CULTURAL REALIA FROM I. CREANGA'S WORKS AND THEIR TRANSLATION INTO ENGLISH

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Relaţia între limbă şi cultură este complexă. Prezentul articol este o încercare de a reflecta asupra cuvintelor realităţi, în special cele din opera lui I.Creangă, de a evidenţia rolul lor în literatură, dificultăţile care survin în procesul traducerii acestor cuvinte şi în tehnicile de traducere utilizate pentru crearea aceleiaşi imagini în textul-ţintă.

Language and cultural identity are inseparable. Language is one of the aspects which give the nation the feeling of unity and every person the ability to identify with the culture. Every culture possesses special culture denoting words, which may not be found in any other language, they are called realia or culture bound words. Realia are "words (and composed expressions) of the popular language representing denominations of objects, concepts, typical phenomena of a given geographic place, of material life or of social-historical peculiarities of some people, nation, country, tribe, that for this reason carry a national, local or historical color; these words do not have exact matches in other languages" [3, p.438]. Culture bound words are of great importance in decodification of cultures, languages and concepts, because the vocabulary of the language and lifestyle of the nation has a close relationship between each other. Another field where realia plays a paramount role is literature. These words not only place the story of a book in a specific culture and period of time, but also imply certain values and create an ambience.

The process of transmitting cultural elements through translation is a complicated but vital task. Translators are permanently faced with an alien culture and thus with the problem of how to treat the cultural aspects implicit in a source language text. Indeed, one of the most difficult problems in translating literary texts is found in the differences between cultures. People of a given culture look at things from their own perspective. Different cultures have different focuses. It usually arise a number of difficulties like the lack of a similar thing in the target culture, difference in connotations and in the stylistic value of the words. In order to convey the cultural aspects into the target language the translator should find the most appropriate technique of translation.

I.Creanga is the main figure to give literary expression to the rich stores of Romanian folk and fairy tales. A past master of the oral narrative style, I.Creanga enhances his stories with a wealth of proverbs, sayings, plastic images drawn from the inexhaustible fountain of folk wisdom and culture

bound words, in order to create the image of Romanian area during the XIX century, the people's lifestyle, their traditions, customs, and beliefs. But I.Creanga's recourse to the particularities of Romanian language realia makes I.Creanga's work difficult to translate. The main techniques used in the translation of realia words from I.Creanga's works, are:

Transliteration is the transmission of letters of a foreign language using the letters of the alphabet of the receiving language. The target language will hardly cover the concept described by the word *'mamaliga'* that is a traditional food in Romanian speaking area and it is difficult to understand by the English native speakers:

*...fripte bine în tigaie şi cu **mămăliguță** caldă* [2, p.124].

*...properly fried in the pan, eaten with warm **mamaliga*** [2, p.125].

A calque is a phrase borrowed from another language and translated literally word-for-word. During the time presented in the story "The Memories of My Boyhood" Orthodox Church was not only a place where people could get closer to the God, but also an education center and the religious books consisted also the teaching materials for pupils. *'Viețile sfinților'* is a book which relieves the importance of the saints in religion and culture. In order to preserve the meaning, the translators chose to translate the title of the book using the calque:

*Însă deschid **Viețile sfinților** şi văd atâtea şi atâtea* [2, p.34].

*I have only to open the **Lives of the Saints** and therein do I find all kinds of things* [2, p.35].

Adaptation is a procedure whereby the translator replaces a term with cultural connotations, where those connotations are restricted to readers of the original language text, with a term with corresponding cultural connotations that would be familiar to readers of the translated text. A relevant example of cultural adaptation is:

*Se zicea că are să treacă **Vodă** pe acolo spre mănăstiri* [2, p.18].

*The rumour went that the **Prince** was going to ride that way to visit the monasteries* [2, p.19].

Generalization consists in the replacement of one word with a word with broader meaning. The translator replaced *'hora'* with '*dance'*, making the perception of the target text easier but depriving it of the local flavor. Considering that *'hora'* is a well known national dance we consider that it would be appropriate to mention it and not to translate by a hyperonym.

*...cu flăcăi voinici şi fete mândre, care ştiau a învârti şi **hora**,* ... [2, p.12]

*...with stalwart young men and comely girls who could swing in **the dance*** … [2, p.13]

When the explicitation technique is used periphrasis is introduced explicitating the denotative content. An example is the translation of the word *'opinca'.* A Romanian native speaker knows that it means "a type of shoes

worn in the past by the peasant, made of a rectangular piece of leather, and tight on the leg and fastened with lacings" [1], while an English native speaker usually is not aware of this. In order to make clear the concept in the TT, the translator used the technique of explicitation and translated it like *'wrap-around boots'.*

***Opinca**-i bună, săraca!* [2, p.36]

*A good old-fashioned **wrap-around boot**'s the thing!* [2, p.37]

Addition refers to translator's note, glossary, preface and other explanatory additions placed outside the text. A relevant culture bound word is *'Doina'*, translated by transliteration and addition of a footnote with the role of explanation (1Romanian peasant song, lyrical and nostalgic). The translators kept the word in its native form, which gives the possibility to the interested reader to find more about it, and also explained the word in the footnote to explain it.

*...şi ne cânta din fluier: **Doina**, care te umple de fiori* [2, p.100].

*...he would play the flute too: the **Doina** that sends shivers down your back* [2, p.101].

A method commonly used when translating from two languages that have different cultures is omission, which means leaving realia or parts of it out of the translation. For example the word '*clacă'*, in the following case is omitted in translation. The realia *'clacă'* means "Voluntary collective work done by farmers to help each other and often is followed by a small party" [1]. We consider it a culture bound word which offers an image about the life of the Romanian village in the XIX century:

*...scoate vornicul din sat pe oameni la o **clacă** de dres drumul* [2, p.18].

...the mayor ordered the villagers out to repair the road [2, p.19].

From a total of 200 analysed examples of realia, from I. Creanga's works, we conclude that no translation technique sharply dominates. The dominant translation strategies are explicitation and addition. Calque and omission are not prevalent in the translation. Transliteration is widely used in the translation especially of geographical realia. The ratio of other strategies, adaptation and generalization, is proportional. Thus, the translation is reader-oriented, but preserving the cultural identity. The role of the translator is to facilitate the transfer of realia from one language into another by applying the most sustainable translation techniques.

The study of culture bound words is an interesting and attractive work. These words are of great importance in the language because they reveal the close connection between culture and language, thus creating the image of one country and its people in a give period of time. Their translation is often a difficult work, but the translator understanding the source and target culture, and applying the adequate translation technique can find the proper way to render culture bound words in the target text.

Bibliography:

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Recomandat
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