

A Center of Translation Attraction as the Tower of Babel Replica: Intersemiotic Translation Perspectives

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ABSTRACT

The present article deals with the issues of “strong” texts of literature survival in their native and foreign cultures in the forms of various types of translation. Particular attention is paid to the formation of secondary texts clusters organized around an original literary text-stimulus. Being described as centers of translation attraction, such text clusters persuasively demonstrate translation multiplicity of complex and heterogeneous nature. The novel in verse by A. Pushkin *Eugene Onegin* and its interlingual and intersemiotic versions were used as the research material. The numerous novel’s transformations into non-verbal semiotic systems demonstrate the possibility to consider such key translation categories as translatability and units of translation in broader semiotic context.

Keywords: Pushkin, *Eugene Onegin*, a “strong” text, translation multiplicity, a center of translation attraction.

Introduction

The evident reality of 21st century Translation Studies is the absence of the universal theoretical approach to the main translation issues combining the most effective ideas of all (or majority of) existing general and special theories of translation. Moreover, there is no real hope that such universal approach will appear in the nearest future or some time or other. Nevertheless, the present situation in the heterogeneous field of Translation Studies clearly reveals the obvious changes in translation paradigm, which mostly deal with types of translation, units of translation and limits of translatability – the “eternal” translation problems. Other changes are connected with the typological issues demonstrating some research shift to intersemiotic type of translation that implies the usage of the concepts of text and translation in the broadest sense.

Prolegomena to intersemiotic translation: short review

The year of 1959 was featured by the publication of R. Jakobson’s article *On Linguistic Aspects of Translation* with his pioneering semiotic approach to translation taxonomy. Regarding translation as transformation within preserved invariant sense of an original text, the author suggests the following trichotomy of translation types – *intra-lingual*, *inter-lingual* and *inter-semiotic* (Jakobson, 1959) – that further was recognized as a “fundamental truth”. In Jakobson’s perspective, these three types of translation fully match three possible ways of a verbal sign interpretation and rely on key semiotic notions – interpretant and absolute semiosis – described earlier by Ch. Peirce known as “the father of semiotics”. Notably, the Jakobson’s article implies a crucial methodological idea – each translation is semiosis, but not each semiosis is translation – which was widely spread later.

Beyond any dispute, *On Linguistic Aspects of Translation* has become a “manifesto” for

future intersemiotic translation studies. Jakobson introduced into the humanitarian discourse of the 20th century the notion of translation, which spreads beyond any linguistic system to vast and multidimensional semiotic space and defined it as interpretation of verbal signs through non-verbal sign systems. In intersemiotic translation, the source and target texts, being bound together by sense equivalences, are always different by their semiotic nature, while the notion of translation in the context of intersemiotic translation enjoys its metaphoric understanding – by its loose meaning. Let us note, that such understudied and, obviously, heterogeneous essence of intersemiotic translation has caused the scholar to use another term to refer to the describing translation type. Thus, alongside with the term *intersemiotic translation* which explicates the concept of text transposition from one sign system to another, Jakobson also came up with an “alchemic” term of *transmutation* that emphasizes the idea of one object (verbal text as described in the article) turning into another one. In such a way, both Jakobson’s terms complement each other answering two main principles of intersemiotic translation – transition (transposition and, thus, “other” semiotic localization) and transformation (semiotic change).

In the Russian humanitarian discourse (linguistics, in particular) the notion of intersemiotic translation was for the first time defined in *The Dictionary of Linguistic Terms*. It conveys the term *intersemioticheskiy perevod* (transliterated into Russian from the Jakobson’s term *intersemiotic translation*) and explains it as: “...communicating the content not by the same or another natural (‘verbal’) language, but, on the one hand, through the means of any non-verbal semiotic system, e.g. choreography, music, etc, and informative logical languages – on the other” (Akhmanova, 1966: 317).

When considering the notion of intersemiotic translation, which suggests a broader (metaphoric) understanding of translation, it is necessary for the notion of text to be perceived in its broadest semiotic sense as well. From the standpoint of cultural semiotics, Yu. Lotman points out possible semiotic duplication of a source text as a result of its translation, an antinomic controversy among various semiotic worlds within the area of translation (Lotman, 1992). In semiotics, a text exceeds the limits of its natural language, since as a regular semiotic phenomenon a text can be constructed by any sign system possessing meaning and coherence. As Lotman says, text represents a close finite unity characterized by its specific structure, clear borders and interpretability as well. Regardless of its semiotic nature, the sense of each source text can be interpreted which directly promotes the information generation process and serves as the main mechanism of semiosphere launching text-producing processes (Lotman, 2010).

