

## ПЕРЕКЛАДОЗНАВСТВО

УДК 811.111'225 .4

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### CULTURAL TURN IN UKRAINIAN TRANSLATION

*The article aims to provide an overview of core knowledge and theoretical assumptions on recognizing translation as a tool for social and cultural change, particularly evident in postcolonial contexts marked by linguistic discrimination and inequity as well as accentuate on the “cultural turn” in Ukrainian context. The phenomenon comes to be viewed as a noteworthy shift from traditional linguistic conversions towards the ones to incorporate cultural and ideological transfer that is extremely important for the current Ukrainian political agenda.*

In the context of translation studies, the “cultural turn” has had a significant impact on how scholars and practitioners approach the process of translating texts from one language and culture to another. Current advances in translation studies since the late 1990s have exposed a notable shift towards examining the ideological and sociopolitical dimensions of translation. This paradigm overwhelms the idea that every translation is not only a linguistic, but also a social and cultural notion, and accordingly, the latter extends beyond linguistic conversions that invariably encompasses the transfer of meaning from one culture to another. Rather than viewing translation as a simple transfer of meaning between languages, we recognize the translator as an active agent, intervening in political and ideological processes. These acknowledge translator’s role as the one encompassing domination, oppression, submission, or resistance within social groups, i.e., more than a mere reproduction or ‘replay’ of the author’s individual style. Consequently, translation is viewed as a tool for social and cultural change, particularly evident in postcolonial contexts marked by linguistic inequality. The 1990s witnessed the emergence of postcolonial translation theories, applicable not only to explicit postcolonial conditions but also to the context of the language discrimination. The above-mentioned issues come to be extremely imperative on the current Ukrainian ideological agenda when accentuating on the problems of how translations help to create national identity resilient to the russian cultural domination.

**Keywords:** *literary translation, cultural turn, linguistic inequity, Ukrainian translators, nation-centered mission of translation.*

**DOI 10.34079/2226-3055-2023-16-29-74-81**

#### **Introduction.**

The art of translation in the culture of every nation proves to be rather intricate and multifaceted phenomenon that has an undeniable impact on their further recognition and development. With the expansion of the cognitive, aesthetic, ethical and worldview horizons it opens up new prospects for acquiring the experiences of other cultures. In the context of translation studies, the “cultural turn” has had a significant impact on how scholars and practitioners approach the process of translating texts from one language and culture to another. Current advances in translation studies since the late 1990s have exposed a notable shift towards examining the ideological and sociopolitical dimensions of translation. This paradigm overwhelms the idea that every translation is not only a linguistic, but also a social and cultural notion, and accordingly, the latter extends beyond linguistic conversions that invariably encompasses the transfer of meaning from one culture to another. Rather than viewing translation as a simple transfer of meaning between languages, we recognize the translator as an active agent,

intervening in political and ideological processes. These acknowledge translator's role as the one encompassing domination, oppression, submission, or resistance within social groups, i.e., more than a mere reproduction or 'replay' of the author's individual style. Consequently, translation is viewed as a tool for social and cultural change, particularly evident in postcolonial contexts marked by linguistic inequality. The 1990s witnessed the emergence of postcolonial translation theories, applicable not only to explicit postcolonial conditions but also to the context of the language discrimination. The above-mentioned issues come to be extremely imperative on the current Ukrainian ideological agenda when accentuating on the problems of how translations help to create national identity resilient to the Russian cultural domination.

The article **aims** to provide an in-depth understanding of translation within the frameworks of national identity and cultural awareness, explore the foundational elements of its theoretical framework as well as define the criteria of how to incorporate 'other realities' in translation.

