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Acta Universitatis Sapientiae, Philologica, **8**, 2 (2016) 7–20

DOI: 10.1515/ausp-2016-0014

Divergent Cultural Environment – Translator Authenticity[1]

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Abstract. People and communities living geographically far from each other and originating from culturally different environments establish contact with each other by means of the sudden spread of information and communication technologies. Knowledge of world languages no longer suffices for engaging in successful social interaction, it has to be accompanied by intercultural competence. Intercultural communication occurs when interlocutors belonging to different cultures understand each other. The translator's work can be also understood as intercultural communication since in addition to translating linguistic material, the translator also transcodes the culture of the source language into the target language. (Inter)cultural competence is therefore one of the basic requirements for a translator. There is an ever-increasing emphasis on mediation between different cultures in translation, and according to new interpretations of translation this mediation represents the keystone of translation. The present study examines how elements of Hungarian culture are rendered in Serbian and German by analysing translations of Hungarian authors' works into these two languages.

Keywords: intercultural communication, translation, (inter)cultural aspect, translator dilemmas

1 The study was conducted within project no. III47013 of the Ministry of Science and Education of the Republic of Serbia.

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Experience the Difference

Our globalised world is characterised by accelerated information exchange, mobility, movement of services and labour, growing networks of relations, international integration, well-developed tourism and international contacts established on a daily basis. The fast spread of information and communication technologies has enabled geographically distant and culturally different people and communities to establish contact. However, knowledge of world languages no longer suffices for engaging in successful social interaction – it has to be accompanied by intercultural competence. As Hidasi (2008: 9–10) points out, "with the appearance of multinational companies and the spread of international cooperation, projects increasingly characterising scientific, cultural and educational life, the need for internationalisation has emerged in our daily work as well. With the rise of international communication from the domain of tourism into the everyday life of the average worker, intercultural and cross-cultural knowledge/competence has gained a different dimension. It is no longer the core element of knowledge of a restricted group of professionals only, but an existential requirement". Modern society creates numerous situations in which the participants in communication have to construct new domains of meaning. Lack of knowledge of the cultural context impedes understanding and reduces the efficiency of delivering the message. The key condition for establishing communication is that "the code sets of the encoder and the decoder have some common elements and that the coding employs these common signs, i.e. that both parties interpret the used system of signs equally or similarly" (Falkné 2001: 9).

Intercultural communication occurs when the participants in the act of communication belong to different national cultures but, nevertheless, understand each other. The interactive communication between members of different cultural groups is a delicate problem because it proceeds differently from communication between speakers who share a cultural background (in which case the encoder automatically selects such verbal and non-verbal devices that the decoder can correctly interpret): "As opposed to this [type of communication], successful intercultural communication is conditioned by the participants in the communication sharing the same language structure (grammar), using identical signs (both verbal signs, i.e. vocabulary, and non-verbal signs, e.g. gestures and facial expressions) and understanding the linguistic background (knowledge of country). No less importantly, it requires that the interlocutors adhere to the same rules regarding use of language (i.e. that the stylistic elements are used appropriately in the given situation)" (Földes 2007: 20, quoting Pavla Nečasova).

Intercultural competence is most valuable to tourists and globe-trotters, people paying short official visits to other countries (business people, government officials, scholars, researchers), officials residing in a foreign country, people who

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have decided to emigrate but also individuals who live in their native country and frequently engage in intercultural interaction, as well as to individuals who belong to a group of immigrants: "In order to understand a culture, it is important to get to know its symbols (linguistic, non-linguistic and tangible symbols), the metaphor system of the given culture (as part of the knowledge of the context), as well as the myths of the given culture – its past, its history and modern beliefs" (Hidasi 2008: 24). Language teachers, translators, and journalists with full-time employment abroad (or working with foreigners), who are usually proficient in the foreign language, particularly perceive the otherness of the new culture, the new social environment: "In spite of high-level language learning and knowledge about the history and literature of the other culture, and despite understanding references to important historical personalities, poets, philosophers or poems learnt as early as in primary school or tales often recounted in childhood (for example, educated Americans often use quotations from *Winnie-the-Pooh* or from *Alice in Wonderland*), there always occur proverbs, anecdotes, tiny obscenities and ambiguities that give rise to a sense of being an outsider" (Buda 1992: 13–14). Individuals working abroad for a longer period of time, who actually manage to blend into the culture of the foreign language, often change their way of thinking, their point of view and they "cease to be typical members of their original culture" (Buda 1992: 14).

