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## The Translator as a Mediator in the Dialogue of Literatures

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### Abstract

The article raises the issue of translating the works of national literatures through an intermediate language since most of the works of the peoples of Russia find their readers in the world thanks to the Russian language. The urgency of this problem is obvious in modern conditions when the interest in Turkic-speaking literature is growing, and many Russian poets, like in the Soviet era, see themselves as the translators from national languages. On the example of the translation of the poem «təshtəgeçə bu kən – səer həm iat ...» (“the day is like a dream”) of the contemporary poetess Yulduz Minnullina both the strengths and the weaknesses of the modern translation school are considered. The word for word translation can lead to the unification of differences between literatures when the dominant language (the Russian language) imposes certain aesthetic principles on the original text. The most important aspect of the topic of interest is the consideration of the role of interlinear translation in the establishment of interliterary dialogue. Through interlinear translation a foreign work, endowed with its special world of ideas, images, national and artistic traditions, serves as the basis for dialogical relations that are indispensable for both the Russian-speaking reader who discovers the “other” literature, and the very work that is included in the dialogue in the “large time”. At the same time, the elimination of differences between literatures occurs when the translator, through the Russian language, by means of line-by-line translation, introduces the features of his own consciousness into a foreign work. In this case, the translation simplifies the content of the literature, equalizes the artistic merits, thereby projecting the life of the work onto communication, rather than dialogue.

**Keywords:** Translation, A dialogue of literatures, Yulduz Minnullina, The Russian language, The Tatar language, Interference, Mediator.

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## Introduction

In the twentieth century, new conditions emerged for the interaction of Russian literature with the literature of the peoples of Russia, depending on the processes of national self-identification being characteristic of this cultural and historical period. During this period the Russian language as the dominant language begins to act as an intermediary between national literatures. This, in turn, leads to an increase in the role of Russian literature as a subject of interliterary dialogues, it is the twentieth century when new functions are formed that are generated by the structural and content features and the dynamics of intercultural communications.

Russian as an intermediate language begins to perform a special function in the process of translation. In many respects, thanks to A.M. Gorky, since 1920 the translation activity has been developing in the context of strengthening the ties between the peoples living on the territory of the former Soviet Union. At the same time, the works of most of its peoples became known to the Russian people, and also to foreign readers, thanks mainly to the interlinear translation. For example, A. Akhmatova translated the works of medieval Korean poets and of G. Tukay, the poems of Georgian romantics were translated by B. Pasternak in a similar way. In Russian and other languages, one can find a variety of similar examples of translation practice.

## Materials and methods

The research is based on the concepts developed in modern Russian and foreign translation studies and comparative linguistics, which consider the role of an interpreter in interliterary dialogue and communication (Tooper, 2000; Frawley, 1984; Qiuxia, 2008; Hatim & Munday, 2004; Safiullin, 2012).

As Russian scholar J. Safiullin writes, "in the dialogue, each of its participants recognizes another (different than himself) and a joint path to knowledge, meaning, which does not necessarily result in an agreement. Communication is monologic because the information transmission and reception are accompanied by the division into the sides that translate information and perceive it, they can alternately change their places. The purpose of communication is knowledge" (2012). Communication arises in different forms of a foreign reception, in particular, when a Russian-speaking translator, relying on interlinear text, cannot overcome the boundaries of its content by virtue of dominating the Russian language as the basis of his thinking, in order to express in his translation the cultural and national identity of the original author. In this case, the translated work is freed from its dialogical purposes: now it translates to the reader the values of the translator's culture, the aesthetic features of the Russian language as an intermediary.

At the same time, there is another main aspect of literary translation - *dialogical* as one of the objective factors of the historical literary process. None of the modern literatures can successfully develop in isolation: monuments of Tatar literature have crossed their national borders owing to the Russian language, the works of world literature have reached the national reader through the Russian language. According to V. Humboldt, "every nation is surrounded by a circle of its language, and one can get out of this circle only by passing to another" (Potebnya, 2007). The Russian language, oriented towards the elements of the national, assumes the forms of narration, finds new structures within other literature, thereby creating a mutual orientation of the two languages and cultures.

The reference to the works dealing with the dialogue of "one's own" and "another's" was of great importance in the development of the research concept, since the translation is based on the desire by means of another language to convey the features of the author's artistic thinking, his aesthetic ideal and values, to preserve the dialogical possibilities inherent in the nature of the literary work (Amineva et al.,

2015; Amineva, 2016; Ibragimov et al., 2015; Varlamova & Safiullina, 2015; Kravchinska & Hayrutdinova, 2016).

One of the main concepts representing the translation issue is linguistic and aesthetic interference. Two kinds of interference affect the creation of translation of the literary work. In the translation, performed without the interlinear, a language interference comes in. At the same time, the difficulties of a linguistic nature are usually understood by the translator: the interpreter, knowing the language of the original text to perfection, knowing the writer's work, the features of his literary expression, seeks to highlight the dominant in the text and eliminate the discrepancies of various kinds that are inevitable in translating.

