

“STRONG” LITERATURE TEXT: CULTURAL PRESERVATION AND CULTURAL DYNAMICS

The article addresses the nature and peculiarities of relations between a “strong” literary text and its secondary versions, which appeared as a result of transcoding the verbal original text by means of various semiotic systems. The relations under consideration are presented in the intercultural and intermedia spaces and are analyzed from the standpoint of the categories of original inexhaustibility and translational multiplicity. The following hypothesis is proposed: the original and all its secondary texts form the center of translation attraction — multilingual, multimodal and multi-authored hypertext, which contributes to an increase in the translatability of the original text, ensures its steady popularity and prolongates its “life”. The famous novel by L. N. Tolstoy “Anna Karenina” and its foreign-language and intersemiotic versions served as analysis material. Special attention is paid to the novel screen adaptations. Following J. Bluestone’s thesis on the necessity to abandon the axiological aspect of the relationship between the text of literature and its film adaptation, the work defends the idea that each secondary text provides dynamics, preservation, as well as intercultural and intermedia interaction of literature and cinema phenomena as significant cultural objects.

Keywords: strong text of literature, literary translation, screen adaptation, intersemiotic translation, translation multiplicity, center of translation attraction, hypertext.

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«СИЛЬНЫЙ» ТЕКСТ ЛИТЕРАТУРЫ: КУЛЬТУРНОЕ СОХРАНЕНИЕ И КУЛЬТУРНАЯ ДИНАМИКА

Статья обращена к природе и особенностям отношений «сильного» художественного текста и его вторичных версий, появившихся как результат перекодирования вербального оригинала средствами различных семиотических систем. Рассматриваемые отношения представлены в межкультурном и межмедийном пространствах и анализируются с позиций категорий неисчерпаемости оригинала и переводной множественности. Предлагается следующая гипотеза: оригинал и все его вторичные тексты формируют центр переводной аттракции — полилингвальный, мультимодальный и полиавторский гипертекст, способствующий увеличению переводимости оригинала, обеспечивающий его устойчивую популярность и продление сроков «жизни». Материалом анализа стал известный роман Л. Н. Толстого «Анна Каренина» и его иноязычные и иносемиотические версии. Отдельное внимание уделено

киноадаптациям романа. Вслед за тезисом Дж. Блюстоуна о необходимости отказа от аксиологического аспекта отношений текста литературы и его киноадаптации в работе отстаивается идея о том, что каждый вторичный текст обеспечивает динамику, сохранение, а также межкультурное и межмедийное взаимодействие явлений литературы и кино как значимых объектов культуры.

Ключевые слова: сильный текст литературы, художественный перевод, киноадаптация, межсемиотический перевод, переводная множественность, центр переводной аттракции, гипертекст.

Introduction

One of the well-known and undoubtedly “strong” texts of Russian literature, actively functioning in the space of “our own” culture and far beyond it (in “foreign” cultures), is the novel “Anna Karenina” by Leo Tolstoy. Among the main evidences of the “strength” of the literary text are the following: its traditional inclusion in the educational programs of different levels; its confident retention of the top positions in national and world ratings of outstanding works recommended for reading; unabated interest and positive feedback from readers, philologists, critics and elocutionists about this text’s cultural significance and artistic value. When asked about the three best novels of mankind, Nobel Prize winner in literature W. Faulkner replied, “Anna Karenina. Anna Karenina. Anna Karenina”. Created in the XIX century, the novel, still retains the status of the unrivaled works of Russian classics in the XXI century. One may assume that it never gets old and will not lose relevance and timeliness for many generations of readers. Another testimony to the “power” of Tolstoy’s novel is its traditionally high translatability into the languages of the peoples of Russia, neighboring CIS countries and far abroad states, as well as into the “languages” of various semiotic systems. According to many sources, the novel has so far been translated into over forty languages, and its author is on the 23rd position in the list of the world’s fifty most translated authors (yielding to Vladimir Lenin on the 7th position and F. M. Dostoevsky on the 16th), compiled by the International Translation Database [Index Translationum].

Results and discussion

Tolstoy’s novel in interlanguage translation versions

The history of translations of the Tolstoy’s text, which dates back to 1877, started almost immediately after its creation, in the 1880s. Until 1917 alone (that is, in less than forty years since the original was pub-

lished), translations into the following languages were created: Czech (1881), French (1885), German (1885), Swedish (1885), Spanish (1886), Italian (1886), English (1886), Danish (1886–1887), Dutch (1887), Hungarian (1887), Bulgarian (1899), Polish (1898–1900), Slovenian (1907), Finnish (1910–1911), Norwegian (1911), Serbo-Croatian (1914–1915) and Japanese (1913–1914) [Grigoryev, 1970].

