

PRAGMATIC AND SOCIOCULTURAL ADAPTATION IN LITERARY TRANSLATION

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Abstract. *When translating a text written for a target audience with a different cultural background, the text necessarily undergoes pragmatic and sociocultural modification and adaptation. Pragmatically, the source text elements need modification to meet the needs of the new cultural and linguistic environment or the communicative situation (Zauberga 1994), and the target language audience (Neubert and Shreve 1992). Socioculturally, the peculiarities of a source text which may trigger sociocultural adaptation (Chang 2009, 95) are the different temporal and spatial perceptions of reality, the difference in the way notions are conceptualized, the syntactic and discourse organization of the two languages, as well as the choice of lexis. This article presents a pragmatic and rhetorical analysis aiming to unveil the pragmatic and sociocultural adaptations 10 students had to make when translating a short story from Macedonian into English. In addition, the students responded to a survey in which they described the challenges they faced while translating. The research highlighted the importance of thorough analysis of socio-cultural differences, pragmatic adaptations, and the context-based vs. language-based problems. Explicit instruction during translation classes is necessary to help raise students' awareness of the problems that might arise due to lack of sociocultural background knowledge and pragmatic failure.*

Key words: *Pragmatics, socio-cultural background, translation, short stories, explicit instruction*

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1. INTRODUCTION

Translation, as defined by Nord (1997, 141), refers to “any translational action where a source text is transferred into a target culture and language”. Subsequently, any text translated from one language into another endures transfer from its original context into the target context, which inevitably affects its meaning. Nida defines this process of translating as, “reproducing in the receptor language the closest natural equivalent of the source-language message, first in terms of meaning and secondly in terms of style” (Nida 1964, 12).

Adaptation is viewed by many authors as an integral part of the translation process (Vinay and Darbelnet, 1995; Sanders 2006; Raw 2012, Volkova 2012, Volkova and Zubenina 2015), aimed at reducing the cultural and temporal gap between the source and target texts (Sanders 2006, 19). As Kosonen points out, “though pragmatic adaptation is distinct from translation, it is somehow always connected to translation” (Kosonen 2011, 66) Translation serves as a crucial tool for fostering cross-cultural understanding, with adaptation facilitating effective communication across cultural disparities and minimizing the likelihood of misunderstandings. As noted by Baker and Saldanha (2011), adaptation functions as a means of “building bridges across minds and languages.” Baker further states that “adaptation is a procedure which can be used whenever the context referred to in the original text does not exist in the culture of the target text, thereby necessitating some form of re-creation” (Baker 2011, 6). Therefore, it is both impractical and unrealistic, as Gambier and Gottlieb (2001, 34) argue, to translate a text without employing cultural, pragmatic, or other forms of adaptation.

So, as a starting point, we can conclude that a translation needs to encompass both the pragmatic and socio-cultural dimensions of the source text, while the translator has to aim towards reflecting the intended communication style of the original author, which necessitates accurate transfer of socio-cultural elements from the source to the target language.

This article aims to delineate the pragmatic and socio-cultural criteria present in the source text that prompt adaptation. It further seeks to examine the pragmatic and socio-cultural adaptations made by students when translating a Macedonian literary text, specifically a short story, into English. Additionally, the study endeavors to assess the students' awareness of the adaptations required and the extent to which they implement them. We believe that these findings will shed light on the challenges and weaknesses students face when translating texts between languages, providing valuable insights for refining translation classes to better address these areas of difficulty. Furthermore, our aim is to contribute to the advancement of research in this field by revising the existing adaptation strategies and techniques and offering illustrative examples of the inadequately made adaptations by students when translating from Macedonian into English, thereby providing insight into yet another language pair and necessary cultural adjustments.

2. THEORETICAL BACKGROUND: PRAGMATIC AND SOCIOCULTURAL ADAPTATION

The shift of focus in linguistics from form to function impacted translation studies. As Munday points out, functionalist and communicative translation theories advanced in Germany in the 1970s and 1980s moved translation from a mainly linguistic phenomenon to being considered as an act of intercultural communication (Munday 2012, 138). For example, in the context of Reiss and Vermeer's translational action theory (1974), the translator is seen "as the key player in a process of intercultural communication and production" (Munday 2012, 127). Komissarov (1991, 43) argues that translation from one language into another is always translation from culture to culture.

This also highlighted the importance and use of various adaptation strategies to enable and facilitate this communication. Kosonen points out that the main reason (but not the only reason) why pragmatic adaptation and translation are so closely related is the close relationship between culture and language (Kosonen 2011, 66). Furthermore, adaptation is an unavoidable part of the translation process which aims at strengthening the connection between source and target texts and between source and target audiences, too. According to Gambier and Gottlieb (2001, 35) even if a translator is not allowed to work with a source text at some degree of 'freedom', adaptation will occur anyway.

Having in mind that adaptation is a complex and multilayered process, Baker and Saldanha (2011, 41) distinguish between two types of adaptation: local and global. Local adaptation addresses situational challenges within specific segments of the text, aimed at managing inherent structural, pragmatic, social, or cultural translation difficulties. On the other hand, global adaptation is applied across the entirety of the text and is prompted by external factors inherent to the source text, such as shifts in purpose, function, or intended impact on the target audience.