The changes mentioned are problematised in literature as well. This can be noticed in Dragan Velikić's NIN-awarded[2] novel *Islednik* [*The Detective*], in which the narrator, at home in the Mitteleuropean setting, constantly travelling and struggling with the discourse of the novel's genre, feels the urge to do stocktaking. It is as if he is continuing his mother's notes, stolen in Vinkovci years earlier. He writes down the names of the hotels, although in the course of time the names and ratings of the hotels have changed. Via the narrator's passion of a collector, the reader notices the international cavalcade of names, accepts a referential reading, realizing at the same time that, in this region, after the disintegration of the [Austro-Hungarian] Monarchy, and later of Yugoslavia, he assumes the absence of agreement, the eternal *tourist/ guest's* mode of being. He is a returning traveller and a hotel guest looking up his former accommodation, searching for a home in provisionality. The narrator (who mostly attends book presentations, exhibitions, and cultural events) is also a traveller through memories and traumas. His investigative attitude results in the development of a complex intercultural net, and numerous problems arise, related to alienation and loss of language and identity. The investigator attitude includes the search for and avoidance of encounters. as well as stressing his lonely walks. His father, who is an officer of the Yugoslav Navy and of Tito's regime, constantly sails, moves around with

2 The *NIN* Award is a prestigious Serbian literary award established in 1954 by the *NIN weekly* and is given annually for the best newly published novel in Serbian literature.

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his family, the only settling point in the narrator's childhood being *Vila Marija* in Pula/Pola (Croatia). His mother is an obsessive talker, neat and adventurous at the same time. From the perspective of an outsider, she lives like a Penelopé transformed by dementia and forced to "settle down" in an old people's home in Belgrade. However, she continues to travel with the help of her memories, moving from one town to another. Her last encounter with her son happens while she "is just living" in Rijeka (Fiume) and she even uses the local dialect (Velikić 2016: 76). Dialectal forms will prove to be a problem in translating the novel and the closing sentence of the novel also reflects a change towards the language use characteristic of Fiume. The narrator's irony signals his loss of the self, the approaching old age as well as the inevitable imitation of the maternal model. "A man has to be somewhere"– this is the recurrent key sentence of the novel, it is this principle that defines the narrator's mode of being, his lifestyle, his historical way of speaking.

The key character of the novel is Lizeta, with her life of vicissitudes and her experience of the micro-worlds of Thessaloniki, Trieste, Vienna, and Pula. The micro-context can be extended since, along with the ageing of people (the parents) and the narrowing of their perspective, Yugoslavia as a country also shrinks and the end of the novel levels harsh criticism at the current barbarian, demented world. The passage of time and its acceleration bring personal memories to the surface (including memories related to Hungary). The moment when his former classmate returns his logarithm table after forty years produces a rather elegiac effect in the narrator. After the encounter, he avoids further contact; the unexpected gift induces in him complex recollection and reappraisal. Maleša, the clockmaker of bygone times, who used to repair clocks on Tito's island, Brioni, lives in a temporal network. The time spent with him in a heated discussion helps the narrator in his investigation, in his attempt to disentangle the historical and cultural memory. Aleksandar Tišma's thoughts pervade the novel; it is through their discourse that the Vojvodinian space gains ground in the novel.

