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Translator's creativity in rendering neologisms of a literary text

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TRANSLATOR'S CREATIVITY IN RENDERING NEOLOGISMS OF A LITERARY TEXT

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The aim of this article is to discuss the concept of translator's creativity and its role played in rendering neologism in a work of literature. It seems that this subject needs to be analysed for several reasons. First of all, in spite of the fact that neologisms are more and more contributing to languages, it has not been written much about their translation in literature. Scholars' concern about neologisms is limited to the establishment of techniques that may be employed to coin them. Apart from some scholars, e.g. Hejwowski [2004], the issue of rendering neologisms from Polish into English has not been raised. Therefore, the paper is to provide an analysis of such a translation and hence to fill in the gap in the hitherto existing research.

The linguistic material to be analysed comprises chosen names of robots from a science-fiction novel *Cyberiada* by Stanisław Lem [Lem 1965/1978] and their equivalents coined by Michael Kandel in *The Cyberiad* [1974]. In order to draw a comparison between the original and translation, such issues are going to be pondered as: a theoretical base for rendering an artistic text and the employment of translation procedures to coin names of robots.

1. Translation of an artistic text

The main characteristic of a literary text is the fact that it consists of many layers. Roman Ingarden enumerates four of them, i.e. the layer of verbal sounds and sound-linguistic phenomena; the layer of semantic units (of a higher and lower level); the layer of presented entities in the very literary text; the layer of image schemata [Ingarden 1955 (1975): 127]. The scholar deduces that since there is a loose connection between the meaning and sound of word, it seems possible to replace all the verbal

sounds that appear in a literary text with completely different sounds from another language. The product of such a substitution is translation. The process of rendition appears to be complex, however, because the replacement of verbal sounds results in alterations of the equilibrium among other layers present in the source text (ST), sometimes so substantial that a totally new text may appear [Pieńkos 1993: 81]. In the light of the fact that translation is marked with the distortion of ST layers, it should rather be referred to as "reconstruction" via the exchange of particular elements construing the layers [Ingarden 1955 (1975): 138]. This exchange is of considerable significance as it directly influences the individuality of the text. If this individuality is preserved in the target text (TT) and sentence meanings remain the same, in spite of all the alterations within the layers of the ST, the translation is considered to be faithful to the original. If not, a new literary text emerges.

As for the individuality of the text, it can be distinguished in terms of two functions, i.e. structural and cognitive-aesthetic, performed by text elements. Ingarden claims that the first function is superior as it arranges the text layers. For instance, the structural function of the semantic layer consists in connecting meaning of words into the meaning of a sentence, meanings of sentences into the meaning of a paragraph, etc. By virtue of this construction, particular parts of the text gain sense and hence such a text is endowed with unique individuality. However, apart from the semantic layer, the layer of verbal sounds and sound-linguistic phenomena such as an emotional nature, rhythm or melody [Ingarden 1955 (1975): 141] play an essential role in the structure of the TT. Maria Krysztofiak [1996: 31] adds that the translator ought to pay attention to such structural elements of rendition as, *inter alia*, aesthetic and poetic norms of the original and their place in the target language (TL) and culture, an epoch in which the original appears, perception and reception of the TT. The aesthetic function proves primary since aesthetic experience evoked in the TL reader leads to the "concretisation" of the poetic text [Ingarden 1955 (1975): 129]. According to Karl Dedecius, if the translator manages to transpose artistic qualities of the ST into the TT, the translation becomes perfect [in: Krysztofiak 1996: 31]. However, it has also to meet the expectations and interests of the reader embedded in the TL culture. So as to achieve this, the translator's task is not to adhere to certain translational strategies but to construct their own system of thinking and acting (dependent on the translator's knowledge, artistic sensibilities, creativity intuition, etc.) distinctive for each process of rendition [Krysztofiak 1996: 51]. This rule seems to be a response to the need of preserving the uniqueness of a literary text.

In turn, the most vital element for the perception of the text is a "polyphonic harmony of aesthetic qualities" among all the layers of the text [Ingarden 1955 (1975): 141]. The greatest impact on this polyphonic harmony is made by the layer of presented entities. The cognitive-aesthetic function is only performed when these entities interest the reader. Ingarden [1955 (1975): 133–134] presupposes that they have to be familiar and important to the reader and to arouse either positive or negative emotions. Therefore, the artist should present characters, phenomena and material objects in

a vivid and authentic manner, as they are a part of the image schemata layer by virtue of which the reader is able to project the objects in their minds.