This article, in its analysis of the translated text, shall adopt Volkova and Zubenina's (2015) concept of **adaptation as a translation technique and strategy**. Translation techniques refer to specific methods and procedures employed to transfer meaning from the source text to the target text, while translation strategies encompass broader approaches and decisions guiding the overall translation process, such as reduction, expansion, creation etc. and they may vary depending on the genre, purpose and audience. Volkova and Zubenina (2015) state that "as with any other kind of translation operation, adaptation is a system of social, cultural, pragmatic and linguistic links between source and target realities. Besides choosing the text that will be translated, the translator has to make a choice in terms of pragmatic and sociocultural adaptation, where a translator has to decide which aspect of the source text is to be adapted". Finally, in this process "pragmatic or sociocultural adaptation (or both) gets embodied in the target text with the help of particular translation techniques or strategies" (Volkova and Zubenina 2015, 92).

Pragmatic adaptation is necessary because it helps: "adapt the source text to the target audience and its needs" (Neubert 1968); modify those source elements which "would not work properly in the target language" (Vehmas-Lehto 2002), as well as "conform to the needs of the new language environment" (Kosonen 2011). Sociocultural adaptation is needed because the text should be translated to reflect a different temporal and spatial perception of reality; different way of conceptualization of a notion; because the two languages have different syntactic and discourse organization and because of the difference in the choice of lexical meaning (Chang 2009). In simple terms, pragmatic adaptation involves adjusting language use for effective communication in a specific context, while sociocultural adaptation

focuses on aligning translated content with the norms, customs and values of the target culture.

With regards to the **source text criteria** on which we based our analysis, we focused mainly on the various pragmatic and sociocultural parameters proposed by Volkova and Zubenina (2015, 96-97), which we felt provided a comprehensive and detailed set which encompasses the general, but also specific features of the translated text (short story) that need to be adapted in the process of translation. The parameters are presented in the table below:

Table 1 Selected parameters of pragmatic and socio-cultural adaptation, Volkova and Zubenina (2015)

Pragmatic Adaptation	Sociocultural Adaptation
Textual level	
Lexical and semantic parameters of a source text (expressing author's pragmatic intentions e.g. colloquial or evaluative expressions)	Idiomatic expressions and play upon words Specific use of pronouns
Syntactic peculiarities of a source text (inversion, impersonal & elliptical sentences, rhetorical questions, direct/indirect speech, word order shift etc.)	Cultural lacunas and realia (which may not exist in the target language)
Grammatical parameters of a source text (modal verbs, specific use of inf. and gerund etc.)	Lexical elements reflecting social and cultural peculiarities of the source culture (words denoting gestures, measures, acronyms, toponyms...)
Stylistic parameters of a source text (stylistic devices: metaphors, personifications, similes & proverbs, sayings and phraseological units)	

Having in mind that this is a prose text, which unlike a poetic text does not always achieve its explicit and semantic and stylistic effects through the inversion or subversion of grammatical and syntactic rules, our analysis focused more on the lexical and stylistic parameters with regards to pragmatic adaptation. As to sociocultural adaptation, the students were faced with a dual challenge with regards to the language and the historical and cultural period in which the short story "Sleepwalkers" (Месечарци) by Dragi Mihajlovski was written and it takes place – the 1980 and 90s . Even though Macedonian language has not experienced a drastic linguistic change since that time, its stylistic and idiomatic features have developed in subtle ways that may cause issues to generations born and educated in the 21st century, especially with regards to its idiomatic expressions. Subsequently, the short story was written in a different social and political system, that of former Yugoslavia, thus its lexical elements, cultural lacunas and realias predominantly refer to that period, with which the current generation of students is insufficiently acquainted.

This, of course, has resulted in employment of various translation procedures and techniques in order to compensate for both the linguistic and semantic differences and requirements of Macedonian and English, as well as the different sociocultural background of readers in both cultures and literatures.

3. SAMPLE

Our study focused on translations conducted by ten second- and third-year student-translators majoring in English at the English department of Ss. Cyril and Methodius University. More specifically, the students included in this study are all on a C1 level (CEFR) and they are enrolled in the translation stream, indicating their aspiration to become future translators and interpreters. They participate in specialized classes focused on translation and interpreting, where they have been introduced to some of the adaptation techniques and strategies examined in this article. However, it is noteworthy that they haven't received explicit training in these adaptation methods for the purposes of this research. They all agreed to have their translations, which were part of a compulsory task within their translation course, subjected to analysis. However, they were not provided with any additional information about the specifics of the research, in order to facilitate as natural a translation as possible.

The students were tasked with translating the short story "Sleepwalkers" (Месечари) by Dragi Mihajlovski. Initially, we identified features within the source text necessitating pragmatic and socio-cultural adaptation. Subsequently, we scrutinized the students' translations based on the set of translation techniques and strategies provided in the Methodology section in order to pinpoint the pragmatic and socio-cultural adaptation challenges they encountered. The students all gave their consent to take part in the study, while this research was conducted outside their regular course assignments, thus ensuring that there would be no interference or power issues in their work would be involved.

