Is James Joyce Lost in Translation?

Elena Fomenko, Classic Private University, Zaporizhzhya, Ukraine, clara8257@mail.ru

Theory of translation is often criticized for the absence of comprehensive models. Although the linguistic approach to translation is not popular at present, current research gets more and more involved in the study of linguistic-cognitive aspects of translation. The literary translator has always faced two main choices: either to recognize that the semantic value of the source text is deeper than that of the target text or that the target text, on the contrary, is richer in semantic meaning than the source text due to the compensated cultural gaps. Whatever the translator's decision, translation strategies are oriented to the whole text rather than to its fragments. What is more, the translator is in touch with the epoch whose embodiment the translated text is thanks to its reflection on the key concepts of the time. Pre-translation relies on interpretation of conceptual structures, so that the translator would identify the translation boundaries of conceptualizations in the target text. The conceptual structure of the target text is based on correlations of meaning, which establishes interconnectedness between the source and the target text. Hence, translation studies may gain from linguistic theories of literary text with a view of focusing on the interpretive channels of the source texts as their ideal readers. Kirali rightly points to an uncontrolled translation problem area that needs to be comprehended in the process of translation (Munday, 2009, p. 58). This facilitates the translator to identify the key drivers to translating the conceptual sphere of the source text (Nord, 2005, p. 27).

I argue that the conceptual sphere of the source and target text is shared by linguistic-typological invariants that the translator borrows from the epoch to which the source text belongs. These invariants are found in the discourse of original texts in assuming culture that are close in time to the source text. These invariants become core elements on which conceptualizations are grounded in the target text. The linguistic-typological approach to translation is oriented towards careful involvement of the target text in the epoch of the source text's creation due to the choice of conceptualizations that are common to one epoch in the development of cultures and languages.

The present article explores the Russian and Ukrainian translations of James Joyce's *Giacomo Joyce* (Joyce, 1996) with a view of identifying the equilibrium of conceptual structures in the source and target text. Linguistic-typological modeling of a shared conceptual space in both source and target texts helps infer linguistic-typological invariants.

James Joyce is a difficult writer for translation, as his idiostyle is the space of an epiphanic model that cumulates meaning across textual boundaries. His model may be identified as a linguistic, conceptual, mental, psychological inner space of a human being that reflects on the values and philosophy of his time. O'Neill claims that Joyce's translations into many languages create a metatext, giving way to a transtextual translation model (O'Neill, 2005, p. 6). As a result, the existing translations of Joyce's texts into various assuming cultures and languages are compared in order to determine translation problem area across them. By this, any comparison between re-translations of Joyce's texts within one language, as well as translations of his texts into different languages, empowers the translation theorist

with knowledge of the linguistic-typological invariants that are common to synchronous source texts and the original texts created in the target culture and language. Joyce's metatext in translation became a reality with his first translations into European languages. Joyce's first Russian translations appeared in 1925. Unfortunately, this process was impeded by the arrests of his prominent translators whose work came out later anonymously or was fatally lost. After a long period of oblivion, years after his global recognition, Joyce occupied his place in the Russian polysystem. Luckily to *Giacomo Joyce,* it gained popularity among the Soviet readers almost simultaneously with his global admirers. Its Russian translator was a renowned translator of *Ulysses* who had been working for twenty five years to translate this book into the Georgian language. Nico Kiasashvili's is so brilliant and inspiring that no attempts have been made to re-translate this text. His target text balances conceptualizations that are common to Western civilization and Russian culture with domesticated concepts of melancholic fatalism that is close to the Russian heart and experienced by Irish Giacomo in his exile.