As for the science-fiction, the layer of depicted entities seems to be of paramount significance for the reader because it constitutes the main source of interest. The reader expects the S-F writer to provide the text with objects unfamiliar and unusual in reality. Owing to this expectation, the role of an artist becomes more complicated as they have to present phenomena and objects which have never been experienced by the reader. The lack of experience is one of the factors resulting in the novelty of language, observed in neologisms. Because of them, all the layers of a S-F text are marked with uniqueness: verbal sounds, sound-linguistic phenomena, semantic units, presented entities and image schemata. This individuality may be effortlessly noticed in *Cyberiada* where the sound-linguistic phenomena are embodied in a specific rhythm, rhymes and puns, often incomprehensible for the reader (because of a highly neological nature) but performing a vital aesthetic function. It seems that the main difficulty the translator may come across is the difference between the source language (SL) and TL, in that case Polish and English. Morphological differences together with the relation of phonetics and semantics of these languages may affect the polyphonic harmony in the layers of the novel. Consequently, it may be assumed that the accomplishment of a successful literary translation of *Cyberiada* is problematic by nature. The level to which Kandel manages to save meanings of given neologisms (here: names of robots) and their structural function in the novel, but also the polyphonic harmony in the text layers, are going to be analysed further.

2. Translation procedures

Since various scholars deal with different aspects of literary translation, there are sundry approaches to it and types of terminology used to describe particular procedures. However, even if called diversely, some procedures coincide. The nomenclature proposed by Newmark will be used since his ideas concerning translation of neologisms proves most helpful. For translating neologisms, Newmark recommends such procedures as: transference, naturalisation, TL neologism, TL derived word, recognised TL translation, functional term, descriptive term, literal translation, translation procedure combinations, through-translation, and internationalism [Newmark 1988: 150]. However, the ones not used by Kandel for rendering robot names will not be explicated. These are: recognised TL translation and functional term. Additionally, apart from the techniques discussed, Kandel also uses synonymy, reduction and expansion [Newmark 1988: 84].

3. The rendition of robot names

In *Cyberiada*, names of robots comprise of male and female ones. They identify and differentiate a given character but also imply, indirectly, specific functions a given

robot performs. They serve a sociological function as well. Tadeusz Budrewicz claims that a personal name conveys no meaning outside community and it is indicative of affiliation to a particular social, economic and national group [in: Domaciuk 2003: 88]. The names frequently provide additional information contributing to the description of a robot or indicating the etymology of its name, which appears to be of considerable importance as the purpose is often mirrored in the translation. Besides, names of robots serve the aesthetic function because they are coined in the artistic text and they exemplify the author's creativity who plays with language to produce certain effects, e.g. a humorous one. All in all, names of robots appear in the novel so as to identify them, distinguish their features, place them in particular groups (social, etc.), and for the artistic purpose. These reasons for the names to occur will be discussed in the analysis below.

Most robot names take the form of an open compound whose components constitute a name and surname, which resembles the way people are designated within society. Some of the names are transferred and later naturalised. Naturalisation is mostly employed for these which "sound" Polish and contain letters pronounced differently in English, e.g. *Wendecjusz* [CP: 371][1] /ven'decyüsh/ – *Vendetius* [CE: 199][2]. Other names are transferred and naturalised but also stylised on Latin. These end with Polish suffix *-iusz* (from the Latin *-ius*), e.g. *Eksyliusz* [CP: 331] – *Excelsius* [CE: 162]. The ones that stem from Latin are only transferred, e.g. *Advocatus Laboratoris* [CP: 376] – *Advocatus Laboratoris* [CE: 204]. Some names undergo the process of partial transference, e.g. in the case of *Tryzuwiusz Pajdocki* [CP: 308], the translator transfers and naturalises the name *Trizivian* [CE: 206], but coins a different surname *Huncus* that may be associated with *Juncus* ('toad rush'), a "genus of chiefly marsh plants of temperate regions that are parennial tufted glaborous herbs with mostly terete or channeled leaves" [Gove 1961/1993: 1226]. In turn, *Pajdocki* in Polish derives from *pajda* ('a large slice of bread') and this connotation gets lost in the translation but the one of a plant is introduced. Besides, Latin stylisation appears in *Huncus* as well as in plenty of other neologisms that refer to robot names.