At first, our research focused on analyzing the translation in specific points of the text where we anticipated students might encounter difficulties, based on their age, education and cultural affiliations. However, we later expanded our examination to encompass the entirety of the translations, discovering additional areas where students encountered difficulties. Additionally, the student-translators completed an open-ended questionnaire designed to assess their awareness of the necessary adaptations, drawing from their experiences during the translation process, which was then used to draw the conclusions of the study regarding the pedagogical implications gleaned from our findings. The analysis is qualitative as our intention was not to count the specific instances of various translations, but to emphasize the points where students did or did not make appropriate pragmatic and sociocultural adaptation.

4. METHODOLOGY

With regards to our methodological approach to the study of pragmatic and sociocultural adaptation in the student translations of the short story, we have decided to focus on their use of various translation techniques. Beside the ones proposed by Volkova and Zubenina (2015), we included some sets of adaptation and translation techniques proposed by other authors: 'creation' (Kosonen 2011) and 'destruction of linguistic patterns' (Berman 2000) as pragmatic adaptation techniques, and 'illustration' (Kostrova 2006) and 'destruction of expression of idioms' (Berman 2000) as sociocultural adaptation techniques.

Table 2 Translation techniques

Pragmatic Adaptation	Sociocultural Adaptation
<i>Omission</i>	<i>Transcription or Transliteration</i>
<i>Expansion</i>	<i>More general word</i>
<i>Substitution</i>	<i>Less expressive equivalent</i>
<i>Updating</i>	<i>Cultural substitution</i>
<i>Creation</i> (Kosonen 2011:56)	<i>Loan words</i>
	<i>Paraphrase</i>
<i>Rationalization</i>	<i>Omission or addition</i>
<i>Clarification</i>	<i>Illustration</i> (Kostrova 2006:254)
<i>Qualitative & quantitative impoverishment</i>	
<i>Destruction of linguistic patterns</i> (Berman 2000:289)	<i>Destruction of expression of idioms</i> (Berman 2000:289)

This combined set of translation techniques was a result of the specifics of the source text and the subsequent analysis of the provided translations by our students. In order to avoid artificially imposing a set of analytical and assessment criteria, we have taken a reverse-engineering approach and first analysed the important sociocultural, pragmatic and literary features of the source text. Based on that, we have identified a combination of techniques that the student-translators had used in their translation process.

Thus, the first set of techniques for pragmatic adaptation, such as ‘omission’ (deletion or removal of source information), ‘expansion’ (explication of source information); ‘exoticism’ (substitution by rough equivalents); ‘updating’ (substitution by modern equivalents), ‘creation’ (a target text preserves only the most essential information of a source text) are used when the translator is faced with lack of formal equivalent solutions in the target language or the need to introduce social, cultural, historical, geographical or other information which is new or relatively unknown to the target culture.

The second set of techniques is taken from Berman’s twelve ‘deforming tendencies’, which address the way translation tends to reduce variation. Though it is aimed at pointing out the reductive aspects of translation, these are techniques which are often used and ‘abused’ by translators when faced with pragmatic challenges. ‘Rationalization’ mainly entails the modification of syntactic structures including punctuation and sentence structure and order. ‘Clarification’ includes explication which ‘aims to render “clear” what does not wish to be clear in the original’. ‘Quantitative impoverishment’ highlights the loss of lexical variation in translation. The last one encompasses some of the techniques and the result from their application, because translators often adopt a range of techniques, such as *rationalization*, *clarification* and *expansion*, all of which standardize the target text to the detriment of the source text style and language (Munday 2012, 231-2).

Sociocultural adaptation may serve as both a translation technique and a translation strategy. When implemented on specific sections of a source text, it becomes evident through the utilization of various sociocultural adaptation techniques in translation. Certain techniques, such as *omission*, *paraphrasing*, *addition* and *illustration*, mirror the approach taken in pragmatic adaptation, as they are practical solutions to the impossibility to find formal equivalents. Furthermore, certain disruptive or negative techniques such as *less expressive equivalents*, *cultural substitutions* and *destruction of expressions of idioms*, may lead to the loss or impoverishment of the cultural depth of the

source text. However, the use of *loan words* and *cultural substitutions* can enrich the target language or expand the semantic versatility of the original text.

