THE TRANSLATION OF THE POETRY BY S. KUNITZ

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Abstract

The article presents the translational analysis of Kunitz's poetry into Ukrainian which has been made on the basis of the Ukrainian translation by B. Boychuk. The article is aimed at highlighting the main features of his poems and its peculiarities in the Ukrainian language translation. The poetry by S. Kunitz abounds in stylistic syntax and the Americanisms which nearly coincide with the Ukrainian variant.

Keywords: americanisms, free verse, inversion, repetitions, stylistic syntax, translation.

Modern poetry in America is marked by a constant struggle with the paradoxes of living in, with and through words. One of the most outstanding poet in America is S. Kunitz. He is considered by many observers to be the most distinguished and accomplished contemporary poet in the United States. The study of his poetic works is rather topical within the linguistic dimension. The translation of poetry is generally held to be the most difficult, demanding, and possibly rewarding form of translation. Kunitz's style is marked by transparency and simplicity of expression. But the simplicity of his poems is treacherous. His language is sophisticated, complex, and not easily translatable. A translator faces some difficulties because Kunitz's poems are characterized by free verse and a number of Americanisms. The goal of the article is to examine the main peculiarities of Kunitz's poetry and its translation techniques. The comparative analysis is used within that paper.

Free verse is an open form of poetry. It does not use consistent meter patterns, rhyme or any other musical pattern. It thus tends to follow the rhythm of natural speech [Abbs, p.137]. Although

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free verse requires no meter, rhyme, or other traditional poetic techniques, a poet can still use them to create some sense of structure.

Free verse is poetry in its necessary freedom of expression and research. And one of the consequences of this is that it is as such the only place where the contemporary poet can define and solve the problems he meets in his existential or cultural condition [Scott 2000, p. 45]. What the translator is attempting to do is not so much to translate a text, but to translate/transform the way a text lives, has its being, in the consciousness of a reader [Scott 2011, p. 75].

Stylistic syntax is the main feature of free verse [Scott 2002, p.211]. Kunitz's poems abound in repetition, anaphora, parallel constructions, inversion [Orr, p. 67]. The translator preserves those stylistic devices in the Ukrainian language, e.g. repetition:

<i>I lie stretched out on a leaf, Pale <u>green</u> on my bed of <u>green</u>, <u>Munching, munching</u> [Кюніц, р. 76].</i>	<i>Я лежу, простягнувшись, на листочку, Блідо-зелена на <u>зеленім</u> ложі, Й <u>жую, жую</u>.</i>
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The rhetorical questions in the Ukrainian translation are also preserved:

<i><u>What makes the engine go?</u> Desire, desire, desire [Кюніц, р. 36].</i>	<i><u>Що є для них рушієм?</u> Бажання, бажання, бажання.</i>
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Anaphora in source and target languages coincides:

<i><u>So I</u> have shut the doors of my house, <u>So I</u> have trudged downstairs to my cell, <u>So I</u> am sitting in semi-dark Hunched over my desk...[Кюніц, р. 86].</i>	<i><u>Тож</u> я позачиняв двері свого дому, <u>Тож</u> зійшов униз до комірки, <u>Тож</u> сиджу в півтемряві згорблений над столиком.</i>
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<i>Draggling my life behind me in a sack <u>Naked I</u> grow, scourged by the black [Кюніц, р. 96].</i>	<i>Я волочу в мішку життя марноване, Повзу <u>нагий</u> і чорною спокусою.</i>
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The stylistic device, inversion, in the Ukrainian translation from above, is not quite relevant to its source variant, nevertheless, the strict rhythm in Ukrainian is preserved.

There are some examples of Americanisms in Kunitz's poetry. Americanism is a word or meaning that is common in U.S. English but is not common in the kinds of English spoken outside the U.S. [Merriam-Webster's Learner's Dictionary]. A translator should be on the alert and choose the American English equivalent:

That single Model A sputtering up the grade unfurled a <u>highway</u> behind [Кюніц, р. 24].	Машина моделі А, що тарахоче вгору, промощує за собою <u>шлях</u>
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The American word *highway* is translated into Ukrainian not by the American meaning “шоссе” but by a generalized word “шлях” (Eng. *Way*).

In the next example the word *purse* is translated by the American meaning “a woman's handbag”. But in the other poem we can see the translation of *purse* by the British meaning “a small bag for carrying money”:

If I can gather strength enough I'll try to burrow under a stone And spin myself <u>a purse</u> [Кюніц, р. 78].	Якщо я зможу ще зібрати до- сить сил, спробую заритися під камень і виткати собі <u>торби-</u> <u>ну</u>
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More even than my <u>purse</u> , And that's no laughing matter, it is my pride That has been hurt [Кюніц, р. 94].	Значно більше, ніж мій <u>гама-</u> <u>нець</u> , моя гординя – це вже не до сміху!
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The shift from American to British meaning in translation in the second example is quite relevant because the author says pride is more valuable than money.

The translator used the correct Ukrainian correspondence for the following Americanism “baggage” but with a slight archaic shade (обоз, in English *cart*, that is a vehicle pulled by a horse):

Thanks to your lightfoot genius No Eighth Route Army kept its lines more fluid, Traveled with less <u>baggage</u> [Кю- ніц, р. 102].	Через твій прудконогий геній жодна Восьма Похідна Армія Не мала плінніших ліній, насту- пала з легшим <u>обозом</u> .
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The translator chose the American meaning for the word “stoop” which means “a raised area outside the front door of a house” in comparison with the British meaning “a way of standing or walking with your head and shoulders bent forwards and downwards”:

I am not ready yet and nobody stands on <u>the stoop</u> [Кюніц, р. 122].	Я ще не готовий, І ніхто там на <u>порозі</u> не чекає...
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Conclusions: The translator managed to preserve the peculiarities of Kunitz’s free verse in the Ukrainian language. He matched the relevant stylistic devices to convey the strict rhyme, the intonation and the total image of a poem. The translation of the Americanisms caused a number of problems. In some cases the translator used not the American but British correspondences, but those options were quite stylistically and semantically reasonable.

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