I will compare the Russian translation of *Giacomo* with its recent Ukrainian translation. *Giacomo* is a difficult text for translation because its fifty discrete fragments pulsate through multiple, interwoven, barely transparent associative semantic fields, which are hard to retain in translation without shifting either to foreignization or domestication. The text's macrostructure may be divided into three distinct blocks that facilitate cognition: fragments 1-14 with their key word "girls" refer to CHILDHOOD; fragments 15-28 with their key word "virgin" refer to YOUTH; fragments 29-52 with their key concept of "womanhood" refer to MATURITY; fragments 43-50 tie the blocks together. All conceptualizations are put together in Fragment 47:

Source text: *Sliding – space – ages – foliage of stars – and waning heaven – stillness – and stillness deeper – stillness of annihilation – and her voice.*

Russian translation: *Скольжение – пространство – века – лиственный водопад звезд и убывающие небеса – безмолвие – безнадежное безмолвие – безмолвие исчезновения – в ее голосе.*

Ukrainian translation: *Минуще – простір – віки – тьмище зір – і зникомі небеса – безрух – і ще глибший безрух – безрух зникнення – і її голос.*

This sequence is a text in itself that reveals many links with the rest of the text. These are concepts through which the whole text can be read, so the translator has to establish, first, the linguistic-cognitive structure that connects each lexeme with other lexemes in the corresponding fragments, and, second, decide on the choice of the concepts that are their equivalents in assuming culture.

1. *Sliding* (direct repetition of the lexeme from fragment 11 is linked via [DESCENT] with *sink, droop, fall, movements, pass, stream*, and *moving* that appear in other fragments of *Giacomo*. Both translators avoid the direct repetition with fragment 11, separating tobogganing from sliding through ages. It is remarkable that their translation choices are different. The Russian translator focuses on the movement across space and ages, whereas the Ukrainian translator conceptualizes "sliding into the past". At the same time, both concepts in the combination with "space" and "ages" are unified by the Slavonic concept WAY. Joyce means the same by using hyphenation that separates each concept in fragment 47. He verbalizes the creative activity as "sliding" through epiphanized creative consciousness. Similarly writes Andrei Bely in his *Petersburg*.

2. *Space* [WORLD]: in the source text, these are *nature, sky, the cold stars*; [INTERVAL]: *gash*; [SPACE]: *spread, darkness of history, midnight, far beyond, from beyond, the moon*. Both translators conceptualize SPACE as the content of consciousness, similar to Joyce.

3. *Ages* [HERE AND NOW]: Joyce ties this together by resorting to *the silent middle age, here and now*, [ROTATION] *whirl, turn, youth has an end*. Both translators select a Slavonic concept that is in harmony with their cultures' understanding of TIME. In Slavonic consciousness, "ages" is finite in human life and infinite as ETERNITY. These conceptualizations are interpreted by both translators as a sequence of WAY ("sliding") – SPACE ("space") – ETERNITY ("ages").

4. *Foliage of stars* [VEGETABLE]: Joyce's associative field includes *flower, peagreen cover, odorless flower, huddled roofs, huddled human forms, myriad veins,* and *vegetable glass of nature*. The Russian translation brilliantly employs the metaphor of a waterfall that connects *foliage* with the plants scattered throughout Joyce's text. The Ukrainian translator points to another meaning whose sources are in Joyce's lexemes *huddled* and *myriad*.

5. *Waning heaven* [DETERIORATION]: Joyce's *droop, sink, shake, die*, [FAILURE]: *fail, sink, go wrong*, [RECESSION]: *recoil*. Both translators select "heavens". They emphasize the movement into the inside of a human being. It is interesting to note that the Russian translator puts together Joyce's *foliage of stars* and *waning heaven*. He avoids a hyphen and presents them as an inseparable unity connected by "and". This tying together emphasizes the direction of the movement, through the stars and away to seclusion of calm and quietness.

6. *Stillness* [REST]: Joyce's *calm, peace, silence, halt, sleeping*, [SILENCE]: *quiet, mute, soft, lay, lie prostrate, lie about, prostrate*. All this is opposed to the movement that is the feature of [DESCENT], [HERE AND NOW], [DETERIORATION]. The Ukrainian translator selects REST, whereas the Russian translator translates Joyce's "stillness" through the Christian concept SILENCE. The Russian lexeme also means the absence of voice, calmness, not saying anything. The Russian translator chooses "silence" from available synonyms by conceptualizing deepness of stillness through a Christian reflection on the awareness of God's presence. SILENCE in the Russian translation has deep roots with hesychia, the tradition of the Wilderness. The Russian translator manages to retain Joyce's multiple content of "stillness". His translation has conceptualized Christian culture by focusing on the typologies that unify both the source and target text. The Ukrainian translation blurs this Christian reflection.

