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## THE MEANS OF TRANSLATING THE TROPES IN THE FANTASY NOVEL “THE HOBBIT, OR THERE AND BACK AGAIN” INTO UKRAINIAN

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The article investigates the translation transformations used by the translator Olexandr Mokrovolskyi to render the imagery and stylistic means of expression in the first translation into Ukrainian of the novel “The Hobbit, or There and Back Again” by the British author John Ronald Reuel Tolkien. The choice of the literature work for the study is determined by high popularity of fantasy fiction among the readers of all ages worldwide at the present time. This novel, published in 1937 and gained popularity since the 60-ies of the twentieth century, is one of the most significant for the development of fantasy fiction in the following decades as well as the epic trilogy “The Lord of the Rings” by the same author, the stories about Conan the Barbarian by the American writer Robert Ervin Howard and the series of novels “The Chronicles of Narnia” by the British writer Clive Staples Lewis. The novel “The Hobbit, or There and Back Again” is full of various author's stylistic devices and expressive means, but the article focuses on the means of translation of three most commonly used tropes, such as epithet, metaphor and simile. Some kinds of grammatical, lexical-grammatical, lexical-semantic, lexical-stylistic transformations used by the translator are described in the article.

**Keywords:** fantasy, translation, translation transformation paths, the epithet, metaphor, comparison

**Introduction.** J.R.R. Tolkien, a professor of linguistics at Oxford University, is considered to be one of the founders of the genre of fantasy, especially in its classic, “high” sense. In the United States of America his books have gained considerable popularity in the early 1960's of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, however, they became known to Ukrainian reader only in the mid 1980's with the first translation of the novel “The Hobbit, or There and Back Again” into Ukrainian (translator O. Mokrovolskyi, 1985). Since then the work has been republished many times, and today there are two variants of its translation (by O. Mokrovolskyi and Olena O'Lear), but we focus on the first, which contributed to revelation of the Tolkien's works to Ukrainian reader.

**The purpose** of the article is to study the translation transformations used while rendering tropes in the J.R.R. Tolkien's novel “The Hobbit, or There and Back Again”.

**General information about the tropes.** One of the features of the works of J.R.R. Tolkien is the wide use of expressive means and stylistic devices, in particular tropes. There are many definitions of tropes, but they all coincide in the fact that the tropes are the notion of poetics, stylistics and rhetoric which means such turns (images) that are based on the use of the word (or combination of words) figuratively and used to enhance the language imagery and expression [5, p. 520; 1, p. 82]. The essence of tropes is comparison of concept presented in the traditional use of lexical unit and the concept this same unit transfers in the literary language, performing a special stylistic feature. Tropes play an important, albeit supplementary role in the interpretation of a text, but stylistic analysis leads to the synthesis of the text and cannot be reduced only to recognize tropes [1, p. 82]. Scientists distinguish a large number of tropes, but we will focus only on the three most common in belles-lettres style – epithet, metaphor and simile.

**Translation peculiarities of epithets.** Epithet is a lexical and syntactic trope that functions as attribute, adverbial modifier or address and is distinguished by not necessarily figurative nature of words it expresses and the obligatory presence of expressive or emotive and other connotations in it by which the author's attitude to the subject is reflected [1, p. 87].

Most linguists see no difficulty in translating epithets, excluding transferred epithets more common in the English language and metaphorical epithets. Mostly epithets preserve the semantics, structure and stylistic function but there are a number of reasons for which there are specific transformation.

We have analysed 378 epithets from the novel “The Hobbit, or There and Back Again” by J.R.R. Tolkien translated into Ukrainian by O. Mokrovolskyi. While translating the text the grammatical, lexical-grammatical, lexical-semantic, lexical-stylistic types of transformations were used. Next we will consider the examples of their application.

In most cases, the translator used the grammatical transformation, especially syntactic assimilation when rendering epithets. V. Komissarov considers the syntactic assimilation or literal translation as a translation devise in which the original syntactic structure gains similarity to a

structure of target language [3, p. 178]. For example, in the following sentence epithets with a signified word “*plain quiet folk*” translator reproduced literally “*прості тихі люди*”:

*We are plain quiet folk and have no use for adventures* [8].