Apart from Latin stylisation, the German one occurs in the rendition of open compounds, e.g. *Bulfon Struncl* [CP: 415] – *Buffon von Shneckon* [CE: 242]. It is because the surname *Struncl* sounds similar to the Polish *strucla*, a word coming from the German *Strutzel* which signifies a rolled and baked dough [Brückner 1985: 520]. First, Lem masculinises the word *strucla*, which belongs to the feminine gender in Polish, and coins *strucl*. Subsequently, he utilises Caroll's "doublets"[3] by the addition of *n* which results in the occurance of *struncl* and may be associated with *struna* ('a string') and connote the "string theory" according to which all particles are no more

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[1] CP stands for *Cyberiada* (Polish version) and is followed by a page number.

[2] CE stands for the English version of *Cyberiada* and is followed by a page number.

[3] The game "doublets" was invented by Lewis Caroll. They are based on the pairs of words which are graphically similar and hence one word can be changed into the other one from the pair through a series of slight letter alterations [Crystal 1995: 265].

represented in terms of points, but strong, stringlike objects of one dimension [Hawking 1996: 242]. This implication seems to be proper as *Bulfon Struncl* is one of the most famous thinkers who, in *Cyberiada*, deal with various hypotheses relating to the origin and structure of the Universe. Kandel does not retain the connotation of the string theory but coins the TL neologism *Shneckon* which resembles the German *Schnecken* ('snail') and implies that the robot looks like a snail. As a result, the translator expands the meaning of the surname because it informs the reader about the robot's appearance. Then, the German stylisation is amplified by means of the particle *von* ('of') that used to appear in titles of former German aristocrats. However, this fact does not distort the original due to the context. In turn, the name *Bulfon* may be associated with the Polish *bufon*, which signifies a low jester or coxcomb [Kopaliński 1967: 79], and hence suggests that the robot is perceived as a rude or vulgar fool. This connotation is preserved because Kandel forges the TL neologism *Buffon* that is similar to 'buffoon'. To sum up, a translational couplet of TL neologisms and expansion is applied to render the compound discussed.

The translation of the female name *Cybrycja Kraśnopięta* [CP: 326] into *Cybrinda the Red-toed* [CE: 157] also seems to be intriguing since a translational couplet is employed. The first name is transferred and naturalised. Next, Kandel partly throughrenders the surname which actually appears to be a sobriquet for it reveals one of the attributes of the robot. The closed compound *Kraśnopięta* consists of *krasny* ('beautiful' or of 'bright red colour') and *pięta* ('heel'), and hence informs the reader about the robot's heels. The word also sounds archaic as it resembles, for instance, *Podbipięta*[4]. In the translation, the first component of the name is through-translated but the second one is rendered as a 'toe' that belongs to the same semantic category as 'heel' which also constitutes a part of the foot. As a result, Kandel manages to produce a sound-effect similar to the original one because there is the diphtong /iə/ in *pięta* and /əu/ in *toe*. Additionally, the surname is preceded by the definite article so as to emphasize the fact that *the Red-toed* exemplifies an agnomen. All in all, despite the loss of the archaic sound, the rendition seems to be satisfying as the English name is natural and the identifying and distinguishing function of the surname is preserved.

Some names of robots indicate their features. For instance, *Krostofil Nijaki* [CP: 374] sounds plainly negatively because the derivative *Krostofil* is comprised of *krost-* (of 'pimple') and the French suffix *-fil* which signifies an admirer of something, e.g. *bibliofil* ('bibliophile'). Accordingly, the name suggests that the robot is a lover of its pimples (which, however, is not proven by the context). Such a connotation is preserved in Kandel's TL derivative *Scrofulon* that may be perceived as a partial anagram for 'scorn' when first heard. In fact, the name looks as if it is a derivative of 'scrofula' (from Late Latin *scrofulae*), i.e. a 'swellings of the lymph glands of the neck' [Gove 1961/1993: 2042]. Therefore, this TL derivative indicates that the referent suffers from

