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PECULIARITIES OF NON-EQUIVALENT VOCABULARY TRANSLATION (BASED ON «THE FOLK OF THE AIR» SERIES BY HOLLY BLACK)

In modern literary translation, the transmission of non-equivalent vocabulary – words and expressions for which there are no exact equivalents in another language – from one language to another is considered to be a crucial problem. It becomes especially noticeable when translating the fantasy genre, where authors often create new terms and concepts that reflect fictional worlds and cultural characteristics. One of such authors is Holly Black, whose books, particularly the *Folk of the Air* series, contain a rich lexical range that is difficult to translate due to the lack of direct equivalents in other languages. The purpose of the study is to examine the peculiarities of translating non-equivalent vocabulary in Holly Black's novels from the *Folk of the Air* series, as well as to analyze the methods used in their translation to Ukrainian.

The non-equivalent vocabulary from Holly Black's novels was classified into the following categories: cultural lacunae, no words in the language into which we are translating to denote concepts that exist only in certain cultures and societies and that must be conveyed in one word, and lack of words due to linguistic reasons (M. Kocherhan's classification).

The problems of translating non-equivalent vocabulary arise from the lack of cultural or linguistic analogs in the target language, which necessitates the use of special approaches to convey the meaning and atmosphere of the original. One of the main difficulties is the need to preserve semantic accuracy and stylistic conformity, while simultaneously creating a sense of immersion in the fictional world. The article presents several methods of translation of non-equivalent units: word-to-word translation, sense development, amplification, transcoding, and synonymous substitution. The analysis of translations has shown that the Ukrainian translator of the *Folk of the Air* series mostly prefers the word-to-word translation method to preserve the unique atmosphere of Holly Black's world. This additionally facilitates understanding for the reader who is not familiar with the fantasy world.

Keywords: non-equivalent vocabulary, realia, cultural lacunae, methods of translation.

Ємельянова Олена, Чуднівєць Анна. Особливості перекладу безеквівалентної лексики (на матеріалі серії «Народ повітря» Голлі Блек)

Передача безеквівалентної лексики – слів і виразів, для яких немає точних еквівалентів в іншій мові – з однієї мови на іншу є важливою проблемою в сучасному художньому перекладі. Ця

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особливо помітною при перекладі творів жанру фентезі, де автори часто створюють нові терміни та поняття, які відображають вигадані світи та культурні особливості. Однією з таких авторів є Голлі Блек, книги якої, зокрема серія «Народ повітря», містять багатий лексичний ряд, який важко перекласти через відсутність прямих еквівалентів в інших мовах. Мета дослідження – розглянути особливості перекладу безеквівалентної лексики на прикладі романів Голлі Блек із серії «Народ повітря», а також проаналізувати прийоми, використані при їх перекладі українською мовою.

Безеквівалентну лексику в романах Голлі Блек було класифіковано за такими категоріями: культурологічні лакуни, відсутні в мові, на яку перекладаємо, слів на позначення понять, наявних лише в певних культурах і суспільствах, та які мають передаватися одним словом, відсутність слів через мовні причини (за класифікацією М. Кочергана).

Проблеми перекладу безеквівалентної лексики виникають через відсутність культурних або лінгвістичних аналогів у мові перекладу, що зумовлює необхідність використання спеціальних підходів для передачі змісту та атмосфери оригіналу. Однією з головних труднощів є необхідність зберегти семантичну точність і стилістичну відповідність, одночасно створюючи відчуття занурення у вигаданий світ. У статті представлено декілька способів перекладу безеквівалентних одиниць: дослівний переклад, модуляція, додавання, транскодування, синонімічна заміна. Аналіз перекладів показав, що українська перекладачка циклу «Народ повітря» здебільшого надає перевагу дослівному перекладу, щоб зберегти неповторну атмосферу світу Голлі Блек. Це додатково дозволяє полегшити розуміння для читача, який не знайомий зі світом фентезі.