*Ми прості тихі люди, і нам ті пригоди зовсім ні до чого* [7].

Another means commonly used is a grammatical substitution method, including the parts of speech or the sentence substitutions:

*Just before tea time there came a tremendous ring on the front door bell, and then he remembered!* [8]

*Якраз перед тим часом, коли п'ють чай, гучно-гучно задзеленчав дзвоник на входних дверях, і враз він згадав!* [7]

Besides syntactic and grammatical substitutions the translator widely uses other grammatical transformations, such as change of order, compression, decompression, addition and omission.

The works of J.R.R. Tolkien are full of nicknames that contain content components that reflect various real properties of the person or object. Usually they are expressed by epithets in postposition and translated by means of loan translation, i.e. reproduction of word or phrase combinatorial composition in which the parts of word (morphemes) or phrases (lexemes) are reproduced by the relevant parts of target language [2, p. 52]. For example:

*Orcrist Goblin-cleaver* [8];

*Оркріст-Гобліноруб* [7].

With equal frequency the translator uses such techniques as modulation and compensation to translate the epithets. Modulation or semantic development is a lexical-semantic substitution of source language word or phrase by target language unit, meaning of which is the logical consequence of the meaning of the output unit [3, p. 248]. For example:

*Beorn was a fierce enemy* [8].

*Беорн не знав милосердя до ворогів* [7].

According to V. Komissarov compensation is a way of translation in which the content items lost in translation of the source language unit are rendered in the translated text in any other way not necessarily in the same place as in the source [3, p. 247].

*...and laugh deep fruity laughs, especially after dinner...* [8]

*Сміються гобіти глибоким оксамитовим сміхом, надто коли пообідають добре* [7].

Depicting such mythic creatures as hobbits J.R.R. Tolkien used the epithet “*fruity*” which means “*фруктовий*” in Ukrainian. In addition to the direct meaning, in English this adjective is used to describe the soft, deep voice or sound, which is unusual for Ukrainian reader. So, in order to preserve the meaning the translator used the adjective “*оксамитовий*” which is more common in the Ukrainian language.

In some cases the translator used the descriptive translation. Descriptive translation is such a lexical and grammatical transformation, in which a lexical unit of the source language is substituted by the phrase that reveals its meaning. For example:

*the nassty noser* [8];

*Капосний заброда, що пхає носа в чужі справи* [7].

O. Mokravolskyi widely uses stylistic transformations, in particular emphasisation in the translation text. To increase the expressiveness he mainly uses augmentative and diminutive suffixes of adjectives such as *-езн-*, *-еньк-*, *-есеньк-*, *-ісіньк-*, *-ющ-* etc.

*great ugly looking goblins* [8];

*здоровезні бридезні гобліни* [7];

*a slender beat of sun* [8];

*тонесенькому промінчикові сонця* [7].

In addition the translator uses stylistically marked vocabulary, for example, in the following sentence O. Mokravolskyi substituted stylistically neutral word “*tricky*”, which is translated in the dictionary as “*хитрий*”, with more expressive colloquialism “*шельмовиті*”.

*There it is, dwarves are not heroes, but calculating folk with a great idea of the value of money; some are tricky and treacherous and pretty bad lots* [8].

*Оце так: гноми — ніякі не герої, а ошадливе, розважливе плем'я, що дуже високо цінує гроші. Бувають поміж них шельмовиті, зрадливі й вельми лихі* [7].

**Translation peculiarities of metaphors.** According to the scholars a metaphor is one of the main tropes, and its essence is the associative similarity between objects, which is why it is

sometimes defined as the implicit comparison [2, p. 42]. As metaphors may differ semantically and syntactically the researchers of translation propose to use different ways and means of translation depending on the context for preserving the imagery and expressiveness of this stylistic device.

During the study we analysed 212 metaphors translation examples in the novel J.R.R. Tolkien "The Hobbit, or There and Back Again". The analysis found that the most common ways to render this stylistic device was compensation and such grammatical means as syntactic assimilation, grammatical substitutions, compression, decompression, addition, omission and change of order.

*...on its sliding surface there were dancing and broken reflections of clouds and of stars* [8];  
*...у пливкому дзеркалі вод танцювали ламані відображення хмар і зірок* [7].