In the last quarter of the 20th century there were published a number of works considering translation issues in the cultural and socio-semiotic perspectives (M. Halliday, A. Chesterman, A. Lefevere and S. Bassnett, B. Hatim and I. Mason, et al) and anticipating intersemiotic researches of the coming 21st century. A great importance in these studies was given to translation theory in the light of semiotics, or, more precisely, to involving translation studies and semiotics theoretical frameworks into investigations – following Bohr’s general (universal) scientific complementarity principle. Such effective integration of translation theory and semiotics has fostered a new branch of translation studies – translation semiotics that has become a clear manifestation of interdisciplinarity in humanities.

Translation semiotics aims at identification and description of the ways and mechanisms

of semiosis in translation in general and intersemiotic translation in particular and can be regarded as its methodological basis. Underlining the extreme importance of semiotics for translation studies, U. Stecconi notes that this sphere was pioneered by R. Jakobson, A. van Kesteren, G. Toury, J. Deledalle-Rhodes and D. Gorlée and later this new discipline was vastly enriched by such authors as U. Eco, P. Torop, S. Petrilli, S. Nergaard, C. Cosculluela (Stecconi). Once again, we place extra emphasis on the idea that by the time translation semiotics appeared, the notion of intersemiotic translation had become “an axiom”. In this respect, it must be also noted that during several decades after Jakobson had introduced the notion of intersemiotic translation it was rather spoken about than scientifically analysed (mainly by the tools of semiotics and translation studies). At present, the situation around intersemiotic translation has its actual development. However, in the current scientific discourse the following opinion could be found: “The sphere of intersemiotic translation remains an area still dark for the science of signs. It’s a question of translatability between verbal and non-verbal languages of the culture” (Brazgovskaya, 2014a).

P. Torop, one of the creators of translation semiotics, assumes that this discipline is still evolving (Torop, 2008: 253). It is also true for intersemiotic translation, which can or even should be considered through translation semiotics. Thus, a flourish idea about intersemiotic translation has explicitly given a way to the field commonly shared by semiotics and translation which supports cross-disciplinary (or, following D. Gorlée, trans-disciplinary) approach to semiotic and translation issues, i.e. translation semiotics. Considering the problems of translation through Ch. Pierce’s semiotics, L. Wittgensteins’ philosophy of language and W. Benjamin’s ideas about linguistic fragmenting, D. Gorlée points out that these spheres, as a rule, focus their research attention on use, interpretation and manipulation of messages or texts, i.e. signs (Gorlée, 1994: 10–11). At the same time, Gorlée says that semiotics and translation theory have ignored each other for a long while due to certain ontological differences. To understand the nature of intersemiotic translation it is urgently important to realize that semiotics and translation theory interact in spheres of sign production and interpretation. Indeed, relying right on such affinity, Gorlée suggests an integrative (cross-disciplinary/trans-disciplinary) notion of *semiotranslation* – a unilateral, future-seeking, cumulative and irreversible process which resembles rather an expanding net, than a single line stretching from the source to the target (Gorlée, 2004: 103–104). The author concludes that throughout such kaleidoscopic and evolutionary process of infinite translation (semiosis) signs may reveal their meaning potential.

The process of semiotranslation – an evolutionarily spreading net – can be described through the notion of bifurcation – a qualitative transformation and metamorphoses of objects under changing parameters that they depend on (Muzyka, 2011). The concept of bifurcation, which explains that splitting of the primary object, alongside with the corresponding theory of bifurcation based on the concept of bifurcation, are widely used in the modern scientific discourse: in mathematics, physics, chemistry, biology and sociology. For humanities, a universal character of this notion has been conclusively proved in a famous book *The Age of Bifurcation. Understanding the Changing World* (Laszlo, 1991). The use of bifurcation when describing phenomena and processes in semiotics and translation studies entirely corresponds to the current trend towards scientific unification (Razumovskaya, 2011).

In literary translation semiotic studies are traditionally presented by culture semiotics

as reflected in P. Torop's idea of translation as translating culture and then in Estonian semiologist's theory of total translation. The author turns to this concept to widen the scope of problems and phenomena involved into the subject field of translation studies as well as to find a real methodology, which would really help in grounding a universal translation interdisciplinarity (Torop, 1995).

