

## ROBERT MINNULLIN'S TRANSLATIONS OF CHILDREN'S LITERATURE

Leila Mingazova<sup>1</sup>, Flera Sayfulina<sup>2</sup>, Elzara Gafiyatova<sup>3</sup>, Alfiya Galimullina<sup>4</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Prof. Dr., Ms., Kazan (Volga region) Federal University, [fsaifulina@mail.ru](mailto:fsaifulina@mail.ru)

<sup>2</sup>Prof. Dr., Ms., Kazan (Volga region) Federal University, [leila69@inbox.ru](mailto:leila69@inbox.ru)

<sup>3</sup>Prof. Dr., Ms., Kazan (Volga region) Federal University, [rg-777@yandex.ru](mailto:rg-777@yandex.ru)

<sup>4</sup>Prof. Dr., Ms., Kazan (Volga region) Federal University, [alfiya\\_gali1000@mail.ru](mailto:alfiya_gali1000@mail.ru)

### Abstract

The article is devoted to the translation activity of the famous Tatar poet, publicist, and journalist Robert Minnullin. Most of the poetic works of the author belong to children's literature. In the field of translations, he focuses on translating works for children and acquaints the young reader with the "world of childhood" in the works of poets of other nations.

The object of our study is the collections of Robert Minnullin's works "I Want to Make Friends" (2004), and the seventh volume of the seven-volume "Selected Works" (2007), which includes numerous translations into the Tatar language of poems of the Volga region poets (Mari, Chuvash, Udmurt), the poets of Turkic-speaking CIS countries (Karakalpak, Turkmen, Kazakh), as well as Russian, Georgian, Armenian, Lithuanian, Moldovan and other authors.

A poetic translation is one of the most complex types of literary translations, which is determined by the formal and content features of poetic texts, performing an aesthetic function. Based on a comparative analysis of the literary text and its translation into the Tatar language, the article notes that the poet possesses a high level of translation competence in interpreting symbolic meanings, subtext and the national color of the translated text.

As the fictional text represents a subjective picture of the world, mental modeling is used as a way of interpreting this world, giving the translator's individual interpretation of the symbols of translated work.

The article considers the translation difficulties caused by the mismatch of grammatical categories in different languages. It contains examples of literary texts, in which grammatical categories are used as semantic means.

**Keywords:** picture of the world, comparative analysis, literary text, literary translation, Robert Minnullin, children's literature,

### INTRODUCTION

"In the 20th century, a similar attitude towards the age of industrialization began to take shape in Europe" (Zakirov et al, 2017). But we should point out that "Literary translation is now one of the ways of connecting literatures of different peoples" (History of Tatar literature, 2015: 470). The well-known Tatar literary critic

Khatip Minnegulov underlines the significant and multifaceted function of translation: "Translation is not an ordinary, purely linguistic or literary phenomenon, this activity is a very significant means of understanding and familiarizing with spiritual and information resources. It connects people, nations, countries, centuries, ensures their communication and dialogue" (Minnegulov, 2008: 219). "Tatar literature in the second half of the XXth century is characterized by its active search for new means of artistic expression, by new schools and stylistic trends, including intellectual realism and sentimental tradition, which have become targets for contemporary scientists" (Sayfulina, 2018). Cooperation in this area gives the reader an opportunity to get acquainted with the rich literary heritage of other peoples, and also expand the circle of Tatar national literature readers.