In the net of cultural contexts

L. S. Barkhudarov distinguishes between three types of context in translation: the micro-context (the level of the sentence), the macro-context (the context of the whole work) and, since the translator sometimes has to look for a solution beyond the macro-context, he names this even wider context the extra linguistic situation (context of situation, e.g. the literary work of an author, his complete oeuvre, the text corpus of his contemporaries, the whole of literature and culture) (Barkhudarov 1975: 169). Various languages view and code even the most common phenomena differently, which is why in most cases the sentential

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context does not provide sufficient information to the translator. For example, when translating the verbs *aller* from French or *ići* from Serbian into German or Russian, the translator has to choose between *gehen* and *fahren* or between *идти* and *ехать*, respectively, depending on whether the person in question moved on foot or by a means of transport. Radomir Konstantinović cites several examples to illustrate the importance of knowledge of the source-language culture: in order to decide whether *el tango de Saborido* in Borges's poem means 'the tango from Saborido' or 'Saborido's tango', the translator has to explore the cultural history of Uruguay and to establish that Saborido was a composer, hence the latter solution should be opted for. When translating from English or Russian into French, if the word *river* is mentioned in the text, the translator has to check on the map whether the river mentioned flows into the sea or not because this fact determines his choice between the words *fleuve* (river flowing into a sea or ocean) and *rivière* (river not flowing into a sea or ocean). Also, in western languages, the system of kinship terms is simpler than in the eastern languages, which adhere to the tribal traditions in this respect. Consequently, if we want to translate the French *oncle*, English *uncle,* or German *Onkel* into Serbian, we have to choose from among the terms *stric* (father's brother), *ujak* (mother's brother), and *teča* (parent's sister's husband). If the exact family relationship cannot be determined from the context and it is necessary to choose between the words *ujak* and *stric*, most translators (consciously or instinctively) opt for *ujak*, following the civilisational tradition deeply entrenched in Indo-European poetry. This tradition is based on the view that the word *ujak* refers to a closer relative than the word *stric* because the love between a sister and a brother is deeper than the love between two brothers. What is more, one of the recurrent topics in Indo-European poetry is hatred and rivalry between brothers. Thus, if there is mention of this typical situation of closeness between the uncle and the nephew (for example, in the case of Alexander the Great and Roland, King Mark and Tristan, or Tsar Dušan and Miloš Vojinović in Serbian folk-poetry), then, by analogy, Donald Duck or uncle Donald is translated into Serbian as *ujka Paja* because the Serbian translator of the Disney cartoon follows this archetype (Konstantinović 2010: 35–37). Linguistic mediation is more than linguistic transposing, it goes beyond the level of words and sentences and appears as text embedded into a situation defined by the culture: "even the translating of a letter requires the translator to be acquainted with numerous extralinguistic (extratextual) factors. In order to decide how to translate the Hungarian address forms *kedves* or *tisztelt* into the target language, the translator has to know the relation between the sender of the letter and its addressee and to know whether the culture of the target language typically uses one or the other expression in the given situation" (Horváth–Szabari–Volford 2000: 16).

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Cultures – transcoded

Culture and lifestyle considerably influence the language used by a given community, and this influence is most readily observed in the lexicon: for example, there are more than 80 expressions for the concept of horse in Chinese, Arabic has nearly 140 different expressions for the camel (Hidasi 2008: 29), Czech uses more expressions for coniferous trees (spruce – smrk, common fir – borovice, larch – modřín, fir – jedle, etc.) than Hungarian does (Beke 2008: 84), the Inuit have more than fifty expressions for snow, and Arabic specifies the type of sand in a more nuanced way than the languages of other peoples living in a non-desert environment. As a result of their cognitive function, languages bear a marker of "our culture/foreign culture", which is indicated in communication by lexical devices (loan words, educated words, etc.). The mapping and borrowing of concepts associated with linguistic realias typical of foreign cultures happens as the result of linguistic and cultural contacts and it assumes the collaboration of bilingual mediators (e.g. translators, interpreters) (Lendvai 2005: 67). Cultural competence is an essential requirement for translators: "In terms of importance, it outweighs translation competence, communicative competence, pragmatic and sociolinguistic competence, etc. Mediation between cultures is becoming increasingly important in literary translation and, according to a new interpretation of translation, it represents the cornerstone of translation procedures. The translator has to bridge the differences between the cultures, coded, for example, in realias and ethno-culturemes as text elements. The latter include social conventions and moral value systems as specific elements of the culture" (Tellinger 2007: 15).