To understand the nature and history of the relationship between the original and its secondary versions, it is indisputably important that the first translations were often not the only ones in the target languages and that the novel was subsequently translated several times within the boundaries of the particular translating language and the hosting culture. Thus, the history of English versions of “Anna Karenina” begins with the 1886 translation by the American specialist N. Dole, and the last known translation is the 2015 version again by the American translator M. Schwartz. Alongside the abovementioned translations, separated by 130 years, Anglophone readers have the opportunity to get acquainted with the outstanding work of Russian literature through the translations of R. Townsend (1892), C. Garnett (1901), L. Wiener (1904), L. and A. Maude (1918), R. Edmonds (1954), J. Carmichael (1960), D. Magashack (1961), M. Wettlin (1978), R. Pevear and L. Volokhonsky (2000), K. Zinoviev and J. Hughes (2008), R. Bartlett (2014). In the UK and the USA, in bookstores, those wishing to enjoy the novel can choose from a number of available translations. Each of the English-language versions has its own special features and unique creation history. The differences between the English-language versions, as well as the versions in other languages of the world, relate primarily to their qualitative and quantitative characteristics, which principally depend on the skill and experience of the translators and chosen approaches to creating the secondary versions. Each of the existing versions of the novel has contributed to the success of the “dialogue” between languages and cultures arising in inter-lingual translation. Despite the regularly noted omissions and simplifications of the Tolstoy’s original in translation and the incessant debates about the quality of the secondary text and the resulting ambiguous evaluations, the best-known version remains the one proposed by C. Garnett in 1901. The version (revised by L. J. Kent and N. Berberova in 1965) has been steadily reprinted in mass circulation in the 21st century and has also acquired new formats, becoming an e-book and audiobook. The text, translated by a British translator who provided the English-speaking world with access to the Russian classics, has retained its importance in introducing the novel to anglophone readers for over a century. For example, J. Galsworthy, the Nobel Prize-winning author of “The Forsyte Saga” (which has plot

similarities with Tolstoy's novel), read "Anna Karenina" in the Garnett's version. It is no coincidence that in 1928 it was J. Galsworthy who wrote the preface to one of the editions of the English translation of the novel. "Anna Karenina" was repeatedly referred to by other prominent writers. Thus, according to W. Faulkner, whose high estimate of "Anna Karenina" has already been cited above, the novel is an outstanding example of the Russian character and an amazing picture of Russian society [Trufanova, 2018]. Nevertheless, the high authority of Garnett's translation has not prevented appearing of other English translations of the novel. One cannot overlook the fact that the critical importance of Garnett's version also lies in the fact that it has often served as the basis (intermediary) for translating the novel into other world languages. For instance, the first translation of "Anna Karenina" into Chinese was made from Garnett's translation and was published in 1956 (the translator was Zhou Yang). It is noteworthy that there are currently fifteen versions of Chinese translations created between 1956 and 2006 [Wang, 2019].

The translation multiplicity of the novel is also evidenced by the history of its translations in Iran. First and foremost, researchers point to the existence of 12 full-text Persian translations created between 1954 (translator M. A. Shirazi) and 2020 (translator S. Mabasher). The scholars write: "Since the 1950s, 'Anna Karenina' has been published in complete translations, so that the notion of 'translation multiplicity' is appropriate in relation to this work: the number of Persian translations is not less than the number of translations into the main European languages taken separately (in Europe there has long been a tradition of multiple translations of world literature, since the language of the perceiver tends to become obsolete and the ideal projection for each new generation of readers should have its own special translation)" [Bekmetov & Sedigheh, 2021, p.96].

For almost one hundred and fifty years, the original novel and its many foreign-language versions (and not just new translations) have continued to be actively reprinted. In 2021 alone, "Anna Karenina" was printed in significant runs by several Russian publishers ("Azbuka", "Andronum Publishing Union", "Eksmo", "SZKEO"). In 2021 a Latvian translation of the novel was published ("Zvaigzne ABC Publishers", translator J. Vanags), 2018 saw a Spanish translation ("Alianza Editorial", translator J. Lopez-Marilla), in 2017 came out an English translation ("Vintage Classics", translation by L. and A. Maude dated 1918). In 2017, the Russian Classics series publishes another edition of the 1901 translation by C. Garnett, already noted above. In 2016, the Italian translation of "Anna Karenina" by E. Carafa Capecelatro, first published in 1941, was reprinted.

