

## The Strategic Aspect of Translating Phonographic Deviations

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**Abstract.** The article deals with the strategies of rendering phonographic deviations (PDs) in the English-Ukrainian translation on the material of such novels as “Gone with the Wind” by M. Mitchell, “The Cabbages and Kings” by O. Henry, “Hard Times” by Ch. Dickens. Theoretical conclusions are made on the basis of opposition between the position of some prominent Soviet translation theoreticians, who absolutely rejected the idea of translating PDs by means of the target language, and that of their Western colleagues, who proclaimed the possibility and necessity of translating PDs by analogues (parallel) means of the target language.

**Keywords:** *strategy, phonographic deviation, translation, target language.*

**Introduction.** Nowadays, there is a tendency in modern Translation Studies to consider a number of linguistic problems, which earlier remained beyond any scientific research. Such a phenomenon as phonographic deviation (PD) belongs to these issues, as well. PD is aimed at demonstrating certain personal speech traits caused by different factors, e. g., speaker’s social or territorial status, physical or emotional state, physiological or health condition, etc. PD imitating various speech anomalies is one of the most effective stylistic means of a character’s characterization and at the same time one of the most difficult devices in the aspect of translation.

Translation theoreticians in Ukraine did not pay much attention to this phenomenon in the past which can be explained by three main reasons. Firstly, PD as a stylistic means has different traditions of use in the English and Ukrainian languages and corresponding literatures. If we compare the ways of conveying speech specifics in the English-language and Ukrainian-language literary traditions, we may conclude that a variety of prominent and popular British and American authors tend to employ PDs on a more or less regular basis, as a result of which “in the English-language culture a certain phonetic system of its expressing has been formed” [8]. At the same time, Ukrainian writers are more concentrated on using colloquialisms and irregular syntax with similar purposes. Secondly, it is well known that the discrepancy between spelling and pronouncing words in English allows authors to modify words freely bringing their graphical form closer to their “natural” sound and, thus, adjusting them to different pragmatic and / or stylistic purposes. Thirdly, both theoretically and practically the diapason of phonographic means imitating speech anomalies was limited only by the specifics of dialectal or sociolectal pronunciation that are factually the most difficult ones to render by the means of any target language (Ukrainian is no exception).

**Analysis of recent research and publications.** The real pioneers of studying PDs were such prominent scholars as V. Kukharenko [5], who even coined for them a special term “graphon”, characterizing personage’s speech peculiarities, as well as O. Morokhovsky [7], A. Skovorodnikov [9], I. Arnord [1], etc. According to V. Kukharenko, a PD can be defined as a violation of orthographical standards that creates the effect of authenticity of individual or dialectal deviations of pronunciation. According to O. Morokhovsky, A. Skovorodnikov, I. Arnord, a PD is not only a stylistically but also a functionally effective deviation of orthographical norm, which

conveys individual or dialectal violations of phonetic norms. That is, a PD conveys the specifics of different types of pronunciation, in particular, idiolect, under which we understand various formal stylistic means and devices typical for a native speaker’s speech (mainly deviated). A person’s idiolect, that changes as he or she masters “a new language or vocabulary”, is usually considered to be a translation difficulty, the most optimal ways of overcoming which must be found by each translator individually. Taking into account the importance of PDs as a stylistic means, in my research I will consider the main strategies of its English-Ukrainian translation. Correspondingly, the **aim** of the research is to consider the main strategies of rendering PDs in the English-Ukrainian literary translation.

**Materials and methods.** The material of my research was taken from such novels, as “Gone with the Wind” by M. Mitchell, “The Cabbages and Kings” by O. Henry, “Hard Times” by Ch. Dickens. I used the translational method of comparative analysis while comparing strategies of conveying phonographic deviations by both authors and translators. Moreover, comparing stylistic devices in the original text and its translation, I resorted to the methods of linguistic (lexico-semantic), functional and stylistic analyses as well.

**Results of research.** Due to its characteristics, a PD is a very specific phenomenon in the aspect of translation, which belongs to “eternal” problems of Translation Studies. PDs do not have permanent equivalents in the target language, thus they can automatically be regarded as non-equivalent words. On the one hand, most translation theoreticians of the Soviet era unanimously characterized PDs as a variety of translation difficulties almost incapable of being solved. On the other hand, the presence of phonographic stylistic means in fiction makes the translator look for creative strategies of their rendering by means of a target language. This challenge determines the necessity to outline prospective approaches to its tackling.

