A Neologism: Translation and/or Adaptation

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Abstract

This article deals with neologisms, the way they are created (their etymology), their function in the text, as well as the way how they are translated and adapted from English into French and Croatian. It will show what are the motifs for some translations (Is it a pure semantic transfer or the text and context have their role too?). Furthermore, we will analyse the main techniques/ways of creating the new words and try to answer the question what purpose they are created with for the whole text. At the end, we will give some examples of a good translation which goes beyond the word or the situation and show how the translator influences the reading of the book.

Keywords: translation, neologism, meaning, adaptation, English, French, Croatian, Harry Potter

Introduction

Translation is all about the meaning, but the meaning is not all in translation.

According to Ghazala (1995:1), "translation generally refers to all the process and methods used to render and/or transfer the meaning of the source language text into the target language as closely, completely and accurately as possible". This means that the meaning is translated in relation to grammar, style and sounds of the target language and not only by that what the words "mean".

Furthermore, translation implies a process and methods leading to (some and hopefully) appropriate equivalent which respects the grammar rules, style and morphosemantic features of the target language. Translation is not a simple copy-paste action. It is a whole process which implies many different approaches in order to obtain the „appropriate" equivalent or the equivalent textual material as it is defined by Catford (1965:19). What method (procedure) of translation will be used largely depends on the choice of the translator and his/her competence of finding the best solution (word by word translation, adaptation, semantic translation…). But the key word in all translation is the **appropriate equivalent** which, in fact, represents the meaning of the word (expression…) which is the closest to the original meaning and the word (form).

The appropriate equivalent is much more than just the meaning of the word in the source language. It implies all possible connotations which the translator has to include in order to represent in the best way and in the spirit of the target language what is said in the source language. This also implies that the translator has to be very educated in grammar and in metrics of both languages, that he/she has to be aware of the context in which the source language is written, that he/she has to feel the spirit of the target language, and that he/she has to be familiar with the cultural phenomena of both languages. Finally, the time the translator has at his/her disposal to do some translation can also play a significant role in transferring the meaning from one text to another.

A Neologism

Most frequently a neologism is a new, coined word or phrase constructed or invented to assign a name to a new reality. Or as Newmark (1985:139) puts it: „Neologisms can be defined as newly coined lexical units or existing lexical units that acquire a new sense."

Very often it involves the description of the function of the new word or the function of the new word itself as it is the case with the German word *Auspuff* which is a compound word consisting of two words *aus* „from" i *puffen* „blow". The English word *exhaust* has the same meaning and it has been translated by means of the similar words: „1530s, „to draw off or out, to use up completely," from Latin *exhaustus*, (…) „draw off, take away, use up, empty""[1]. Both neologisms have a logical, obvious meaning which contains the original idea of „throwing something out of something".

But, the new coined words don't always have to have the obvious meaning. Sometimes the creator of a word (the author) has had completely different ideas from those which, at first sight, may seem correct. Such a situation can be found in some neologisms invented by J. K. Rowling for the purpose of her book about Harry Potter. During the interview with J. K. Rowling a British reporter has concluded that the neologism *quidditch*, a popular wizarding sport, obviously comes from the word *quiddity*: „now, you obviously got the word "quidditch" from "quiddity," meaning the essence of a thing, it's proper nature"[2]. In spite of the fact that the author:

„was really really tempted to say, "yes, you're quite right," because it sounded so intellectual, but I had to tell her the truth, which was that **I wanted a word that began with "Q"** (Emphasis added) -- on a total whim -- and I filled about, I don't know, 5 pages of a notebook with different "Q"-words until I hit "quidditch" and I knew that was the perfect one - when I finally hit "quidditch." Yeah."

In another interview[3] the author added that the word *quidditch* rhymes with the word *pitch* („an area painted with lines for playing particular sports")[4]: *Quidditch pitch*.

