REALIA WORDS IN THE WEB-SITES IN ENGLISH DESCRIBING THE REPUBLIC OF MOLDOVA

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Cunoaşterea şi înţelegerea unei culturi, îndeosebi a unităţilor lingvistice specifice culturii, permite oamenilor să stabilească relaţii mai strânse. Răspândirea culturemelor, şi împreună cu acestea a întregii culturi moldoveneşti, duce la creşterea interesului faţă de cultura noastră transformând-o într-o atracţie pentru turişti.

Acest articol are ca scop prezentarea multiaspectuală a culturemelor de pe site-urile care descriu Republica Moldova, precum şi a metodelor, şi strategiilor de traducere a acestora în limba engleză.

According to S. Vlahov and S. Florin realia are the words and phrases denoting the objects typical for the life of one nation and alien and unfamiliar for another, they do not have exact equivalents in other languages, and therefore cannot be translated on the general basis, requiring a specific approach [1, p.24]. This type of culture-bound units have recently become a topic of interest in translation studies since they play an important role in the understanding of a culture and give an important insight of the people from the source culture.

In order to analyze realia words that describe the Republic of Moldova, we have consulted various theoretical sources, among which we can mention "Approaches to Translation" and "A textbook of Translation" by P. Newmark. For the practical part of the research we selected our corpus of examples from some websites describing the culture of our country (moldovaholiday.travel), the letters and stories shared by the Peace Corps Moldova volunteers regarding their experience here, web sites of some local wineries and also the online menus of several traditional restaurants from our country ("Vatra Neamului", "Casa Părintească"), the majority having English and Romanian versions.

One of the main aspects regarding realia words is their translation from Romanian into English, for the analysis of which we referred to the translation techniques suggested by P. Newmark in his books [2, p.103]. After performing the lexical and semantic analysis of forty seven culture-bound units from web sites, we found out that the same culture-specific unit may be rendered in different ways in different sources. Among them we can mention "mămăliga" which was translated as "*mamaliga*" by through translation on the traveling website moldovaholiday.travel, "*polenta*" by using a cultural equivalent in the menu of "Vatra neamului" restaurant and "*mamalyga*" through naturalization in the menu of "Casa părintească" restaurant; "brânză" was translated as "*brinza*" and "*brynza*" in the "Casa părintească" restaurant menu through naturalization or "*cheese*" through a cultural equivalent on moldovaholiday.travel, and "*brinsen cheese*" in the menu of "Et Cetera restaurant"; "compot" rendered as "*compote*" on moldovaholiday.travel or "*kompot*" in the "Et Cetera

restaurant" menu, both variants translated through naturalization; "pască" is referred to as "*pasca*" using it as a loan word on moldovaholiday.travel or "*pasca (sweet bread*)" through a descriptive equivalent in the stories of Peace Corps volunteers; and also "soleancă" rendered as "*solyanka*" through naturalization on moldovaholiday.travel and "*soup*" through functional equivalent in the menu of "Vatra neamului" restaurant.

Another example is *placinta*, a traditional Moldavian pastry product made out of dough with cheese, potatoes, cabbage or cherry filling, which was rendered on peacecorps.gov through a functional equivalent, which means that the source unit was used with a short description which would help the target reader understand what the concept is. In the menu of "Et Cetera restaurant" it was rendered through naturalization – "*placintas*" since the author preferred adapting the cultural unit to the English language, thus adding "-s" which shows the plural form.

Borş is a type of sour soup popular in our country. This dish was rendered in different ways in different sources: on moldovaholiday.travel it was translated through naturalization "*borsh*" since the Romanian letter "ș" became the English combination "sh". The same technique was applied in the menu of "Casa părintească", however being slightly different "*red borsch with pork*". However in this menu a second variant of translation can be found – "*Sauerkraut soup*" which represents a functional equivalent. Regarding this example we can say that it also represents a type of descriptive equivalent, since the "sauerkraut" describes what this dish is made of.

From all the twelve suggested translation techniques the most used in rendering realia words is through translation which accounts for twenty items, among which we can find twelve loan words, seven through translations, four calques. Among loan words we can enumerate "*sarmale*", "*Gustar*", "*leu*" and "*cozonac*" on moldovaholiday.travel, "*crama*" on the website of wine cellars.

One of the loan units is "*izvar*". Izvar is an alcoholic drink made out of mulled wine to which various spices like black pepper and cinnamon are added. It could also be rendered through the German term "gluhweim" which in fact represents the same thing and is more

popular than our "*ïzvar*", but still the translator of the site decided to preserve the cultural nuances by keeping the Romanian form. "*Casa Mare* (*Big House*)" is an example of calque through which the translator emphasizes the great importance this room for Moldovan people.

The second most used technique is by using a descriptive equivalent found in the translation of eleven examples. "*Alivanca*" – "Who remembers the taste of alivanca (a custard tart, from the cuisine of Moldova made with cornmeal)?" and "*babă neagră*" – "…a Moldovan chocolate cake called *baba neagra*" on peacecorps.gov. On moldovaholiday.travel we found another example of descriptive equivalent which is "*ia*" – "*…ia (the Moldavian traditional blouse").*

Other two techniques include the use of functional equivalent and naturalization, each accounting for ten examples. For example, "*martisor*" was translated through naturalization. Here naturalization is reflected by the replacement of diacritical signs "ă" "ț" "ș" with the letters of English alphabet "a", "t" and "s".

Regarding the usage of functional equivalents we can mention "*mujdei*" rendered as "*sauce*" in "Vatra neamului" menu and *"skirt"* as a translation variant for *"catrinţa"* used on moldovaholiday.travel. Indeed, *"skirt"* can be an equivalent for the Romanian *"catrinţa"*, but still it cannot show the cultural specifics since it is part of the national costume and has a certain design. Also here we can bring another example: *"towel"* translated as "*prosop*". They can work as functional equivalent to some extent, but we should not forget that in our culture they have a slightly different use. The English variant "*towel*" is a piece of cloth used for drying something or someone wet. The Moldovan "*prosop*" has this function as well, but it also represents a symbol of social and national identity.

Transference is another technique for rendering realia words. Four units were translated by using this technique among which *"masa* (meal)" on peacecorps.gov, "*bundiță*" – "*bundle*" on moldovaholiday.travel. Three units from our corpus were translated via cultural equivalent: "*smântână*" – "*sour cream*" on moldovaholiday.travel and "*mămăliga*" translated as "*polenta*" in the menu of Vatra neamului restaurant. In the last case "*mămăliga*" was

rendered as "*polenta*", its Italian equivalent, because it is more known to the foreigners.

Despite the wide range of strategies and techniques suggested by various scholars, our opinion is that no attempt of translating can render the exact meaning of the culture-bound words. We would suggest using the descriptive equivalent that is both realia word and its short description in the target text. Having both variants in front, people would be more interested to continue reading the text, since a unit different from lexical and spelling point of view may seem to them funny, curious or strange.

Realia words represent the bridge between the cultures. They are the mirror that reflects our whole nation and present and portray Moldovan lifestyle and traditions.

References:

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