Finally, the pragmatic and sociocultural parameters which the source text imposes as well as the adaptation and translation techniques which the students applied, have a direct influence and reflect on the overall translation strategies which are chosen and applied in the translation process. As you can see in table 3 below, we adopted the strategies proposed by Volkova and Zubenina (2015, 96) combined with the ones proposed by Chesterman and Wagner (2002), as well as the well-known concept of domestication and foreignization in translation as expounded by Venuti (1995):

Table 3 Translation strategies

Pragmatic Adaptation	Sociocultural Adaptation
<i>Explicitness change</i>	<i>Cultural filtering</i>
<i>Interpersonal change</i>	(Chesterman and Wagner 2002):
<i>Illocutionary change</i>	
<i>Coherence change</i>	<i>Domestication</i>
<i>Partial translation</i>	<i>Foreignization</i>
<i>Visibility change – author’s presence</i>	(Venuti 1995)
<i>Transcending – radical rewriting</i>	
(Chesterman and Wagner 2002)	

The following strategies we felt were used knowingly and unknowingly by our student-translators, thus altering to various degree the tone, intent or register of the original text. For example, *explicitness change* as a strategy “helps to transform the information of a source text to make it more explicit or implicit”, while *interpersonal change* helps change “the level of formality, the degree of involvement and emotivity of a source text author” (Chesterman and Wagner 2002, 60–63, Volkova and Zubenina 2015, 93) The style and register of the author is often impacted by illocutionary change which involves “a change of moods (e.g., indicative to imperative), changes of the structure of rhetorical questions and exclamations, variation between direct and indirect speech”, which can also happen with translations which lead to coherence change through “various alterations of the source text structure” (Chesterman and Wagner 2002, 60–63, Volkova and Zubenina 2015, 93). Partial translation in this case was mostly used when the translator failed to fully understand an expression or passage in the source text, thus reducing certain parts or sentences to a summary. Visibility change is a strategy where translators can “undertake changes in the level of the author’s presence in the text, but also make themselves visible by adding footnotes, bracketed comments, etc.; while transcending, refers to radical rewriting of the text (Volkova and Zubenina, 2015, 93).

Chesterman, as cited by Chesterman and Wagner (2002), regards sociocultural adaptation as a translation strategy, defining it as a form of ‘cultural filtering’ that can be manifested through domestication and foreignization (Volkova and Zubenina 2015, 95). ‘Domestication’ helps to translate specific cultural concepts of a source language so that ‘they conform to the target language norms’, while ‘foreignization’ is the directly opposite process, when those specific concepts are not adapted at all, but simply ‘borrowed or transferred directly’ (ibid).

We have also conducted a review of previous similar studies of translation techniques and strategies used by students when translating a literary text. Most of the studies have been conducted from English to the target language, but we also found studies where English is the target language as is the case in our study, In Habbeeb and Jameel (2023) when translating a text from Arabic to English, students used the strategies of adaptation, functional equivalence and domestication, with adaptation employed more than any other translation strategy, as way of overcoming to communicate effectively in the target language.. and navigate the cultural norms and expectations of the target language community, because adaptation strategy is the simplest way to achieve this objective” (Habbeeb, L. S., & Jameel, A. S. (2023).

Garipova and Latypov (2019) carried out an experiment with fourth-year students from Kazan Federal University, who were translating from Russian into English. The main difficulties found in the study were clichés, idioms, and terms, followed by translating metaphors and collocations. Al Nakhal (2017), found that difficulties that students encountered when trying to translate cultures from English to Arabic “typically linked to: 1) translating particular cultural conceptions, 2) futile attempts to achieve language similarity in English, and 3) a lack of understanding of translation methodologies and approaches”. In Asi et al. (2024), students translated texts from Indonesian to English with a dominant use of the strategy of foreignization including techniques such as calque, transference, modulation, transposition, omission, explication, and addition, while they concluded that cultural equivalence and accepted translation belong with the domestication strategy.

We shall see, as part of our analysis, which techniques and strategies shall be most employed by our students and whether they align with the findings of the aforementioned research.

5. ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION

This section features the analysis of the pragmatic and socio-cultural adaptations made by students in their translations. As mentioned previously, we initially identified some points in the text which we expected to be problematic for students because of their sensitivity to context and culture specificities. However, we analysed the entire translations to pinpoint all the instances of adequate and inadequate translations, which also provided further insight for the conclusions drawn from this exercise.

5.1. Pragmatic adaptation

In the first stage of our research regarding pragmatic adaptations, we conducted an **analysis of the lexical and semantic parameters of the source text**. Our examination revealed that students encountered difficulties when translating Macedonian colloquialisms, particularly words in their diminutive form and those with archaic or period-specific usage. As a coping strategy, they often resorted to *partial translation*, resulting in a *qualitative impoverishment* and *disruption of linguistic patterns*. For instance, they employed *literal, direct translation* when faced with unfamiliar words, leading to instances such as (1a) and (2a). In other cases, they *omitted* diminutives, as seen in (3a), or opted for expansion, as in (4a), or expansion and substitution, as in (5a) when uncertain about conveying the intended meaning. Additionally, *rationalization* was employed when dealing with archaic words, resulting in a *generalized translation*, as observed in (6a). Furthermore, students encountered

challenges when translating words specific to certain Macedonian dialects, as exemplified in (7a). In these instances, they struggled to capture the nuanced colloquial register, often resorting to *literal translation*, employing *rationalization* as a technique, and inadvertently *disrupting linguistic patterns*.