The problem of literary translation becomes relevant at the beginning of the 20th century becoming the focus of scholars' research. The fact that many monographic works study the problems of literary translation in different literatures, shows that this issue is relevant for many peoples (Aristovich, 1984: 25; Rakhmanov, 1991: 24; Mallalliev, 2006: 24; Nagimov, 2006: 23; Safina, 2014: 23; Galimullin et al., 2016: 3940-3945; Gimadieva et al., 2017: 497-504)

At the beginning of the 20th century, the works of French and German writers were translated into Tatar, as well as works by Russian authors such as N. Gogol, A. Pushkin, L. Tolstoy, M. Gorky, D. Mamin-Sibiryak, I. Turgenev, and A. Kuprin, translated by I. Bogdanov, D. Gobaydi, S. Suncheley, N. Khalfin and other's. H.C. Andersen's fairy tales, V. Gauff, O. Wilde, V. Hugo, R. Kipling, L. Tolstoy and stories by other world-famous writers were published in the Tatar language in translations of F. Saifi-Kazanly, S. Rakhmankulov, and S. Dzhalal. According to literary critic D. Zagidullina, translated works make an update to the Tatar literature in terms of genre, form, expand the range of thematic searches, its psychological analysis and variety of styles (Zagidullina, 2000: 100).

Children's literature translation holds a special place in the translation activity of Tatar writers. At the beginning of the 20th century, the well-known Tatar poet Gabdulla Tukay worked in this area. The poems "The Child and the Butterfly" (free translation of the poem "Moth" by L.N. Modzalevsky), "Trust Allah" (I.S. Nikitin, "Child's Prayer"), "Ladder" (A.E. Izmailov, "Ladder"), "Good News" (A.N. Pleshcheev, "Raindrop"), "Rain" (A.N. Maikov, "Summer Rain"), "Swallow" (I.S. Nikitin, "Swallow's Nest") and other poems, numerous fables were introduced to Tatar readers in his creative translation. Tukay's talent as a poet and as a translator is revealed in these works, as they are enriched with details and Tatar national color.

It should be noted that during the Soviet period, especially in the second half of the 20th century, the works of many Russian-speaking writers and of writers who used their national languages were brilliantly translated into the Tatar language. For example, until the end of the 1980s, Tatar Publishing House, the main publishing center of the Republic, annually produced about a dozen translations from Russian and from national languages, which amounted to 8-10% of fiction published in the Tatar Autonomous Soviet Socialist Republic. It was with great enthusiasm and interest that Tatar writers-translators translated the works of the most popular Russian writers – Konstantin Paustovsky, Konstantin Simonov, Sergei Mikhalkov, Yuri Bondarev, Viktor Astafyev, Vasil Bykov, Valentin Rasputin, Yevgeny Yevtushenko; Roman Solntsev – Russian-speaking Tatar writer (Sufeev Renat), Kazakh writers – Mukhtar Auezov, Sabit Mukanov, Uzbek poet Askad Mukhtar, Georgian writer Nodar Dumbadze and many others (Hamidullin, 2012).

This article is devoted to the translation activity of Robert Minnullin, a famous Tatar poet, who made a great contribution to the development of children's literature. Translations of poetic works, especially from unrelated languages, require a special talent and a sense of language. This type of activity is very complicated as the style of the translated author, as well as knowledge of the literary and cultural context and many other features should be taken into account.

## **METHODS**

The Tatar scientist, who devoted many of his works to the theory and practice of translation, notes that literary translation is translating a work into another language, while preserving its stylistic features and meaning, and using the possibilities of another language (Yusupov, 1975: 14).

According to L.S. Barkhudarov, the purpose of translation is to restore connections between people speaking different languages (Barkhudarov, 1975: 14). The process of translation, is regarded as an act of interlingual communication by many scientists, such as E.V. Breus (Breus, 2002), F.G. Galimullin (Galimullin, 2014), R.A. Yusupov (Yusupov, 1975).

At the same time, literary translation differs from other types of translation, as one of the most complicated types of translation activity. As the Russian scientist working in the field of translation theory points out, "In

literary translation, the literary-aesthetic or communicative goal-function play a leading role. The aesthetic function distinguishes literary speech from the communicative function, which contains semantic content” (Kommissarov, 1990: 95).

E.V. Breus, a scientist studying the history of translation, notes that not only the forms of language are compared, but also general cultural layers that are not directly related to language in the process of translation (Breus, 2002: 625).