Thus, the work of a translator can be viewed as intercultural communication since in the course of translating linguistic material the translator also transcodes the culture for the recipient of the source-language text. This is why besides acquiring the vocabulary and the grammar, the translator needs to have a vast knowledge of the culture of both the source language and the target language, as well as great extralinguistic knowledge in order to make the source-language text accessible and understandable for the target-language reader. The translator mediates between cultures. Since we acquire the language of our culture, its rules and accepted norms fairly early in life (between the ages of five and ten), we are mostly unaware of the ways in which our culture influences our behaviour and communication. "When we communicate with the members of other cultures, we often encounter languages, rules and norms markedly different from our own, and these encounters raise our awareness of the peculiarities of our own culture. At the same time, they may also be a source of positive feelings, but of the feeling of frustration as well" (Falkné 2008: 14–15).

An increasing number of scholars have recently explored the relationship between translation and culture. According to some of these scholars, the lexicon,

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the grammar and the culture of two communities may differ to such an extent that translation becomes impossible. Namely, the other culture cannot be fully understood either at the linguistic level or at the semiotic level. On the other hand, scholars who support the view that translation is actually mediation between cultures claim that all parts of reality can be translated because the vocabulary of a language is continuously expandable with various methods (calques, loan words, neologisms, transfer of meaning, etc.) (Simigné 2011: 16).

A work of art and its translation often represent dissimilar cultural media. Translation is thus a field in which the differences between cultures are particularly evident: "Translation tries to identify the links between cultures, and building on these, it tries to make clear and acceptable all the things that would otherwise not be clear without special explanation. This, of course, does not imply that the translator should obscure cultural differences. On the contrary, in this world of uniforming globalization, individuality, extraordinariness is considered to be a lasting value. Therefore, it is extremely important to retain in translation the culture-specific elements and characteristics of a minority culture" (Spiczéné 2007: 15).

In his volume of essays entitled *Preveseji*, the Serbian translator Sava Babić provides an example from literature to illustrate the impossibility of translation due to cultural peculiarities. Branko Ćopić's poem entitled *Pite* (*Pies*)[3] represents a list of nearly twenty types of pastry/pie. The poem was inspired by the enormous variety of this dish in Serbian cuisine (in which the influence of eastern cuisine is particularly noticeable). Namely, the Serbian cookbook entitled *Veliki kuvar* (*Great Cookbook*) contains recipes for 115 different sorts of pie and yet it does not mention all the types found in the Ćopić poem. According to Babić, the poem could be translated into other languages and cultures with various translation procedures: *pite* could be replaced by pizza in Italy, fish dishes on Pacific islands, or rice dishes in China; however, this would only be substitution, not translation (Babić 1989: 81).

In the German translations of Dezső Kosztolányi's novel *Pacsirta* (*The Skylark*), the translator faces the problem of translating the word *pálinka* (brandy). In Klaus Schmuck's 1970 translation of the novel, the principle of equivalence applies naturally and the word *Schnapps* is used. The ninth chapter of the novel may present several problems for the translator, for example, how to transpose names, hymns, historical-political references, identity crisis, or names of dishes. The earlier German translation mostly emphasises the foreign character of names; the names of drinks do not raise any kind of problems in translation. In contemporary German translations, however, this spirit represents the untranslatable nectar

3 Pita čvrka / Pita džilituša / Pita gužvara / Pita onako / Pita Misir-pita...// Pita zeljanica / Pita sirnica / Pita krompiruša / Pita drobuša / Pita jajara... // Pita savijača / Pita zaljevuša / Pita bundevara / Pita kajmakuša / Pita bazlamača // Ačak pita / Đul pita / Luft pita / Šam-pita / Krem-pita / Lenja pita / I Pitino dete!