- (1a) **автоматчето** (orig.)¹ - [the switch, the light switch for electricity]²
Students' translation: *vending machine, automat sensor, automatic machine*
- (2a) **самопослуга** (orig.) – [grocery store]
Students' translation: *self-service store/ shop*
- (3a) **Паркчето** (orig.) – [diminutive form of park]
Students' translation: *the park*
- (4a) **збивта** (orig.) – [panting, breaths heavily]
Students' translation: *panting and puffing*
- (5a) *ако ги намести антените ...можеби ќе добиеш слика* (orig.) - [you may get a good reception/ better signal]
Students' translation: *you may get a picture; maybe your TV will receive a picture signal and you'll be able to watch TV clearly => expansion and substitution*
- (6a) **пепцере** (orig.) – [casement]
Students' translation: *window*
- (7a) *Рецензиите да ми икграбнат* (orig.) – *colloquial expression (Bitola dialect)*
Students' translation: *to write a review (neutral); or some review to scribble for me, they can write me a little review (literal translation)*

Nonetheless, it is noteworthy that certain dialect-specific terms or archaic words, still prevalent in contemporary usage, were effectively recognized and accurately translated by students, as evidenced in examples (8a) and (9a).

- (8a) **р'мбај** (orig.) – [break your back working; work as a slave; work till you drop]
Students' translation: *work your fingers to the bone; labour; slave away*
- (9a) *Овие митолошки имиња баи убаво си ми ги трефнал* (orig.) - [you aced/ hit on the
mythological names]
Students' translation: *you hit the spot with those mythological names/ you sprinkled in those mythological names*

The analysis of the **syntactic peculiarities** also revealed some problematic areas for students as they opted for *partial translation* as a strategy, which led to *destruction of linguistic pattern* as a technique, as in example (10a). They again did not manage to translate the subtle difference in meaning between "I do not know", which is a simple declarative statement and "Not that I know", which is often used to express uncertainty or limited knowledge.

¹ The original text was in Macedonian and is presented with the abbreviation (orig.).

² Translation was provided by the authors and is presented in square brackets.

- (10a) A: „Жупски е?“ (orig.) [“Is it from Zhupa?”]
 B: „**Не** оти знам,“ вели Јово. [“Not that I know”, says Jovo.]
 A: „**Немој** да мислиш дека јас пак знам“, велиам... [“Don’t think that I know”, I say...]
 Students’ translation:
 A: *Zhupski, is it...*
 B: **No idea/ I don't know/ As if I'd know**
 A: *Well, don't go thinking that I know/ Well, I wouldn't know either/ Of course, I also have no idea*

Additionally, the examination of **grammatical parameters** revealed that students generally encountered no significant difficulties, as they were largely able to make satisfactory adaptations.

- (11a) *Еднаш мора да си одам од аптеката.* (orig.) [I need to/I have to leave the pharmacy eventually.]
 Students’ translation: **I have to leave the pharmacy already/ I should quit my job at the pharmacy.**

Moreover, as students endeavored to translate the text **stylistically**, particularly when dealing with metaphorical language, they resorted to various techniques, including *omission* or *substitution with rough equivalents*. Unfortunately, these approaches often resulted in a *qualitative impoverishment of the text*, as in examples (12a) and (13a). This was manifested through *partial translation*, *radical rewriting (transcendence)*, and *changes in explicitness* as strategies.

- (12a) ...*смалената женска сенка залепена ко* **пачавра** *за месечината*
 Suggested translation³: [shrunk female shadow stuck to the moon **as a wet rag**]
 Students’ translations:*shrunk female shadow...*
 ...*glued to the moon* (omission, qualitative impoverishment)
 ...*who clings to the moon like a sticker/an old rag/a tramp*
 (substitution by rough equivalents)
- (13a) ...*очекува да го фалам, а мој да расме, расме.*
 Suggested translation: [he expects me to praise him, so that **he could just show off.**]
 Students’ translations: *he is expecting my praise/ expects me to praise him/ compliment him so that he may grow and grow/ and for him to grow, grow/ so he can expand, and grow, and grow...*

Furthermore, when translating speech acts students encountered challenges in accurately conveying the illocutionary force. Instead, they often resorted to *substitution by rough equivalents* as a technique and employed strategies such as *changing the mood* and *altering the illocutionary force*. For instance, the use of directives in (14a) sounds

³ Suggested by the authors

completely normal in Macedonian, but a bit rude in English, and in (15a), students made a direct transfer of the question and did not use polite forms.

(14a) „Оди Јово,“ велам, „оди напред!“

Suggested translation: [Move Jovo, I say, you move straight on!]

Students' translations: “Go, Jovo,” I said, “go forward!”/ “Go, Jovo,” I say, “go ahead.”/ “Go ahead Jovo,” I said, “go first.” / “Go ahead, Jovo,” I say, “lead the way!”

(15a) Да не сакаме кафе?

Suggested translation: [Would you like some coffee?]