In several decades after Jakobson's article had been published, typological understanding of intersemiotic translation was significantly broadened. While the notion of intersemiotic translation was introduced to refer to verbal signs being interpreted through non-verbal ones, further, however, there appeared researches, which defined this type of translation in reverse direction. In science, non-verbal signs – verbal signs translation is defined as *ecphrasis*, i.e. verbal representation of art works in literary texts. In linguistics, ecphrasis is considered as *genre, text type, and literary technique* or, most importantly, as *code transformation, which represents a sign process and translation from one semiotic system language into another*. “When performing internal and external processes of intersemiotic translation in ecphrastic development of literary text which aims at adequate representation of literary image within another code system, a fundamental role is given to the system of imagery signs which articulate that original interpretation of literary image through the system of codes (theatrical, artistic and poetic) performing, in this very case, a basic mental formation” (Tretyakov, 2009: 6). The cases of ecphrasis have also been mentioned in the researches dealing with music verbalization, where verbal descriptions are defined as an important way to actualize and comprehend music text or as a chance to look into its essence. However, it is noted that music verbalization – as any other verbalization – means a semiotic switch of stochastic nature (Brazgovskaya, 2014b) – that is also a principle for any type of translation. Another vivid example of ecphrasis is dance verbalization (ballet) (Il'ina & Belinskaya, 2015).

Pointing out that multidimensional nature of translation in its wide semiotic sense, H. Gottlieb describes mono- and polysemiotic text types involved in the translation process (Gottlieb, 2007). The presence or absence of semiotic adequacy between translation texts allows us to identify *intrasemiotic* (an umbrella term for intralingual and interlingual Jakobsonian types of translation) or *intersemiotic* translation types. Basing on semiotic changes made in information channels in the target text in comparison with the source one, there are the following types of translation: *isosemiotic* (identical information channels); *diasemiotic* (different information channels); *supersemiotic* (increased number of information channels) and *hyposemiotic* (reduced number of information channels). Considering the degree of translator's freedom (following Gottlieb – translation agent's freedom), we may also identify *inspirational* and *traditional* translation types. The absence or presence of verbal material in the source and target texts are reflected in the following classification: secondary texts which preserves original verballity; secondary texts which add non-verbal units; secondary texts which add verbal units; secondary texts which remains non-verbal (Gottlieb, 2007: 35–37). As H. Gottlieb understands, intersemiotic translation (the author follows the Jakobsonian term) implies the existence of different information channels and has six types. Inspirational intersemiotic translation is represented by nonverbal-nonverbal; verbal-(not only) verbal; nonverbal-verbal translations. Traditional intersemiotic translation, in turn, is also classified into the following types: nonverbal – nonverbal; nonverbal – verbal; verbal-(not only) verbal.

Among all abovementioned types of translation the most studied one is verbal-(not only) verbal inspirational type mostly exemplified through screen adaptations of literary texts. In this case, a monosemiotic literary text transforms into a polysemiotic cinematic text. Regarding mainly the process of translation, translation semiotics allows shedding a new light on the 'eternal' issue faced by translation critics and experts, i.e. translatability. Translation semiotics broadens this problem beyond pure linguistic subject to a wide semiotic space of culture, by viewing text as a semiotic unity or cultural artifact. Interestingly, transposition of literary text into 'other' semiotic space by intersemiotic translation extends text translatability, which is restricted merely in linguistic perception.

“Strong” literary texts as objects of intersemiotic translation: original text inexhaustibility and translation multiplicity

Literary texts are considered to be the most traditional (and, accordingly, the most studied) objects of intersemiotic translation. In the context of this translation type the most important role is played by “strong” literary texts that form the core of a particular culture (Kuzmina, 2009). Suggesting the notion of a “strong” literary text N. Kuzmina points out that “strong” texts are known to the majority of native speakers (of the language and culture a “strong” literary text belongs to), and such texts determine the canon of individual and school-university education. “Strong” texts are characterized by the embedded ability to be re-interpreted – the ability of ‘translatability’ into other languages as well as “languages” of other arts. The concept of a “strong” text was proposed by the Russian scholar Kuzmina in the context of intertextuality theory. Considering the issues of literary translation, the leader of the *manipulation school* A. Lefevere also allocated a special type of such texts, which are national and world cultural heritage (*cultural capital* in the terms of the scholar) among the regular objects of literary translation. According to the American scholar, culturally significant literary texts of various origin are in the permanent mutual interaction that suggests the existence of a particular text system-structural heterogeneous formation formed by the most important national literary texts, and by texts that are considered the world cultural heritage. Lefevere argues that literary texts characterized as cultural heritage, form textual grids within certain cultures. Possessing such regular features as artificiality, historicity, convention, variability and incomprehensibility, textual grids are perceived by the representatives of their ‘own’ culture to such an extent that they are perceived as “natural” (Bassnett & Lefevere, 1998: 5).

