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## TRANSLATION TECHNIQUES IN PRESERVING THE AUTHOR'S IDIOSTYLE IN MEMOIR TRANSLATION (CASE STUDY ON BRI LEE'S *EGGSHELL SKULL*)

## ПЕРЕКЛАДАЦЬКІ ПРИЙОМИ ЗБЕРЕЖЕННЯ АВТОРСЬКОГО ІДІОСТИЛЮ ПРИ ПЕРЕКЛАДІ МЕМУАРІВ (НА МАТЕРІАЛІ ТЕКСТУ БРІ ЛІ «*EGGSHELL SKULL*»)

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The article explores the author's idiostyle concept in the context of literary translation relying upon Bri Lee's memoir *Eggshell Skull* text. The idiostyle is understood as the unique linguistic and stylistic «handwriting» of the author. It plays a crucial role in shaping the linguo-stylistic identity of literary texts. Preserving such idiostyle during translation turns out to be a complex task for the translator, requiring linguistic accuracy, cultural and stylistic sensitivity, etc. The research focuses on linguistic means for idiostyle realization used by Bri Lee, namely professional legal terminology, colloquial lexicon, vulgarisms, idioms, and proper names of various types. The article presents the analysis of the system of translation techniques applied to convey these elements in the Ukrainian version of the text. On examining the translation, the study detects nine actively used translation techniques relying on the classification developed by L. Molina and A. Hurtado Albir. Among the most frequent techniques, there are calque (most frequently used one), adaptation, established equivalent, borrowing, and amplification. The list of less frequently used techniques (given in descending order) includes description, transposition, discursive creation, and modulation. The findings of the research demonstrate that the translator gave priority for preserving the authenticity and expressive function of the source text, which is of special importance for memoirs characterized by a high degree of subjectivity and emotivity. It is detected that among the genre-specific features of memoir writing influencing the translator's strategy, there is first-person narration and presence of autobiographical elements. The research sets the perspective of studying translation techniques aimed at preserving the author's idiostyle in prose translation.

**Key words:** non-fictional memoir, idiostyle, linguistic means of realization, translation techniques, *Eggshell Skull*.

У статті досліджується явище ідіостилю автора в контексті літературного перекладу на прикладі мемуарного твору Брі Лі «*Eggshell Skull*». Ідіостиль у цьому випадку розуміється як унікальний мовно-стилістичний почерк автора. Зокрема він відіграє важливу роль у формуванні унікального та неповторного «звучання» літературного тексту. Збереження цього ідіостилю в перекладі належить до основних та складних завдань, оскільки вимагає не лише мовної точності, але і стилістичної та культурної чутливості перекладача. У центрі дослідження поставлено виявлення мовних засобів, за допомогою яких відбувається реалізація власного ідіостилю Брі Лі. Зокрема це професійна юридична термінологія, розмовна лексика, вульгаризми, ідіоми та власні назви різних типів. Розглянуто систему перекладацьких прийомів, застосованих у перекладі для адекватного відтворення цих елементів. Базуючись на класифікації перекладацьких прийомів Л. Моліні та А. Уртадо Албіра, автори виокремлюють дев'ять технік, які використовувалися в перекладі досліджу-

ваного тексту. Найчастотнішими серед них виявилися калька (найбільший відсоток вживань), адаптація, усталений еквівалент, запозичення та посилення. Менш уживаними були (перелік у порядку спадання) опис, транспозиція, дискурсивне утворення та модуляція. Результати дослідження свідчать про прагнення перекладача зберегти автентичність та експресивність оригінального тексту, що має особливу важливість для мемуарів, які характеризуються суб'єктивністю та емоційною насиченістю. Крім того, зазначено, що жанрова специфіка мемуарів, зокрема оповідь від першої особи та автобіографічність, суттєво впливає на вибір перекладацької стратегії та низки перекладацьких рішень. Дослідження визначає перспективне вивчення перекладацьких прийомів, застосованих при перекладі прозових текстів.

**Ключові слова:** нехудожні мемуари, ідіостиль, лінгвістичні засоби реалізації, перекладацькі прийоми, «Eggshell Skull».

**Urgency of the Problem.** In contemporary linguistics, the concept of idiostyle holds significant importance for both literary scholars and translators. It may be called *linguistic «handwriting»* and is reflected in an author's selection of vocabulary units, use of figurative language, syntax, rhythm, and other linguistic features that together establish the distinctive style of the author and their literary piece. Conversely, capturing an author's specific idiostyle presents one of the most complex challenges in translation studies. The importance of this research arises from the need for a thorough examination of effective methods for accurately conveying idiostyle during the translation process [1].