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of the foreign medium, a kind of Hungaricum, despite the fact that the word *pálinka*, naturalised in Hungarian in the 17th century, is of foreign origin (TESz 3 1976: 71)" (Hózsa 2015: 72). According to Judit Pieldner, such a "shift" can be considered as a benefit for interpretation, leading to a dialogue between one's own culture and the foreign culture (Pieldner 2010: 78).

From a distance of time and place (Switzerland), the success novel of Melinda Nagy Abonyi (on the volume: Melinda Nadj Abonji) from Óbecse (Bečej), entitled *Tauben fliegen auf (Pigeons Fly Off)* (Nadj Abonji 2010) emphasizes the local and cultural stereotypes that belong to the landscape of Vojvodina, Bačka and the people living here (for example, the Kocsis family). The family members who have emigrated travel back home for a wedding or a funeral turned into a family reunion. The novel mainly refers to the common but highly diverse culinary stereotypes, to the plains, the significance of the allée through the woods, to trees (acacia, poplar, chestnut trees), even to the air, the airflow, the fields, to the mud and the dust, the buildings (the fence, the outdoor kitchen), to the border and border crossing, the shreds of Hungarian language identity, and to the 1980s and the wartime period (Hózsa 2011: 110–111). The protagonist of the novel *Tauben fliegen auf (Pigeons fly off)* is Ildikó Kocsis, who had lived in Switzerland since the age of five and who narrates in German the world of Vojvodina, the stories she heard in Hungarian and the events which occurred during her visits home (to Vojvodina). She translates. Both the environment in the novel and the language of the volume are multi-ethnic: there are numerous italicised German, English and Serbian words in the text (the meanings of which are always clear from the context) and a few Hungarian words are also emphasised in italics. The Hungarian words italicised in the Hungarian edition occur in Hungarian in the original German volume, too (Szarvas 2013: 91). In one of the chapters of the novel in which the narrator recollects Vojvodina, the Hungarian terms of the dishes traditionally served at Hungarian weddings (broth with Tokaji wine, goulash soup, goulash soup with small noodles called *csipetke*, egg soup, bread dumplings, savoury scones), of wedding accessories and the key people at weddings (the bride's father, the master of ceremonies) are translated by the narrator into German, and these are translated from the German source language back into Hungarian in Éva Blaschtik's translation of the novel, *Galambok röppennek fel (Pigeons fly off)*. Taking into consideration the fact that the readers' background knowledge of the source language and target language may differ considerably, translators often make use of adding information or leaving out something. The Hungarian words *pogácsa* (savoury scone) and *fasírt* (*Frikadeller,* mincemeat dumplings) are printed in italics in the German and Hungarian texts, whereas in the Serbian translation only *pogácsa* is italicized in its Hungarian form, whereas *fasírt* is replaced with the explanation *dish made from minced meat*. Assuming that the readers are not familiar with the role of *Brautführer*, the Serbian translator of the novel, Dragoslav Dedović, uses descriptive translation