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[4] Podbipięta is a name of a tall Lithuanian knight who is one of the characters in the novel entitled *Ogniem i Mieczem* (1884) (*With Fire and Sword*) – the first volume of *The Trilogy* by Henryk Sienkiewicz.

some kind of disease, unequivocally a cybernetic one, and evokes similar feelings in the SL and TL reader. As far as the surname *Nijaki* (of 'no kind') is concerned, a new coinage *Thermaphrodyne* appears. The robot appears to be average or of unrecognisable generation as its surname implies. Albeit the new coinage *Thermaphrodyne* does not allude to any robot kind, it may denote warmth (like in the derivative 'thermochemistry') or love and beauty of Greek Aphrodite, and altogether arouses positive emotions. However, the negative association of *Scrofulon* and the positive one of Aphrodite's warmth evoke antipode feelings and therefore the whole name *Scrofulon Thermaphrodyne* [CE: 202] exemplifies an oxymoron which amplifies the implication of *Nijaki* because the TL reader draws a conclusion that the robot is indeed neither disgusting nor beautiful.

Such names as *Mordosław Będziejak* [CP: 374] – *Bestian Phystobufficus* [CE: 202] denote the nature of particular robots. Most of them take delight in beating and mistreating other ones. *Mordosław* constitutes a derivative of *mord-* ('murder') and the Polish name suffix *-sław* (from Slavic *-slav*) which implies somebody who praises or glorifies [Kupis, Wernichowska and Kamyczek 1975: 38], e.g. *Bogusław* is the one who praises God (*Bóg* – 'God'; *sław* – 'praise'). Ergo, the neologism indicates that the robot glorifies manslaughter – in that case 'robotslaughter' – and probably murders and prides itself on doing this, which in fact is reflected in the context. The new coinage *Bestian* refers to 'beast' and resembles a first name, e.g. 'Adrian', 'Brian'. The surname *Będziejak* constitutes a compound of the phrase *będzie jak* ('it will be like'). The context informs the reader of the fact that *Mordosław* always attains its goals and abides by the rule that the end justifies the means. Therefore, the name and surname together may imply that no matter what, everything will be just as *Mordosław* wants it to be. This violent nature of the robot seems to be reflected in the translation. Kandel decides to coin the TL derivative *Phystobufficus* which bears a relation to an animal (buffalo) and *ipso facto* to the name *Bestian* via the recognised root *-buff-*. The prefix *physto-* may be associatied with the same infix in *Mephistopheles*[5] and, thus, it suggests that *Bestian* has a devilish nature and is an expert in bestiality. The suffix *-us*, in turn, classifies the surname as it is a sign of Latin stylisation. Such an operation may serve as a compensation of the loss of sound-effect in the name *Fafucy* [CP: 374] – *Dummis* [CE: 201] that appears in the same context.

Another cluster of robot names is constituted by closed compounds. Kandel renders most of them by the coinage of TL neologisms. For instance, the hyphenated compound *Zbójca-Dyploj* [CP: 314], the name whose meaning remains vague in the context, is translated as *The PHT Pirate* [CE: 146]. In fact, even the great constructors Trurl and Klapaucius rack their electronic brains to deduce what the name of the monster they have met is supposed to mean. They have no difficulty in inferring the monster's nature from the first component *Zbójca-* ('brigand'), which is rendered as *Pirate* by the employment of semantic equivalence. Conversely, *-Dyploj* seems to be

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[5] In demonology, Mephistopheles is one of the seven chief devils in the *Faust* legend by Johann Wolfgang von Goethe [Gove 1961: 1412].

too enigmatic to be deciphered for certain. However, Trurl associates it with the term "Dipol" [CP: 314] ('dipole') which serves to symbolise a dualistic structure of the monster. Forging the initialism *PHT* proves right as it is motivated by the context. The clear correlation between *Zbójca* and *Dipol* is preserved in the translation as "Trurl thought this [PHT] might be a distortion of 'pH', which would indicate an ionic pirate with a high concentration and very base" [CE: 146]. Moreover, by referring to "pH", which stands for the logarithm that provides a measure of the acidity or alkalinity in a solution [Gove 1961/1993: 1692], the TL reader gets also familiarised with Trurl's hypothesis concerning the monster.