The novel has been translated into German several times. In 2009, the renowned translator R. Tietze offered readers her version of the translation, which has now become an iconic German-language version. The author writes: “For a translator of Russian prose, there could hardly be a more attractive or more flattering offer than to re-translate ‘Anna Karenina.’ But, I confess, I hesitated for a long time. After all, Tolstoy’s novel is such a huge thing, such an incredible burden, I mean, not so much volume as greatness, that one involuntarily begins to doubt whether the shoulders can bear this burden. And you have to cope not only with the original, but also with a long series of previous translations...” [Tietze, 2011].

Translations into the languages of the peoples of the USSR (later — the Russian Federation) constitute a significant proportion of the array of foreign-language versions of “Anna Karenina”. The state language policy had a weighty impact on the reception of the novel in a multinational and multicultural country, as well as on the history of its translations. Speakers of the languages of different ethnic groups were introduced to the novel both in their native language and in the language of the original text. Despite the traditionally high translatability and retranslatability of the novel, there is only one translation in some languages of the peoples of Russia, which wholly fulfils the cognitive and aesthetic requirements of a secondary foreign-language text. So, by 2017, only one translation into Tatar was known (by the translator M. Maksud). The Tatar translation was published in 1960 and it marked the fiftieth anniversary of Leo Tolstoy’s death. Researchers of the translation admit its chief role in expanding Tolstoy’s readership in the Tatar world [Kadyrov, 2005] and its definite merits, along with its shortcomings, which are becoming increasingly obvious in terms of modern Tatar literary language [Zakirov, 2017].

The creation of translations into the languages of the different peoples of Russia is closely linked to the issues of including “Anna Karenina” in educational programs. There are conflicting views on the necessity of including “Anna Karenina” in school curricula — from requiring compulsory study of the novel at school to defending the impossibility for schoolchildren to comprehend Tolstoy’s psychologically complex and mysterious work about the problems of family life and love. In this case we claim that there is a widespread belief that readers turn to the novel repeatedly at different periods of life and each time it is re-read anew. p. V. Basinsky, a researcher of Tolstoy’s works, writes convincingly about the possibility and peculiarities of a new re-reading of the novel: “We perceive the same books differently with age. But this is not the case. There was a time when I re-read ‘Anna Karenina’ every year, spending the summer at the country house. And every year the feeling that I was reading a different novel never

left me. I hardly grew up much in one year. Apparently, it wasn't me — but the novel itself" [Basinsky, 2022, p. 3]. On the eve of the presentation of his book "The True Story of Anna Karenina", which has become a kind of "guide" for readers, Basinsky gave an interview in which he stated that the novel is equal to life and agrees with the possibility of its various readings: "I am not against modern interpretations of the novel — Freudian, existentialist, postmodernist and whatever. But I love it precisely for the fact that everything there is really simple, everything happens as it is in life, not in the head of philosophers and philologists" [Efremova, 2022].

*"Anna Karenina" in intersemiotic translation perspective:
multiplicity and variety*

New readings of the novel are also secondary texts, being the result of translating (in the broad sense of this type of communicative activity) the verbal text of the original into the "languages" of various semiotic systems. The observed growth of interest in intersemiotic translation strongly suggests that "strong" fiction texts are regularly interpreted by different (non-verbal or not only verbal) semiotic systems. The category of foreign semiotic interpretations of "Anna Karenina" includes theatrical and radio productions, ballets, operas, musicals, audiobooks, comic books, pictures in book publications, etc. A clear illustration of the unflagging interest in the original text and its secondary versions are the themes of the papers at the "Tolstoy Readings" conference in 2022: "The novel 'Anna Karenina' as a field for experiment: ballet works, design images and choreography in the format of drama", "Anna Karenina' in four themes-interpretations of the Parisian artist Alexander Alexeev", "Genesis of the novel 'Anna Karenina' in the space of contemporary art", etc. [Tolstoy readings, 2022]. One year earlier there was an international conference "Leo Tolstoy's novel 'Anna Karenina' in cinematography" [Tula museum, 2021].

Researchers unanimously recognize the novel as one of the most screened texts in fiction: "...over the past hundred years, the novel has been screened around the world several dozen times. It is perhaps the most screened novel in all of world literature. No other literary construction has withstood so many screenings, both television and cinematographic, full-length" [Gelasimov, 2020].