**Results and findings.** The research and findings regarding cultural dimensions in the field of translation give emphasis to translator's active engagement to define cultural and linguistic nuances of both source and target languages (Venuti, 2002; Bassnett, 2006; Denton, 2016), the intersection of translation with politics, ideology, and conflict as well as power of dynamics (Bassnett, 2006; Зорівчак, 2007; Москаленко, 2006), exploring tactics and strategies in conveying cultural and linguistic aspects of the source language (Snell-Hornby, 2006; Стріха, 2006; Павленко, 2018) as well as portraying non-Western cultures in Western literature, exposing challenges and complexities of translation and its role in bridging linguistic and cultural gaps (Некряч, Чала, 2008). The importance to uphold cultural identity in literary translation, exposed in those theoretical and philosophical reflections, provides a range of issues from a contemporary perspective embracing foremost ideas and debates on the problem above.

**Background.** In Ukrainian literary space translation comes to be recognized as the tool of constructing Ukrainian culture and a stable indicator of its historical, and aesthetic experience, a universal means of communication between cultures and civilizations. In this regard, J. Denton, asserts that "<...> translations significantly affect the interpenetration of literary systems, not only projecting the image of an individual author or work into other literature <...>, but also adding new tools of artistic skills, opening the way to changes in its functional component" (Denton, 2016, p.14). Accordingly, every work of art proves to be a reflection of both general and particular (i.e., author's individual views and a peculiarly national vision of the world), followed by the scholar's assumption that "translation is not just a reincarnation, a 'replay' of the individual-national picture of the author in the garments of another language but also its inevitable reinterpretation in accordance to the nature of the target language" (Denton, 2016, p.17).

In terms of 'spiritual continuum' to which the researchers attribute translation, the latter creates peculiar models of reality that define the aesthetics of the new artistic space. At the same time, artistic reality is structured in accordance with the laws of artistic creation, acquiring universal features of spatiality and openness thus, acting as the 'super norm' that gives the individual (the translator) the opportunity to reproduce his "own space with a specifically organized structure of feelings and thoughts, roles and plots" (Сморж, 2005, с. 58). Advocating the philosophical assumption of 'individual's style of thinking' we find it reasonable to incorporate the latter into "*individual translation style of thinking*", characterized by creativity, erudition, a sense of belonging to the national culture as "a guarantee of self-realization development" (Сморж, 2005, с. 63). Hence, the translator "constructs" his own reality, <...> "producing his own artistic and stylistic codes and his own style of communication" (Venuti, 2002. p. 231). In the context of the epistemology of culture, artistic reality comes to be defined not as "the world of true reality" – it takes the translator beyond its limits. In other words, it is created with the help of means and techniques and represent a <...> "new, third world" acting as a <...> "subjectivized subjective", <...> "visible and invisible", <...> "determined and undefined", <...> "conscious and unconscious", which in its entirety constitutes integrity, indivisibility as a necessary condition for the artistic work to perform and function (Venuti, 2002. p. 231). Identifying translation as "a constant immanent process of culture and communication

with the ability to generalize as well as enrich the speech with new meanings, obtained as a result of the artist's creative search" (Тарнашинська, 2013, с. 169), the researchers also accentuate on the combination of individual national features of the original work in translation, and in a more general sense *synthesis of cultures*. This brings the translation back to M. Bakhtin's dialogism theory, according to which the dialogue moves to a higher level, converting into a broad philosophical concept. In this regard, artistic translation is recognized within the dialogue of cultures in view of the absorption of artistic works, styles and trends at the level of national literatures, "the dialogue between nations and cultures" understood <...> "as an endless recitation and forming new meanings of each cultural phenomena involved in the communication" (Бацевич, 2008, с. 134). Accordingly, the "dual nature" of translation comes to be not only a necessary prerequisite to form a new cultural continuum but also a peculiar means to protect national languages and cultures as well as become an impetus for their further development.