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and renders *Brautführer* as *ceremonijal majstor* (master of ceremonies) or as *dever* (groom's brother). Similarly, there is no Serbian equivalent for the bride's father (*Brautvater*), and so Dedović descriptively (mis)translates it as *mladoženjin otac* (the groom's father). In *erőleves tokajival*, the Hungarian drink *tokaji* (from the Hungarian vine region Tokaj) implies what is being qualified (wine) even without explicitly mentioning it, and this is clear to any native speaker of Hungarian. However, when translating *Kraftbrühe mit Tokajer* (broth with Tokaji wine), the target language reader needs to be made aware of what is being qualified (*tokajsko vino*, wine from the Tokaj region), just as in translating *erőleves/Kraftbrühe* a cultural equivalent needs to be used in Serbian (*teleća supa sa tokajskim vinom,* veal broth with Tokaj wine) so that the meaning of the source language expression is properly conveyed. The term *Gulaschsuppe* (goulash soup) confuses the Serbian translator because the Serbian word *gulaš* (used by Dedović) corresponds to stew in Hungarian. The German *Gulaschsuppe mit gezupften Nockerln* is *gulyásleves csipetkével* in Hungarian (goulash soup with small noodles), but the Serbian translator again uses the equivalent of stew and renders this as *gulaš sa šufnudlama* (with a Germanism for noodles, even though Serbian cuisine has a word for this type of noodles, namely *tarana* or *trgančić*). Much like its German equivalent (*Süppchen mit geschlagenem Ei*), *tojásleves* (egg soup) is translated into Serbian descriptively (*supa sa umućenim jajetom*, soup with beaten eggs). On the other hand, the Hungarian *zsemlegombóc* (bread dumplings) is rendered in German as *Sauerrahm und Knödel* (with 'soured cream' added), but the Serbian translator does not specify the key ingredient of this dish and simply translates it as *knedle* (dumplings). The translations of Melinda Abonyi Nagy's novel highlight aspects of the different cultures involved, and these differences often lead the careful translator to add explanations to his translation. Moreover, since the novel focuses on the experiences of the minority, its identity, tradition, rites, the translator has to pay special attention to issues like the characters' way of speaking, the problem of belonging to an ethnic group and cultural differences.

In his essay on the translation of Dezső Kosztolányi's novel *Pacsirta*, the Serbian translator Predrag Čudić points out the dilemmas translators are often faced with. Among other things, he stresses that the overuse of the word *puszta* in the language of tourism has resulted in his translating *tarkövi puszta* (the steppe near Tarkő in Slovakia) as *tarkeška pusta* and not *pustara*: "I thought that any grassy area anywhere in the world can be called *pustara*, whereas the word *pusta* is only used in the Hungarian context. I have to emphasise that I have relied on Danilo Kiš, who mainly used the word *pusta* in his outstanding translations of Petőfi's poems. However, after learning that people who do not live in the border area of these two cultures are unlikely to understand the word *pusta*, I added a footnote to this word" (Čudić 2007: 588–589). The word *puszta* is also found in the German translations of the novel since with the increase of tourism it

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becomes readily comprehensible to the German reader as well. Pacsirta's letter written in the *puszta* of Tarkő occurs in the eighth chapter of the novel. The key problem in all the three German translations (by Klaus Schmuck, Heinrich Eisterer and Christina Viragh) is the word *puszta*, which is mentioned in the heading of the letter, in the first sentence after the greeting, in reference to an idyllic awakening and later in the narrative reflection of Ákos Vajkay's vision (the Tarkő puszta, the Hungarian "puszta" life, the noise of the "puszta", what he saw was not the Tarkő puszta). All three translations solve the problem in different, though consistent ways. In his 1970 translation, Klaus Schmuck employs the dictionary equivalent of *puszta*, adapted to German (die Pußta), which reflects a stable, fixed entity, the provincial character of a site mostly familiar from the traditions of Lenau (*Pußta* Tarkő, das Leben in der *Pußta*, beim Larm der Pußta, die Pußta in Tarkő). In Heinrich Eisterer's translation, this linguistically and culturally unfamiliar word is left out altogether (Tarkő, (die vielen Freuden) des Lebens hier, von den Geräuschen des Hofes, das Gehöft in Tarkő), while Christina Viragh uses the Hungarian word with its Hungarian spelling in the German text (*Puszta* von Tarkő, *Puszta*-leben, von den Geräuschen der *Puszta*, *die Puszta* von Tarkő). "Therefore, in this regard, one may raise the issue of the increased influence of tourism as well as of the media, travel brochures and advertisements, the problem of going beyond the linguistic context, which Eco terms information about the world or encyclopaedic information" (Hózsa 2011: 109).

