

**TRANSLATION AND INTERPRETATION STUDIES**DOI <https://doi.org/10.30525/978-9934-26-110-7-60>**DECODING THE HUMOROUS ELEMENT OF THE TITLE  
IN TRANSLATION: THEORETICAL ASPECT****Volodarska M. V.**

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The modern theory of the literary title balances between the two poles of its interpretation represented by the aphorisms of S. Krzyzanowski («Поэтика заголовка» / «The poetics of the title», 1931) and U. Eco («Postille at «Nome della rosa» / «Postscript to «The Name of the Rose», 1983). S. Krzyzanowski's almost canonic notion of the condensed folding, which launches the text decoding process (while the text, in its turn, reveals itself in the title), is actually the recognition of the literary text heading as the key benchmark for the recipient: «The book is the title unfolded full length, the title is the book compressed to the volume of one or two words» [5, p. 3]. In 1983, almost 50 years after the publication of S. Krzyzanowski's micro-monograph, U. Eco would take a stand against the mentioned statement, appealing in his Postscript-Paradox to the utmost neutralization of the semantics with the view to disorient the reader: «The title must confuse the thoughts instead of disciplining them» [9, p. 6]. Similar conceptions are found in the papers of numerous scientists. To mention only a few, A. Etkind compares the weight of the heading with the weight of «thousands of other words in a text» [10, p. 559], L. Vygosky considers the ability of the title to determine the plot development [3, p. 206] V. Kukharenko calls the title «the actualizer of all text categories» [6, p. 90]. These and other considerations add nuances to the long-lasting debate, being simultaneously coherent with the ideas of both S. Krzyzanowski and U. Eco.

In reality the dissonance between the two definitions is a little bit exaggerated. To begin with, the analyzed concepts stress the strong position of the first text sign. U. Eco's anxiety about the excessive information weight of the title is caused by the awareness of the in-depth text-and-title connection due to which the text, «this multilayered system of the denotatives» turns into

the system of «the denoted with regard to its heading» [10, p. 559]. Next, both S. Krzyzanowski and U. Eco emphasize the role of the title in the author's concept actualization. U. Eco doesn't deny the fact of the text program being encrypted in the title, though the recognition of this fact is accompanied by the remark «unfortunately». The reader's inability to favor any definite text interpretation («the entanglement of the thoughts») prior to the text complete deployment is the obvious result of the parallel dynamics of the conceptsphere creation process and the process of the title content building up (the title here playing the role of the dominant concept actualizer) [6, p. 96]. In this case the obligatory retrospective reflection on the title («the frame sign» [6, p. 92]) will always reveal both semantic shifts and the non-convergence of the amount of meanings at the input and output of the text [6, c. 100]. Third, S. Krzyzanowski and U. Eco's arguments infer the ability of the title to implement a range of functions including the advertising one. According to V. Kukharenko, the advertising function suggests gaining the attention, establishing contact and directing the expectations of the potential reader [6, c. 95]. The endless «new renderings» poeticized by U. Eco are connected with the title ambivalence, which is withdrawn only as the result of the author's concept manifestation, and can incite the effect of «frustrated expectations» [6, c. 95]. Arguing with U. Eco on behalf of the role of this effect for the potential reader, V. Kukharenko actually recognizes the commercial importance of the hypersemantized title, its powerful incentive, which motivates the recipient to fill information gaps at the expense of individual associations. Meanwhile, intertextuality and the metaphoric loading of the title catalyze the forecasting process [7, c. 91] and contribute to the success of the literary work in the publishing arena.

However, the prosperity of the original product does not necessarily equal the prosperity of the translation. It can happen due to the capacity of all above mentioned title characteristics to slow down the process of the initial message adaptation in the new intertextual space. Since the space change means the launch of the text discourse with some other semantic universe, this switch also initiates a definite connotation shift in the nature of paratextual relationships between the text and the heading [7, c. 93]. The title is endowed with the energy of «the tightly coiled up spring» [6, c. 92-94]; its condensity and nondescriptiveness result in the problem of the content explication and the impossibility of its implication without deprivation of at least a part of the original code [1, c. 80]. These losses become especially significant in translation of the humorous element of the title, particularly – the pun, which serves like a focus gathering all the main ideas and expressing the author's concept about the definite text. As stated by S. Vlahov and S. Florin, these aspects are the most difficult to reflect [2, c. 288]. The key reason of the linguistic humor resistance is meant to be the necessity to decode not only the

content but also the form which is sometimes more important than the content. To preserve them both the phraseological units of the two languages should be completely equivalent. As far as this condition is almost impossible to achieve, the adequate reproduction of a joke is rather an exception than the rule [2, c. 290–291]. The challenges of the linguistic humor have long been stimulating scientists to look for a single mechanism of translation. The search predictably begins with the systematization of all possible problems.

Thus, the classification by O. Kolesnik comprises three main types of obstacles (without mentioning the extremes – the adequate and absurd levels of translation) on the way of humor penetration into another culture: 1) full or partial extinction of the joke due to either the resistance of linguistic humor, or the interpreter's inadvertence, or his / her disregard of some basic code elements; 2) the swap of the humor type aimed at the original text adaptation to the needs and abilities of the new audience; 3) the translator's creation of his her own humor [4, p. 104]. The obvious peculiarity of this approach is the tendency to treat the interpreter's most popular solutions like «problems». In the context of translation recognition as «the art of the deliberate sacrifice» [8, p. 50], more common is the treatment of at least the second and the third aspects as recommendations rather than flaws.

P. Zabalbeascoa offered a hierarchical pattern, a «binary branching tree structure», every next level of which, starting with the second one, represents a compromise induced by objective obstacles: producing identical joke → regenerating the joke by analogy → creating any type of joke → compensation at the expense of other stylistic devices and expressive means → the neutralization of the joke [11, p. 199-200]. Among A. Leibold's tips to the translator in case of the functional analogue absence O. Pidhrushna distinguishes: the omission of the joke, word-by-word translation, and a translation commentary. Nevertheless, the Ukrainian scientist immediately debates A. Leibold's point of view concerning the adequacy of the chosen ways. Since unpredictability is the everlasting premise of laughter, humor loses «the force of its effect» [8, c. 51] due to any attempts of explanation.

The awareness of the existence of a boundary, behind which the original language has the tendency to «monopolize humor», often makes scholars preserve the «invariant nucleus» (A. Popovich) in translation rather than keep to any particular case of a language game [8, c. 53-54]. Taking into account that the aim of humor, this «mover of translation» [8, p. 53], is able to contrast with the purpose of a final consumer of a humorous product, the issue is to find the most appropriate way of combining «stylistics and pragmatics» under the particular circumstances [8, c. 54]. In the case of a humorously charged title this matter is an efficient though not always easy task.

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**ОСОБЛИВОСТІ ПЕРЕКЛАДУ  
ОФІЦІЙНО-ДІЛОВОГО СТИЛЮ МОВЛЕННЯ**

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Офіційно-діловий стиль – функціональний різновид мови, який слугує для спілкування в державно-політичному, громадському й