It is interesting to study the translation of metaphors used in poems and riddles, plenty of which is in the novel of J.R.R. Tolkien. O. Mokrovolskyi tries to keep their images and expressiveness, while not breaking the rhyme and poetic size. In order to achieve this he uses grammatical transformations, as well as loan translation and compensation. For example, the following lines describe the art of dwarves' forging:

*On silver necklaces they strung  
 The flowering stars, on crowns they hung  
 The dragon fire, in twisted wire  
 They meshed the light of moon and sun* [8].  
*В намиста сріберні низали  
 Квітучі зорі, ще й чіпляли  
 Вогонь дракона на корону,  
 У вічка сонце й місяць бгали* [7].

Here we see the word-for-word translation of metaphorical epithet "The flowering stars" – "Квітучі зорі". However, the translator could not render literary the expression "in twisted wire They meshed the light of moon and sun" and here he used such means as compression, grammatical substitution and compensation.

When translating riddles the translator also followed similar techniques to preserve the imagery of the source text. When the author calls teeth "Thirty white horses on a red hill", translator renders the expression word for word: "Тридцять білих коней на горі червоній".

Since the imagery of Ukrainian and English languages often do not match, the translator uses widely such lexical-grammatical means as compensation to render the metaphors in the text.

*His head was swimming...* [8]  
*Голова йому йшла обертом* [7].

In some cases, the translator used the image substitution, for example in the following expression the translator replaced the verb "sprout" ("рости, виростати") by "пурхати" to enhance expressiveness.

*Tales and adventures sprouted up...* [8]  
*...історії та пригоди так і пурхали йому з-під ніг...* [7]

In some cases, O. Mokrovolskyi applied such means as neutralization translating the metaphors:

*Winter and snow will bite both men and Elves* [8].  
*Зима й сніг насядуть і на людей та ельфів* [7].  
*...in which it had eaten out a wide bay...* [8]  
*...де вимлила широку бухту...* [7]

In addition to the mentioned above the other transformations are used, including emphasisation, specification, modulation and lexical substitutions. Often translator combines several means of translation to save the stylistic unity of the text.

**Translation peculiarities of similes.** Scientists define simile as a stylistic device based on the partial assimilation of two objects belonging to different classes. Simile is a structure consisting of two components: the subject of comparison (the tenor) and object comparison (the vehicle) combined by means of formal indicators of mental assimilation operation, such as "like", "as", "as though", "as like", "such as", "as ... as" [6, p. 183].

During the study we analyzed translation of 116 similes from English into Ukrainian. It was found that mostly to render the similes in the target language the translator used the grammatical

means (grammatical substitution, decompression, compression, changes of order, addition, omission), loan translation and compensation.

The reason of prevalence of grammatical transformations is the difference between syntactic structures of the English and Ukrainian languages. For example, in the following similes the translator substituted the complex sentence (“*it was an old volcano that had made up its mind*”) by the simple one and added the verb “*прокинувся*” to enhance the imagery.

... *when suddenly a vast rumbling woke in the mountain underneath as if it was an old volcano that had made up its mind to start eruptions once again* [8].

... *коли це в глибині загриміло, загурило, от ніби прокинувся старий вулкан і надумав повіргатися знову* [7].

Another example of grammatical transformations can be seen here:

*there was a gleam of yellow upon its far roof, as if the light caught the last pale leaves* [8].

...*і та смужка позолотила – чи не останні бліді листочки запалали під сонячним промінням?* [7]

In this case O. Mokrovolskyi used grammatical substitutions of parts of speech and parts of sentence. Also, to enhance the expressiveness he replaced the affirmative sentence with interrogative.

In verse lines the translator cannot always keep the original simile. This happens due to the rhythmic structure of the source and target texts. Therefore, in some cases O. Mokrovolskyi used such transformations as the omission, lexical substitution and neutralization in the translation:

*While hammers fell like ringing bells* [8];

*Як били молоти без втоми* [7];

*The trees like torches biased with light* [8];

*Дерева стали вогненосні* [7].

As we have mentioned above, the loan translation method renders the source language morphemes and lexemes by the morphemes and lexemes of target language, thus preserving semantic meaning and imagery of statement. Therefore, this method is often used when translating similes. For example:

...*he shook poor Bilbo like a rabbit* [8].