So sometimes the meaning of the new word is not so obvious and it can be invented for so many different reasons: it sounds better, it has hidden meaning, it describes the function of the word, it rhymes with another word, it fits better in the text or just because it „must begin with the letter *Q*"…

A neologism unlike an „ordinary" word poses a double problem for the translator. Firstly, it is a new word, it doesn't exist in the dictionary so it doesn't have its existing equivalent, which makes the translation of neologism even more difficult for the translator. And secondly, after acquiring the meaning of the neologism, the translator has to decide how to approach the problem of the translation of a new coined word. He/she has very few choices. Or he/she is going to keep the original word, the original form of the neologism in the source language, or he/she is going to adapt the new word to the target language. Both solutions are possible but the second one is quite more sensitive and needs much more attention and feeling for the whole (con)text rather than just for the new word itself. In the case of the second solution, the translator again has at least two options: to translate the neologism or to adapt it to the best solution in the target language. We can mention the German example *ausflug* which has been literally translated into Croatian as *izlet* (*iz* – *aus*; *let* – *flug*), so it is an example of translation. The already mentioned German example for the word *exhaust* – *auspuff* has been adapted in Croatian as a word *auspuh* (*aus* remains as in German, but the word *puff*(*en*) has been converted into Croatian word *puh*(*ati*)) in which both mean „to blow out").[5]

When translating new words, translators usually combine both approaches taking into consideration many different (not always linguistic) reasons: no better solution, sounds better, in the TL there is already a word with a similar meaning, it fits better into the translation… So it doesn't surprise when Newmark states: „Neologisms are perhaps... translator's biggest problem." (1985:139)

When dealing with the formation of neologisms we can find a different ways they are coined but the most common are: abbreviation, compounding, derivation, loan words, analogy, and meaning transfer (Zhou, 2016:292). In *A textbook of translations* (1985, pp. 141-149) Newmark mentions 12 different types of neologisms including also collocations, pseudo-neologisms and internationalisms.

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[1] https://www.etymonline.com/word/exhaust; (19.7.2019.)

[2] https://www.hp-lexicon.org/source/drs/ (19.7.2019.)

[3] http://www.nbcnews.com/id/20001720/ns/dateline_nbc-harry_potter/t/harry-potter-final-chapter/#.XTFkr-gzbIU (19.7.2019.)

[4] https://dictionary.cambridge.org/dictionary/english/pitch (19.7.2019.)

[5] It is interesting to see how the Croatian word *auspuh* (from German *auspuff*) developed in Croatian and from the pure adaptation became a translated word *ispušna cijev* („exhaust pipe"). This happened many years after the first apparition of the adapted word *auspuh*. That means that also the time has an important role in translation as we shall see further in the article.

In purely linguistic terms, neologisms are most often created by putting a prefix or a suffix to an existing word (*bonjour - rebonjour*); by putting together two existing words (*latinoamerican*); by putting together the first part of one and the second part of another word; but keeping the meaning of both words (*franricain*: *français - américain*) or they are pure innovations.

Neologisms in *Harry Potter* – Neomagisms

The world created by J. K. Rowling is a world of pure magic. At the beginning of the series the reader is slowly introduced to the strange and abnormal world of wizards and witches that is presented to us through the eyes of the *Muggle* family – Dursleys, the family where the world's most famous wizard, Harry Potter, is growing up. The only problem is that he is not aware of it and the reader discovers, step by step, along with Harry, a new world – the world of magic. To describe this world, the author invented hundreds of neologisms which help the reader better understand the functioning of the newly discovered world. The neologisms which can be easily called neomagisms, for the purpose they have, function as a sort of a guide to this magical world. At the beginning of the *Philosopher's Stone*, since it was meant to be "a story for kids", the magic is introduced by familiar notions and phenomena: a half-giant[1] with a magical umbrella[2] which he uses for spells, cauldron as a symbol for making potions[3], disappearing glass… All these phenomena are well known to the reader. But then the words take over the role and help the reader immerge into the world of wizards.

The neologisms can be found in many different semantic fields: names (especially in proper names), spells, magical creatures, potions and many more. They can also be divided by the type of word formation: prefixed or suffixed words, a combination of Latin and English words, compound words, wordplay, anagrams, the use of foreign words, particularly French words (*Beauxbatons*, *Madame Maxime*, *Voldemort*…).