The research uses a comparative method of analysis, which helps to trace the accuracy of interpreting thoughts and feelings in the course of translation, which makes it possible to evaluate the skill of the poet-translator.

## **RESULTS AND DISCUSSION**

Translations of Tatar national literature into other languages, as well as translations from other languages into Tatar, have a long history and many traditions. Tatar Translation School was formed in the Soviet period. For example, almost all the works of the famous writer Chingiz Aitmatov were translated into the Tatar language in a timely manner.

In the post-Soviet period special attention was paid to translating Tatar literature into other Turkic languages, especially into the Turkish and Kazakh languages; simultaneously, Turkish, Kazakh literature was actively translated into the Tatar language. Thus, a dialogue among cultures and literatures was realized.

Robert Minnullin, a well-known Tatar poet, made a definite contribution to the development of mutual understanding of peoples by translating the poetry of contemporary poets into his native language – the Tatar language. It should be noted that the poet’s works have been translated into many related languages, such as Bashkir, Azerbaijan, Turkish, Yakut; and the Volga region peoples’ languages – Chuvash, Mari, Udmurt, as well as the Belarusian and Ukrainian languages.

Over the past decade, R. Minnullin has shown himself as a talented translator. He is especially active in translating children’s literature – poetry, which is dedicated to children, expanding the circle of children’s reading with works from different literatures. A few decades ago, the famous Tatar poet I.Yuzeyev noted this feature in R.Minnullin’s work: “...R. Minnullin is interested in his nation’s traditions and customs. But, we all know that if the poet is interested only in his own culture, the horizons would be narrow. Realizing this, Robert explores the life of kindred peoples” (Yuzeev, 1978: 186). Today we can confidently say that R. Minnullin is interested not only in everyday life and traditions, the culture of kindred peoples, he gets acquainted with the literature and culture of many peoples and actively translates works from related languages as well as from many other languages. Russian poets’ poems and works from the Karakalpak, Turkmen, Kazakh, Udmurt, Mari, Chuvash; Georgian, Armenian; Lithuanian and other languages are being published in the Tatar language in R. Minnullin’s translation. He translated poems of famous children’s poets from Russian: Agnia Barto, Sergei Mikhalkov, Mikhail Yasnov, Gennady Paushkin; from Udmurian – the poems of Vladimir Romanov; from Mari – Anatoliy Timirkaev; from Chuash – Raisa Sarby, Vasily Davydov-Anatri; from Latvian – Oyara Vacietis, Leon Briedis; from – Vieru Grigore; from Lithuanian – Juozas Nekrosius; from Karakalpak – verses by Zholdas Setnazarov; from Kazakh – Muzaffar Alimbaev, from Turkmen – Kayum Tanrekuliyev, Agageldy Allanazarov; from Armenian – Silva Kaputikyan; from Georgian – Nodar Dumbadze and others. R.Minnullin undoubtedly enriched the Tatar reader’s circle of reading by translating the works of about ten famous poets of different nationalities. Reflecting on children’s literature, the poet writes: “Children’s poets live on different continents. They belong to different countries, homelands, have different names, but their poetry is about the same things, their heroes, deeds, behavior, dreams, joys and sorrows are similar. Because children are alike everywhere, it means that children’s poets are similar ...” (Minnullin, 2004: 223).

One of R.Minnullin’s favorite Russian children’s poetesses is Agniya Barto. Her work was influenced by V.V. Mayakovsky, a famous poet of the 1930s. A satirical trend of the poet’s works and in her desire for stylistic experiments are evidence of this influence. Even within the framework of one verse, A. Barto is able to drastically change the current of thoughts (“Oh, the plank is ending, / Now I’m going to fall”), uses the method of pun (“Mne kogda” – “nekogda”(“When do I” – “Nowhen”); “Lida, mol” – “vydumal” (“Lida, they say” – “No way”)), or suddenly turns to expressive rhymes. Apparently, these ideas, attract the poet-translator’s attention as they have common features in their creative work. In the work of A. Barto, the child’s image is depicted in a satirical and humorous way. For example, the poem “Dad Got Angry” was very accurately translated into the Tatar language by R.Minnullin.