The concept of “strong” text is comparable with the concept of *absolute picture* proposed by the Moscow Conceptual Art School to denote canvases, without which it is impossible to imagine the history of art as a wide pan-European or global culture phenomena (*Mona Lisa* and *The Last Supper* by Leonardo da Vinci, *Sistine Madonna* by Raphael), and within the individual national cultures (*Trinity* by Rublev, *Alyonushka* by Vasnetsov, *Morning in a Pine Forest* by Shishkin, *Bathing of a Red Horse* by Petrov-Vodkin for Russian culture). The absolute pictures with maximum completeness and expressiveness accumulate the collective conscious and collective unconscious (Monastyrsky, 1999). “Strong” texts possess high energy potential: they constantly give energy to their readers and receive the additional energy from the readers, which is magnified due to the emerging information resonance.

Introducing the idea of textual and cultural grids in the context of literary translation study, Lefevere claims that “strong” texts (the key texts of a culture or *culture capital* in his terms) are located at the nodes of text and cultural grids, which guarantees stability of cultures, providing a certain “rigidity” of their structures.

The group of Russian “strong” texts, undoubtedly, includes such novels as *Crime and Punishment* by Dostoevsky, *Eugene Onegin* by Pushkin, *The Master and Margarita* by Bulgakov, *Doctor Zhivago* by Pasternak and some other prosaic and poetic aesthetically significant literary texts created in the space of Russian culture. The significance of literary texts for understanding the Russian culture is difficult to overestimate due to its evident literature centric nature. M. Lipovetsky writes: “Do not the Bible, Homer, *The Divine Comedy* or *Eugene Onegin* embrace the whole world, each time making it in a new way? And does not every true work build a shaped model of the whole universe as a whole?” (Lipovetsky, 2013).

The history of literary translation provides a convincing evidence that a culturally (and thereafter aesthetically) significant literary text regularly tends to self-recurrence and generates numerous foreign-language and intersemiotic versions, creating extensive centers of translation attraction. A center of attraction translation has a field structure: an original text is the core-stimulus in the field of translatability, which includes the central part comprising all already created and existing actual foreign-language translations; the peripheral part is represented by translations, which became irrelevant because of their obsolescence or low quality; the potential part of the field of translatability combines hypothetically possible translations of the original text, which may appear in the future (Razumovskaya, 2014).

One cannot but agree with Lotman that “strong” literary texts do not only act as constant passive repositories of information, for the reason that they are not only warehouses but also information generators (Lotman, 1998). The self-recurrence of “strong” texts is directly determined by their information characteristics. The aesthetic information, cultural information and, above all, cultural memory form the information content of a literary text: the content which is un-detailed, un-manifested, indescribable, and as a consequence – ambiguous. It is ambiguity that underlies art and science creativity (Caglioti, 1983). The information ambiguity implies the necessity of profound decoding of a text content in the process of understanding and creates unlimited possibilities for interpreting of the content in the perception of an original text by its reader (a reader belonging to the original culture) and in decoding the text by a translator in the translation process.

A “strong” literary text is a complex system-structural information formation demonstrating openness to imitation and the ability to be continued in domestic and foreign linguocultures. It is the ambiguity of literary text aesthetic information that determines numerous interpretations of a certain literary text within its own culture and language and also above them. Beyond doubt, it is information ambiguity that underlies (“triggers”) the translation categories, which have recently expanded the categorical paradigm of literary translation studies: original inexhaustibility and translation multiplicity. A Russian theorist in Translation Studies R. Tchaikovsky and his school define *original inexhaustibility* as the ability of a literary text to generate numerous (practically endless regarding the number of potential recipients) interpretations of its information. Text inexhaustibility logically results into the phenomenon of *translation multiplicity*, which is traditionally considered in the

context of translated literature as an obvious fact of the existence of a “third literature” occupying an intermediate position between the foreign language literature and domestic literature (Tchaikovsky & Lysenkova, 2001). Tchaikovsky’s ideas concerning literary translation mostly deal with the *interlingual* translation type (*intra-semiotic* and *iso-semiotic* translation according to Gottlieb’s classification) relating to monosemiotic texts. Taking into consideration broader understanding of the concepts *text* and *translation* we can address to translation multiplicity in the intersemiotic perspective, which adds polysemiotic texts of diasemiotic and supersemiotic types of the secondary versions of the original text.