Highlighting the cultural dimension of translation, S. Bassnett underlines that it does not simply replace one code with another, but rather develops strategies that enable the texts of one culture to penetrate the textual and contextual network of the other so that plentifully operate in it" (Bassnett, 2006, p. 4). Thus, we cannot offer universal and prescriptive criteria for evaluating translations, since they appear to be based on the historical era of the translator, the tasks and objectives he sets as well as a potential reading circle. Accordingly, the translator analyzes the cultural context (norms, traditions, social and ideological factors), then the situational context (a set of socio-cultural determinants of communication, including social background, type of relationship, personal states, intentions, temporal state, etc.) and, finally, the target text as it is. With this in mind, the translator must not only possess a certain range of knowledge about another culture as "a special form of organization of ideas about the world in the collective consciousness of society" (Smorz, 2005, p.78), but also take into account all possible discrepancies that exist in the worldview models of a certain ethnic group. These put forward the basic principles of the dialogic-communicative strategy of translation, turning the latter into a 'historical event' ('cultural history') that shaped national values, traditions and beliefs as well as accentuates on the issues closely related to "cultural memory" in translation (Павленко, 2018, p. 76). In this light, R. Zorivchak, asserts that "without the history of Ukrainian literary translation, nothing could be said about the history of Ukrainian culture and, hence, about the Ukrainian nation" (Зорівчак, 2007, с. 3). To support the idea M. Strikha presents an argument in which he draws attention on the informational and educational mission of translations, which is inextricably linked with the nation-centered mission. This provides a basis to assert that "literary situations actualize the creative function of translation, which proves to be especially visible in conditions of clear cultural challenges" (Стриха, 2020, с. 43). To overcome these (fully or partially) the translator has to be able to distinguish linguistic and cultural boundaries by means of the including the 'otherness' of a foreign culture into the communicative field of his culture with the "move away from a purely linguistic approach towards a more culture directed analysis (Snell-Hornby, 2006, p. 45).

"Cultural turn" in Ukrainian translation comes to be recognized through radical changes in the social atmosphere of Ukraine in the 1960s –1980s caused by a rising necessity to create a new "cultural construction" based on <...> "the living Ukrainian language as an instrument of the national idea and, in a broader sense, Ukrainian culture as a whole, as a unique way to perceive the world – among other European and world languages and other national cultures" (Москаленко, 2006, с. 178). The period mentioned led to a powerful explosion of translations that made it possible to integrate world's literary masterpieces into Ukrainian cultural context via translations conducted with the highest standard by H. Kochur, M. Lukash, R. Dotsenko, Yu. Lisnyak, V. Mitrofanov, M. Dmytrenko, V. Mysyk, M. Pinchevskyi, E. Popovych, O. Senyuk, O. Terekh and others. Taking the aesthetic dimension of artistic translation as the essential matrix, they credibly proved that only a combination of artistic skill, erudition, inspiration, creative intuition and a specific translational gift of incarnations, multiplied by stylistic versatility, linguistic tact and a sense of proportion, ensures the emergence of texts capable of withstanding competition with powerful neighboring cultures (this mostly regards a

long lasting russian social and cultural domination). Since this competition took place under the conditions of resolute and purposeful ‘linguicide’, Ukrainian translations had to affirm the idea of direct cultural ties between Ukrainian and other culture, and hence the right of cultural and political equality of Ukrainians with other European people, disproving <...> “the outside view of the Ukrainian language as a tool for domestic use” (Доценко, 2013, с. 15). Translations performed at a high artistic level persuasively proved that Ukrainian translators, even when addressing texts of the highest complexity, can do without the “russian colonial mirror” (Доценко, 2013, с. 24).