**Analysis of Recent Research and Publications.** The investigation of the various linguistic tools that constitute an individual author's idiostyle, as well as the set of translation techniques designed to preserve it, is also highly significant. Notably, relevant research includes studies related to nonfictional literature and the classification of memoirs (M. Abrams, T. Cherkashyna, B. Paramonov, J. Smith, and others), the notions of idiostyle and text style (G. Leech, O. Kukhar-Onyshko, M. Short, and others), professional terminology (H. Black and others), and translation problems (M. Alosyna, L. Molina, and others).

Nonfictional texts are distinguished by their genre features, which include a blend of mostly factual content with fictional elements, an emphasis on documentary authenticity, a focus on deep psychological insight, and the incorporation of real dates, names, places, and other authentic details. In their article *Nonfictional Literature: Nature, Typology, Terminology*, T. Cherkashyna and B. Paramonov also highlight «subjectivity, personal component, and the fusion of images of the author and narrator» as distinct features of nonfictional literature including the portrayal of real events. They are often filtered through the author's perspective and subjective interpretation [2, p. 79].

Contemporary American author Jack Smith asserts in *The Writer* that «a memoir is a key corner of that genre (i.e., non-fiction)» [3]. Therefore, we can state that a memoir can be described as a nonfictional account in which the author actively participates in or witnesses a sequence of events, recalling them through personal experiences, memories, and official records. Essential characteristics of the memoir genre thus include a first-person perspective, subjectivity, reflection, emphasis on a particular time period or topic, autobiographical elements, and some other features.

Memoir can often be confused with autobiography. In *A Glossary of Literary Terms*, literary critic and scholar M. Abrams notes that autobiography is a sort of a narrative «written by the subject about himself or herself,» whereas memoir, on the other hand, emphasizes «not the author's developing self but the people and events that the author has known or witnessed» [4, p. 27].

Brianna «Bri» Lee is a leading contemporary Australian writer, known also for giving a voice to individuals who have experienced assault [5]. Her debut publication, *Eggshell Skull*, is a memoir that recounts her two-year experience navigating the Australian legal system and highlights the various ways it falls short in supporting victims of sexual assault and harassment [6].

**The Purpose and Objectives of the Study.** This research aims to identify the unique features of Bri Lee's idiostyle in her memoir *Eggshell Skull* and to examine the essential difficulties encountered in translating it. The main objectives include analyzing the linguistic devices used to represent the author's distinctive style and establishing a set of translation strategies that effectively communicate and maintain the author's idiostyle within the literary work [1].

**Main Research Material.** The notion of the author's idiostyle has long been a subject of considerable debate in academic circles. In their work *Style in Fiction: A Linguistic Introduction to English Fictional Prose*, G. Leech and M. Short define style as «a way in which language is used in a given context, by a given person, for a given purpose, and so on,» which consists of the «choices made from the repertoire of the language» [7, p. 31]. According to Ukrainian O. Kukhar-Onyshko, idiostyle is «an expression of the author's worldview» that unifies a literary piece into a cohesive wholesome text and permeates every linguistic element, securing the text's structure and integrity. Additionally, he notes that in case there is «a variety of styles, artificiality, or contrivance,» the author's idiostyle has not been fully formed yet [8].

In general, idiostyle can be described as a blend of stylistic and linguistic features – such as the author's selection of the words, use of figurative language, principles of sentence construction, and syntax – that together create the author's distinctive style [1]. However, in our research, we focus on examining the idiostyle of a particular work – Bri Lee's *Eggshell Skull* – as a representative example of the author's overall idiostyle.

In her memoir *Eggshell Skull*, Bri Lee utilizes various linguistic devices to express her idiostyle, such as technical terminology, colloquial expressions, vulgar language, idioms, and proper nouns [6].

Given that the main goal of any translation is to accurately and adequately render the meaning from the source language to the target language, capturing a specific writer's idiostyle involves conveying «the author's creative personality along with their linguistic methods» [9, p. 4]. This process requires employing a broad range of translation techniques.

In our study, we follow the classification of translation techniques proposed by L. Molina and A. Albir. They differentiated the concept of technique from methods and strategies and identified 18 distinct translation techniques [10]. However, only nine of these techniques were predominantly used in translating of Bri Lee's non-fiction memoir *Eggshell Skull*; those are: adaptation, amplification, borrowing, calque, description, discursive creation, established equivalent, transposition, and modulation [10, pp. 509–511].

Below are examples illustrating the use of these translation techniques.

Adaptation involves substituting a cultural element from the source language (SL) with one from the target language (TL) [10, p. 509], ensuring that the translation is perceived naturally and is culturally appropriate, rather than providing a literal translation. For example:

**(1-s)** *I zoned out, imagining what would happen if the chip on my shoulder manifested itself into an actual wound...* [6, p. 15].

**(1-t)** – На мить я відключилася, уявляючи, що трапилося б, якби **все те почуття невинуватої образи** перетворилося на справжню рану [1].