But J. K. Rowling hasn't strictly limited herself to the creation of the magic world. Instead, she created the whole atmosphere (the very large context) which follows not only the plot of the seven books, but which goes far beyond the story in order to give a multidimensional frame of the story. The pluralism of her ideas has been largely seen in the real world: films, the theme park, trading, marketing… But much more of this plurality has been hidden inside the words of the books. Almost every single name in the book has its meaning, history and destiny. Almost every single neologism is created with accuracy to serve the whole saga, not only in the particular book. In addition to the series of seven books, and three separate books (*Fantastic Beasts and Where to Find Them*, *The Tales of Beedle the Bard*, *Quidditch through the ages*), the official site of the author (www.jkrowling.com) and the official entertainment and news channel (www.pottermore.com), there are numerous web sites on which the fans from all over the world try to explain the complexity of the magical world of Harry Potter. And for that, the creation of the atmosphere (the context) was crucial.

Creating the Atmosphere – Neologisms with the Latin Root or Element

Almost all neologisms referring to the spells in Harry Potter series contain the Latin element. J. K. Rowling studied French and classical studies which she largely integrated in her novels. Hogwarts, the school of wizarding and witchcraft, was created in 10th century, which was the time when Latin was used as a *lingua franca*.

Many neologisms for spells in the book contain an overt Latin element: *wingardium leviosa* (eng. wing; lat. *arduus* "high"; lat. *levis* "light, not heavy" or *levitatio* "to float"), *nox* (lat. *nox* "night"), *lumos* (lat. *lumen* "light"), *expelliarmus* (lat. *ex* "out, from" *pellere* "to push", lat. *arma* "weapon"), *locomotor* (lat. loco "place"; motor "to move"). Some of them are combined with the English words, some of them are just creations that sound Latin.

When facing such neologisms the translator has to take care of several things, not only of translation. First of all, he/she has to understand the context[4] and why the author used Latin root words for spells. Secondly, the translator has to understand the meaning of Latin roots in order to give an appropriate equivalent. Thirdly, he/she has to be aware of "what's coming next" if possible. Fourthly, the translator has to choose which way he/she is going to approach the translation of the neologisms, and finally the translator has to be aware for whom he/she translates (the public).

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[1] Mythological creatures

[2] Mary Poppins flies with her magical umbrella

[3] Merlin, the wizard, druids, legends

[4] which is a *conditio sine qua non* for any good translation.

After having taken all these things into consideration, the translator can begin the search for an appropriate neologism in the target language.

In these particular examples the translators of Harry Potter books in French (Jean-François Ménard) and in Croatian (Zlatko Crnković books 1 -3, and Dubravka Petrović books 4 -7), opted for the neologism as it is. This means, they left the spells in Latin. The reasons for that can be very different as we have previously mentioned in the text. Usually it is about two main reasons: there is no better option or it sounds better (it reflects better the atmosphere of the whole story).

But in the case of the next two spells, *crucio* (lat. *crucio* "I crucify, I torture")[1], *imperio* (lat. impero "I rule"), in French there is translation of the first spell - *endoloris*, while the second spell is adapted to French with the omission of the last *–i*: *impero*. *Endoloris* comes from a French word *douleur* "pain" derived from Latin *dolor* (v. *dolorare* "to suffer"), so it is obvious that the translator adapted and translated the meaning of the Latin word into French ("to make pain to someone"). In Croatian, the translator kept the original form for both neologisms.

Keeping up with the Modern – Neologisms with the English Root

J. K. Rowling stated in an interview[2]: „I love making up words". This love for new words contributed in making up the whole Harry Potter world. She didn't use few neologisms to fulfil the gaps between "the Muggle and the wizarding" world, rather the neologisms are essential part of the wizarding world. They make difference. They are there to keep reminding the reader of the magic world he/she finds himself/herself in. But Rowling has been aware that Latin couldn't be the only source of neologisms so she has counted also on many newly coined English words such as *knightbus* and *stupefy*.

Knightbus (*knight + bus*) is a neologism which is actually wordplay arising from the words *night bus* and the word *knight*. The meaning of the word connects the meaning of the bus which drives at night and the word *knight* which implies a noble warrior coming to help those in need. So it happens to be the bus which comes to help the wizards.