I got “a two” –

You are familiar with that.

Dad got angry,

But he didn't scold.

That ignorance makes me worried,

I'll go to bed! (Minnullin, 2007:301).

When translating poems, the translator should convey the poet's original idea, express national characteristics of the work and keep the meter. In literary translations, different cultures come into contact – the literature and culture of the original work and the translator's national literature and culture, as well as the personalities – the author of the original work and the translator's personality, their worldview and various traditions. According to the scholars, "Tatar literature of the second half of the 20th century is characterized by active search for new means of expression, new schools and stylistic trends, including intellectual realism and the sentimental tradition. Artistic trends in Tatar literature, being typologically similar to those in Russian and European literatures have distinctive particularities. The difference of the national literature from European and Russian literatures, the use and adaptation of European and Russian literary trends in Tatar literature are determined both by specific, and by local cultural substrate related to the national worldview and manifested, first of all, in thinking specifics and artistic perception (Yusupova, 2016: 213-222).

If you evaluate the translation from this position, the work translated into another language is difficult to correlate with the original work. Sometimes the translator's personality dominates over the area of language, imagery, symbols, in rhythmic, and the construction of a verse. In the poems translated by R. Minnullin, the style of the poet himself is also felt.

It should be noted that for Tatar translations R. Minnullin chooses works with clearly expressed ideological and aesthetic thought, with problems of moral education of the younger generation, those, reflecting national traditions of the people.

For example, Silva Kaputikyan's poem "The Drawing" in R. Minnullin's translation into Tatar reminds his own poem "The Smiling Wolves" (Minnullin, 2007: 335).

In R. Minnullin's children's poetry a big place is occupied by a game that performs a special function (Mingazova, 2014: 423). R. Minnullin widely uses the form of the poetic game for the purpose of depicting a character, drawing up the psychological state of the child, who does not understand adults, who perceives the adults' decisions "as something not fair". Such poems are important for the development of imagination, children's thinking, their knowledge of new concepts.

Verses use words similar in sound, but different in meaning. This helps the little reader to remember the word, to understand its meaning. Therefore, the poet chooses such poems to translate. In this regard, the poems of Lithuanian poet Juozas Nekrosiusa are of interest. The poem "Rabbits See a Dream" translated by R. Minnullin attracts the young reader with its simplicity and semantic content (Minnullin, 2007: 347). Or the poem of the Russian poet Mikhail Yasonov "I help in the kitchen":

– Go meat to the grinder!

Go meat to the grinder!

Go right to the grinder!

Get right the grinder!

Go right there... Marsh!

– Stop! Who goes?

– Stuffing! (Minnullin, 2007: 336).

R. Minnullin never forgets about specific features of children's psychology, when a children's writer plays with his reader, he reaches his goal quickly, a lyrical game is easier to remember, and children's discoveries are made more unexpectedly and surprisingly, for example, in the poems of the great Georgian poet Nodar Dumbadze, translated by the Tatar poet (Minnullin, 2007: 334).

In his work, R. Minnullin turns lines of poetry into a game. For children of young and middle age, he often creates a play of words in a poetic way with the help of rhythmic, stanzas, rhymes, repetitions of words-homonyms, etc. For translation he chooses the poems that are close to his style.

In children's poetry, as in folklore works, poetry is written in the form of questions and answers, which help the poet to reveal different states of the soul: joy, bewilderment, enthusiasm, interest, etc. Such poems are often found in R. Minnullin's work and are frequent in the works of national authors, chosen by R. Minnullin for translation. In the poem of Udmurt poet Vyacheslav Ar-Sergi, "The Children's Poet", translated by Minnullin, this way of presenting the verse is used to raise topical current issues:

- Mom, sweetheart,  
Why all the rich  
They speak only in their own way  
And do not like our language?  
- Mom, sweetheart,  
Why in cities  
They chase our relatives  
Reproaching them for the language of our ancestors,  
Reproaching for our difference in guise? ... (Minnullin, 2007: 310).