The search for a new identity in the Ukrainian literature of the end of the 20th century is realized through the understanding of many aspects, among which we observe the presence of a reckoning with the imposed value system, an active challenge of the past through the tradition of “symbolic farewell to the imperial past” (Тарнашинська, 2013, с. 296). It is about the emergence of a literary and artistic direction, distanced from the classical and neoclassical (modernist) tradition, which claims to express the general theoretical “superstructure” of modern art and literature. Thus, the spirit of destruction, which is transferred by writers to the sphere of artistic creativity, comes to be harmonized with the spirit of creating a new reality, starting from tradition and its consistent evolution within the national worldview and aesthetic experience. The way of how translation formed cultural identity, creating <...> an “intense spiritual space of high intellectual comfort” (Тарнашинська, 2013, с. 24) comes to be persuasive through a huge amount of prose fiction translations, which gained a special significance in conditions where the status of the Russian language as the unique instrument of “unification of people” in the territory of the former USSR was restricted by the rhetorical question once uttered by I. Dzyuba “Internationalism or Russification?” At the same time, L. Tarnashinska emphasizes, that “just as Latin protected the intellectuals of the European Renaissance from the world of fuss and bustles, so the transmigration of the artistic word through the efforts of Ukrainian translators delimited their virtual world from the bourgeois life of their contemporaries, which they so ardently opposed” (Тарнашинська, 2013, с. 296).

When referring to the English prose fiction, Ukrainian translators subconsciously outlined the reasons regarding the selection of the books and the original authors, as well as the course of translation, tracing the processes of perception of the ‘Other’ through reshaping of artistic thinking and incorporation of existing reality into the system of artistic images. These provided them with a sense of involvement in world trends, and on the other hand, molded their own translation style of thinking, based on *ethical ontologism*, which went beyond their original vision of the world through overcoming ideological stereotypes and prohibitions. Such “re-emphasis” of reality required not only artistic flair and refined translation skills, but also a certain mobility, readiness to react to the target readers’ “horizon of expectation” in the best traditions of ethical intellectualism” (Тарнашинська, 2013, с. 295).

A general overview of translations of English-language prose into Ukrainian makes it possible to reveal certain trends, different from the translation process of any other national literature (in particular, russian), which are primarily caused by historical and political factors that determined the nature of these translations as well as proved their productivity. Translations of English-language prose, published in Ukraine and beyond, adequately reproduce its internal richness and diversity, embodied in thematic-problematic and genre-stylistic dimensions. Among them are examples of classic and modern fiction, children’s, religious and theological, anthologies of stories, original series, etc., published in books and periodicals.

The appeal of translators to change artistic orientations, in particular in the field of modeling the communicative situation, had a profound effect on forming national self-awareness with a clear definition of linguistic priorities – the shift from the traditional dogma of “united Soviet people” with a single Russian language by nation-centric guidelines, among which the Ukrainian language occupied a foremost position as key factor of the nation’s linguistic reality. The abovementioned frame of reference focusing on the nation-constructing mission of translations comes to be considered as the “*age of world-forming translation*”, which determined qualitatively

new axiological and artistic guidelines for the national art of translation. It is about the role of translations in the assimilation reference of non-national historical, cultural and aesthetic experience, when English-language literature, falling into the circle of interests of Ukrainian culture, not only becomes an object of inter-literary reception, but also acts as an important factor in contact-genetic ties, which in its organic unities reveal universal commonalities and national differences as well as general patterns of developing aesthetic phenomena and their artistic peculiarities.

Furthermore, the concept of the “cultural turn” in Ukrainian translation of the late 1960s, provides a clear swing from the abstract and fixed dogmas of *realistic method* with the key thesis of recognizing a full-fledged, equivalent translation in accordance with its requirements (socialist realism as a central method of socialist art mirrored in naturalistic, subjective-intuitive, ideological-aesthetic translation determined by the epoch-defining ideological challenges) that ruled out all aspects of “extralinguistic reality”, to the more practical approach to view the translation in accordance to the social situation. One of the methods employed during this transition was the domestication of translated texts into the target culture system, aiming to enhance their appeal to a broader audience. Opponents have criticized this process, viewing it as an appropriation and resisting what they acknowledge as the imposition of “a global domination of English” (Snell-Hornby, 2006, p.45. Projecting this on the Ukrainian context if setting ideology aside (breaking the barrier of “the total russian cultural domination” and accentuating on the Ukrainian cultural identity by attributing to it a new symbolic meaning, mostly related to resistance and inspiration for the future), it proves to be challenging for a translator to effectively bridge two languages and cultures, that within the cultural turn implies a recognition of the crucial role that culture plays in shaping language use, meaning, and communication.