7. *Deeper stillness* [DEPTH]: Joyce's *sunk, buried, heart, hollow, soundless*. The Russian translator continues deepening the meaning of "stillness" by pointing to the silence that is in vain and dangerously still, whereas the Ukrainian translator increases the condition of not moving. The former focuses on the degree of SILENCE, whereas the latter accumulates "stillness". However, the fatalism that is felt in the Russian translation may be missing in the source text. Joyce anticipates the truth of epiphany which for him is something like "inner silence/inner stillness". In Russian, SILENCE may be modified as "inner silence", "complete silence", and "absolute silence". Russian culture is sensitive to the movements of the soul as movements into consciousness marked by sacred calm and stillness. The Russian translator echoes on the Russian original texts that described similar situations as the pulsations of the soul.

8. *Stillness of annihilation* [NON-EXISTENCE] [REST] [SILENCE]: Joyce uses such lexemes as *dissolve, die*, [DESTRUCTION]: *sink*. The Russian translator's equivalent is "silence of not being present" and the Ukrainian translator's equivalent is "lack of movement caused by the absence". This is hard to translate because annihilation may be rejection or epiphanic anticipation of awakening and renewal. It is likely that Joyce means both.

9. *And her voice* [SOUND]: Joyce's *noise, echo, resonant, rude* = vernacular (*boneless Viennese Italian, beat, tap, purr, voice of wisdom*). The Russian translation replaces the nominative case in the source text by the prepositional case, which interferes with the state of

silence because of something unexpected in "her voice". The Ukrainian translator retains the original nominative case. The Russian translator reflects on the echo, which in fact is the voice of a human female: what she says is a shadow, for she has left Giacomo's life, leaving her poetic image in the epiphanic language that will know, unlike her, eternity.

The first fragment of *Giacomo* is the driver to the whole translation. The problem area is the object through which a young wealthy woman looks at the world and Giacomo. The word combination *quizzing glasses* is translated as lorgnette. In Russian, this word points to the object with two lenses and to the object with one lens on a handle. In Chekhov's play *Cherry Orchard* a heroine uses the lorgnette that has one lens. Hence, translated directly as a popular object, it should be лорнетка, which is Chekhov's word. But Giacomo points to the distorting properties of glasses as a reflecting, mirroring surface. Joyce himself fails to use the lexeme lorgnette. His Muse admires him through a mirroring surface that distorts the real objects, turning a poor teacher of English into Giacomo Casanova. In the Russian translation the Muse looks through the quizzing glasses, whereas in the Ukrainian translation she uses them to have a better look at the object of her scrutiny. Her own eyes are covered from Giacomo because of this object. The Russian translator focuses on the look that as scrutiny with condescension. He retains the metaphor that is present in the source text. The Ukrainian translator resorts to the word-for-word translation being loyal to Joyce's repetitions of *brief*. Unlike him, the Russian translator selects an equivalent to a brief syllable that corresponds to "a sigh" that follows monosyllabic "Yes". The Russian translator grasps at the monosyllabic structure of most words in this sequence of sentences in the source text. He masterly retains Joyce's rhythm and nervous pulsation without repeating Joyce's *brief* whose corresponding Russian lexeme has not one but two syllables. Both translations preserve alliteration:

The source text: *Yes: a **brief** syllable. A **brief** laugh. A **brief** beat of the eyelids. /*

The Russian translation: *Да: вздох. Смех. Взлет ресниц.*

The Ukrainian translation: *Атож. Говорить **рвучко**. Сміється **рвучко**. І так само **рвучко** стріпує повіками.*