In the Serbian translation of Nándor Gion's 1974 anthology of short stories *Ezen az oldalon* (*On this side*), we find an example of successful translation of a nickname as the whole reference system carried by the character who bears this nickname is also transferred into the cultural context of the target language. *Szent Erzsébet* (Saint Elizabeth) is rendered by Lazar Merković as *Sveta Jelisaveta*, i.e. both parts of the foreign name are translated but *Erzsébet* is substituted with its Serbian equivalent, *Jelisaveta*, while *Szent*, a nickname with connotative meaning, is translated as *Sveta*. But the translation and the original text involve different legends, and thus the name of Saint Elizabeth has different intertextual references in Hungarian and in Serbian. While in Hungarian it is associated with Elizabeth of Hungary (1207–1231), who hid roses under her cloak,[4] the reader of the Serbian text associates the name of Sveta Jelisaveta, the Grand Duchess Elisabeth of Russia (1864–1918) killed in 1918, who was canonised in 1981 by the Russian orthodox

4 Elizabeth of Hungary is perhaps best known for her miracle with the roses, which says that whilst she was taking bread to the poor in secret, she met her husband Ludwig on a hunting party, who, in order to quell the suspicions of the gentry that she was stealing treasure from the castle, asked her to reveal what was hidden under her cloak. In that moment, her cloak fell open and a vision of white and red roses could be seen, which proved to Ludwig that God's protecting hand was at work. Hers is the first of many miracles that associate Christian saints with roses, and is the most frequently depicted in the saint's iconography (https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Elizabeth_of_Hungary# Miracle_of_the_Roses).

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church outside of Russia and in 1992 by the Moscow Patriarchate, too. However, the lives of the two Elizabeths do share some common features: they both led a moderate lifestyle, helped the poor, founded hospitals, they were both members of an order and were both canonized (Hózsa–Horváth Futó 2013: 167).

In the English, German and Croatian translations of Éva Janikovszky's picture book *Velem mindig történik valami* (*Something's Always Happening to Me*), the translator faced the problem of rendering in the target language several expressions specific to Hungarian culture (Hungarianisms). Andrew C. Rouse translated *hármas* (grade 3, the mark that teachers in Hungarian schools give to a student's work to show that it is average) as *mark C* because in the English-speaking countries letters are used to show the quality of a student's work. Éva Janikovszky's creative neologism for the caretaker of a block of flats, *tömbösített néni* (blocked lady) is simply translated into English as *janitor* and in the German translation she appears as *Die Hausmeisterin*. However, in the Croatian translation, she is the lady from the local board of tenants (*teta iz kućnog saveta*). The *szódás* (person who produces soda water) is not translated at all: in the Croatian translation of the picture book, the translator opted for a word which sounds similar, *stolar* (carpenter), in the English translation it becomes the *ice-cream man* and in the German translation it is turned into *der Limonadenverkäufer* (lemonade vendor) (Utasi 2015: 81–82).

Due to our daily exposure to the enormous amounts of information and to rapid technological development, it is generally believed that communication between people is improving. However, surveys have proven that surfeited with the abundance of information, people tend to withdraw to a comfort zone. Modern technological devices actually impede interpersonal communication and lead to alienation. Similarly, it is a misconception that the number of conflicts in communication will decrease with the growth of international space: "Rather, it is much more likely that knowledge about conflicts arising from more frequent contacts will be more appreciated. Consequently, it is much more acute than ever before to predict such conflicts and to develop methods to prevent them" (Hidasi 2005: 272–273).

In order to handle cultural shock ("the reaction of the foreigner to the new, unpredictable and therefore insecure environment", Falkné Bánó 2008: 83), adaptation to an environment and a new situation, in order to do one's work successfully in a foreign culture and in various intercultural situations, it is necessary that the translator, manager, ambassador, tourist, etc. make an effort to learn as much as possible about the foreign country's culture, the forms of communication and to develop his intercultural competence. Translation is also a form of cultural mediation, and therefore in order to communicate effectively in either speech or writing, the translator/interpreter has to be fully aware of the peculiarities of the interlocutor's social and cultural life, his traditions and habits.

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