FRENCH AND UKRAINIAN CULTURAL SPACES IN IVAN BABYCH’S LANGUAGE PERSONALITY

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Summary: The article is dedicated to the integrative essence of the language personality of a representative of the Ukrainian school of literary translation Ivan Babych. It is pointed out that I. Babych, as a person of European culture whose native land was France, was the disseminator of its fundamental values in Ukraine. At the same time, he promoted national culture, the Ukrainian word in French-speaking countries. Two cultural spaces have determined the specific function of intercultural mediation, in the context of which the linguistic personality of the master of literary translation should be considered.

Keywords: language; culture; linguistic personality; literary translation, Ukrainian school of translation.

Since the first half of the 20th century, the significant changes have taken place in the field of language studies and the new interdisciplinary direction known as linguistic personology appeared. Based on the ground of anthropocentric approaches, which contain “human dimension”, linguistic personality became a topical research issue of such linguistic sciences as cognitive linguistics, sociolinguistics, psycholinguistics, cultural linguistics, communicative linguistics, linguopragmatics, etc.

The aspects of a language personality attracted attention of many scientists (M. Alefirenko, G. Bogin, V. Vinogradov, D. Hymes, Yu. Karaulov, V. Karasik, A. Kuznetsova, O. Leontiev, V. Neroznak, O. Sirotinina, etc.). In modern scientific discourse language personality is regarded as linguistic correlate of the person’s education, knowledge, cultural valuable priorities, communicative abilities, etc.

It was pointed out that language personality bears the imprint of social, territorial environment, educational and cultural traditions [1, p. 92–93].

According to V. Maslova, the language personality is a conglomerate of the following components: firstly, the system of values; secondly, the level of mastery of culture as a means of increasing interest in a language; thirdly, personal, or individual traits, which each person possesses [2, p. 81].

The abovementioned assumption is true in case of interest in the language personality of a translator as a ‘person in the language’. The important role of translators as the narrators of interliterary relations for society in general and for Ukrainian society in particular was argued. Therefore, translators’ biography,
geographical and cultural space, social functions were determined as influence-makers upon a language personality [3, p. 12].

The aim of our research is to highlight the formation of Ivan Babych's language personality via his worldview priorities, shaped by French and Ukrainian geographical and cultural spaces.

It is significant to mention that each person as a part of society is to be found in certain geographical and cultural circumstances, for example, environmental, social, linguistic, etc. Those circumstances in one or another way mark personal development, ensuring internal integrity, and self-identity, the influences of which in are known as a “geocultural space for the functioning of national culture” [4].

Moreover, such a “cultural section”, as I. Murzina points out, not only helps in understanding the uniqueness of a certain geographical region and its integration into the cultural space of a country and the whole world but also architects the personality's type, communication skills, and the forms of spiritual discovering of the world [5, p. 62].

Geographical and cultural factor, thus, can be said to have deep roots in a special regional identity. For that reason, we consider it as the basis for the language personality formation.

According to E. Bakusheva, the phenomenon of language personality can be metaphorically compared with the links between the members of a particular ethnic and cultural community. The main means of transforming an individual into a language personality is called socialization as the unity of three main aspects: the process of human inclusion in social relations, as a result of which the language personality becomes the embodiment of cultural and historical knowledge of a society, active speech and mental activity according to the norms and standards of governing ethnolinguistic culture; mastering the laws of social psychology of the people [6, p. 92].

Extrapolating the above statements to the biography of the well-known translator and educator Ivan Babych, we stated the dualism of geographical and cultural spaces as he belonged to the French and the Ukrainian cultures. Indeed, a radical changing the French cultural environment was a challenge for a teenager who was born and educated in Burgundy but had to obey his parents' will and move to Ukraine.

It should be said that the French language personality of the young man, had nurtured in the best traditions of national culture, and had been formed on the fertile ground of his innate cognitive abilities, creativity, skilfully cultivating by the family upbringing, and, undoubtedly, by high-quality education in such institutions, as private primary school (Paris), high school (Auxerre), Classique et Modern (Jouanier) school, University of Burgundy (Dijon).

In the country of his childhood and adolescence, Jean Babych, in addition to French as his native language, mastered German, Polish, English, Latin, understood and could communicate with Czechs, Bulgarians, Serbians, who worked at his father's farm [7]. Hence, multicultural polilogue was an integral part of the French period of the boy's life.

During the student period of life, a valued attitude to poetry and prose works as well as the strong desire to study literature was formed. All the above-mentioned circumstances were the impulses of influence on Babych's language personality.
So, the French geographical and cultural environment, where the future translator owed his deep knowledge of foreign languages outlined his language personality. The elements of its mighty influence, among the others, were love for the nature and the world of people, deep admiration of the French literature, the nature and traditions of Burgundy, local history trips and various music festivals, which were a visiting card of the geocultural space of France.

Upon the arrival in Ukraine, the internal cultural support gave the desire for further development, and for successful self-realization in a geographically and ethnically new society.

In Poltava region, in the town of Karlivka, Jean Babych began to learn the Ukrainian literary language and the local dialect. He read a lot, studied in the local evening secondary school, and then in Karlivka Craft School, cherished the dream to try himself in the sphere of literature studies.

An important event in the biography of the French Ukrainian was his debut in the field of technical translation (1951). In our opinion, the success inspired a novice translator to enter the Moscow P. Lumumba University.

In addition to socialization, a distinctive feature of the first Ukrainian years of I. Babych was the discovering the richness of national culture. The local customs were of special interest, which later contributed to the realization of a personal mission of bringing the abundant literary wealth to the French-speaking readership. Being by the will of fate on the boundary of two geographical and cultural spaces, the French-speaking bachelor of natural sciences mastered the Ukrainian and Russian languages, and got two university diplomas. In 1960, a rural teacher from Karlivka graduated with honours from the Kharkiv Pedagogical Institute of Foreign Languages, and continued his career as a senior lecturer at the Poltava V. G. Korolenko State Pedagogical Institute (1964–1989) [7, p. 149].

Another significant fact is that in Poltava, I. Babych published several translations of short stories in the popular among the intelligentsia and student youth magazine “Vsesvit” [8, p. 109]. After the successful debut, he translated to French tens of the best works of the Ukrainian writers (V. Vynnychenko, O. Honchar, P. Zahrebelnyi, H. Kvitka-Osnovianenko, I. Franko, Yu. Mushkeyk, P. Panch, Yu. Smolych, I. Wilde, and many others).

I. Babych’s rich literature heritage confirms the thesis about intercultural mediation of translators in the hard times of the Soviet “iron curtain” [3, p. 10].

The significant result in the field of literature translation reflects the dual influence of French and Ukrainian geocultural spaces on the linguistic personality of the artist.

An important comment was made by the Ukrainian theorist of translation studies Yarema Kravets: “The tandem of I. Babych from Poltava, K. Shymanskyi from Kyiv, and J. Maksimovich from Lviv deserves a special respect as they published the classics’ of national literatures translations in the interpretations not from the Russian translations but from the original texts [9, p. 187]. As a result, the longstanding monopoly of Moscow publishing houses in Ukraine was ruined.

Thus, the linguistic personality of Ivan Babych was formed as a multicultural personality. Through the means of language, formal education and self-education, professional activity and, most importantly, translation work, it is connected the
cultures of France and Ukraine, and integrated different geographical and cultural spaces into the environment of sustainable development.

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