Barbaron [CP: 258] is a closed compound of *bar* ('bar') and *baron* ('baron') and hence suggests a connection between the referent and place aforementioned. Kandel opts for splitting the compound into *Master Gyles* [CE: 96]. As a result, the title "baron" is reduced to master, through the procedure of semantic equivalence, and the place is superseded by a substance, namely "gyle" – 'wort in the process of fermentation added to a stout or ale' [Gove 1961/1993: 1014]. Although the names appear to be corresponding, some losses may be observed in the rendition. Firstly, the translation is deprived of the sound-effect that consists in the repetition of *ba*(r) syllable. Secondly, the translation does not allude to any existing name in the TL, unlike the original one which resembles the Polish common female name 'Barbara'. On the other hand, it may be assumed that Kandel makes an allusion to a literary character *Sir Gyles*[6] and, in that case, the TL neologism may be perceived as a literatonym. All in all, Kandel does not manage to enclose all the connotations and the sound-effect present in one lexical item coined by Lem. In order to preserve some of them, he forges two words but still his translation appears to be only partially successful.

Forging new coinages in the TL provides evidence of translator's creativity and aesthetic value of the word that results in various connotations. The fact whether they correlate with the original ones or differ, but seem desirable in a given context, substantiates pertinence of a given rendition. The linguistic category of the TL neologism does not seem to be of utmost importance as long as an effect accomplished proves satisfactory, when compared with that of the SL neologism. It may be observed in the rendition of *Snupan* [CP: 391] as *Oneiromant* [CE: 217], a knight who appears in a dream of a cybernetic king named *Rozporyk*. The Polish components *snu* (of a 'dream') and *pan* ('master') imply that the denotat is a master of dreams and hence the one who seizes power over them. Kandel manages to preserve this connotation through the employment of TL derivative. Namely, he converts the grammatical category of the lexical item 'oneiromancy', a closed compound of the Greek *oneiro* ('dream') and the Greek combination form *-mancy* ('to divine'), in the process of affixation into 'oneiromant' which contains the lexeme 'man' and hence may suggest that the referent is a master of dreams. The Greek origin of the neologism implies that the robot serves

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[6] Sir Gyles is a character from the ballad entitled *Old Robin of Portingale* by Arthur Quiller--Couch. He is asked by the daughter of the mayor of Lin to help in murdering her husband, Robin. Nevertheless, their plans fail.

as a prophet of dreams and predicts what is to come (this is only an assumption as *Cyberiada* does not inform about this fact). This interpretation seems to be propable because Kandel's derivative corresponds to the German *Oneiromant* equivalent to English 'oneiroscopist', somebody who interprets dreams and, accordingly, may be perceived as their master.

Plenty of derivatives forged out of existing names in the SL are transferred, some naturalised, but often accompanied by Latin stylisation. For instance, *Heteryk* [CP: 384], a derivative consisting of *hetera* ('harpy') and the suffix *-yk* characteristic of some Polish male names (like in e.g. *Henryk*), becomes *Heteronius* [CE: 210]. Due to the same root *heter-* both the SL and TL derivatives have similar connotations. *Torturiusz* [CP: 393], in turn, is a derivative of *tortury* ('torture') provided with the suffix *-iusz*, also present in male names but stemming from Latin anthroponyms, e.g. *Marius* [Kupis, Wernichowska and Kamyczek 1975: 174]. This derivative is translated as *Torturus* [CE: 220] which again contains the same root *tortur-* and, therefore, is easily comprehended in the SL and TL texts.

Kandel employs various procedures to render Polish derivatives. For instance, *Kreatoryk* [CP: 414] that derives from *kreator* ('creator') is translated as the derivative *Demiurgon* [CE: 241] which implies the referent's ability to form as *Demiurg* is a deity name believed in some philosophies to have created the world. The etymology of this name semantically refers to *Kreatoryk* since it comes from the ancient Greek δημιουργός meaning an 'artisan' [Webster]. Likewise, the translator reflects the feature of *Potworyk* [CP: 187], the name deriving from *potwór* ('monster'), through the coinage of *Atrocitus* [CE: 32] resembling the adjective 'atrocious'. The literal translation of *Klapaucjuszek* [CP: 232], a diminutive of the new coinage *Klapaucjusz* [CP: 156], is symptomatic of the superiority of Polish over English in forming diminutives. Due to the fact that *Klapaucjuszek* appears in *The Cyberiad* as *Klapaucius* [CE: 70], the original name gets deprived of the emotional function, in that case the positive one.