In comparison with the Russian translation, the Ukrainian one appears to be heavy. Although the Ukrainian translator repeats the lexeme, Joyce's original word is monosyllabic. Moreover, Joyce's sentences are elliptical, whereas the Ukrainian translator uses a subject-predicate pair in the last sentence. Finally, he omits Joyce's colon by using a comma instead. It may be argued how consistent Joyce is in his usage of colons. But the fact that in *Giacomo* he uses 50 colons speaks louder than words : this punctuation mark turns into a signature of *Giacomo,* for each appearance of a colon needs intepretation. In my view, the Russian translation grasps at the code of the target text better than the Ukrainian one: everything is perceived through a mirroring surface, the distorted truth, the play of words, seeming similarities, and seeming differences: exactly as it is in the source text.

For example, fragment 3 draws a parallel between Joyce and Hamlet.

The source text: *I launch forth on an easy wave of tepid speech: Swedenborg, the pseudo-Areopagite, Miguel de Molinos, Ioachim Abbas.*

The Russian translation: *Я вздымаюсь на легкой волне ученой речи: Сведенборг, псевдо-Ареопагит, Мигель де Молинос, Иоахим Аббас.*

The Ukrainian translation: *Мене підносить на легкій хвилі беземоційної мови: Сведенборг, псевдо-Ареопагіт, Мігель де Молінос, Йоахім Аббас.*

I would like to focus more broadly on the lexeme "tepid", which is translated by the Russian translator as "academic speech" and by the Ukrainian translator as "emotionless speech". Definitely, these are two different meanings. Joyce resorts to the intertextual links with *Hamlet*: *It waves me forth again* [Shakespeare 1977: 1078]. Like a serpent that stinks Hamlet's father, Giacomo's speech "poisons" the young pupil by getting her interested in the teacher that says something whose content is left beyond the text. Joyce's *Giacomo* builds his

speech by keeping his emotions tight and hidden under a list of names that is talking itself. The lexeme *tepid* is synonymous with [HEAT], close to "mild" and "genial" on the one hand and "lukewarm" and "frozen" on the other. The speech is intentionally academic. Swedenborg is a mystic who could contact with the souls of the spirits. This mystic experienced epiphanies. The pseudo-Areopagite called for being freed from the visual and the subject of the visual in order to be cleansed from the inside. This theologian mastered the mystery of epiphanies, which is directly connected with "quizzing glasses" at the beginning of *Giacomo*. De Molinos claimed that the human mind had no direct knowledge of God. Abbas (1130-1202) was a commentator of the apocalypse. Similar to Areopagite, he represented the Orthodox Church and might have been admired by Joyce for his opposition to the Catholic Church. From this, it may be assumed that the mystic experience of epiphanies, the boundaries of these experiences, and knowledge available to the soul are connected in Joyce's consciousness with Hamlet's doubts and thoughts. The Russian translation retains the conceptualizations that are implicitly present in Joyce's list of names. This list, uncovered without translators' notes, is in itself "deep stillness" or "silence" of awe that turns the interpretation to Christian reflections hidden behind the "quizzing glasses" of Joyce's own doubts and genuine human soul.

The use of colons is a linguistic-typological marker of epiphanic writing that can be found in Bely and Proust among others. This is a code of a special link, a sign that is similar to the gaps between the fragments that narrow or widen in the manuscript. Joyce's colons have multiple interpretations. They reveal the process of creating a thought about thought, like below:

The source text: *Rounded and ripened: rounded by the lathe of intermarriage and ripened in the forcing house of the seclusion of her race.*

The Russian translation: *Выточенная и вызревшая: выточенная резцом внутрисемейных браков, вызревшая в оранжерейной уединенности своего народа.*

The Ukrainian translation*: Заокруглена й дозріла: заокруглена різцем внутрішньородових шлюбів і дозріла в тепличній ізольованості своєї раси.*

Both translators have retained Joyce's repetitions before the colon. The Ukrainian translator closely follows Joyce, leaving Joyce's *race*, whereas the Russian translator domesticates *race* as "people". The Russian translator is in line with the translations of the Old Testament in which "people" is used in a similar sense. Joyce describes the object of his adoration before the colon; after it, he speaks about his own seclusion of an exile, which connects him to the Muse and her people.

