# LEXICAL PECULIARITIES OF TRANSLATING AGATHA CHRISTIE'S DETECTIVE STORIES INTO ROMANIAN

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*Traducerea reprezintă redarea în scris a unui text dintr-o limbă sursă într-o limbă-ţintă. Deoarece fiecare limbă are propriul mod de a exprima anumite lucruri, traducătorii folosesc tehnici lexicale speciale de traducere. În acest articol, ne propunem să prezentăm dificultăţile lexicale în traducere şi strategiile de depăşire a acestora, în baza detectivelor Agathei Christie. Concluziile privind analiza contrastivă a detectivelor, scrise de Agatha Christie, reprezintă finalitatea cercetării efectuate.*

Translation implies a correct and clear rendering of what is expressed in one language by means of another language. Translation techniques are the transformative tools used by a translator in order to overcome the contextual inconsistencies when translating the units of the original text.

The analysis of the classifications of translation techniques given by four Russian linguists: T.Kazakova, V.Komissarov, L.Barhudarov and A.Parshin showed that a common classification does not exist. That is why we have provided our own classification. Since lexical translation techniques are applied at the word level, we believe that they should include the following techniques: transliteration, transcription, calque, concretization, generalization, equivalence, addition, omission, and explanation.

The literary translation has certain peculiarities, such as: high sense workload; perception of the text is affected by: the culture, the subtext, the national characteristics, etc.; the means of information: epithets; comparisons; metaphors; neologisms of authors; irony, etc. Since the translation of literary texts is complicated due to a high sense workload, and the translator often has to create a completely new text in another language, literary translation is an art accessible only for the privileged ones. Only an ingenious writer mastering perfectly a foreign language can translate the belles-lettres style bearing a definite emotional and stylistic message.

We analyzed Agatha Christie's detective stories, featuring Hercule Poirot and Captain Hastings: *The Million Dollar Bond Robbery* and *The Jewel Robbery at the Grand Metropolitan* and their translation, made by Iordana Ferenţ and Ştefan Ferenţ.

Among the lexical difficulties encountered in the detective stories we have singled out: the translation of proper names, terms, idioms, context-bound words, etc. which represent a challenge for every translator.

In the analysed books we have identified fifty proper names. All these proper names were rendered into Romanian through different translation techniques, such as: transliteration: *Liverpool, Hercule Poirot,* etc.; equiva-

lence: *London – Londra, Belgian – belgian, Tuesday – marți,* etc. Those rendered through equivalence, most of them are not proper names in Romanian, such as: *Belgian; Tuesday*. Also, there are proper names rendered through: calque: *London and Scottish Bank – Banca londonezo-scoțiană*; explanation: *Profiteer – îmbogățiții de peste noapte*; omission: *L. & N. W. R., England;* and also through a combination of translation techniques, such as: addition + transliteration: *Cheshire Cheese – restaurantul Cheshire Cheese;* equivalence + transliteration: *Rendez-vous Restaurant – Restaurantul Rendez-vous*. In conclusion, most of the proper names were rendered through transliteration.

We have also identified sixty-six terms. The majority of terms were rendered into Romanian through equivalence: *thief – hoț, finger-print – amprentă, robbery – jaf,* etc. However, some of the terms were rendered through other lexical translation techniques, such as: transliteration: *Scotland Yard – Scotland Yard*; concretization: *to search – a percheziționa, crime – comitere de jafuri*. In the second example rendered through concretization, we can notice the fact that the translators have specified what type of crime is discussed about in the story, since there are several types, such as murder, burglary, aggravated-assault, arson, etc. There are also cases when the translators used the explanation in order to render the terms into Romanian: *paying-in clerk – funcționar care încasează bani*; and generalization: *female searcher – femeie de la poliție.*

Speaking about the technical terminology, we can state the fact that it is not very specialized and complicated. In comparison with other authors of detectives, Agatha Christie attracts the reader through the creative plot structures, psychology, enigmatic style, intrigue and careful story development. For her the literary aspect counts a lot more, than the technical one.

We have identified twenty one idioms in the analysed stories. And we classified them according to Vinogradov's classification into: phraseological fusions (e.g. *to be at the seaside – a fi dezorientat; to go over something through a tooth comb – a trece prin ciur și prin sită*); phraseological unities (e.g. *to cross swords with somebody – a încrucișa sabia cu cineva; to drive someone mad – a înnebuni pe cineva,* etc.); and phraseological combinations (e.g. *to stare someone in the face – a fi izbitor; to have to do with something – a avea de-a face cu ceva*, etc.). As it can be noticed, the most complicated idioms are the phraseological fusions. The translators have rendered them either through a Romanian equivalent, like in the case of the idiom, *to go over something through a tooth comb*; or they have rendered the meaning of the idiom, like in the case of *to be at the seaside.*

In the process of translating idioms there are some difficulties, and due to this fact, according to Mona Baker, there are four problem solving strategies

to overcome such probable difficulties: using an idiom of similar meaning and form: *frightened to death – înfricoşat de moarte; to cross swords with somebody – a încrucişa sabia cu cineva*. This example consists of equivalent lexical items, they both in the source and target language constitute idioms and they are fixed expressions. Other strategies are: using an idiom of similar meaning, but dissimilar form: *to go scot-free – a scăpa basma curată, to go over something through a tooth comb – a trece prin ciur şi prin sită*; translation by paraphrase: *to be at the seaside – a fi dezorientat, to be on the safe side – a lua toate măsurile de asigurare*; translation by omission. We can mention the fact that the number of idioms which were translated by paraphrase prevails, and this is the most common way of translating idioms.

We have identified lots of context-free words, such as: names of persons *(Hercule Poirot, Philip Rodgeway)*; names of cities *(Liverpool, Brighton)*; names of organizations *(Scotland Yard),* which were rendered through transliteration; and terms *(robbery – jaf; private inquiry agent – detectiv particular)*. The terms have their permanent equivalents in Romanian.

Also, we have identified examples of context-bound words, an example is the following: "She was perhaps about five-and-twenty, with big brown eyes and a perfect figure." In this sentence the word *figure* has many equivalents in the Romanian language, such as: *cifră, sumă, calcul*, etc. The context shows very well that the word *figure* in this sentence has the meaning of human body shape.

False friends represent another difficulty for translation. There were selected forty examples of false friends. An example of such false friends is the English word *office* in the following sentence: "The last moment that the bonds are seen as bonds is in the office of the London and Scottish Bank on the morning of the 23rd." This word seemingly resembling the Romanian word *oficiu*, which in the Romanian language has the following meanings: 1. serviciu (administrativ); 2. îndatorire, funcție; 3. slujbă bisericească; in fact has the equivalent – *birou.*

The conclusion is that every translation is a creative process that should be marked by the individuality of the translator, but the main task of the translator is to transfer in the translation all the characteristics of the original; and in order to create an adequate artistic and emotional experience, the translator has to find the best language tools: find synonyms, related artistic images and so on.

Literary translation should be fully comprehended in terms of the original, just knowing a foreign language is not enough, one needs a special skill – the ability to feel idioms and word plays, and be able to convey the artistic image.

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