Nowadays, there are several different approaches concerning the possibility or even appropriateness of rendering English PDs by means of the Ukrainian language. Soviet scientists, for instance, emphasized peculiar national colouring of PDs, on the basis of which they put forward the idea that PDs as a form of verbalizing territorial and / or social dialects could not be rendered adequately by similar means of any possible target language. The only accepted strategy in this case is considered to be their compensation by other – more universal or, on the contrary, typical for the target language – lexical and

grammatical means of characterization. As a result, such a phenomenon as “simplified translation”[4] appeared in the philological paradigm.

The other strategy is a PD removal and its replacement by neutral vocabulary. An inadmissibility of such an approach is determined by the fact that there is a threat of an initial image transformation leading to its deformation. Such examples can be found in numerous translations of the Soviet epoch, as ignoring PDs both Ukrainian and Russian translations was regarded as a norm of that time.

Finally, the third approach stipulates parallel rendering of PDs in translation by the way of creating occasional substitutes in accordance with peculiarities of character’s speech in a target language. For instance, M. Morini proposes to translate PDs by “creating an artificial language in the language”[6]; L. Berezowski insists on “creating an absolutely new language phonetically adjusted to the target one”[2]; and J. C. Catford sees the way out in “using parallel means of the target language”[3].

I believe that it is this approach that allows to preserve and adequately reproduce functional and stylistic potential of PDs as an effective stylistic device in translation.

Now using certain examples from different novels, I will try to demonstrate how all these strategies are implemented in the English-Ukrainian translations.

The first fragment is taken from the novel “*Gone with the Wind*” and my task is to demonstrate which markers the author uses to convey dialectal speech of a personage. This personage is Negro Jeems whose speech is deviated.

First of all, I would like to note that the translator can not always guess how to pronounce phonographic deviations proposed by the author to imitate a personage’s speech, furthermore, their meanings often remain vague, as well. Now, I will try to analyze what phonological changes were meant by the author in the following passage:

*Ah ain’ never figgered dat out, mahseff,” replied Jeems, undisturbed by his master’s scowl. “Look ter me lak dey’d ‘lect all de awficers frum rich gempnum, ‘stead of swamp trash.”*

Thus, the specifics of a character’s speech are expressed with the help of : 1) modification of personal pronoun I [aɪ] into Ah [ɑ:]; 2) modification of reflexive pronoun myself [maɪ'self] into mahseff [mɑ: 'sef]; 3) modification of demonstrative pronoun that [ðæt] into dat [dæt], modification of definite article the [ðə] into de [də]; 4) modification of infinitive particle to [tu:] into ter [tɜ:]; 5) modification of verb elect [ɪ'lekt] into ‘lect [lekt]; 6) modification of noun gentlemen [dʒentlmən] into gempnum [dʒempnʌm]; 7) modification of noun officer [ˈɒfɪsə] into awficer [ɔ:fɪsə]; 8) modification of preposition from [frɒm] into frum [frʌm]; 8) modification of adverb instead [ɪn'sted] into ‘stead [sted];

Let’s look at the Ukrainian translation:

*Отож я не розумію цього,— відказав Джімс, анітрохи не злякавшись гострого тону хазяїна. — Як на мене, їм би пра обирати офіцерів із заможних жентменів, а не з цих болотяних голодранців.*

The translator resorted to the compensation of phonographic anomalies by colloquialisms «голодранці» and «жентмени» that can be seen as the embodiment of the speech of uneducated Ukrainian people. “Trash” is trans-

lated as “голодранці” that means “very poor people”. Thus, the translator compared very poor people with trash; he also phonetically deformed lexical item “треба” as “тра” for a more natural image of an uneducated person. As it is impossible to translate English dialects by Ukrainian ones, the translator used Ukrainian colloquialisms and at the same time he implemented the strategy of lexical compensation.

We will try to describe the next strategy of translating PDs on the material of the novel “*The Cabbages and Kings*” by O. Henry:

*You are just like a woman!” yelled Behrman. “Who said I will not bose? Go on. I come mit you. For half an hour I haf peen trying to say dot I am ready to bose. Gott! dis is not any blace in which one so goot as Miss Yohnsy shall lie sick. Some day I vill baint a masterpiece, and ve shall all go away. Gott! yes.*

Various phonetic means, such as the replacement of voiceless consonants by voiced ones (*pose=bose*) or the other way round (*haf peen=have been, vill=will, ve=we*, as [w] is not peculiar to the German phonetics), as well as using parts of speech of the German language (*mit=with, Gott=God*) allow us to conclude that the central character is German. So, the task of the Ukrainian translator is to imitate the German accent in the translation.