Considering the translator as an intermediary in the dialogue of literatures, it is necessary to take into account the role of *aesthetic interference*, which is defined as a spontaneous, involuntary impact of the national consciousness of the perceiver on the reception and translation of a foreign work (Khabibullina, 2015).

The material of the study was the translation of the poem «təşhtəgeçə bu kən – səer həm iat ...» (“the day is like a dream”) into the Russian language, performed by modern Tatar poetess Yu. Minnullina.

The objectives of the study are related to the consideration of the translations of Tatar poetry of the late twentieth and early twenty-first centuries into Russian, done via an intermediary, which is the Russian language, and the peculiarities of perception of the text of “alien” culture through the mediation of the Russian language.

## Results

Examination of the issues of the dialogue between Russian and national literatures of the Volga region is associated with the analysis of cultural processes at the “intersection” of Russian and other worlds, the phenomena of struggle and the synthesis of external and internal “archetypes” that generate the literary forms properly.

According to A. Shveitser, “translation can be defined as a one-way and two-phase process of interlingual and intercultural communication, in which on the basis of the primary text purposefully (with respect to translation) analyzed, a *secondary text* (metatext) is created, *which replaces the primary text in another linguistic and cultural environment* [italics are us]; ...a process characterized by the set to render the communicative effect of a primary text, partially modified by the differences between two languages, two cultures and two communicative situations (Shveitser, 1988).

The translators, as the bearers of another culture, do not fully reveal the depth of meanings contained in the source texts. Here one can talk about a special case of interference when the translator is strongly influenced by the Russian language. In this case, the measure of the translator's creativity with respect to the search for the correspondences to the signs of the original text is determined by the conceptual and image-bearing potential of these signs.

Translation always takes place in accordance with the cultural paradigm with which the subject of the dialogue identifies himself. In this case, it is not just transposing the text into another system of linguistic signs, but also transplanting the meaning into the space of another culture, it is not reduced to simple transcoding, but it is also an explication, commentary, interpretation. The translation work acts as an intermediary not only between two literatures but also cultures, it helps enrich the receiving culture, introduces new themes and ideas into it. As modern translator Alena Karimova notes, “when we begin translating this or that thing, we ... are forced to live a piece of life in other reality, at other time, in other circumstances” (Karimova, 2014).

For example, R. Kutuy, having referred to the work of the Tatar poet of the early twentieth century, Derdemend, creates Russian works that are difficult to call translations, these poems created after the Derdemend lyrics are aesthetically of great value. In this case, the translation for R. Kutuy is another way of expressing oneself using the material of the predecessor poet. The translator, like the author of the translated work, “thinks” using images, is in search for and realization of linguistic, compositional and other correspondences to these images. This approach to the source text is the most appropriate in cases when it is impossible to reproduce all the subtleties of the original text in translations (the lyrics of Derdemend are practically untranslatable into other languages).

The same difficulties are faced with by modern Russian-speaking poets, who get acquainted with the original texts by mean of interlinear translation. The interlinear text, on the one hand, impoverishes the original text, because the figurative system of the latter is not reducible to its vocabulary. At the same time, it leaves room for the development of the translator's imagination, supported mainly by key words and story lines of the original text. Therefore, on the other hand, the interlinear encourages the interpreter to extend his “own” onto “someone else's” and achieve the unity with it. Let us turn to concrete examples from modern poetry.

Many translations of young Tatar poets in the “Anthology of New Tatar Poetry”, performed by Russian poets using the literal translation, impoverish the world of Tatar poetry. A modern critic can give a very ambiguous assessment of the translations presented in the “Anthology” because along with the successful rendering of the poetic thought of the Tatar authors, we see a very schematic representation of a foreign language culture in target works. The literal translation, in this case, led to the unification of the differences in the literatures being in dialogue. Such translations lose the things that connect with many threads the literary work with its culture and the national identity of the author.

At the same time, the literal translation, as it was mentioned above, can allow us to achieve a deep unity of the original poem with a translation in Russian through the extension of “one's own” onto “someone else's”.

Let us dwell in greater detail upon the poem by Yu. Minnullina «təštəgeçə bu kən – səer həm iat ...» («den' kak vo sne ...» / “the day is like a dream”).

The excellence of the Tatar poet has been noted by the Russian-Italian literary award “Bella”: in 2016 she won this award in the nomination “The Touching of Kazan” for the poem «den' kak vo sne ...» / “the day is like a dream” translated into Russian by Herman Vlasov.

Y. Minnullina (born in 1985) creates the poems that differ in fragmentation, reticence. Her poetry is multifaceted, according to D.F. Zagidullina, Minnullina's works characterize “lyricism and symbolism, the desire for detail, including through intertextual links, illusory, ephemeral picture of the world, which points to the plurality of meanings” (Zagidullina, 2016).