It is interesting to note that both translators rethink the use of colons in Joyce's source text. The Ukrainian translator omits Joyce's colons several times. The same strategy is used by the Russian translator. It is remarkable that they change punctuation in different places. I will demonstrate how meaningful Joyce's colons are in the fragment that has no changes in punctuation in both translations.

The source text: *On the stairs. A cold frail hand: shyness, silence: dark languor-flooded eyes: weariness.*

The Russian translation: *Лестница. Холодная хрупкая рука: робость, молчание: темные, полные истомы глаза: тоска.*

The Ukrainian translation: *На сходах. Холодна тендітна рука: сором'язкість, мовчання: темні, млосно наповнені очі: втома.*

Joyce's colons are surrounded by such concepts as "shyness" and "silence". The third colon introduces the concept *weariness*. The Russian translator chooses the Russian concept that has no close equivalent in English and can be translated as "melancholy/depression" or "weariness/boredom". In Russian culture, the concept of "melancholic boredom" absorbs both possibilities by blurring any difference in a nationally specific concept. The Russian translator

emphasizes an anxiety that us caused by emptiness of the soul. Giacomo's eyes are filled with desire whose yearning needs satisfying in creative writing.

In the fragment that describes the church service at dawn the semicolon introduces the Latin quotation from John's Gospel.

The source text: *…the steelblue waking **waters** chill my heart. They creep and lap about the island whereon men have lived since the stone age ..... Tawny gloom in the vast gargoyled church. It is cold as on that morning: quia frigus erat.*

The Russian translation: *…синевато-стальная вешняя **вода** леденит сердце мое. Она плещется и ласкается к острову, на котором живут люди со времен каменного века … Ржавый мрак в огромном храме с мерзкой лепниной. Холодно, как в то утро: quia frigus erat.*

The Ukrainian translation: *… тільки-но пробуджені сталево-сині **води** студять мені серце. Вони хлюпочуть і припадають до острова, на якому люди живуть від кам'яного віку … Темно-рудуватий морок у просторому храмі з химерною ліпнявою. Холодно, як того ранку: quia frigus erat.*

Joyce describes *waters* that remind of ink in a fountain pen. The Russian translator uses the concept of spring/vernal floods that carry melted snow and ice with one difference: the "floods" in the plural is replaced by "flood" in the singular. The Russian translation focuses on awakening of water, its flowing condition. The Russian translator emphasizes the meaning of cleansing, purifying water. The link between spring floods and the middle age that Joyce describes in *Giacomo* is inferred from a Russian saying that years have been carried away as spring floods. This association is intertextual: Turgenev's character from *Spring Floods* went to Paris where the fragment is located. The vernal floods are associated with Rachmaninov's romance ("spring" and "vernal" are synonyms in Russian). Similar to Joyce, the Russian translator translates this yarning of renewal, which is dear to the Russian soul. The Ukrainian translator deepens the presence of darkness but avoids domestication through the nationally specific concept. His translation is emotionally neutral in comparison with the Russian translation. The unifying principles are not the same in the translations. The Ukrainian translation avoids direct Christian reflections.

Joyce's idiostyle is rich in repetitions. The Ukrainian translator carefully retains them. The Russian translator chooses to leave them or to omit them selectively. For example:

The source text: *O you **would**, **would** you? A lady of letters.*

The Russian translation: *Конечно, вы спросили бы! Дама ученая.*

The Ukrainian translation: *О, ти **б спитала б**, таки **спитала?** Пані едукована.*

In this fragment, the Russian translator not only avoids repetition but also turns an interrogative sentence into an exclamatory one. The Ukrainian translator addresses the young woman with "thee", which intimacy is controlled by the polite "you" in the Russian translation.

One more example is given below.