In Croatian the translator, Zlatko Crnković, uses the same method: wordplay. The translator connects Croatian word *noć* „night" with the word *moć* „power" using the rhyme between these two words, he adds the word *autobus* and thus creates the new word *moćni autobus*. So the *knightbus* turned out to be the „mighty bus" in Croatian or the bus that has a power to help people in need (close to a meaning of „knightbus"). This is an example of very skilful translation. It coincides with the meaning of the neologism, it respects the wordplay as it is in the source language and it even rhymes like it is also a case in the original neologism (*night - knight*; *noć – moć*)

On the other hand, in French there was no such a possibility of the wordplay and rhyme. There was no possibility to combine the words *nuit* „ night" and *chevalier* „knight" so the option was to put together the word *magic* with the word *bus*. So the translator offered a new word – *magicobus*, which definitely reflects the purpose of the neologism (it is not an ordinary bus, it is invisible to Muggles, it can change the shape…).

The spell *stupefy* is an English word that "means 'to put into a stupor', a temporary vegetative state."[3] S*tupefy* became *stupéfix* in French which is the adaptation by adding the suffix *-ix* and is adapted also to a French orthography (by putting the accent on the *é* for the French pronunciation of the closed *e*). It seems that the translator wanted to keep the Latin[4] mode of making the spells.

In Croatian this non-Latin spell was translated as the imperative form of the verb: *omami* (infinitive *omamiti*) which means "to stupefy". There was no phonetic similarity, so the option was to translate. The other reason for the translation lies perhaps in the fact that this spell is not casted in Latin and it has its overt meaning in English.

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[1] lat. *crux* „the cross"; it can be understood also as a spell which causes an extreme pain to the person.

[2] J.K. Rowling on The Diane Rehm Show, WAMU Radio Washington, D.C., October 20, 1999 (re-broadcast December 24, 1999) https://www.hp-lexicon.org/source/drs/ (20.7.2019.)

[3] https://harrypotter.fandom.com/wiki/List_of_spells#S (20.7.2019.)

[4] Something that is very well known in French comic tradition (see *Astérix*, *Obélix*, *Idéfix*…). All „typical" Latin names.

Proper Names as Neologisms

The proper name has no meaning. It means that, following the Saussure's theory[1], a proper name will not produce an image in our spirit which will connect the sound (the phonemes that are a part of the proper name) with reality. On the other hand, nouns do produce an image in our spirit. If someone pronounces the letters CHAIR (in correct order and in correct, in this case, English way) it will produce the image of "chair" in anyone's spirit (assuming that a person speaks English, of course). But if someone pronounces the letters HARRY, the proper name will not automatically refer to some particular Harry or to any Harry in general. That means that the proper name has no real meaning. This shouldn't be misunderstood with the names which derive from some overt origin such as for example *Leon* which means "lion". That only means that the name itself has a meaning but it is not in any particular way related to a person that carries that name.

J. K. Rowling used neologisms to create the magical atmosphere of the story. Many creatures, objects, phenomena which are invisible to non-magical people, exist there as "normal" nouns. But in creating the story she has coined many new names that are always somehow linked to characters' destiny, or at least they reflect their personality. New names are there for a reason. Every name has its purpose. For example, Remus Lupin is a professor who turns into a werewolf during the full moon. His name comes from the legend of creating the city of Rome where two brothers, Romulus and Remus, were raised by a mother wolf. His last name *Lupin*, comes from a Latin word for "wolf" – *lupus*. It is revealed in the story that he was bitten and turned by another werewolf, Fenrir Greyback[2]. So, there is a whole story behind the name, especially if the name is a neologism.

Again, it is obvious that many characters have the Latin name or at least contain the Latin element: *Albus*, *Severus*, *Remus*, *Sirius*, *Lucius*, *Bellatrix*… The atmosphere of the ancient and magic world is further emphasised by the use of Latin names or elements. Many names in the series have a hidden meaning. For example, *Albus* (Dumbledore) means "white" in Latin. It is not by accident that the Dark Lord fears only Albus (White) Dumbledore. His name can also be comprehended as a "dawn"[3] (of a new times) since he had won the great battle against another dark wizard, Grindelwald, in 1945 (sic!).

