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References to Music in the Translations of *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland* into Russian

Abstract: The article studies the references to music in *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland* and their renditions in its Russian translations. The material of the research consists of three translations containing thirteen cases of musical references. To assess the quality of the translations, an approach was developed on the basis of the criteria of musical genre, period of Russian translation/analogue, and vocabulary, syntax, and register. This method helped in selecting the translations which may be regarded as successful, even if they have employed a degree of poetic licence, in rendering the idea and pragmatics of the source text. Analogues based on Russian lyrics made the text domesticated, making the translations closer to the Russian analogues rather than Carroll's verses.

Keywords: *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland*, analogues, music, translation into Russian

1 Introduction

Alice's Adventures in Wonderland (hereafter *AW*) by Lewis Carroll has been studied in various fields. Within the domain of language and intercultural communication, it presents a special example of persistent interest among translators attempting to render the nature of the book in a way that captures the various features of the text. An aspect underestimated in theory but important in practice is rendering the musical references using analogues represented by parodied song texts or lyrics based mostly on nineteenth-century music. This article will argue that analogues based on song texts of the target-language culture are an efficient approach to rendering the parody in Carroll's work if properly selected and modified. Hence, the present research presents a means of examining analogues based on song texts in translations, and may be used for studying and comparing multiple translations.

This article promotes the study of the transcultural and intertextual features in *AW* (Carroll 1978), in particular the musical aspect, and the search for new translation tools and their evaluation. The subject matter of the research is the references to music in the book and how they are rendered in its Russian transla-

tions. There are more than twenty translations of the book; the article will focus on the translations and adaptations by Solovyova (Carroll, trans. Solovyova 1909), Florya (Carroll, trans. Florya 2006) and Blekhman (Carroll, trans. Blekhman 2011). These translations were the most consistent in employing analogues based on music and lyrics of Russian origin. The novelty of the research lies in studying the musical component in literature in the context of translation. The article proposes a method of analysing and assessing analogues used in the translation of parodied poetic texts, including lyrics. The objectives planned for the research are (a) to show the relevance for translation of parody in Carroll's book, (b) to present the ways of rendering musical references through analogues in the Russian translations, and (c) to determine the degree of resemblance between source text and translation.

2 Material and methods

The article will consider translations into which the aspect of music is incorporated. The translations are those of Solovyova (1909), Florya (2006), and Blekhman (2011), from which four, five, and three analogues respectively for rendering musical references have been selected. The material of the research per se is made up of the verses from *AW* set to music (group 1), the tunes presumably sung by the characters (group 2), and the verses rendered into Russian with arbitrary song lyrics (group 3). Group 1 includes *Twinkle, Twinkle, Little Star*, based on the poem by J. Taylor and set to the tune of a French folk song, and *Beautiful Soup*, based on the lyrics of *Star of the Evening* by J. M. Sayles. Group 2 includes the verses which are supposed to be songs in the book: the lullaby *Speak Roughly*, based on a poem by W. Bates, and *The Lobster-Quadrille*, based on verses by M. Howitt. Group 3 is represented by the translations of the poems *How Doth the Little Crocodile* and *The Letter in the Trial*.

The composers whose music was incorporated into the parodies are A. Alyabiev (*Vecherniy zvon* [Those Evening Bells], *Solovey* [Nightingale]), A. Rubinstein (*Ptichka bozhiya* [Divine Bird]), P. Bulakhov (*Gori, gori, moya zvezda* [Shine, Shine, My Star]), B. Flis (*Spi, moya radost', usni* [Sleep, My Joy, Sleep]), A. Verstovskiy (*Troika*), A. Spadavecchia (*Dobriy zhuk* [Kind Beetle]), and G. Gladkov (*Ah mozhet, ah mozhet ...* [May It Be, May It Be ...]); there are also the folk songs *Chizhik-pyzhik*, *Korobeiniki* [The Pedlars], and *Bayu, bayu-bayushki, bayu* [Lulla, Lulla, Lullaby]. The poets whose lyrics were used in the music were A. Pushkin, I. Kozlov, A. Delvig, V. Chuevskiy, F. Glinka, N. Nekrasov, F. Gotter, E. Schwartz, and E. Uspenskiy.