Ключові слова: безеквівалентна лексика, реалія, культурологічні лакуни, способи перекладу.

Formulation of the problem. Non-equivalent vocabulary exists in every language and holds significance, as it allows the reproduction of the uniqueness of certain concepts inherent in only one language and ensures the expressiveness of the text. The study of non-equivalent vocabulary and its translation is important for ensuring accuracy, relevance, preservation of cultural contexts, and professional development of translators, as well as improving the quality of intercultural communication and literary translations.

The **relevance of this problem** lies in the fact that internationalization and globalization processes increasingly require the translation of texts of various types and fields of activity in the modern world. There are cases when concepts, phrases or terms that are unique and important in the source text are impossible or very difficult to reproduce in the target language without losing their meaning.

The issue of non-equivalent vocabulary and the problems of its translation was studied by M. Kocherhan [Kocherhan 2006, 2008], I. Loshchenova, V. Nikishyna [Loshchenova, Nikishyna 2014], O. Harhaieva [Harhaieva 2015], M. Lisna [Lisna

2015], O. Shvachko [Shvachko 2016], M. Baker [Baker 2018], T. Rudenko [Rudenko, Havrylova 2019], I. Havrylova [Havrylova 2020], Yu. Hron [Hron 2021], V. Bialyk, N. Zadorozhna [Bialyk, Zadorozhna 2023].

The **aim of the article** is to consider the concept of “non-equivalent vocabulary” and its translation, to analyse the non-equivalent vocabulary in the novels *The Cruel Prince* and *The Wicked King* by Holly Black and its Ukrainian translation.

The scholars who studied the notion of non-equivalence in linguistics gave various definitions to this notion. We believe it was because of the difference in theoretical approaches used. Therefore, O. Shvachko equates the concept of “non-equivalent vocabulary” with the concept of “lacunae”. Scientist believes that lacunarity takes place in all “spheres of human semiotic activity”. The presence of a thesaurus and the experience of a translator makes it possible to delacunarize a foreign text [Shvachko 2016, p. 7]. Some scholars compare non-equivalent lexicon with realias and combine the two notions into one. Realia is a “variable category associated with the process of predominantly binary comparison” of languages at the lexical and phraseological levels [Loshchenova, Nikishyna 2014, p.275].

In addition to realias, there are also such concepts as exoticism and ethnographism, which need to be distinguished from the equivalent vocabulary. Ethnographisms are used to describe and categorize aspects of the culture, customs, traditions, or history of a particular ethnic group. Ethnographisms may be “non-equivalent”, as their meaning and scope may differ in different cultures and languages [Kocherhan 2008, p. 122]. On the other hand, exoticisms are similar to barbarisms in their functions. Exoticisms are used to describe exotic or unusual things, phenomena, places or cultures, and can be part of the equivalent vocabulary, but not necessarily. Exoticism adds colour to the text and is used to create a certain atmosphere or image. According to M. Kocherhan, barbarisms are “foreign words or expressions that are not fully assimilated into the language but reflect the peculiarities of the semantics of another language” [Kocherhan 2008, p. 122].

V. Bialyk and N. Zadorozhna outline the main reasons for the emergence of non-equivalent vocabulary. These are [Bialyk, Zadorozhna 2023, p.37]:

- historical and cultural differences;
- the lack of an identical concept in the experience of native speakers of the target language;

–differences in language structure.

Exploring possible ways of translating non-equivalent vocabulary from one language to another, M. Baker suggests the following approaches to translation [Baker 2018, p. 243]:

- using a less colourful word or just a neutral one;
- using a broader word (usage-wise);
- using a word of foreign origin or a word of foreign origin with an explanation;
- substitution in terms of cultural background;
- paraphrasing using a related word;
- paraphrasing using unrelated words, omissions, and illustrations.