So, when dealing with neologisms the translator has to be very aware of the importance that the author attaches to the new word. When dealing with an invented name, the translator has to be even more careful for the name is often connected with the plot of the story by the meaning that the author has willingly hidden in it. A change of the character's name can be very problematic especially for the story that is being told in several books.[4]

In translations of the *Harry Potter* series in Croatian and French we have found several interesting translations of proper names. We have tried to draw a few that we found extremely important for the story: *Hogwarts*, *Severus Snape*, *Alastor Mad-Eye Moody*.

In French translation the name of the school (*Poudlard* – *Hogwarts*) has probably been adapted to kids since it is said that the Harry Potter series was meant to be for kids. Even though J. K. Rowling admitted that she had written it for the kids ages 9 and up, some parts of the first book and other books have been definitely meant for older readers. Many critics have defined it to be for kids because the main character is 11 years old at the beginning of the story, but since the story is so complex and it is subject to countless interpretations it is clear that the kids are not its only public.

The neologism (the new name) *Hogwarts* probably comes from the word *warthog*. Its head is at the entrance of the school and it is very likely that the name derived from wordplay: warthog – Hogwarts.

The French translation – *Poudlard*[5] comes from *pou-de-lard* which literally means "bacon lice". It is true that there is some connection between the hog and bacon, and that lice live on the skin of the animals and that it is easier to explain it to the kids in a funny way. But the name had to be kept within all seven books, and that is something that the translator has to keep in mind.

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[1] Theory of a sign: signifiant + signifiée = sign (CLG, 2005/1916)

[2] The name of *Fenrir Greyback* also has its meaning and origin in the Scandinavian mythology. It comes from the name of the gigantic wolf of God Loki – *Fenriswolf* or *Fenrisulf*. *Greyback* could just simply be one type of a wolf (grey wolf).

[3] fr. *aube*, it. *alba*

[4] „In the case of *Harry Potter*, one of the most striking features of the book (…) concerns the names of characters and elements related to the school." (Munday, 2016:192)

[5] The name could have come also from the French word for *powder – poudre*, which is usually used or is the effect of the witchcraft.

The Croatian translation kept the original name as according to the Croatian language standard the proper names are not modified. Foreign names are respected in their original version unless there is an existing Croatian version of the name.

Severus Snape is another proper name that has been changed in the French translation. And it was not adapted nor was it translated. The translator opted for a description of the personality of the character. His French name is *Severus Rogue*. *Rogue* is an old French word meaning "arrogant, unpleasant" which definitely fits with his first appearance in the first book and he also keeps that characteristic till the very end of the saga. The adjectives that are mostly used to describe Severus Snape in the books are as following: *unpleasant*, *malicious*, *angry*, *dangerous*, *horrible*, and *twisted*. There is no need to mention that his name, *Severus*, means "severe" in English. However, when translating one must be aware of the context in the original text and that there are some indications that shouldn't have been neglected. First of all, three out of four heads of the houses have the name and the surname beginning with the same letter: **M**inerva **M**cGonagall, **F**ilius **F**litwick, **S**everus **S**nape. All four founders of Hogwarts share the same characteristic: **G**odric **G**ryffindor, **H**elga **H**ufflepuff, **R**owena **R**avenclaw and **S**alazar **S**lytherin. Even though J. K. Rowling said that *Snape* originates from the name of the village[1] in the North of England (North Yorkshire), it is quite obvious that his last name shares the same root as the word *snake* and that he is the head of the Slytherin house, a sign of which is a snake. In the French version of the name the alliteration[2] has also been lost (**S**everu**s** **S**nape vs. *Severus Rogue*). Again, if translated in that way, the translator has to keep the name of the character till the end of the saga.

The Croatian version has kept the original name.

A Nickname

Unlike the proper name, the nickname does not impose any restrictions in translation. Nicknames are the names that describe someone's characteristic. Therefore they carry the meaning unlike the proper names that lack the meaning. The nickname is the name given to somebody who usually has some obvious characteristic. In the book there are several nicknames such as 'Mad-Eye' Moody (real name Alastor Moody) or Nearly Headless Nick (real name Sir Nicholas de Mimsy-Porpington). Both characters have the obvious characteristic: one has the eye that spins, therefore he got the nickname Mad-Eye; the other was not decapitated properly so he is "Nearly Headless". Both translations in both cases respect the meaning of the origin words. In French Mad-Eye Moody becomes Maugrey[3] Fol-Oeil, and Nearly Headless Nick is Nick Quasi-Sans-Tête (literally). In Croatian they have respectively become: Divljooki[4] Moody i Skoro bezglavi Nick (literally).