As defined in Merriam-Webster, *to have a chip on one's shoulder* is an informal idiom, which means «an angry or unpleasant attitude or way of behaving caused by a belief that one has been treated unfairly in the past» [11]. Since there is no precise equivalent in Ukrainian, it is suitable to adapt this idiom and modify it using flexible word combinations that suit the context.

Amplification involves incorporating additional information and details to enhance clarity in the target language text [10, p. 510]. In translation research, this method is also referred to as decompresion, addition, explicative paraphrase or explicitation. An example of this technique is:

**(2-s)** *So many handsome young men in R.M. Williams boots, so many stunning young women in Rhodes & Beckett suits* [6, p. 15].

**(2-t)** Так багато красивих молодих людей у **брендових австралійських речах преміум-класу**: чоловіки в черевиках від «Р.М.Вільямс», а жінки в костюмах від «Родс енд Беккет» [1].

In the translation, the «amplifying» phrase «у брендових австралійських речах преміум-класу» is added to provide extra context, as the average reader might not be familiar with Australian brands and their pricing tiers. This technique aids in clarifying the background of the individuals the narrator met and explains the confusion she felt on her first day at the court building [1].

L. Molina and A. Albir describe borrowing as a translation technique that consists of directly transferring a word or phrase from a different language [10, p. 510]. There are two categories of borrowing distinguished: pure borrowing and naturalized borrowing. In the works of other researchers, this technique is frequently regarded as similar to transcoding (including transliteration and transcription) and naturalization [1]. An example is:

(3-s) *From the window where I stood, I saw a group of Indigenous Australians gathering in Roma Street Parkland, laughing and sharing food* [6, p. 20].

(3-t) *З вікна я бачила групу корінних австралійців, які зібралися в парку Рома-стріт Паркленд, сміялися та обмінювалися їжею* [1].

In this instance, the proper name *Roma Street Parkland* was translated into Ukrainian using naturalized borrowing technique to align with Ukrainian pronunciation and spelling conventions; furthermore, it was clarified by adding the lexeme *парк* [1].

In translation studies, calque is defined as a literal or word-for-word translation from the source into the target language [10, p. 510], as exemplified here:

(4-s) *Where does this leave the pitiable man-who-can't-help-it trope – the misunderstood and unfortunate soul who wishes he didn't have forbidden fantasies about children?* [5, p. 35].

(4-t) – *Куди ж подіти ідею мізерного чоловіка-якому-не-під-силу-щось-вдіяти, нікому не зрозумілої та втраченої душі, яка бажає відректися від заборонених фантазій щодо дітей?* [1].

This example illustrates the application of the calque translation method to translate the colloquial expression *man-who-can't-help-it* as «чоловік-якому-не-під-силу-щось-вдіяти», supporting the source's stylistic tone.

Description entails substituting a source language lexeme or phraseme with its equivalent in the target language based on its function or form [10, p. 510]. When using this technique, the description must precisely capture the meaning of the source text lexeme and be straightforward in both structure and interpretation. An example from our work is:

(5-s) *That evening at home over dinner, my mum asked me about circuit* [5, p. 24].

(5-t) *Того вечора вдома за вечерєю мама почала розпитувати мене про відрядження по окружних судах* [1].

As defined in *Black's Law Dictionary*, *circuit* can be understood as the regular progression of superior court judges through different counties to oversee civil and criminal cases [12, p. 307]. Although Ukraine's administrative and territorial structure does not include divisions such as states, counties, parishes, etc., the concept of *округ* remains present within the Ukrainian legal system. In Chapter 2 of the Law of Ukraine *On the Judiciary and the Status of Judges* [13], this term appears in expressions like «окружний суд», «окружний адміністративний суд», and «окружний господарський суд», all referring to different types of local courts. These are officially rendered in English as «*local general jurisdiction courts*», «*local administrative courts*», and «*local commercial courts*», respectively. As shown, the term *circuit* is not an officially established equivalent for «окружний суд» in Ukrainian legal terminological system. However, because *circuit* is more familiar to the target audience, the phrase «відрядження по окружних судах» aids in making the text more understandable without substantial loss of meaning [1].

Discursive creation aims at establishing «a temporary equivalence that is totally unpredictable out of context» [10, p. 510], as in:

(6-s) *...at least what the Crown is suggesting happened – so what difference does it make to say it out loud instead of dancing around it?* [6, p. 40].

(6-t) *... принаймні, так стверджує сторона обвинувачення. То яка різниця, якщо ми скажемо це прямо, а не будемо крутитися коло та навколо?* [1].