The history of film adaptations of the novel dates back to the silent film era. Turning to the 20th-century versions of "Anna Karenina", I. Makoveeva begins her list with the version produced by Pathé Studios in 1911, which has since been lost, and finishes with the Anglo-American film directed by B. Rose, released in 1997 and starring S. Marceau as Anna. The

researcher classifies silent films (the last film without soundtrack is “Love”, filmed in the United States in 1927 with G. Garbo in the title role and offering the audience two versions of the ending) and sound films, TV films and TV series, films-ballets (for example, the 1974 version with M. Pliset-skaya), as well as theatrical productions [Makoveeva, 2001]. The context of understanding the nature and mechanisms of intersemiotic translation highlights researcher’s reflections on the relationship found between the verbal work and its film versions, as well as on the degree of translatability of the “strong” original achieved by cinematographic means. The bond between cultural objects revealing relations of equivalence is based on the ideas of Yu. N. Tynyanov on the nature and degree of correspondence between the original and its film version (“a spoiled novel or an unfinished drama”) and V. Woolf, expressed on the basis of an analysis of one of the first film adaptations of “Anna Karenina” (“a visual copy of a fiction text with limited possibilities”). Using the results of the comparative analysis of seven screen adaptations and the classification of literary works adaptation by means and methods of cinematography (lubok — Russian popular folk print, illustration, interpretation) proposed by N. Zorkaya, Makoveeva distinguishes several types of film adaptations of Tolstoy’s text: cinematographic lubok, illustration, commentary interpretation and interpretation-analogy. Let us remark that the researcher’s treatment of each new screen adaptation as an obvious progress in solving the complex problems of transferring Tolstoy’s novel to the screen deserves special attention, as well as the use of the concepts of hypotext and, most importantly, hypertext to understand the nature of the relationship between the verbal original and its secondary cinematographic text.

The large number of film versions of the novel created in different periods of the cinema era provides valuable material not only for witnessing the specifics of the interpretation of “Anna Karenina” in each particular case (changes in the plot lines, structure and composition of the original, the actors, etc.), based on the unique reading of the original by the filmmakers from the perspective of their theoretical attitudes and aesthetic tastes, but also for identifying changes in the understanding of the phenomenon of film screening in general in light of the development of the cinematographic means and its very formation. J. Brodsky believed that the translator of poetry should be congenial to its author. Applying Brodsky’s idea to the field of cinema, we can say that, ideally, a film adaptation requires a director who should be congenial to the author of the original masterpiece.

The history of cinematographic interpretations of the novel goes back more than a century and the interest of film masters in the novel persists,

as is amply demonstrated by the emergence of new film texts. In the 21st century, for example, more than ten adaptations of the novel have been made. Not all film versions bear the novel's original title: in 1927 the above-mentioned American film "Love" was made; in 1936 "Manja Valewska", based on the novel, was made in Austria, retaining the original storyline with a high degree of accuracy (although the names of the characters were changed and the action moved to Poland); in 1975 the French film "La passion d'Anna Karénine" was released; in 2017, the Russian director K. Shakhnazarov made "The Story of Vronsky"; 2021 saw the release of "Anna K." (directed by V. Fedorovich and others) and "Seryozha" (the film version by D. Krymov).

Film adaptations of a "strong" literary text pose valuable material for examining the topical issue of intersemiotic translation. Each new adaptation of a verbal original increases its visualisation and, consequently, its translatability and degree of translation — translatedness. A reference to the history of film adaptations allows us to trace the evolution of the intermedial approach to the "strong" text of culture and literature [Aseeva, 2017]. Being a relatively new object of creative activity, the phenomenon of film adaptation belongs to the field of intermedial problems and is directly connected with medial transposition, as well as with the issues of perception of a film phenomenon and narrative differences between the verbal original text and the film version. It is irrefutable that literature and cinema are narrative art forms, but it is in the narrative that their main difference lies: in literature the narration is carried out with the help of graphic signs, while in cinema — with the help of visual images and soundtrack [Bochkareva & Zagorodneva, 2019, p. 8].

When perceiving a verbal original in the process of reading, the reader is the interpreter of the information received, relying in decoding on one's own background knowledge, aesthetic preferences and personal experience. In the situation of film adaptation of a fiction work, interpreters are both the entire film crew (directors, producers, actors, cameramen, etc.) and, later, the viewer who perceives the cinematographic text, which has already become a secondary text.