Ukrainian translation:

*Ви справжня жінка! - загорлав німець Берман. - Хто каже, що я не хочу позувати? Ну вперед. Я йду з вами. Півгодини я- намагаюся пояснити, що готовий позувати. Боже мій! Тут зовсім невідходяще місце хворіти такій гарній дівчині, як міс Джонсі. Колись я намалюю шедевр, і ми всі виберемося звідси. їй-бо, виберемося.*

In the translation, any phonographic deviations are absent. All phonographic deformations of the original are compensated by the only Ukrainian lexical item «німець», outlining the nationality of a personage.

This German speaks absolutely correct literary language in the translation. So, this fact confirms that the translator ignored all phonographic deviations in his translation. It is obvious, that such a translation is easier to perceive, but it brings deformations into the stylistics of the original that completely ruins the original intentions of the author. At the same time, the Ukrainian reader does not have any opportunity to imagine the speech of the German character. Thus, by ignoring PDs in translation, the Ukrainian translator deprived the text of its originality.

On the material of novel “*Hard Times*” by Charles Dickens I will demonstrate the specifics of rendering PDs that imitate personage’s speech caused by asthma disease. Asthma is a common long-term inflammatory disease of the airways of the lungs. It is characterized by variable and recurring symptoms, reversible airflow obstruction, and bronchospasm. Symptoms include episodes of wheezing, coughing, chest tightness, and shortness of breath. Speech of a person suffering from asthma is presented in the original in the following manner:

*“Thquire!” said Mr Sleary, “Your thervant! Thith ith a bad piethe of bithneth, thith ith. You’ve heard of my Clown and hith dog being thuppothed to have morrithed?”*

The central character can not pronounce letter s, so the

author replaces it by *th* pronounced like [θ] to show the peculiarities of speech caused by asthma: *thquire*=*squire*, *thervant*=*servant*, *thith ith* = *this is, piethe of bithneth*=*piece of business*, *hith*=*his*, *thuppothed*=*supposed*, *morrihed*=*morried*.

Translation:

*Слуга покiрний, мохъпане! – сказав пан Слiрi. – прикра iхторiя, хай йому абищо! Ви вже, певне, чули, що мiй клоун, як видно, забрав хвого хобаку й ушився?*

We can see that the translator strives to follow the idea of the author and replaces Ukrainian letter «с» by «х», and factually acts within the strategy of domestication: «мохъпане» = «мосъпане» (in the XVIII-XIV centuries «мосъпане» was a form of addressing masters that means «мiй милостивий пане», or «вельмишановний добродiю»), «iхторiя» = «iсторiя», «хвого» = «свого», «хобаку» = «собаку». That is, the translator rendered

PDs by parallel means of the target (Ukrainian) language. I may conclude that both the author and the translator present speech deviations of personages caused by different diseases according to common stereotypes in their corresponding societies. All deviations in speech should correspond to imaginations of both cultures about one or other disease.

**Conclusions.** This research enables me to conclude that, while rendering phonographic deviations, contemporary translators more often resort to the strategy of rendering PDs by parallel means of the target language. They construed analogous phonographic imitations supplementing them, where appropriate, with more traditional for Ukrainian literary discourse lexical and grammatical compensations. Therefore, translators tend to avoid total ignoring PDs in translation, or replacement by typical colloquialisms.

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#### Стратегический аспект перевода графонов

##### А. Стативка

**Аннотация.** В статье рассматриваются стратегии воспроизведения графонов в англо-украинском переводе на материале таких романов, как «Унесенные Ветром» М. Митчелл, «Короли и Капуста» О. Генри, «Трудные Времена» Ч. Диккенса. Теоретические выводы сделаны на основе сравнения идей некоторых выдающихся советских теоретиков перевода, которые полностью критиковали перевод графонов средствами целевого языка, в то время, как их западные коллеги настаивали на переводе графонов с помощью аналогичных (параллельных) средств языка перевода.

**Ключевые слова:** стратегия, графон, перевод, целевой язык.