An Anagram

If *Harry Potter* is considered to be an ordinary English name,[5] *Tom Marvolo Riddle* or *Lord Voldemort* is certainly not. All the names attributed to the main antagonist are likely to be very significant.

It has already been said that J. K. Rowling did her French and classical studies and that she used her knowledge of those languages in creating the story and especially in inventing the names of the characters. One has only to mention some of those names to conclude the fact: *Beauxbatons*, *Malfoy*, *Fleur Delacour* are influenced by the French language, *Alastor* (*Moody*) is originally a Greek name, *Argus* (*Filch*) and many others are the names from the Roman mythology (Latin).

The main antagonist is named *Voldemort*, another name that comes from the French language, which literarily means "the flight of death" (*vol* "flight"; *de* "of"; *mort* "death"). It is a neologism because it respects the process of creation and uses

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[1] The village Snape is famous for its wool combing and in the book it is revealed that the Severus Snape's house is located in „Spinner's end". The reminiscence is completely lost in the French translation.

[2] Munday (2016:192) also points out the importance the sonority of the names used in *Harry Potter*: „The school itself has the sonorous and Anglo-Saxon sounding name of *Hogwarts*… The names of the characters are similarly sonorous and suggestive: *Hagrid*, *Hedwig*, *Snape*, *Draco Malfoy*, *Argus Filch* and the headmaster *Albus Dumbledore*"

[3] *maugréer* – to mumble but also the person who shows his bad mood by mumbling which describes quite well the character of Alastor Moody.

[4] *divlji* „wild" so his name means „Wild-Eye Moody" in Croatian which once again describes the characteristic of his "nervous and spinning" magical eye.

[5] Yet, there are many theories which explain how Harry Potter has been predestined to become the leader. His name derives from *Henry* which is the name that many English kings bore during the history.

ISSN 2411-9598 (Print)
ISSN 2411-4103 (Online)

European Journal of
Language and Literature Studies

September December 2019
Volume 5, Issue 3

existing parts of the language. But since it is the only name of that character that appears in the first book[1], the reader nor the translator has any idea that it is in fact a kind of the nickname that Tom Riddle invented for himself in his desire to abandon all the connections with his Muggle father. Another very important thing is that the name is a coined word from French elements and if it is pronounced in English way it does not have an overt meaning, especially if the reader doesn't speak French (and many don't since it is supposed to be for English kids). These facts lead almost all translators to maintain the name as it is in the original version – *Voldemort*. It would be very strange and harmful for the story if translators have used different variations in the target language as it is the case with Slovenian in which his name sounds so weird – *Mrlakenstein*.

If the name of (Lord) *Voldemort* hasn't produced much controversy, this cannot be said for the name of *Tom Marvolo Riddle*. That name appears for the first time in the second book (*The Chamber of Secrets*) and is contained in an anagram that gives the phrase *I am Lord Voldemort*. At this point any translator has to have and has to take time to decide what to do with the anagram. When the second book appeared, it was already known that J. K. Rowling was going to write seven books about Harry Potter in which Voldemort is the main antagonist. So the translators were aware of the fact that this name was going to appear and reappear again and again and that their choice of the name in translation would have many influences on the future translations of the books to come. It is the fact that it is not easy to translate; it is also the fact that translation of the neologism is the translator's biggest problem, but the anagrams can be a real nightmare.

In the anagram *Tom Marvolo Riddle* again all the parts of the name carry their own meaning and therefore make it much more difficult if someone decides to respect the meaning and at the same time to stick to the form of the anagram. Probably the worst situation would be to stick to the form of the anagram in the target language without making connections to the meaning in the source language. It is not to be forgotten that in translation everything is about the meaning but the meaning is not all.

Tom comes from the Hebraic word meaning "twin". Thomas was the Apostol who didn't believe that Jesus resurrected till he didn't see him personally, he had so little faith. In the book Tom can be understood as a twin of Voldemort or his double (reappeared in the memory of one diary), some other see him as a twin of Harry Potter because they have many characteristics in common (they are mentally connected, they can speak with snakes, they share the same core of the wand…). But since *Tom* is a very common name at least in European languages, it didn't cause lots of problems because almost all translators kept the original or the existing similar name in the target language. Yet in Danish it becomes *Romeo*!