With the advent of sound in cinematography, a version of the translation, which the stage director refers to and which becomes the basis for the screenplay, becomes crucial in the creation of film adaptations of Russian literature abroad. It is commonly known that there are cases when the director or screenwriter became the author of the translation. Translation is important for two key aspects of film adaptation: (1) broadcasting the content of the original, already refracted through the perception of the author of the translation and reflected in the sec-

ondary foreign-language text created, which by means of cinematography is transformed into a tertiary cinematographic text; (2) speech of the characters, which creates their speech portraits and which meets the concept of “playability”.

The author of the 1957 monograph “Novels into film”, which became a classic work on the theory of film adaptation, G. Bluestone pointed out the need for a clear distinction between literature and film (as unique and independent fields of art) and attempted to identify the fundamental differences that exist between a literary text and its film version. The researcher based his approach to understanding the phenomenon of adaptation on the mandatory distinction between media environments of the considered art fields (“medium-specific approach”), referring, first of all, to the notion of visualization. It should be noted that visualization (it is more accurate to speak about audiovisualization — author’s note) in the context of film adaptation reveals at least two aspects — the screen version of the script and the viewer’s perception of the artwork; on the other hand, visualization can be regarded as a process and its material outcome. Visualisation can also take place when reading the original. The reader perceives images of the fiction text and creates his or her own images based on them, which may not (and often do not) coincide with the images of the original text. When perceiving a film adaptation, the viewer becomes familiar with the already existing version of the visualization of the original art, being the result of the work of the entire film crew, which also refracts the resulting visualized information through their consciousness and psyche. It should also be stated that depending on the semiotic nature of the visualised text, different perceptual techniques come to the foreground. Of indisputable importance in perceiving a film adaptation is also the viewer’s possible prior familiarity with the original. Clarifying the nature of screen adaptation, E. I. Prostsevichene believes that the genre feature of the film version of the novel is that it provides a meeting of different viewer perceptions on the basis of reader’s experience). [Prostsevichene, 2013, p. 49].

Advocating the independence and autonomy of a literary text and a film text, Bluestone proposes to forsake value judgments when comparing the film adaptation and the literary original, and notes that comparative analysis of the two art objects in most cases begins with a declaration of the need to establish similarities between them, but always ends up with a statement of the differences [Bluestone, 1957, p. ix]. The researcher discusses film versions of six works of world literature (“Anna Karenina” is not among them) and, what is particularly interesting for our analysis, uses a comparison of cinema shooting (camera movements) with the

narrative consciousness of Leo Tolstoy, figuratively defining literature as a precious ore for creating film scripts on its basis.

The “strong” original text of “Anna Karenina” and all its secondary versions of different semiotic nature are in relations of primary and secondary character, similarity and difference, equivalence and non-equivalence, which can be traced at all levels of the fiction text. The verbal original and all its foreign-language and foreign-semiotic versions form a vast center of translational attraction [Razumovskaya, 2019], which can be defined as a polylingual and multimodal hypertext with synchronic and diachronic dimensions, created by different authors-interpreters, which also makes it polyauthorial.

Conclusion

The “strong” literary text and its secondary foreign-language and foreign-semiotic versions form the center of translational attraction, within which the translatability and translatedness of the original, presented in various semiotic forms, are enhanced, and the number of information perception channels increase for the reader (viewer, listener). But at the same time, the status of the texts perceived by the reader in terms of the parameters of primacy or secundancy may change, which largely depends on the media environment of the embodiment of secondary texts. For example, potential readers of a novel often turn to the original or its translations only after becoming acquainted with film adaptations, among which “strong” ones may be presented. Film adaptations actualize the precedent verbal artistic originals, drawing the audience’s attention to the literature and offering the role of readers. In this case, rather than the result of successful or unsuccessful medial transposition of a work of fiction by means of cinematography, film adaptation is but a manifestation of cultural dynamics, which contributes to the preservation of a “strong” fiction text in the space of national and global culture, maintaining its popularity for generations of readers and ensuring active intercultural and inter-medial collaboration of literature and cinema as significant cultural objects. The analysis of the ways of communicating the content of a literary work by cinematographic means implies the identification of strategies for adapting the narrative of a literary text by cinematographic means, the selection and application of effective visualization techniques and the identification of units, in relation to which the director (“translator”) makes a crucial decision on inter-semiotic translation.

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