The method developed for the research is based on benchmarking that aims to assess the quality of translation, and on the existing practice of using data collected on the basis of a set of criteria. The criteria applied in this research are a combination of lexical, syntactic, and stylistic means and analogues of genres in the translations. An approach common in assessing achievement in general, and in particular assessment in education (*Common European Framework* 2001, 190), facilitated the transition from an impression to a considered judgement. This approach is especially relevant for assessing a vague area of poetic translation and the rendition of parodies, because a variety of criteria makes the assessment of translation fairer and more balanced.

To demonstrate the efficiency of analogues based on song lyrics and to hence prove the hypothesis, poems from three translations from different periods, which regularly apply analogues based on song lyrics, have been selected. Thirteen cases of translated poems were examined in terms of their consistency with the English text. It is proposed that the degree of resemblance between the English and Russian versions be measured on the basis of the rendition of Carroll's intention, as seen either in the burlesque or subversive nature of the poems; the choice of the musical genre and the year of the hypotext; and the application of linguistic parameters and the degree of their transformation (lexical, syntactic, and stylistic levels). The lexical level is assessed using the number of notional words which were changed or added in the Russian version compared to the English one for the purposes of parody. The syntactic level is assessed using the number of sentences and their types (neutral, interrogative, or exclamatory types of sentence). The stylistic level is assessed using the linguistic register of the words. A match in terms of these criteria between hypotexts and hypertexts in the source text and translation will mean an adequate correspondence between the source and target texts. The results of the analysis will be calculated and presented in a summarized manner. The approach will identify the translations with most parameters met, which will show the efficiency of analogues based on song lyrics, identifying the genres applied and tendencies in rendering either the burlesque or subversive nature of Carroll's poems.

3 The relevance of music in Carroll's work

Music was a significant part of Carroll's life that was projected onto his magnum opus. The writer was a connoisseur of opera and church music. In *AW*, conceived not only as a story but an operetta (Wakeling 2015, 189), a special feature is seen in parody. Interpretation of the parodies differs. Some scholars regard them as

primarily subversive (Updike 1965, 198) because they reject the morals of Victorian England. However, burlesque features of the poems were discussed by Gardner, a most authoritative and well-known commentator of the book (Gardner 2000, 356). This division in attitudes to the poems may also be traced in the translations, and the parameters (subversive or burlesque) that apply to the verses may be traced in them. A definition based on the analysis of earlier interpretations of the concept of parody is presented by N. Korkut. She writes: “parody is an intentional imitation – of a text, style, genre, or discourse – which includes an element of humour and which has an aim of interpreting its target in one way or another [...]. The last phrase of my definition – ‘an aim of interpreting its target in one way or another’ is related to the attitude exhibited by the work of parody towards its target” (2005, 21). This definition shows that a parodied text is based on intertextuality. We shall emphasize this when it comes to literary works. Intertextuality depends on the interaction between the parody text, which is a hypertext, and the text referred to in a parodied form, which is a hypotext. For instance, the lyrics of the lullaby *Twinkle, Twinkle, Little Star* are a hypotext, and Carroll’s parody, *Twinkle, Twinkle, Little Bat*, is a hypertext. Hereafter, the analysis will cover hypotexts and hypertexts in both the original text and its translations. The sources briefly outlined above concerned the poems without their musical features, but the current study will take references to music into consideration.

4 Analysis

As has been stated, parodies presuppose identifying and understanding the source text for the parody. The hypotexts of the poems created in the nineteenth century were well known to children in Victorian England (Hahn 2015, 19).