Students' translation: *Do you want coffee?*

Overall, the analysis revealed that the prevalent **translation techniques** employed for pragmatic adaptations included substitution, omission, rationalization (generalization), and expansion which is similar to the result in Asi et al (2024). However, some translations resulted in a qualitative impoverishment of the language and style of the source text, occasionally resorting to literal translation and disrupting linguistic patterns. As for the use of **translation strategies**, students generally opted for partial translation, or transcending (radical rewriting) in cases when they did not properly understand the context, which also led to changes in the explicitness and illocutionary stylistic features of the source text.

5.2. Sociocultural adaptation

Further analysis revealed that students faced difficulties in adapting the text socioculturally, particularly when translating **idiomatic expressions**, as featured in examples (1b) – (4b). They predominantly utilized techniques such as *cultural substitution* or *destruction of expressions and idioms*. Additionally, they often resorted to the strategy of *foreignization*, which involves borrowing or directly transferring terms from the source language.

(1b) „На здравје!“, велам.

„Да сме здрави и живи!“ вели Јово. (orig.)

Suggested translation: [“Cheers!”, I say. “To our health! /Gesundheit!”, says Jovo.”]

Students' translations: *May we be alive and healthy; May we be in good health.*

(2b) Јово е мртов ладен. (orig.)

Suggested translation: [Jovo remains stone-cold.]

Students' translations: *Jovo is aloof/ reactionless/ emotionless/ nonchalant.*

(3b) „Да не сакаме кафе?“, прашува жената.

„Само стави вода“, вели Јово. (orig.)

Suggested translation: [“Would you care for/like some coffee?”, asks the woman. “Just put a pot of water on the stove”, says Jovo.]

Students' translations: “Do you want coffee?” she asks. / “Would you care for coffee?” “Would you like some coffee?” the woman asks.

“Just bring some water,” he says. / “Just put the water on” / “Just put water” / “Just give us water,” says Jovo

(4b) *Важно е да останеме луѓе. (orig.)*

Suggested translation: [It is important that we stay normal/ humane.]

Students' translations: (*false friends*)

It's important to stay /to remain human/ people/ human beings.

We must remain human. / We should stay human.

In a similar manner, when translating **cultural lacunas and realia**, student-translators did not manage to make an appropriate sociocultural adaptation, opting either for a *loan word without an explanation* or *transliteration* as techniques, and *foreignization* again as a strategy. See for instance examples (5b) to (13b). In (5b) and (6b) students just transliterated the proper names with no adaptation whatsoever. The ethnographic terms, in (7b) - (9b) were also transliterated and no footnotes were given to explain to the reader what these names referred to exactly.

Similarly, when translating brands they faced a different set of challenges. There are brands which are so popular and in everyday use that they are referred to without any need for additional explanation or even referred to in a diminutive form. However, some of them are no longer existent or present in the popular mind, thus need either explaining in the form of a footnote or being replaced with similar current brand names. The student-translators most often applied the strategy of referring to the original city in which they were produced (10b) or just transliterating it as in examples (11b) and (12b), thus not fully accomplishing the goal of mediating between two different cultures.

Proper names:

(5b) *Јово*

Students' translation: *Jovo*

(6b) *Јејмс (Yeats)*

Students' translation: *Yetes (inappropriate spelling)*

Ethnographical terminology: no footnotes to explain

(7b) *Банчор (village in Macedonia)*

Students' translation: *Bapchor*

(8b) *Вучо (mountain)*

Students' translation: *Vicho*

(9b) *Љуботен (mountain)*

Students' translation: *Ljuboten*

Brands:

(10b) *Ниики е? (adj.) [Is it an EI Nish TV, a Nish TV⁴?]*

Students' translation: *Is it from Nish? Nishiki? Niški?*

(11b) *Жупски*

Students' translation: *Župski*

(12b) *Горење*

Students' translation: *Gorenje*

(13b) *Vinjak*

Students' translation: *brandy*

⁴ Nish is a place in Serbia, so the question is whether the TV is a Nish TV, or EI Nish TV

Finally, the examination of students' translation of **lexical elements reflecting social and cultural peculiarities of the source culture** unveiled that they predominantly employed techniques, such as *using more general words*, *paraphrasing* or making *cultural substitutions*, as in both (14b) and (15b). Consequently, this led to the adoption of either foreignization or domestication as overarching strategies in their translation approach.

(14b) „E, ee, majkama“ (orig.)

Suggested translation: [Oh, c'mon!] (expressing disagreement)

Students' translations: *Well, well. /Well, the mother. / Ha! A thing like that/ Oh, yes.../Aye*

(15b) *И наоѓа мана во мезето* (orig.)

Suggested translation: [He nitpicks the appetizer]

Students' translations: *finds fault in her cold cuts/ nags about the salad/ he finds something wrong with her meals.*

Overall, regarding sociocultural adaptation, the prevalent **translation techniques** included cultural substitution, alteration or removal of expressions and idioms, paraphrasing, generalization, as well as transliteration and incorporation of loanwords without clarification, while the prevalent **strategy** employed was foreignization. This is very similar to the conclusions of Asi et al. (2024), where foreignization was dominant, while the difficulty with idioms is confirmed in Garipova and Latypov (2019).