When translating into the Ukrainian language, non-equivalence can be transmitted using folklore, although when we take into consideration the folkloric side of the Ukrainian language, it is more common to be used orally rather than in writing. Moreover, the choice of the way to translate non-equivalent vocabulary is determined by several prerequisites, which include the following factors, taking into account which the translator can choose the best translation method for equivalent vocabulary in a particular context. M. Baker outlines some specific prerequisites for non-equivalence translation [Baker 2018, p. 251]:

- specificity of the text (before choosing a translation method, one should carefully study the text and find out how important the non-equivalent vocabulary is for the overall meaning of the text);
 - target audience;
 - context and purpose of the text;
 - nature of the non-equivalent lexicon (it is important to determine why the non-equivalent vocabulary was used);
- specificity of the target language (some languages may be more flexible in translating non-equivalence, while others may require transformations).

Non-equivalent vocabulary is often easier to find in fantasy books because fantasy authors create unique worlds, cultures, and magical systems that don't exist in real life. They introduce new creatures, magical powers, mystical places, and social structures that have no direct counterparts in our everyday world. This makes translating fantasy more challenging since the language of these books often includes made-up words, names, and concepts that are specific to that fantasy world.

The books under discussion were written by Holly Black and narrated about a human girl named Jude who grows up in the magical and dangerous world of the faeries. She lives in a land called Elfhome, where faeries rule and humans are looked down on. Jude dreams of gaining power and respect among these magical beings, even though she's an outsider.

The series follows her struggles with the complex politics of the faerie world, her clashes with powerful faerie nobles, and the challenges of being a human trying to survive among creatures who often have no mercy for humans.

M. Kocherhan classifies non-equivalent language into three main groups [Kochergan 2006, p. 322]:

- 1) cultural lacunae – cultural realias of a certain nation;
- 2) there are no words in the language into which we are translating to denote concepts that exist only in certain cultures and societies and that must be conveyed in one word;
- 3) lack of words due to linguistic reasons.

Using M. Kocherhan's classification of the non-equivalent lexicon, we found and grouped the non-equivalent vocabulary in the novels under discussion. Here are some of the examples with explanations where needed [Black 2018, p. 6–326; Black 2019, p. 10–197]:

- 1) merfolk – *русалка*, wild-eyed horses – *коні з шаленими очима*, mortal realm – *край смертних*, faerie trade – *фейрівський обмін*, tied to the land – *прив'язаний до землі* (about faeries' rulers), lifeblood – *джерело сили*, golden wine – *золоте вино*, hag – *відьма*, commoners and the gentry – *простолюд і панство*, , magical knots – *магічні вузли*, goblin – *гоблін*, troll – *троль*, sprites – *спрайти*, spriggan – *сприджен*, sluagh girl – *дівчина-слуа*, faerie wine – *вино фейрі*, sparrow boy – *хлопчисько-горобець*, black-thorned bees – *тернові бджоли*, white-barked trees – *білокорі дерева*, hob-faced owl – *сова з личком гоба*, subjects – *піддані*, orbs – *кулі* (magic balls in which memories can be enchanted), cloth – *тканина Матінки Мозок* (could turn even the sharpest blade), mad magic – *шалена магія* (which goes to the High Kings after the coronation), curses – *прокляття* (as faeries' punishment), frost giant – *морозний велетень*, great monsters of yore – *великі чудовиська минушини*, crisped eels – *смажені вузрі*, silvery fish – *сріблясті рибки*, rowan berries – *горобинові ягоди*, imp – *імнес*, Court factions – *партії Двору*, grigs – *григи*, bundle of oak, ash,