Robot names also take the form of blends. The name *Synchrofazonizy* [CP: 343] exemplifies an instance of joining two neologisms already coined by Lem, i.e. *Synchronizy* [CP: 342] and *Synchrofazy* [CP: 342]. Both of them serve as names and refer to one robot. What the novel reveals about the machine is that it consists of two parts: the top half and the bottom one. The top part is called *Synchronizy*, a blend of *synchronizować* ('to synchronise') and the Polish male name *Dionizy*. It is first transferred into English and then stylised into Latin as *Synchronicus*. The name of the bottom half of *Synchrofazonizy* is a derived form of the pluralised root *-faza-* ('phase'), namely *Synchrofazy*. In the translation, this one emerges as a new coinage *Symphonicus* [CE: 173] formed out of the shortened lexical item *symphony*, stylised into Latin as well. *Synchrofazonizy* is a blended form which implies that the robot may be distinguished by a synchronised phase. In turn, Kandel joins *Synchronicus* [CE: 173] and *Symphonicus* into *Symchrophonicus* [CE: 174], the name which denotes a harmonised symphony and hence something that performs well. As for the context, such a rendition appears to be perfect because the representation of the machine by both the SL and TL reader is the same and the translator manages to preserve the initial consonance among all three names.

4. Conclusions

Within the group of robot names 104 neologisms were recognised. According to the statistics, such techniques as TL neologism and combinations of two different procedures, i.e. "transference + naturalisation" together with TL neologism or expansion (usually Latin stylisation) are most useful for Kandel. This *status quo* coincides with the translation theory as the kinds of neologisms that belong to this group are rendered via the techniques recommended by Newmark. Almost a half of all Polish names of robots takes the form of open compounds which, in many cases, are rendered via couplets of "transference + naturalisation" and TL neologism. This suggests that Kandel opts for the deprivation of the uniqueness of Polish names for the sake of the implementation of the new ones, which often derive from English lexemes. Besides, the fact that he coins a lot of new coinages is symptomatic of his creativity. For some SL lexems that have equivalents in English, the translator uses synonymy, semantic equivalence or through-translation. All in all, he sets the equilibrium between the semantic and communicative translation [Newmark 1988: 45] and, as a result, this translation is both close to the original and intelligible for the reader. This fact also refers to the translation of other types of neologisms idendified in this group which in most cases are transferred and naturalised, or TL neologisms or TL derivative is applied.

Besides, the analysis proves that Kandel takes into consideration such factors that influence the process of translation as functions a particular neologism serves in the novel, and its linguistic structure. This proves the translation satisfying since neologisms in an artistic text are not only to name new phenomena and objects, but they also evoke various feelings in the reader. Therefore, they serve the aesthetic function and are marked with extra-linguistic items, such as allusions, references, the uniqueness of the author's style, etc. Additionaly, the translator plays with language and produces word-games in a similar way to Lem. By doing so, he again maintains the author's style and humour.

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Summary

Translator's Creativity in Rendering Neologisms of a Literary Text

The article aims at analysing a concept of translator's creativity and its function performed in the course of rendering neologism in a literary text. The linguistic material constitutes Michael Kandel's translation of chosen robot names from the S-F novel *Cyberiada* by Stanisław Lem. The process of rendition is discussed from a literary and linguistic point of view. Therefore, such factors influencing translation as functions a particular name serves in the novel and its linguistic structure are taken into consideration. Moreover, motives for the employment of certain translation procedures, recommended by Peter Newmark, which pertain to neologisms are accounted for. The analysis shows that Kandel's translation appears to be successful since, owing to his creativity, he menages to render such layers of neologism as its meaning, referent, form, connotation, function and, in some cases, sound. Doubtless, all these are not retained in each case due to obvious language impediments. Nevertheless, the neologisms sufficiently allow the TL reader to get to know futuristic characters of *Cyberiada*.