Riddle is a common noun but can also be a very common last name. As the common noun it has its synonyms in *enigma*, *puzzle* or *mystery*, so Tom Riddle was a very mysterious boy that nobody knew who he was. J. K. Rowling definitely played on the meaning of the word *riddle* in creating the name of Tom Riddle, wanting to build the mysterious atmosphere about this strange boy (who is revealed to be the future Lord Voldemort). Translators in many languages tried to incorporate the different kind of this name in the anagram that fits in the target language meaning "I am Lord Voldemort". Probably the two best solutions are those in Slovakian: *Tom Marvoloso Riddle* which comes from the anagram *A som I Lord Voldemort* "And I am also Lord Voldemort" and which is very appropriate equivalent with the small transformation of the middle name – Marvoloso (Marvolo), and Turkish: *Tom Marvoldo Riddle* which is the anagram of *Adim Lord Voldemort* ("My name (is) Lord Voldemort") and is again an excellent equivalent that respects almost in perfect way the original name.[2]

Marvolo is the name that caused many different theories about the creation of the word/name itself. The most common one is that it comes from Latin meaning "marvellous" and volo meaning "to desire". So it gives "the desire of marvelous". But it is a very weak theory and it could be also that J. K. Rowling invented the name *Marvolo* just to create the anagram: *I am Lord Voldemort.*

In their intention to follow wordplay in the anagram, many translators forgot the true function of translation: appropriate equivalent. And by *appropriate* we mean a lot more than just translation or a grammatically correct word in the target language. Appropriate means the best solution in the full sense of the word, not only the pure translation. In the example of the French translation of the anagram, the translator made a fantastic combination of words creating the anagram *Tom Elvis Jedusor* which gives *Je suis Voldemort*. He created the anagram containing the word *Jedusor* which is a pun or wordplay (fr. *calembour*). It can be understood as *je(u) du sor(t)* which can be comprehended in many ways because of the

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[1] His name strikes fear into the wizards so they call him: *You-Know-Who* or *He-Who-Must-Not-Be-Named*.

[2] For more anagrams and translation see https://harrypotter.fandom.com/wiki/Tom_Riddle#Translations_of_the_name

extremely homophonic character of the French language: "spell casting", "game of chances", "I have/possess destiny" and many more. But in reality the anagram was more a game in which the translator showed his extreme translation ability and competence, no doubt about it, then the search for the appropriate equivalent. He has totally lost sight of the further reading of the book.[1] Now it turned out to be that *Elvis* is the name of the old dark wizard family!

In Croatian, the translator left the anagram as it is, giving an explanation of the meaning of wordplay and the phrase *I am Lord Voldemort* in the footnote. This was definitely better solution than to search for invented names that can easily ruin the further reading of the story. In the next five books of the series the reader feels much better with the original *Marvolo* name rather than with *Elvis* which sounds so modern that cannot be traced back to the old family name. Sometimes the less is more and sometimes it is better to leave a neologism as it is than to offer a doubtful solution.

It is obvious from this example how important is the time in translation. At the time of the publication of the second book of the series, it was already clear that the whole saga will be extremely popular and that there was no question about whether it should be translated or not. The only solution was to translate it immediately after the book was published in English, in the shortest possible time. It is, what is popularly called, *must do* thing because people *must have* it. Perhaps, if the translator had had more time to think over the coming books and how the story would develop, he would have opted for another solution.

A Bit of Luck

Like in everything, a bit of luck is needed also in translation. If the translator limits himself/herself to a "simple" translation, to a simple search of what some word means in the source language in order to be able to translate it into the target language, then the result can be an "empty" sequence of words or phrases which do not fit in the spirit of the target language. But if the translator feels the spirit of a language, he/she will look up for a solution which reflects many elements of the target language: meaning, atmosphere, sounds, context, culture… And yet, sometimes it is with luck that a dedicated translator is awarded. In the last two examples we will show how translators have shown an enormous feeling for the translated word and how their translation competence is crucial in their job.