The source text: *A flower given by her to my daughter. **Frail** gift, **frail** giver, **frail** blue-veined child.*

The Russian translation: *Цветок, что она подарила моей дочери. **Хрупкий** подарок, **хрупкая** дарительница, **хрупкий** прозрачный ребенок.*

The Ukrainian translation: *Квітка, що вона дала моїй доньці. **Благенький** дарунок, **благенька** дарувальниця, **благеньке** синьожильне дитя.*

This time, both translators retain Joyce's repetitions of *frail*. But in Celtic "blue" is the color that symbolizes a poet. The Ukrainian translator leaves the color in translation, whereas the Russian translator omits it by describing the child's frailty. Through mentioning his daughter Lucia, Joyce speaks about his poetic gift. Avoiding the color, the Russian translator

repeats the root of the word meaning "gift" in three Russian derivatives. The Muse gives a gift (a flower, most likely a rose) herself. The rose quickly fades, similar to human life.

Joyce's text is full of shifts, nuances, and shades of meaning. These shifts are expressed by a variety of deictic elements. The initial "Who" may characterize any of many personages, real and imaginary, that appear in the source text. Giacomo's *she* is both specific and universal, a modern Muse, an object of desire.

The translation space is controlled by the interpretive keys provided by the source text. They are text constants that integrate conceptualization into one epiphanic whole. The translator's consciousness works as the ideal reader's consciousness. In the act of translating the given conceptual space of "who" that uses "quizzing glasses" is transformed into epiphanic writing. The choice of translation strategies needs to optimize the techniques of such writings with their multiple interpretations.

The Russian translation of *Giacomo* is in itself a work of art that reconstructs the system of images involved in the fluctuations of the source text. The Russian translator selects those translation equivalents that are connected with completed verbalized images. Some elements of domestication are not alien to the source text, since Giacomo values his soul above all, and this is close to the Russian heart. Giacomo is an Italian under whose mask can be found any exile, any artistic nature, and any poetic mind. The Ukrainian translation is technically closer to Joyce's text: it retains Joyce's repetitions without search of translation equivalents whose nature is interpretive. Both translators achieve contextual correspondences and are consistent in translation strategies.

Both translations have indicated that translating universalizes the depth of semiotic signs. The translator ties the language picture of the world to assuming culture by neutralizing the gap between universalism as a translation strategy and the unique character of the source text. The translation space is unified by Joyce's "sliding", one of the first concepts that appear in a sequence of mere concepts that can be interpreted in different ways in the source text itself. Joyce's text is highly symbolic because it is grounded in nominalizations whose meaning is inferred from the mosaics of each fragment within the framework of the unified whole.

Joyce's source text and its translations live in a shared space of his epoch's literary discourse, recognized in Russian literature through the works of Bely and Chekhov, as well as philosophical treatises of Russian thinkers. These three texts of *Giacomo* are united by a linguistic-typological invariant that is MOVEMENT of THOUGHT. The language pulsates, enjoys its own rhythm, and expresses the blended reality and imagination.

Literary translation is involved in linguistic-typological modeling of the fictional discourse of the epoch through interpenetrating linguistic-typological variants that are found in other texts of assuming culture and are built on the epiphanic model of Joyce's kind. Both Russian and Ukrainian translations have shown that Joyce is not lost in translation. Yet, his epiphanic modeling needs careful pre-translation analysis in which all associations become transparent and make up a conceptual sphere that is comprehensive to assuming culture. The Russian translation is deeper in comparison with the Ukrainian one because it reflects on Joyce's other texts and views them together with the Russian works of art that share with *Giacomo* their own epiphanies. Joyce's pain and glory, his torturing love and awareness of his great writing talent – all this is with awe and pain are kept in the Russian translation. The Ukrainian translation, in this sense, is neutral and less reflective on Joyce's doubts that are so many in the source text.

Literature

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Аннотация

В статье рассматривается переводной текст как результат интерпретационных усилий переводчика, сохраняющих концептуальное равновесие между оригинальным и переводным текстом. Лингвотипологическое моделирование общего концептуального пространства оригинального и переводного текста устанавливается выведением лингвотипологических инвариантов.