However, no matter how challenging the above-mentioned issues were, their practical implementation by Ukrainian translators (H. Kochur, R. Dotsenko, Yu. Lisnyak, M. Dmytrenko, V. Mitrofanov, M. Pinchevskyi, E. Popovych, O. Terekh etc.) comes to be acknowledged not only within the linguistic aspects of a text (Council of Europe, 2020) but also its cultural nuances, values, and context embedded in the source language. It is achieved through considerable understanding of the key aspects of the notion in question which include: 1) *cultural competence*; 2) *cultural adaptation*; 3) *contextualization*; 4) *idiomatic and colloquial expressions*; 5) *cultural sensitivity*.

Translators’ cultural competence, i.e., understanding not only the linguistic structures of both the source and target languages but also the cultural norms, customs, and social contexts that influence communication, proved to be observed in their translation versions (“Go Down, Moses”, “The Intruder in the Dust”, “The Reivers”, “A Rose for Emily”, “The Picture of Dorian Gray”, “Gone With the Wind”– R. Dotsenko; “Great Expectations”, “Golden Land”, “Never Bet the Devil Your Head”, “Hard Times”– Yu. Lisnyak; “The Adventure of the Speckled Band”, “The Adventure of the Noble Bachelor”, “The Final Problem” –M. Dmytrenko; “A Farewell to Arms”, “The Snows of Kilimanjaro”, “The Headless Horseman”, “Uncle Tom’s Cabin”), “Dandelion Wine”, “All the King’s Men” – V. Mytrofanov).

Cultural adaptation in Ukrainian translations is traced in the way of how this process goes beyond linguistic equivalence when translators may need to modify elements of the source text to ensure that the meaning and cultural references are accurately conveyed to the target audience. Recognizing the importance of the context, translators consider the broader cultural, historical, and social context in which the source text was produced. This contextual understanding helps in producing translations that resonate with the readers’ expectations.

The “cultural turn” also involves a sensitivity to idiomatic and colloquial expressions that may not have direct equivalents in the target language. Translators may need to find culturally relevant equivalents or provide explanations to ensure comprehension. Furthermore, translators proved to be aware of potential cultural pitfalls, avoiding translations that could be offensive or misinterpreted in the target culture. They fully recognize the fact that sensitivity to cultural nuances is crucial to maintaining the integrity of the message. Working with puzzling and

confusing texts that at first glance seemed to be untranslatable they created harmonic translations through the skillful representation of the main characters' speech and dialogues in fiction while tagging them with peculiar speech mannerisms (rhythm, quotes, slang words and phrases, collocations, proverbs and sayings, punctuation, etc.) as well as artistic application of historical, mythological and ethnical realia, the most adequate translation of meaningful names (personal and geographic names, public places, landmarks, etc.). The aforementioned translation versions provide specific examples and insights on how translators incorporate cultural nuances in their translation workflow to "produce a new artwork" in the form of harmonic and culturally appropriate translation to meet target readers' expectations.

**Conclusion.** The "cultural turn" in Ukrainian translation reflects a broader trend in translation studies to move beyond a purely linguistic focus and consider the intricate relationship between language and culture. This approach acknowledges that successful translation involves more than just converting words from one language to another; it requires a deep understanding of the cultural context that shapes language use and interpretation as well as represents cultural identity.

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Стаття надійшла до редакції 29 листопада 2023 р.