Twinkle, Twinkle, Little Bat, performed by the Hatter in chapter 7, is based on the lullaby *Star* with lyrics by J. Taylor. The music has been known since the eighteenth century as *Ah! Vous dirai-je, maman*. The song text is written in a neutral register. The lyrics represent a monologue addressed to a star accompanying a traveller. The star is compared to a diamond, while in the parody a bat is compared to a tea-tray. In Carroll’s parody, the star is replaced with a bat. The overall idea of the poem is burlesque. In three instances, the changes in the hypertext are located (“star” – “bat,” “so high” – “you fly,” “diamond” – “tea-tray”) at the end of a line. In the last line, “diamond” is substituted with “tea-tray.” Besides, Carroll repeats the words “Twinkle, twinkle” as a refrain after the stanza. The hypotext consists of two sentences: one narrative and one exclamatory. Carroll’s hypertext is made up of four sentences.

In chapter 10, the Gryphon and Mock Turtle sing *Beautiful Soup*, which parodies *Star of the Evening* by the American amateur poet and musician J. M. Sayles. The song, published in 1855, was devoted to a star – the evening star (a possible poetic reference to the planet Venus). The general idea of the parodied poem is burlesque. Changes in the hypertext in terms of vocabulary can be found on eight occasions: “star” was substituted with “soup” seven times, and “beautiful” was repeated. The lyrics consist of five neutral sentences with neutral lexis. Carroll’s parody, *Beautiful Soup*, consists of thirteen sentences, nine of which are exclamatory and four interrogative, with no neutral sentences. The register of the hypertext is lower compared to the hypotext; in particular, an intentional violation of register can be observed in an irregular division of the syllables in the gap in “pennyworth [*sic*].” The traces of the song and musicality of the poem can be seen in the hyphens used for drawing syllables: “Beau-tiful Soo-oop!”

Carroll also included the poems that are presumably sung in the book, in particular the lullaby *Speak Roughly*. The hypotext, *Speak Gently* by the American poet D. Bates, consists of two song stanzas and two choruses. The second stanza of the hypertext reflects the first one by rephrasing the first line of the poem, “Speak roughly to your little boy,” as “I speak severely to my boy.” The parodied part is the first line of the poem, “Speak gently to your little child,” which became “Speak roughly to your little boy,” with three words (two notional words) being changed: “gently” to “roughly,” and “child” to “boy.” The tone of the poem is neutral, even though it describes a negative idea: in the parody, tender love for a child is opposed by sneezing because of pepper. The hypertext by Carroll represents an idea inconsistent with the morals of Victorian England and hence is subversive.

The Lobster-Quadrille parodies the poem *The Spider and the Fly* by M. Howitt, published in 1829. The poem represents a piece of cautionary poetry for children. The idea of danger is traced in Carroll’s text as well, so the latter did not intend to subvert the idea but to render it in a burlesque manner. Carroll’s *Lobster-Quadrille* is made up of seventeen sentences, seven of which are interrogative and three exclamatory. The register of the lexis is neutral. The English hypotext and hypertext are of neutral register; both contain neutral sentences and questions, but Carroll added exclamations. Howitt’s text is made up of twenty-two sentences, and Carroll’s numbers eleven. The changes in the parodied fragment are represented by seven words (four notional words): “into my parlour” becomes “a little faster,” and “the spider to the fly” becomes “a whiting to a snail.” The characters are turned from the insects “spider” and “fly” into “whiting” and “snail.”

The features of the English hypo- and hypertexts were expected to correlate with the hypo- and hypertexts in the translations. To research the approaches to translation and measure their performance, the characteristics of the transla-

tions were compared. The Russian translations were assessed in terms of criteria related to type of parody, musical genre, year, lexis, syntax, and register.