Addressing to the relations of texts in the space of a centre of translation attraction it is extremely important to admit the fact that there is a unique relationship between the original literary text and its translations. In his famous paper *The Task of the Translator* (*Die Aufgabe des Übersetzers* in the original version), which was published in 1923 as a preface to his German translation of poems of Ch. Baudelaire and greatly influenced the theory of translation, W. Benjamin expresses the innovative idea about the nature of the relationship between original text and its translation: the translation does not serve the reader, and it independently exists by itself; a translation provides growth for the original text, and continues its life. In the article, which became a program for action of many future generations of translation scholars, W. Benjamin writes: “In translation the original rises into a higher and purer linguistic air” (Benjamin, 2007: 75). Following W. Benjamin a literary theorist J. Derrida emphasizes the relationship between the literary original and its translation. Derrida states the primacy of a copy (translation) over its original and claims that this is the original that needs to be translated, it wants to be translated, “... the structure of the original is marked by a requirement to be translated. < ... > The original is the first debtor, the first petitioner, it begins by lacking and by pleading for translation” (Derrida, 1985: 227). In the context of the abovementioned ideas translation is considered to be a process of original text growth in forms of its translations. “The life of the originals attains in them <translations – V.R.> to its everrenewed latest and most abundant flowering” (Benjamin, 2007: 72). The extremely strong dependence of the original on its translations made the scholars to come to the conclusion of deconstruction (according to J. Derrida) of the binary opposition between the original and its translation and the possibility of considering translation as transgression, involving a difference and repetition of G. Deleuze’s understanding (Andreeva, 2011). It is of ultimate importance that the apologist of deconstruction sees the Tower of Babel not only as a recognized way and figure of an unrecoverable plurality of languages, but also a symbol of incompleteness, impossibility to complete the architectural design of the system and architectonics, one of the species and which will be the center of translation attraction: it will never be fully completed up to the end, and the number of translations will permanently change.

Eugene Onegin: monosemiotic and polysemiotic versions

The abovementioned “strong” literary texts authored by the outstanding Russian writers regularly act as attractors forming their fields of translatability. In the present research the centre of translation attraction with the novel *Eugene Onegin* as its attractor is analyzed. The novel in verse (an undisputed national treasure of Russian culture) is one of the most

perfect and unique manifestations of Pushkin's creativity. The researchers of poet's legacy consider *Eugene Onegin* to be one of the most difficult Pushkin's texts to convey in any foreign language (Alekseev, 1964).

The poetry of Pushkin became known beyond the borders of Russia already during the life of the author, and his creative legacy continues its life in numerous translations. The first mention of Pushkin's name in the foreign press refers to 1821. The first interlingual translations of Pushkin's texts were published in 1823 in France and Germany. A Russian poet, translator of German poetry and specialist in literature V. Neustadt provides interesting data that during Pushkin's life (in a relatively short period from 1823 to 1836) about 75 translations of his works were published in 12 foreign languages: German, French, Swedish, English, Polish, Italian, Serbian, Czech, Moldovan, Ukrainian, Georgian, Armenian (Neustadt, 1937: 146). If we look at the history of Pushkin's translations legacy, one of the important issues is the question of what kind of Pushkin do foreign readers read in translation – French, German, Polish, or may be Russian? Adhering the idea of cultural grids of A. Lefevere, we can assume that not all translated literary texts can occupy some significant place in the grid of a translating culture.

The history of *Onegin's* interlingual translations lasts for almost two hundred years revealing high multilingual variety. Novel's multiplicity comprises numerous secondary versions created by means of many languages. According to various bibliographic sources, there are 17 French translations of the novel at present. The first translation made by A. Dupont was published in Paris and St. Petersburg in 1847. One of the latest French version of *Eugene Onegin* was published in 2005 (the translation by André Markovitch) and is considered to be one of the best by critics.

The translation history of *Onegin* in English has nearly 140 years: the first translation was published in 1881 (translator H. Spalding), the last known to us translation appeared in 2011 (translator M. Hobson). Now, there are more than 40 English *Onegins*. One of the latest translations of the novel was carried out by S. Mitchell (the University of London professor). The translation was published in 2008 by the publishing house Penguin Classics and was praised by translators, linguists, literary critics and readers. In 2013 the English version of Pushkin's text was narrated for an audio book by Stephen Fry – a famous British actor and writer. Fry used for the narration the text of translation created by American scholar and translator J.E. Falen in 1990. All known English translations have different popularity, literary form (poetic or prosaic) and completeness in comparison with the original text (full, shortened or fragmentary versions).