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## **КУЛЬТУРНИЙ ПОВОРОТ В УКРАЇНСЬКОМУ ПЕРЕКЛАДОЗНАВСТВІ**

У статті розглянуто явище художнього перекладу з використанням методологій, спроектованих на вивчення його природи в контексті специфічних чинників, пов'язаних з осмисленням цього явища в контексті культурного і ідеологічного впливу на соціально-політичну ситуацію в суспільстві, що особливо простежується у постколоніальних контекстах, позначених мовною дискримінацією та нерівністю. Зазначене набуває актуальності і сьогодні, коли українське слово виступає засобом культурного протистояння, важелем боротьби за зміцнення національної самосвідомості.

«Культурний поворот» в українському перекладознавстві відбувався в умовах примусового звуження простору функціонування української мови, сформованої в умовах тоталітарної монодоктрини соцреалізму моделі культури, яка обмежувала перекладацьку творчість, підпорядковуючи її єдиному прийнятому підходу, в основі якого концепції ідейно-естетичного й натуралістичного перекладу з максимальною

відповідністю художньому контексту оригіналу, з одного боку, й соціальній ситуації, з другого, що, таким чином, виключає будь-які аспекти «екстралінгвістичної реальності». Мистецтво перекладу постає в таких умовах «викривленим дзеркалом», своєрідним пропагандистським інструментом з метою його послідовного у силове поле, структуроване владою. З-поміж таких методів – пристосування перекладених текстів до системи цільової культури з метою посилення їхньої привабливості для ширшої аудиторії.

Сучасний прогрес у перекладознавстві з кінця 1990-х років виявив помітний зсув у напрямку вивчення ідеологічних та соціально-політичних вимірів перекладу, коли останній виходить за межі суто мовних репрезентацій й осмислюється з позицій перенесення художніх смислів з однієї культури в іншу. Отже, першочерговим постає завдання відстежити міжлітературну комунікацію (оригінальний твір – переклад), проаналізувавши мотиви входження інших літератур (вихідний текст) у художній світ сприймаючої літератури (цільовий текст), акцентуючи при цьому на ролі перекладу як «формуючої сили» у здійсненні міжкультурного діалогу.

Дослідження українського художнього перекладу другої половини ХХ століття під таким кутом зору фокусує увагу на мотиваційному виборі перекладача, щоб через живу українську мову створити художні тексти, здатні витримати конкуренцію з існуючими у той час виключно російськомовними перекладами. Присутність в українському культурному контексті якісно досконалих перекладів здійснених Г. Кочуром, М. Лукашем, Р. Доценком, Ю. Лісняком, В. Митрофановим, М. Дмитренком, М. Пінчевським, О. Терехом та ін. спростувала нав'язуванні «згори» погляди на українську мову як «наріччя для хатнього вжитку». Звернення перекладачів до зміни характерних для цього періоду художніх орієнтирів (публікація перекладів виключно російською мовою) суттєво вплинуло на формування національної самосвідомості з чітким визначенням аксіологічних і мовних пріоритетів у перекладі: українська мова як центр буття нації й пов'язана з цим інформаційно-просвітницька й націєтворча місія українських перекладів зазначеної доби.

Спротування ідеї «тотального російського культурного домінування» з акцентуванням на українській культурній ідентичності шляхом приписування їй нового символічного значення, здебільшого пов'язаного з культурним опором і протистоянням, визнається не лише в межах лінгвістичних аспектів тексту, але й його культурних нюансів, цінностей і контексту, вбудованих у вихідну мову. Це досягається шляхом глибокого розуміння перекладачами ключових аспектів розглянутого поняття, які включають: 1) культурну компетентність; 2) культурну адаптацію; 3) контекстуалізацію; 4) ідіоматичні та розмовні вислови; 5) культурну чутливість. Отже, вивчення загальних закономірностей розвитку естетичних явищ іншої культури через переклад має бути реалізовано через врахування перекладачем універсальних спільностей та відмінностей двох мов і культур.

**Ключові слова:** художній переклад, культурний поворот, лінгвістична нерівність, українські перекладачі, націєтворча місія перекладу.