

Literary Multilingualism, Language Relationships And Translation: Observations From A Case Study

Martina Ožbot

University of Ljubljana, Slovenia

Literary multilingualism, or according to the seminal work by Rainier Grutman (1997, 2006), heterolingualism is a practice that has been well represented in many literatures. The translation of multilingual literary texts has also received considerable attention (cfr. Grutman/Delabastita 2005, Wilson 2011, Suchet 2014, Hansen 2016). Of special interest are perhaps those multilingual literary texts and their translations in which language is not only an instrument of literary expression, but also an object reflected upon and thematized in the polyphonic text. In the translation of such texts, a central question is how to take into account the relationships between the different languages, whose presence may point to specific issues of multilingualism and multiculturalism, in particular when interlinguistic and intercultural as well as sociolinguistic relationships are treated in a highly creative manner.

To illustrate the issues at hand the paper will explore the Slovene novel *Čefurji raus* (2008; *Southern Scum Go Home!*) by Goran Vojnović (b. 1980) in the original and in various translations, especially Italian and English, which presented special challenges to the translators because of the relative linguistic and cultural distance between the source and the target settings, but also in the Serbian, Croatian, and Bosnian versions, which are interesting in their own right, since the Slovene text is interspersed with Serbian/Croatian/Bosnian. The translations into these three languages therefore pose questions related to linguistic self-referentiality as well as to the representation of otherness. The novel, which revolves around questions of identity, migration and multiculturalism within the (post-)Yugoslav context, is an exemplary case of a language-centred literary text and as such enables us to observe how the complex multilingual polyphony of a source text is dealt with in translation. In conclusion, attention will be drawn to some other multilingual literary texts and their translations, concerning other cultural and linguistic settings.

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