...*він трусив бідолашного Більбо, мов кролика* [7].

*In the gloom the great dwarf gleamed like gold in a dying fire* [8].

*Серед мороку Торін виглядав таким величним і осяйним, неначе золото в меркнучому вогнищі...* [7]

In some cases, the translator used the lexical-grammatical method of compensation to achieve a certain stylistic effect.

*shaking like a jelly that was melting* [8].

*трусився (...), мов танучий холодець* [7].

In English, the word “jelly” means a semi-solid, somewhat elastic dessert made from gelatine and fruit juice, while more familiar to Ukrainian reader “*холодець*” is made from meat.

Often translator combines several means of translation for preserving the imagery and enhancing a certain stylistic effect and impact on the reader. The example we can see here:

...*castles with an evil look, as if they had been built by wicked people* [8].

...*замки, і здебільше виглядали вони так, наче будовані були аж ніяк не з доброю метою* [7].

When translating this expression O. Mokrovolskyi applied modulation, grammatical substitution and decompression.

**Conclusions.** Thus we discussed the basic ways of rendering epithets, metaphors and comparisons in the novel of J.R.R. Tolkien. From this we can make a conclusion that translating the epithets O. Mokrovolskyi paid more attention to grammatical transformations to preserve, and in some cases even enhancing the imagery of source text. Only in some cases descriptive translation was used indicating that the epithets mostly were not lost, and the translator kept pragmatic meaning of the text.

In the same manner as with rendering epithets, translating the metaphors O. Mokrovolskyi preferred grammatical transformations, however, because the imagery of two languages is not the same, in some cases he used lexical substitutions and compensation, especially in translation of poetry.

When rendering the similes translator mostly uses grammatical substitutions and loan translation of lexical transformations to preserve imagery of work due to the different syntactic structures of the source language and the target language, but in some cases, particularly in the translation of poetry, he had to omit similes and resort to lexical substitution in order to preserve the rhyme and rhythm.

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#### **Ю. О. Зайченко. Засоби перекладу тропів у романі Дж.Р.Р. Толкіна «The Hobbit, or There and Back Again» українською мовою.**

Стаття присвячена дослідженню перекладацьких трансформацій, які використовувалися перекладачем О.М. Мокровольським для відтворення стилістичних засобів образності та виразності при першому перекладі роману Дж.Р.Р. Толкіна «*The Hobbit, or There and Back Again*» українською мовою. Цей роман, надрукований у 1937 році і набувший популярності починаючи з 60-х років ХХ ст., став на ряду з «Володарем Перснів» та творами Р.І. Говарда і К.С. Льюїса одним з найбільш визначальних для розвитку жанру фентезі у подальші десятиліття. Мова автора багата на різноманітні стилістичні прийоми та експресивні засоби, проте у статті увага зосереджується на засобах відтворення у перекладі трьох найбільш розповсюджених тропів, а саме епітету, метафори та порівняння.

**Ключові слова:** фентезі, переклад, перекладацькі трансформації, тропи, епітет, метафора, порівняння

#### **Ю. О. Зайченко. Средства перевода тропов в романе Дж.Р.Р. Толкина «The Hobbit, or There and Back Again» на украинский язык.**

Статья посвящена исследованию переводческих трансформаций, которые использовались переводчиком А.Н. Мокровольским для воспроизведения стилистических средств образности и выразительности при первом переводе романа Дж.Р.Р. Толкина «*The Hobbit, or There and Back Again*» на украинский язык. Этот роман, напечатанный в 1937 году и получивший популярность начиная с 60-х годов ХХ в., стал на ряду с «Властелином Колец» и произведениями Р.И. Говарда и К.С. Льюиса одним из наиболее определяющих для развития жанра фэнтези в последующие десятилетия. Язык автора богат разнообразными стилистическими приемами и экспрессивными средствами, однако в статье внимание сосредоточено на средствах воспроизведения трех наиболее распространенных тропов в переводе, а именно эпитета, метафоры и сравнения.

**Ключевые слова:** фэнтези, перевод, переводческие трансформации, тропы, эпитет, метафора, сравнение