If in many European countries the first translations of *Eugene Onegin* began to appear already in the 19th century, many readers around the world got an opportunity to discover the outstanding text of Russian literature only in the 20th century. In Mongolia *Eugene Onegin* was first published in 1956 (translated by Ch. Chimid). Chinese translations of the novel appeared in the 20th century and the history of their appearance was directly dependent on the political situation in China and educated citizens interest in the Russian language and culture. The first translation was done by Su Fu (published in 1942). The last known Chinese translation was carried out by Gu Yunpu and Tian Guobin (published in 2003). Currently, there are a number of translations of *Eugene Onegin* in Japanese. The first two Japanese *Onegins* appeared simultaneously in 1921 in Tokyo (translators were Okagami Morimichi

and Yonekawa Masao). The best known novel's Japanese translations are the following: Kentaro Ikeda in 1962; Kaneko Yoshihiko in 1972; Shoichi Kimura in 1972; Katsu Kimura in 1975; Masao Ozawa in 1996. Most Japanese translations are in a prosaic form and convey the form of work without concern for poetic rhythm, which corresponds to the translation of the Japanese tradition dating back to the annotated translation of Chinese texts *kanbun kundoku*. Only two Japanese translations (by Katsu Kimura and Masao Ozawa) are presented in a poetic form. The first poetic translation into Spanish of *Eugene Oegin* appeared in 2009 (translated by M. Chilikov) and took eight years of hard creative work (almost as much time as creating the original.) A significant factor affecting the appearance of interlingual translations of Eugene Oegin are celebrations of Pushkin's anniversaries. Year 1937 (the year of the centenary of the poet's death) was an important milestone in the development of novel's multiplicity. 112 academic publications devoted to the study of Pushkin's legacy were published in Great Britain, the USA, Australia, India, Singapore and Shanghai. In this jubilee year 26 verse and prosaic translations of poet's works appeared (including three English translations of the novel by O. Elton, B. Deutsch and D. Prall-Radin together with D.Z. Patrick) (Leighton, 1999: 135–139). Two *Eugene Oegin*s were published in Hebrew (translated by A. Levinson and A. Shlonsky). The historiography of German translations of the novel is quite numerous. The first German translation (*Jewgenij Oegin*) was made by K.R. Lippert in 1840. According to experts this version turned out to be unsuccessful. The translator did not follow *Oegin*'s stanza, broke the lyrical composition of the novel, made numerous semantic errors and strongly 'germanized' Pushkin's text, converting Tatiana into Johanna. But even the highly inaccurate translation made a huge impression on the Western European critics and readers (Neustadt, 1937: 149). One of the best German translations is considered to be the translation by R.-D. Keil published in 1980. Keil's version was awarded by a prize of German Academy of Language and Poetry in 1983. This translation is the twelfth full translation of Pushkin's text into German. Polish translation of *Eugene Oegin*, published in Warsaw in the early 50s (translators were J. Tuwim and A. Ważyk) was praised by critics and readers.

The results of the intersemiotic translation of Pushkin's text include various secondary texts, among which an important position is occupied by the musical texts: the opera *Eugene Oegin* by P. Tchaikovsky (1878), music by S. Prokofiev to the unperformed play of the Moscow Chamber Theatre dedicated to the 100th anniversary of Pushkin's death (1936), choral music (a capella) by R. Shchedrin (1981).

P. Tchaikovsky's musical text was first performed in 1879 at the Moscow Conservatory. In 1881, the opera was staged at the Bolshoi Theatre in Moscow; in 1884 – at the Mariinsky Theatre in Saint Petersburg. The first foreign staging of the opera took place in 1888 in Prague. For less than a hundred years (from 1881 to 1963) more than 1500 performances had been staged at the Bolshoi Theatre (Uvarova, 1963). P.I. Tchaikovsky's opera had been repeatedly staged at the prominent opera houses of the world: Germany, Finland, the United States, and the UK. At the Chinese stage, the opera was performed for the first time in 1962 at Beijing Central Opera House; it had several subsequent successful productions and was always presented in the full version (Sun, 2011). In the 2013–2014 theatre season, at the Metropolitan Opera, the opera was performed in Russian (starring A. Netrebko and M. Kvichen with V. Gergiev as a conductor).

In 1965 a choreographer J. C. Cranko (a director of Stuttgart Ballet) presented a distinctive ballet version in three acts of Pushkin's novel. For this ballet adaptation the Tchaikovsky's opera music was arranged by K.-H. Stolze. *Onegin* has remained in the active repertoire of Stuttgart Ballet and is now performed by companies around the world. Another ballet rendition was staged in 2009 by Saint Petersburg choreographer B. Eifman (music by A. Sitkovetsky with some excerpts from Tchaikovsky's opera). The most recent ballet interpretation titled "Tatyana" was staged by L. Auerbach and J. Neumeier in 2014 (Stanislavski and Nemirovich-Danchenko Moscow Academic Music Theatre).