The episode with *Twinkle, Twinkle, Little Star* has frequently been rendered using analogues in the Russian translations. For analogues, the translators chose the anonymous song *Chizhik-pyzhik* (once) and the romantic song *Solovey* by Alyabiev (twice). The parody is burlesque. This approach is found in the translations and renderings by Solovyova, Florya, and Blekhman. The most popular hypotext was the well-known Russian romantic song *Solovey*. It was composed by Alyabiev for lyrics by Delvig in the late 1820s. This analogue does not correspond with the genre of the lullaby *Twinkle, Twinkle, Little Star*. The best translation according to our criteria was done by Blekhman. The back-translation of his Russian analogue is “Ant, my ant, fidget ant! Whe-e-re are you hurrying? Wh-y are you sleeping so little?”¹ Blekhman’s translation met five of the six criteria. He used drawling to show that this is a tune, for example: “Mu-u-ravey moy, mu-u-ravey [...] ” A bat was replaced by an ant as protagonist. The hypertext was made up of three sentences, two interrogative and one exclamatory. However, no comparisons between bat and tea-tray or the idea of sky and flying were presented. Parody was mostly evident in the initial line and did not spread throughout the poem as it did with Carroll. The neutral register of the vocabulary was kept.

The other poem relevant for translation as a song text was *Soup of the Evening*. The main object described is soup. Translations with a musical basis were used in all the translations examined here. The melodies referred to are the song *Vecherniy zvon* and the romantic song *Gori, gori, moya zvezda*. The tunes were created before Carroll’s book and thus can serve as analogues to some extent. The translators Solovyova and Blekhman used the well-known song *Vecherniy zvon*. The criteria of genre and type of parody were preserved. Most of the translations considered in this article followed the majority of our criteria. The criteria of lexis and syntax were met less successfully. The number of sentences was one of the most challenging parameters, for the translators used fewer sentences. A variant which met all the criteria was proposed by Blekhman. The back-translation of his version is: “The evening soup, soup, soup, the evening soup, soup, soup is lovely to be licked from fat lips, lips, lips. It is not made of chicken but a fatted billfish. I have loved it since my young years and I cannot bear other dishes. The evening soup soup, soup, the evening dream, dream, dream has been cooked for our common joy.”

The works of the composers mentioned earlier were used as Russian analogues. Alyabiev’s song *Vecherniy zvon* was based on translated verses of the poet Thomas Moore. The Russian translator Ivan Kozlov produced a fine translation

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1 All translations from Russian in this article are my own.

of them. The tune and verses were used by the translator Solovyova in the early twentieth century and by Blekhman in the twenty-first century. The idea of soup is represented in all the analogues. In Solovyova's text, the verses represent recollections about childhood. The song is a relevant analogue as it is a well-known Russian song with a solemn melody. Another translation of the song was made by Florya to the tune of *Gori, gori, moya zvezda*. To show that these are lyrics, drawling syllables are graphically represented. In Florya's version, the Russian currency, the rouble, is mentioned instead of "pennyworth," which makes the text sound more Russian.

The second group of poems where rendition with musical references is necessary includes *Speak Roughly*. Considering its poetic nature, some translators turned to the genre of lullabies. The translations were done by using corrupted lyrics of the two most popular lullabies in Russia: the folk song *Bayu, bayushki, bayu* and *Spi, moya radost', usni* (by the German-speaking composer B. Flis and the poet F. Gotter), the latter albeit in a lower register ("Sleep my nasty, sleep"; back-translation of the first line of Florya's parody). Florya mentions a popular Russian literary character, Barmaley, as an element of domestication. The variant by Blekhman is closer to the Russian lullaby, but this translator did not mention pepper so the poem does not explain why the baby cries. Blekhman managed to meet six criteria in his analogue based on the Russian lullaby. His version, in back-translation, is: "Sleep, baby, on the edge, so that when Wolfie comes, he will bite your side. Uaa-Ua! Sleep, baby, go to sleep, do not whimper and sneeze. Mom will sing a song, box her mite's ears."