With the introduction to this poem, the poet's refusal from capital letters immediately jumps to the eyes. This corresponds to the general trends of Russian poetry: the absence of capital letters makes reading more delayed.

Minnullina's poem is characterized by original poetics. It fits into the framework of urban poetry. The picture of a contemporary city is presented: cars, a red signal light, houses in the windows of which shadows are dancing, the crowd hastening on the affairs, etc. A lyrical hero is a person from the crowd, but he is sensitive to his loneliness among people whose “views pass through him”. Seeking to overcome the city vanity, the poet calls to stop during a short pause and become imbued with a state of silence (“kuzgalmyi tor, sularga da kyima”).

The heroine of the poem seeks to see any manifestation of life, it can even become a disease:

sin barmy soñ əle? – synap kara,  
hich'iugynda, əidə, salkyn tider...  
(ty zhiv eshche? a nu-ka sdelai vid

i na khudoi konets skhvati prostudu ...) (Anthology of New Tatar Poetry, 2015). / (are you still alive? Make a show of catching a cold at the worst...)

She is a rebel against the indifference that reigns in modern society, therefore, acutely experiencing her loneliness, she tries to pull invisible ties of communication with those who live in this city vanity. Hence, there is a certain change in focus: a glance is cast at the window, but there is just a shadow (in the postmodern world picture, simulacra come to the place of images), the impossibility to get rid of indifference is also manifested in the fact that «sletaia k volosam, / k ego resnitsam sneg ne taet » / “when it flies to his hair, / his eyelashes the snow does not melt”.

The form corresponds to the content of the poem: this is a fragment. Before us there are fragments of thoughts, torn from the stream of life impressions, which are strung together.

The translation by Herman Vlasov, performed using a linear translation, allows you to say about many merits of the poem of the Tatar poetess. However, it happens primarily because the poetic manner of Minnullina's writing is congenial to the Russian poet himself (his own poems are also fragmented, he refuses capital letters, which makes the process of reading poetry delayed). Even the appearance of individual turns in the translation refers to works by Vlasov himself:

G. Vlasov:

Tak tanets voznikaet: ia khochu  
porvat' so starym, vytsvetshim, solenym  
i sam sebia ot vymysla lechu,  
i udivliaius' porosliam zelenym («Dance»).

Y. Minnullina:

təshətəgeçə bu kən – səer həm iat,  
keshelərneñ karashlary – sineñ asha,  
sineñ asha elmaialar ber-berenə,  
tizlegen də kimetmichə iakynlasha  
mashinalar ...

den' kak vo sne – on dikovat i chuzhd:

toboi prokhodit vzgliadov porosl',  
toboi letaiut babochki iz ust,  
mashiny ne sbavliaiut skorost'

(Anthology of New Tatar Poetry, 2015).

Vlasov was able to develop and convey to the Russian-speaking reader the internal tension of thought of the Tatar poet: the work of translation is permeated with the same sense of loneliness of a thinking person in the crowd, so the work by Minnullina is. However, with all its dignity, translation by interlinear in this case also leads to the unification of differences in the literatures.

әнә, кара, шәһәр urtasynda  
taktalary cherep betkән koima,  
koima arty – zirat, tash khachlarda  
nichә karga? – sana! – kuzgalmyi tor! –  
tirәklәrdә nichәy? – sana! sana!  
dән'ia kiһ sana ul, dән'ia matur!  
  
no chto eto? zabor, budto skelet,  
bliz tsentra gorodskie zdan'ia;  
kladbishchenskii zabor, gde *na krestakh*  
uselis' – skol'ko ikh – vorony,  
stoiat', ne dvigat'sia: na vetkakh, na shestakh  
*prekrasen mir, pust' pokhoronnyi.*  
(Anthology of New Tatar Poetry, 2015).

The expressions corresponding to the bearers of the Christian view of life are introduced to the target work, the text of the Tatar poetess, in this case, is transformed according to the principles of the Russian language consciousness. Herman Vlasov does not differentiate between Christianity and Islam, he uses a word that cannot be imagined in the poem of a Tatar poet: *на крестах/ on crosses* (na shestakh); the line “dән'ia kiһ sana ul, dән'ia matur!” (literal translation: mir neob"iaten, mir prekrasen! / the world is immense, the world is beautiful!) is compared in translation with the “world of the funeral”, which also diverges from the ideas of Islam.

Thus, thanks in many respects to the intermediary function of the Russian language, the writers' works of national literatures are available to a wide range of readers. At the same time, each of these literatures has its unique national distinctness, which causes certain difficulties when translating.

## Conclusion

Dialogue relations contribute, on the one hand, to the development of universal semantic structures, on the other hand, to the national and cultural self-identification of literary and artistic systems. In the case of studying the translated works performed through the intermediate language, we come to the conclusion that the differences in the literatures in dialogue are unified. The appearance of such translations contradicts the national values of the Turkic language literatures of modern Russia, i.e. in their basis - overcoming the identity of literary works as a necessary condition for the dialogue of literatures.

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