Within the given context, the term *Crown* is used not literally but as a legal term and an alternative designation for the criminal cases prosecution party representing the state. It signifies that Australia is a constitutional monarchy, with its citizens under the protection of the Crown. When adapted to



a different linguistic and legal setting, the phrase «сторона обвинувачення» ensures that the target audience understands the reference accurately and unambiguously. However, although this phrase clearly indicates the prosecuting party, it does not carry the original historical connotations associated with the term *Crown*.

An established equivalent pertains to the use of a term or expression that is fixed in the target language dictionary [10, p. 511]. This technique includes both single-word and phraseological equivalents. In translating Bri Lee's *Eggshell Skull*, most of the specialized legal terminology was conveyed through established equivalents. For example:

(7-s) Cheryl, the extremely friendly **bailiff**, was trying to chat to me about her weekend, and I was short in response [5, p. 28].

(7-t) – Шерил, яка була надзвичайно привітною судовою розпорядницею, увесь час намагалася розпочати розмову про свої вихідні, натомість я тільки кидала короткі фрази у відповідь [1].

According to the *English-Ukrainian Glossary of the European Convention on Human Rights*, the term *bailiff* has several established Ukrainian equivalents, including «судовий виконавець», «судовий розпорядник», and «бейліф» [14, p. 4]. Selection of the most suitable Ukrainian equivalent depends on the context and the translator's knowledge of legal terminology beyond language. Although the word «бейліф» is used in Ukrainian as a borrowed term, it is advisable to avoid it in translations aimed at a general audience unfamiliar with legal jargon. In the considered translation, the term is used to refer to a court employee responsible for executing judicial orders, maintaining order, and ensuring security during proceedings. In the Ukrainian legal system, this role corresponds to *судовий розпорядник*, and following the 2019 Ukrainian orthography's recommendation to use feminine forms for professional nouns, we opted for *судова розпорядниця*.

According to L. Molina and A. Albir, transposition entails altering the grammatical category of a word or phrase [10, p. 511]. An example from our work is:

(8-s) 'Did you see that barrister's cufflinks?' I asked Judge later in the private elevator after **court adjourned** [6, p. 23].

(8-t) – Ви помітили запонки того баристера? – пізніше запитала я суддю, коли ми їхали в ліфті під час **перерви в судовому засіданні** [1].

In this instance, we see that the original legal phrase from the source text, *court adjourned*, was rendered as «перерви в судовому засіданні» in the target text, effectively converting the verb *adjourn* into the noun *перерва* with some additional elaboration. In other words, the translation involves not only a vocabulary shift but also an adjustment of the grammatical structure to ensure the result sounds natural in the target language and is perceived properly by the target audience.

Modulation as a translation technique entails shifting focus, perspective, or cognitive categories during the translation process. This approach highlights not only individual words or phrases but also the style and subtle nuances one can observe in the source text [10, p. 510]. Previously, in the article *Translation transformations and techniques: terminological challenges in translation studies*, we emphasized the relationship between antonymic translation and the use of modulation [15, p. 134]. An illustrative example of the modulation technique in the considered translation of Bri Lee's *Eggshell Skull* is:

(9-s) It was another child sex trial, though, so I was **fresh out of sympathy** [6, p. 38].

(9-t) Та втім, це була чергова справа про сексуальне насильство над дітьми – у мене **не було й крихти співчуття** [1].

In this instance, alterations are evident at both the lexical and structural levels. The Ukrainian translation, «у мене не було й крихти співчуття», shifts the emphasis from the notion of «*running out of*» sympathy to the idea of «*not having even a small amount*» of it, rephrasing the concept by means of negation and metaphor. While both the source text and the target text communicate the idea of lacking sympathy, they utilize different imagery and phrasing.

**Conclusions.** Following a comprehensive analysis of the translation techniques employed in the process of translating Bri Lee's non-fiction memoir *Eggshell Skull*, with the goal of maintaining the author's unique individual style, we determine that the most commonly used techniques are calque (22.93%), adaptation (21.95%), established equivalents (18.05%), borrowing (15.61%), and amplification (10.73%). Less frequently applied ones include descriptive technique (5.37%), transposition (3.41%), discursive creation (1.46%), and modulation (0.49%) [1].

Based on the analysis of *Eggshell Skull*, it can be concluded that Bri Lee's unique style in this book is expressed through five primary linguistic elements: professional terminology, colloquialisms, vulgarisms, idioms, and proper names [1]. The frequent use of legal terminology enhances the vividness and realism of the legal scenarios. At the same time, the inclusion of proper names helps to create a clear picture of the settings and circumstances where the events take place.

Idioms, colloquialisms, and vulgarisms contribute to making the narrative more natural, socially engaging, and emotionally expressive, aligning the text more closely with everyday language. By combining these five linguistic features, Bri Lee effectively provides an authentic and nuanced presentation of the events.

Future research could explore practical applications of the translation techniques system used to preserve the author's idiosyncrasy in English-Ukrainian translations of prose.

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