5.3. Questionnaire results

In the subsequent phase of the analysis, we requested student-translators to reflect on their experiences through an open-ended questionnaire. Here, we will provide a summary presentation of their responses. The first question asked them to state how satisfied they were with the submitted translation and assess the level of difficulty of the text. Most of the students found the text interesting but rather challenging and difficult, and were somewhat satisfied with their submitted translation.

The next question prompted them to reflect on the aspects of the text they found challenging and explain the reasons behind their struggles. Unsurprisingly, they predominantly cited difficulties in translating cultural lacunas and realia, notably mentioning terms like *Nishki* and *Zhupski*, along with period- and culture-specific vocabulary. Additionally, they encountered challenges in capturing the colloquial style, as well as nuances of tone and register, which were evident in their translations.

Furthermore, when asked about challenges pertaining to diachronic differences in language and style, students generally responded that they did not really experience such problems. However, they did acknowledge difficulties in finding equivalent terms for certain diminutive expressions and archaic vocabulary. This suggests that many of them were not fully aware of their lack of adaptation skills. This is a matter that has to be taken into consideration when developing and adapting the translation study curricula, which needs to be regularly updated to meet the needs and scope of general knowledge of the new generations of students.

When asked whether the type of text influenced their choice of style and register, students responded affirmatively. They indicated that they considered various factors

such as the genre, cultural context, and formal or literary aspects of the text when determining the appropriate style and register to use.

Furthermore, when asked if there were any terms or socio-cultural notions they found challenging to comprehend upon their initial reading of the text, students responded affirmatively, listing examples of such difficulties including archaic vocabulary and colloquial expressions like "филадендрон", "автоматче", "трефнал", and "шкрабнат".

In addition, when asked about the pragmatic adaptations they remembered they had to make to adjust the text to the English cultural and language norms, they listed examples such as: names (e.g. *Јово*), interjections, idiomatic expression (e.g. "Оган се" [*It's expensive*], *Јазикот се разврзува* [*I get chatty*]), diminutive forms ("автоматче"), lexical elements reflecting social and cultural peculiarities of the source culture ("мезе" [*meal*], "Ее, мајката" [*Well, well*]); syntactic adaptations (adding a subject, as in: "стани, рмбaj, лежни" [*you get up, work your fingers to the bone, and go to bed*], [*rinse and repeat*]). This confirms the importance of the concept of cultural filtering by Chesterman which goes hand in hand with the need for pragmatic adaptation in order to: "adapt the source text to the target audience and its needs" (Neubert 1968)

Finally, we sought to understand if there were any social and cultural taboos present in the text that influenced their approach to translation. The students acknowledged this, citing an example with the word "мајмуни" compared to "monkeys" in English. They recognized that while "мајмуни" might not carry derogatory connotations in their language, its translation to "monkeys" could be perceived as a racial slur in English. Consequently, they opted for adaptations such as "morons" or "nitwits" to avoid offense and maintain cultural sensitivity in their translations. This is an instance, when social and cultural norms, such as taboos, lead to radical re-writing as a form of domestication strategy.

6. CONCLUSION

Though our analysis of the translations of the short story *Moonwalkers* by Dragi Mihajlovski is based on a small sample of just 10 student-translators, we feel it has provided us with sufficient and thought-provoking results and insights which allow us to draw certain conclusions. As Jiri Levy states, "literary translation is both a reproductive and a creative labour with the goal of equivalent aesthetic effect" (Munday 2012, 98), but also sees real world translation work as being pragmatic: "The translator resolves for one of the possible solutions which promises a maximum of effect with a minimum of effort" (Munday 2012, 62).

This precise outlining of both the goals and the effort of a literary translations also helps us point out the main issues facing young translators, as well as the reasons for choosing certain adaptation and translation strategies.

First, we tried to identify the main issues that our student-translators had with regards to pragmatic and socio-cultural adaptations. We took into account that the diachronical and cultural period when the source text was written (1980's in former Yugoslavia) would pose a set of challenges for the students who were born and educated in the 21st century. Thus, from the point of view of **pragmatic adaptation**, what emerged was that students face issues when having to adapt lexical, semantic and stylistic parameters of a source text that was written before their time. Though the language has

not changed dramatically, still certain stylistic and expressive features have become either obsolete or are not as used by the younger generation.

With regards to **socio-cultural adaptation**, what emerged was that the student translators were somewhat perplexed when they had to adapt idiomatic expressions, cultural lacunas and realia and lexical elements reflecting social and cultural peculiarities of the source culture into the target culture, in this case English. They are faced with a double-pronged challenge, researching and learning the social and cultural features of a past period (Macedonia in former Yugoslavia) that is slowly dissipating from the collective memory, while at the same time trying to find equivalent translation solutions for the English and international reader and their cultural and literary expectations and knowledge.