and thorn twigs – *вузлик із гілочками дуба, ясеня й терену* (together protect with faeries' magic), oath binds – *зв'язаний присягою*, fiefdoms – *володіння* (фейрі), denizens – *мешканці* (of Elfhame), deer-boy – *хлопець-олень*, golden dish of salt – *золота тарілка із сіллю* (is enchanted to never be empty), faerie gold – *золото фейрі*, ragwort stalks – *стебла жовтозілля*, ragwort steeds – *жовтозілляні коні*, gem-encrusted broach – *брошка з самоцвітами* (allows to summon gauzy wings from the back and fly), necklace of tears – *кольє зі сліз*, pin of teeth – *брошка із зубів*, Queen of the Undersea – *Королева Підмор'я*, Isle of Woe – *Інсвіл, Острів Горя*, Master of Revels – *майстер гулянь*, Tower of Forgetting – *Вежа Забуття*, Folk – *Народ*, Grimse the Smith – *Грімзен-Коваль*, Fairfold – *Фейрфолд*, Severin – *Северин*, Blood Crown – *Кривава Корона*, Mab – *Маб*, Mother Marrow – *Матінка Мозок*, Hunter's Moon in the Milkwood – *Мисливський Місяць у Молочному лісі*, Insweal, Vulciber – *Вулсібер*, Undersea – *Підмор'я*, Infernal Majesty – *інfernальна величність*, Living Council – *Жива Рада*, Unseelie Minister – *неблагий міністр*, Seelie Minister – *блага міністерка*, Grand General – *головний генерал*, Royal Astrologer – *королівський астролог*, Minister of Keys – *міністр ключів*, Grand Fool – *головний блазень*, Randalin – *Рандалін*, Fala – *Фала*, Nihuar – *Нігуар*, Mikkell – *Міккел*, Vaphen – *Бафен*, wild Folk – *дикі представники Народу*, sea Folk – *морський Народ*, Elowyn – *Еловін*, Rhyia – *Рія*, Court of Bone – *Двір Зубів*, Van – *Ван*, Court of Elfhame – *Двір Ельфгейму*, blood moon revel – *Кривавий Місяць*, Corn King – *Зерновий Король*, Dulcamara – *Беладона*, Seelie and Unseelie members – *благі й неблагі фейрі*, Queen of Mirth – *Королева Радоців*, King of Fools – *король дурнів*, selkies – *селкі*, Gentry of the Undersea – *Панство з Підмор'я*, Court Poet – *придворний поет*, Greenbriar line – *рід Смілаксів*, Shadow Queen – *королева тіней*, Lady Asha – *леді Аша*, Caelia – *Келія*.

2) root men – *коренелюди*, servitude – *поневолювати* (about debts/deals with the faeries), sumophane gem for an eye – *око-цимофан*, Faerie – скорочення для *Faerieland* (Край), Tower – скорочення для *Tower of Forgetting* (Вежа).

3) treefolk – *дереволюди*, deathsweet – *смертний нектар*, blusher mushroom – *гриб-рум'янка*, wraithberry – *примарна ягода*, everapple – *вічнояблуко*, changeling children – *діти-підмінки*, inland – *на континенті* (synonym for the faeries' land), spymaster – *керівниця шпигунської мережі* (the head of the nest), glowing mushrooms – *світні грибочки*, Nightfell – *Нічний Рубака*, Alderking – *Вільшаний*

король, Heartseeker and Heartsworn – Шукач Серця та Вірний Серцю, Mr. Hiss – Містер Шипучка, Snapdragon – Роззявротик, Palace of Elfhame – Ельфгеймський палац,

The Ukrainian translator of the Holly Black novels from the *Folk of the Air* series M. Puhlii used various translation methods to convey the meaning, structure, etc. of the non-equivalent units such as [Black 2020a, p. 4–403; Black 2020b, p. 13–204]:

1. Word-to-word translation: wraithberry – примарна ягода, faerie trade – фейрівський обмін, tied to the land – прив'язаний до землі, Heartseeker – Шукач Серця, Heartsworn – Вірний Серцю, Tower of Forgetting – Вежа Забуття, Blood Crown – Кривава Корона, magical knots – магічні вузли, faerie fruit – плід фейрі, sparrow boy – хлопчисько-горобець, faerie steeds – коні фейрі, blackthorned bees – тернові бджоли, white-barked trees – білокорі дерева, root men – коренелюди, blusher mushroom – гриб-рум'янка, Faerie – Край (скорочення для Faerieland (Край Фейрі), mad magic – шалена магія, Isle of Woe – Острів Горя, Milkwood – Молочний ліс, Undersea – Підмор'я, golden wine – золоте вино, treefolk – дереволюди, faerie wine – вино фейрі, wraithberry – примарна ягода, everapple – вічнояблуко, Minister of Keys – міністр ключів.