For *The Lobster-Quadrille*, the Russian translations twice used borrowed music: first, in the early twentieth century, in the translation of Solovyova, and later in the translation of Blekhman. Solovyova incorporated the first line of the lyrics by Glinka from the song *Troika* by the Russian composer Verstovskiy: "A swift fish is rushing." In the later case, Blekhman incorporated a piece of incidental music, *Dobriy zhuk*, from the Soviet film *Zolushka* (1947). The music was composed by Spadavecchia. This hypotext contains eight sentences (neutral, with exclamations). Analysis shows the irrelevance of the translation. The year of the analogue, 1947, adds to its irrelevant status. The tone of both analogues is neutral. In the earlier case, the sea theme is represented, while in the later one we can read a funny verse about the inhabitants of the sea without the idea of the cautionary tale – "will you walk into my parlour?" – when crayfish and goby fish are mentioned. The song symbolizes the idea of friendship and kindness. The translations were examined, and Solovyova's meets all the requirements. The criterion of register has become challenging, and the two translators did not cope with it. Though the hypotext in English is a work typical of cautionary tales, the Russian texts did not make any reference to a work in that style. Blekhman

used a film song. Besides the choice of a twentieth-century song, inconsistencies were found in syntax and register. Solovyova applied only the first lines from the Russian romantic song *Troika*. Solovyova's variant in back-translation is "A swift fish is rushing – a whiting – on stones to the wave, the snail is behind and carries a shell on its back."

Translation with lyrics was not considered obligatory in the third group of verses. However, lyrics were employed occasionally. To render Alice's verse *How Doth the Little Crocodile*, lyrics were used. Solovyova parodied a well-known romantic song by A. Rubinstein with the lyrics of *Ptichka bozhiya* from Pushkin's long poem *Gypsies*. As the use of lyrics is optional in this group, the analysis will omit some criteria. The parodies under examination in this group are *How Doth the Little Crocodile* as rendered by Solovyova; *'Tis the Voice of the Lobster*, Alice's third poem, rendered by Florya as a parody to the tune *Ah mozhet, ah mozhet ...* from the Russian animation *Plastilinovaya vorona* [Plasticine Crow] of the 1980s; and *The Letter in the Trial*, read by the White Rabbit, adapted with *Korobeiniki* in Florya's rendition. The latter two translations were based on less suitable hypotexts: the folk song did not match the poem read by Alice, and using the song from a Soviet animation was not a reasonable choice either as the period of the analogue should have some correlation with that of the original.

The poem rendered by Solovyova can be regarded as the translation closest to Carroll's text. The back-translation is: "Divine crocodile does not care either about work or labour. He does not rent apartments and hire servants. He sleeps at night in the ooze; when the red Sun rises, the crocodile, having warmed his back, clicks with his teeth and swims away." The issue with the other translations is the extent of parody, which is relevant given that Carroll parodied the first two stanzas of Watts's text rather accurately.

5 Results and discussion

To summarize the data obtained by means of benchmarking, some trends require mentioning. *Twinkle, Twinkle, Little Star* was rendered three times. The lyrics parodied in the translations to fit the tune were borrowed from *Chizhik-pyzhik* and *Solovey*. *Beautiful Soup* was rendered with lyrics three times. The parodies were based on the lyrics of the song *Vecherniy zvon* (twice) and the romantic song *Gori, gori moya zvezda* (once). The largest number of analogues based on lyrics is presented in the translation by Florya, where there are five cases: *Twinkle, Twinkle, Little Star* – *Solovey*; *Beautiful Soup* – *Gori, gori, moya zvezda*; *My Star* – *Spi, moya radost', usni*; *'Tis the Voice of the Lobster* – *Ah mozhet, ah mozhet ...*; and *The Letter*

in the *Trial* – *Korobeiniki*. One of the analogues in Florya's translation relates to the animation *Plastilinovaya vorona*. The rest of the lyrics were drawn from the music of the eighteenth or nineteenth centuries. The translator additionally used a song text (*Korobeiniki*) for the letter read by the White Rabbit. Solovyova used lyrics in four cases: *Twinkle* – *Chizhik-pyzhik*; *Beautiful Soup* – *Vecherniy zvon*; *The Lobster-Quadrille* – *Troika*; and *How Doth the Little Crocodile* – *Ptichka bozhiya*. All the lyrics were based on nineteenth-century music. Hence, Solovyova's choices may be considered the most successful. Blekhman, who produced his translation in the early 2000s, coped with most poetic passages successfully, as shown by the following three instances: *The Lobster-Quadrille* – *Dobriy zhuk*; *Beautiful Soup* – *Vecherniy zvon*; and *Lullaby* – *Bayu, bayushki, bayu*.