The category of the secondary texts of the novel certainly includes the Russian text of the libretto written by K. Shilovsky on personal request of P. Tchaikovsky and various librettos created in foreign languages. The persistence of interest in the Tchaikovsky's opera version allows to define this secondary musical text also as a 'strong' text of the Russian culture (in the broadest sense of the concept *text*), while it has been regularly performed in various countries around the world for almost 150 years of its existence, and is widely used in other secondary texts of the novel which results into polysemiotic versions. All the above-mentioned secondary versions of Pushkin's text indicate a high degree of intersemiotic intertextuality of the piece of music by Tchaikovsky. In the theory of musical art, it was suggested that Pushkin's and Tchaikovsky's *Eugene Onegin*s should be approached as a universal text able to generate new texts both in theater and instrumentalism field – performance, scenographic, transcript texts (Golovataya, 2008). The documentary film (shot in 2009) *Eugene Onegin. Between the Past and the Future* (directed by N. Tikhonov) is dedicated to P. Tchaikovsky's opera masterpiece and tells the story of its creation.

The drama performances based on Pushkin's novel in verse are staged rather rarely in a drama theatre interpretations. A few productions can be mentioned among the most famous ones. The play by S. Krzhizhanovsky was staged (and then removed from the production) in the Moscow Chamber Theatre. Ch. Webber's play *Tatyana* was staged in Nottingham Playhouse in 1989 (with Tchaikovsky's music). A famous Russian director Yuri Lyubimov presented an innovative drama remake of the novel at the Taganka Theatre in 2000. The Lyubimov's version included the phonogrammes of the famous Russian reciters of Pushkin's text (I. Smoktunovsky, V. Yakhontov, and A. Yablochkina), fragments of the commentaries to the original Pushkin's text by the outstanding philologists (V. Nabokov and Yu. Lotman) and key arias from the Tchaikovsky's opera. In 2012 the spectators got the possibility to get acquainted with Krzhizhanovsky's adaptation in Princeton University. In the 2012-2013 theatre season the artistic director R. Tuminas presented to the audience an unusual controversial approach to the staging of *Eugene Onegin* at the Vakhtangov State Academic Theatre (with S. Makovetsky, L. Maksakova, J. Borisova performing the leading roles). The original Pushkin's text was turned into drama and got breathtaking improvisation. In Tuminas's adaptation, *Onegin* is telling the story of his lost love 30 years later the events described by Pushkin. As the action was organized in the form of *Onegin's* memories, the doppelgängars of *Onegin* (younger and older *Onegin*s are the main narrators) and *Lensky* appeared. Russian and French folk songs along with the fragments of music by Tchaikovsky (not opera) and Shostakovich accompany the Vakhtangov's adaptation. It is important to emphasize that the music from Tchaikovsky's opera is not used in Tuminas's version. This staging received wide and ambiguous response from the audience and critics and has become

the winner of several prestigious theatre awards. Ch. Wallenberg writes in his review: “The acclaimed production, which features a 45-member cast, premiered in Moscow last year and captured Russia’s prestigious Crystal Turandot theater award. Writing in the Moscow Times, John Freedman declared it ‘a remake of a classic work of literature that has all the hallmarks of a new masterpiece’” (Wallenberg, 2014).