2. Sense development: Snapdragon – Роззявротик, Nightfell – Нічний Рубака, Wattle – Прутик, deathsweet – смертний нектар, Gnarbone – Кістяк, Gentry – Панство, Corn King – Зерновий Король, Seelie Court – Благий Двір, Unseelie Court – Неблагий Двір, lifeblood – джерело сили.

3. Amplification: knighthood – лицарський титул, spymaster – керівниця шпигунської мережі, to command – віддавати наказ, wild Folk – дикі представники Народу.

4. Transcoding: Elowyn – Еловін, Grimsen – Грімсен, Elfhame – Ельфгейм, goblin – гоблін, troll – троль, sprites – спрайти, spriggan – сприджен, sluagh girl – дівчина-слуа, grigs – григи, Vulciber – Вулсібер, Randalin – Рандалін, Fala – Фала, Nihuar – Нігуар, Mikkell – Міккел, Varphen – Бафен.

5. Synonymous substitution: to put in three knots – вплести три вузлики, mortal realm – край смертних, to wear out the soles of your shoes – стоптати черевики, golden dish of salt – золота тарілка із сіллю, mock war – удавана війна, subjects – піддані.

6. Transposition: servitude – поневолювати, oath binds – зв'язаний присягою.

Translation method	Quantity	Quantity %
Word-to-word translation	100	58%
Sense development	25	15%
Amplification	4	2%
Transcoding	25	15%
Synonymous substitution	16	9%
Transposition	2	1%
Overall	172	100%

Tab 1. Frequency of using translation methods in the novels

Discussions and conclusions. Non-equivalent vocabulary includes words and expressions for which it is difficult or impossible to find an exact equivalent in another language due to cultural, historical or semantic differences. Non-equivalent vocabulary may include cultural realias, specific vocabulary and concepts without analoges in target languages. We took into consideration the M. Kocherhan's classification and found out that *The Cruel Prince* and *The Wicked King* have more examples of cultural lacunae due to the large number of proper names and fairy-tale realias, and the majority of all non-equivalent vocabulary repeats from book to book because the novels narrate the same story. The translator used various translation methods, such as word-to-word translation, sense development, amplification, and synonymous substitution. The usage of transcoding poses the most interest in our eyes, since it was used most often for proper names (e.g., *Jude*), some of which, however, the translator decided to render using Ukrainian concepts (e.g., *Wattle*). The word-to-word translation method was used the most (58%). In our opinion, the use of word-to-word translation to denote non-equivalent vocabulary may be because the translator tried to preserve H. Black's original style, which is very important, especially when considering texts of the fantasy genre that represent a new universe. Also, the use of word-to-word translation helps to preserve the context or associations with the original term or expression, which makes it easier for the reader to understand this phenomenon or the general context. The sense development (25%) and transcoding method (25%) were used to balance creativity and faithfulness, as well as to keep some proper names the way they were used by the author. In particular, the sense development method provides the flexibility to adapt meaning, while transcoding allows creative freedom to invent or localize proper names used in the story.

In many cases, the original text contains cases of non-equivalent lexicon, phenomena that do not exist either in the real world or in the Ukrainian language and culture. In such situations, we believe that the most appropriate option in this context is

word-to-word translation, as it allows for preserving the semantic and stylistic aspects of the original text.

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*Подано до редакції 09.10.2024 року
Прийнято до друку 29.10.2024 року*