Butterbeer is a famous drink in the wizarding world. It is a compound consisting of two words: *butter* and *beer*. Since such drink doesn't exist in a real life (at least it didn't exist at the time of creating the Harry Potter's world), it is a neologism that should be adapted or translated into the target language. It is translated in Croatian as *pivoslac* which is a combination of the words *pivo* "beer" and (*ma*)*slac* "butter". The translator changed the word order probably because the word *pivo* ends with –*o* which is often used as a connector between the two words in Croatian (latin**o**američki "Latin American"), and he added the end of the word (ma)slac to obtain the new word that sounds like some Croatian existing word.

In the French translation there is even more than the "sounds like in French" effect because the neologism *Bièraubeurre* respects perfectly the logic of creation of the French words and it even rhymes with the English original *Butterbeer* even though the word order is changed in French.

The last example is about the name *the sorting hat* which is a neologism composed of two or more words. It is a very old hat that sorts students into the houses (fr. *sort* „destiny"; the hat that decides about the destiny of a pupil; it suggests, predicts, helps with the choice of the house).

The translator in Croatian offered a combination of an old word for *hat* – *klobuk* which is almost forgotten word but can be found in older texts and stories and which matches perfectly the characteristics of the sorting hat and how it looks like; and the word *razredbeni* which is the adjective of *razred* "class", so it gives *razredbeni klobuk*. In Croatia those who want to enter the University sometimes have to pass the so called *razredbeni ispit* (an entrance exam). The word perfectly describes the look of the sorting hat and it respects its age and function.

In French the translator has created an excellent neologism combining the verb *choisir* („to choose") and the noun *chapeau* („hat") which resulted with *choixpeau magique* „the hat that makes a choice", „that predicts the destiny of a pupil". With a

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[1] Yet, there are however different opinions to be found on https://frenchly.us/best-french-translations-harry-potter-vocabulary/ where it is said that the puzzle *Tom Elvis Jedusor* is „Best of all, Tom Marvolo Riddle became **Tom Elvis Jedusor.** Elvis. ELVIS!... Because of the genius of the translator, the pun with Riddle's last name was not lost: Jedusor sounds like "jeu de sort," meaning a game of chances."

ISSN 2411-9598 (Print)
ISSN 2411-4103 (Online)

European Journal of
Language and Literature Studies

September December 2019
Volume 5, Issue 3

little bit of luck (the homophonic beginning of *choisir* and *chapeau*) and a great dedication of the translator, the reader is rewarded with a magical neologism (neomagism) that almost sounds better than the original.

Conclusion

In this article we have tried to point out some of the difficulties in translating the new coined word. The analysis has shown that the translator's job goes far beyond the meaning and that the successful translation largely depends on the competence and dedication of the translator. When dealing with neologisms the translator has to be extra cautious since he/she must understand the reasons for creating the neologism and its meaning. Then he/she can get busy with finding the best solution in the target language. In our article we have shown that three compared languages (English, French and Croatian) in many ways show the similarity in approaching the problem of creation and translation of neologisms. In spite of their belonging to a different language family (German, Romance and Slavic) they all share many characteristics in dealing with neologisms (the way they are created, the purpose of their creation and so on).

Some differences in translation have also been noted especially in the field of new coined proper names. Whereas in Croatian the proper name is almost respected as it is in the original, the French translator sometimes opted for a translation of the name. In our opinion it has had also some bad implications for the further reading of the HP books since some offered solutions for the proper names (such as *Elvis* for *Marvolo* or *Poudlard* for *Hogwarts*) have had an odd overtone not reflecting in an appropriate way the connotation that the proper name has in the original version. Sometimes the best option for the translation would be to leave the neologism as it is if there is no better solution in the target language especially when it is about proper names. It is not in vain said *Nomen nest omen*.

On the other hand, we have also shown how the translator's competence and excellence can contribute to the story by creating neologisms which perfectly reflect the meaning and the function of the newly created word. Examples such as *bièraubeurre* for *butterbeer*; *razredbeni klobuk* and especially *choixpeau magique* for *the sorting hat* show how a highly successful neologisms need to be approached and that there is much more beyond the pure meaning of the word.

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