Secondary cinematic texts of Pushkin’s masterpiece began to appear at the very beginning of the cinema era. In 1911, the director V. Goncharov filmed a silent short film (in black and white) *Eugene Onegin*. The film combined the major scenes from the Pushkin’s text and Tchaikovsky’s opera. The famous actor P. Chardynin starred as Eugene. In 1915, two more feature films were shot in the Russian Empire. A silent film based on the novel was produced in Germany in 1919 (directed by A. Halm). In 1999, the British-American film *Onegin* was released (directed by M. Fiennes and with R. Fiennes and L. Tyler as Eugene and Tatyana). A special group of secondary cinematic texts is presented by cinematic adaptations of opera. Thus, in 1958, Soviet film studio “Lenfilm” released a full-colour feature film-opera *Eugene Onegin* directed by R. Tikhomirov. The roles were played by professional actors (A. Shengelaya, S. Nemolyaeva, V. Medvedev), and opera arias were performed by the leading singers of the Bolshoi Theatre (G. Vishnevskaya, L. Avdeeva and E. Kibkalo). Other music films were created in Germany in 1972 and in the UK in 1988. In 1994, H. Burton (the UK) also converted Tchaikovsky’s opera into music TV film in which the representatives of the Netherlands, Germany, Italy, Switzerland and the UK took part. A famous Polish baritone W. Drabovicz starred in this adaptation as Onegin. In 2002 *Eugene Onegin* film-opera with P. Mattei (Sweden) starring as Onegin was released in France. Five years later (in 2007) another film-opera with participation of P. Mattei was released in Austria. The interesting cinematic attempt to modernize the 19th century novel was made in Russia in 2013 (in nearly two centuries after the creation of the original novel). The producer of the film version was a famous Russian actor, director and TV host F. Bondarchuk. The plot of the novel was moved into modern Russia. In accordance with the new temporary and cultural context, the characters of the novel are radically changed: Onegin becomes a successful businessperson, and Lensky is a musician. The action takes place in nightclubs. Several cartoon versions are created on the basis of Pushkin’s text: directed by A. Oyat’eva in 1999 and E. Kharlamov in 2013.

The film adaptation is one of the most common secondary forms of a “strong” literary text. It is interesting to cite the statement of O. Aronson who notes that ‘when we touch upon the subject of film adaptation, we involuntarily begin to think in terms of translation’ (Aronson, 2002: 128). Considering film adaptation (as the translation of verbal language into the language of visual images), which is one of the regular types of intersemiotic translation, the Russian theorist of film and television repeatedly refers to the abovementioned work by W. Benjamin *The Task of the Translator* and states that film adaptation allows to sharpen a number of key statements of the Benjamin’s. First of all, O. Aronson argues about the nature of Benjamin’s ‘untranslatability’ understood by the German philosopher not as the impossibility of translation, but as an important way to detect inherent insufficiency of the original, and draws attention to W. Benjamin’s thesis that the higher the level of the literary work, the more translatable it is. Herewith, it is particularly appropriate to refer to the following well-known statement of M. Proust that wonderful books are written in a kind

of a foreign language (Proust, 1984). It means that wonderful books (“strong” texts in our understanding) should be translated. I. Chubarov, who writes as follows thinking about the Benjamin’s ideas on translation, also presents the focus on Benjamin’s idea of “foreignness” of the outstanding literary texts in the work: “Benjamin associates the issue of the relation of the quality of the translation and the original with the quality of the latter. <...> the possibility of translation is associated with its special characteristics, namely the presence of a kind of a prototype of a foreign language in the language of the original” (Chubarov, 2011: 246). It is critically important that film adaptation is determined by O. Aronson not only as the use of another language (another semiotic system to be more exact), but, above all, as a qualitatively different experience of reception of a significant cultural object allowing to explicate the implied information of the original text. It is the different experience of reception, which enables a significant literary work to be continued in a secondary cinematic text. Reflecting on G. Deleuze’s ideas on cinematography and film art, O. Aronson concludes that the cases of film adaptation of literary text are the cases when literature and cinema interlace to find in each other what they cannot fully implement individually. In conclusion, the researcher comes to an important conclusion that “the language of cinema images is nothing else but the communicative touch of the untranslatable, and film adaptation is an inevitable indication of the failure of the original, its impossibility, despite all its greatness, to be the ‘pure language’” (Aronson, 2002: 140).

Conclusion: any coming breakthrough in intersemiotic translation studies?

The studied material demonstrates that novelistic writing and a “strong” text in particular can be translated into other texts of various semiotic nature. The inclusion in the translation process the means of other semiotic systems can be considered as the change the translation strategy (Dusi, 2010) leading to the overcoming of “residual” interlingual untranslatability. As a possible scientific field in the current humanities, intersemiotic translation studies are at the beginning of its genesis the success of which fully depends on universal scientific complementary principle. Interdisciplinary of this branch can mainly be supported with the further integration between semiotics and translation – that has already proved to be efficient right by translation semiotics. There are persistent questions to be answered: (1) the limits of translatability/non-translatability; (2) the units of intersemiotic translation; (3) *ad hoc* & *ad libitum* intersemiotic translation strategies related to cultural information / memory; (4) semiotic conditions to intersemiotic translation (Stecconi, 2007); (5) the degree of an original text adaptation (when and why does translation stop to be translation). In this context, the centers of translation attraction formed by “strong” literary texts can be valuable material for future research. Within the centre of translation attraction as a replica of the Tower of Babel another persistent question arises: the *ad hoc* dominance of various translated versions of the original text in the heterogeneous space of a center of translation attraction.

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