As our analysis showed, in order to resolve these adaptation and translation challenges, they applied a set of various translation techniques. With regards to pragmatic adaptation, the most typical **translation techniques** used were: substitution, omission, rationalization (generalization), expansion with mostly satisfactory results, but some of their solutions resulted in qualitative impoverishment with regards to the language and style of the source text, as well as on certain occasions to literal translation and destruction of linguistic patterns. Concerning **socio-cultural adaptation**, the most typical **translation techniques** used were cultural substitution, destruction of expressions and idioms, paraphrase, generalization, as well as transliteration and using loan words without an explanation. The results of these techniques were varied, which depended on the level of general or cultural knowledge of the translator, and the amount of research they conducted. However, we also have to take into account that for some of the younger students, these were their first attempts at serious literary translation.

In addition, these factors had an impact on the translation strategies that were applied when attempting pragmatic and socio-cultural adaptation as part of the translation process. In order to solve the problems and challenges that the source text posed, the most typical **translation strategies** used were partial translation, transcending (radical rewriting) when not properly understanding the context, which also led to changes in the explicitness and illocutionary stylistic features of the source text. Furthermore, we have to highlight one of the strategies which is most prevalent among young translators, which is foreignization and domestication of the target text, as we have seen in the research done by Habbeeb and Jameel (2023) and Asi et al. (2024). These opposite, but sometimes parallel approaches to translation occur when there is a greater dominance of one language and culture (English), thus putting pressure on the minority languages to use its linguistic and cultural features. Domestication occurs mostly when the linguistic and cultural features of both languages differ widely, such as the case is with Macedonian and English, leading to the issues also encountered in Al Nakhil (2017). Thus, translators often reach for the traditional and well-established modes of linguistic and cultural expression and communication.

However, this exercise also helped us identify specific areas of knowledge and skills which can be improved in our student translators. Beside the analysis, another good indicator were their responses to the follow-up questionnaire, which highlighted some of the areas where they need improving. They cited difficulties in translating cultural lacunas and realia, also acknowledge difficulties in finding equivalent terms for certain diminutive expressions and archaic vocabulary, which suggests that many of them were not fully aware of their lack of adaptation skills. However, their ability and effort to solve issues of adaptation by considering various factors such as the genre, cultural context, and formal or

literary aspects of the text in order to choose the appropriate translation strategies or techniques, was encouraging.

In conclusion, we can assert that although in general the translations of our student-translators were satisfactory and met the criteria for literary translation as we analyzed the whole translated text and all the submitted translations were acceptable as translation products. However, there were still evident examples of inadequate application of adaptation techniques and strategies, both pragmatic and socio-cultural as can be seen from the examples provided in the analysis. These were the result of the various factors that were underlined in our paper (lack of general knowledge, differences in the socio-cultural aspects of the different periods, inadequate knowledge of both source and target language and culture, as well as lack of research). Nevertheless, this small-scale research underscores the imperative for addressing specific needs and implementing necessary measures within language, literature, and translation courses at the undergraduate level.

Primarily, students need more explicit instruction in pragmatics and emphasis of the importance of socio-cultural aspects of literary texts. Further emphasis should be put on honing student's skills for recognizing the aspects in the texts where pragmatic adaptation is needed. Subsequently, the course of literature and translation studies, instruction should extend to reading, analyzing and translating texts of different genres, taking into account the historical and cultural background of each.

Finally, in order to better understand the issues and challenges faced by our students in translating different texts, we shall conduct a follow-up to this task and repeat the experiment with the same sample group after the students complete the course of Pragmatics in Year 4.

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PRAGMATIČKA I SOCIOKULTURNA ADAPTACIJA U KNJIŽEVNOM PREVODU

Pri prevođenju teksta napisanog za publiku sa različitim kulturnim poreklom, tekst se neophodno podvrgava pragmatičkim i sociokulturnim modifikacijama i adaptacijama. Pragmatički, elementi izvornog teksta moraju se modifikovati da bi zadovoljili potrebe novog kulturno-lingvističkog okruženja ili komunikativne situacije (Zauberga 1994), kao i ciljne audiencije na ciljnom jeziku (Neubert & Shreve 1992). Sociokulturno, elementi izvornog teksta koji mogu pokrenuti sociokulturnu adaptaciju (Chang 2009, 95) jesu različite vremenske i prostorne percepcije stvarnosti, razlika u načinu konceptualizacije pojmova, sintaksičko i diskurzivno organizovanje dva jezika, kao i izbor leksike. Ovaj rad predstavlja pragmatičku i retoričku analizu pragmatičkih i sociokulturnih adaptacija koje je 10 studenata moralo da napravi pri prevođenju kratke priče sa makedonskog na engleski jezik. Pored toga, studenti su odgovorili na anketu u kojoj su opisali izazove sa kojima su se suočavali pri prevođenju. Istraživanje je istaklo značaj temeljne analize sociokulturnih razlika, pragmatičnih adaptacija i problema baziranih na kontekstu ili na jeziku. Eksplicitna nastava za vreme časova prevođenja neophodna je da bi se pomoglo razvijanje svesti studenata o problemima koji mogu nastati zbog nedostatka znanja o sociokulturnom kontekstu i pragmatičkim greškama.

Ključne reči: Pragmatika, sociokulturni kontekst, prevođenje, kratke priče, eksplicitna nastava