As the translations varied in quantity and quality, one task of this article was to reveal the approaches applied to rendering parodies using analogues based on music. The analysis of the translations has helped to show tendencies in the translations and may assist in presenting guidelines for dealing with musical analogues. The least successful cases should be considered *The Lobster-Quadrille* substituted with the song *Dobriy zhuk* (Blekhman's translation) and *'Tis the Voice of the Lobster* substituted with the analogue of *Ah mozhet, ah mozhet ...* (Florya's translation). These translations fit three criteria. All the parameters were met in the translation of *Speak Roughly* by Florya. This translation may be considered the one that most resembles Carroll's text in terms of our six criteria. Three translations by Blekhman and two translations by Solovyova fit five criteria and thus show a high degree of resemblance to the source text.

This study may allow us to identify which criteria the translators considered relevant and which they saw as insignificant. The approach taken here shows that the majority of the translators prioritized the type of parody and register (twelve out of thirteen cases). Attitudes to date and genre contrasted with one another: the criterion of date was followed in twelve cases while genre was considered only in seven of thirteen cases, which shows that consistency between the hypo- and hypertexts was relevant to the translators. The criterion of lexis was more challenging – it was met in five out of thirteen cases. The syntactic pattern of parodies was rendered in slightly more cases – eight out of thirteen. The fidelity to the criterion of type of parody shows that, though the letter of the original was followed loosely, the spirit of the original text was preserved even with the incorporation of the musical references into the translations. As a recommendation for translators, it should be mentioned that, as far as translations incorporating analogues based on music are concerned, consistency in terms of genre and period may be appropriate. Parodied verses should avoid the realia of the target culture.

Applying musical analogues is ambivalent. It has the advantages represented by rendering the musical aspect of the original. In turn, it makes the text more

familiar and provides pragmatic adaptation. However, this deprives the translations covered in this article of proximity to foreign countries and cultures, which would be useful as an educational component, especially for children. The following negative features of the approach should be noted: using analogues does not let readers notice allusions, and it makes the text closer to the target text culture. In terms of the criteria proposed here, ignoring the genre and time of the analogue makes the text less relevant. In particular, the Hatter's song based on *Twinkle, Twinkle, Little Star* should have been a lullaby, but the translators chose other genres, especially doggerels and romantic and other songs. The overuse of musical analogues may also be considered a disadvantage.

6 Conclusion

This article has shown that a number of Russian translations reflected the idea of the musical nature of *AW*, as is apparent in the thirteen examples from three translations considered here. The translations covered the period from the early twentieth century to the more recent past. Their approach to analogues based on music was relatively popular, and the translators used it in an appropriate manner. The research has suggested a criteria-based – and thus relatively clear and transparent – analysis of translations, which is not common in translation theory given the problem of assessing poetic translations or those incorporating poetic license. To assess the quality of translations, an approach was developed on the basis of the analogues with a focus on the major levels of language, especially vocabulary, syntax, and register. The method helped to select those translations which may be considered successful: even with a share of poetic license, they render the idea, tone, and pragmatics of the original. The lyrics from Russian melodies make the text domesticated, bring the translations closer to the Russian analogues rather than Carroll's verses. The analysis has shown that the use of analogues based on the lyrics from the culture of the target language is a feature of domestication. Although analogues may be a controversial tool, they are incorporated into the text of a foreign culture. Such analogues become an associated part of the original work, enabling the work to develop through new translations and acquire new meanings, hence making the original not something petrified but a work that develops in time and across cultures, and is thereby enriched.

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