Thus, the poet introduces children to adults' key problems.

R. Minnullin perceives the child as a part of wildlife. And for translations, the poet chooses the works of the poets, with a similar perception of the world. The nature surrounding the child, its native village, the animal world, the plant world, and the changes they undergo, are of interest to the poet as a textbook by which the poet acquaints the young reader with the surrounding world, which brings the poet's work and folklore closer. The world of childhood is an inseparable part of nature in the poems translated by Robert Minnullin such as the Latvian poet Oyar Vacietis's poems ("The Miracle Snail", "The Taste of the Sun", "The Song of the Berries"), the Roman poet Grigore Vieru "Say, the Sun", "A Cloud with a Rainbow", the Russian poet Sergei Mikhailov "Finch", Lithuanian poet Juozas Nekrošius "The Rabbits See a Dream", "The Raven's Porridge", "The Violinist Dragonfly", Karakalpak poet Joldas Saitnazarov "At the Birch", Russian poetess Irena Sergeeva "White Swans", Ossetian poet Maxim Tsagarayev "The Sun", etc.

Kazakh poet Muzaffar Alimbaev's poem "Rainbow", Chuvash poetess Raisa Sarby's poem "Birches are Horses", Ossetian poet Alexander Tsurukaev's poem "Autumn Forest", translated by the Tatar poet, are perceived as R. Minnullin's own poems. He is not the author of line translations, but he complements the translated verses with national feelings, with the spiritual wealth of his native people, using the opportunities of the Tatar language extensively. Such is the poetic world of the Tatar poet in his translations of the well-known Chuvash poet Yuri Semender "Before the Rain", where onomatopoeia is widely used with the sounds (d), (p), (t), which resemble a thunderclap, the sounds of falling rain drops (Minnullin, 2007: 369) Thus, the child perceives the rhythm of the verse, the muzzy sound, adjusted to a clear picture of the nature painted by the poet.

Children's poetry is a special world, which is recreated by the poetic representation of the world, aimed at creating the beauty of the surrounding nature, through fairy-tale transformations, sounding and rhythmic lines.

The same can be said about Latvian poet Leon Briedis's poems for children "What grows on the apple tree?", which were published in the Tatar language in R. Minnullin's translation (Minnullin, 2004: 103).

As it is known, young representatives of any ethnos study traditions, folklore, history of their people, comprehend its spiritual wealth in the process of development. Children's poems written in the native language help in this process. Moldovan poet Grigore Vieru's poem "Mother Tongue" written with this purpose, was also translated into the Tatar language by R. Minnullin (Minnullin, 2007: 329). He managed to convey the love of the Moldovan poet to his native language through the Tatar language.

Thus, R. Minnullin's translations, in general, can be attributed to a free translation, because they reflect the findings of the poet-translator himself. In his translations R. Minnullin extends the ethno-cultural context of the verse with the help of his native culture, making the perception of another's culture for the little reader easier, more understandable.

The perception of poetic translations written by the poets of the related Turkic peoples does not cause difficulties for the Tatar reader, since the world outlook of the peoples, their mythological basis, the roots of

folklore are common. The picture of the Turkic people's life, familiar to the Tatar child, is recreated in Turkmen poet Agageldy Allanazarov's poem "At the Meeting of the Herd" (Minnullin, 2007: 292).

R. Minnullin's poems are written in a language that is accessible to children, they take into account children's psychology, the child's perception of the world. In selecting texts for translation, the poet proceeds from the same criteria. While translating other peoples works, he often refers to "winged expressions" – phraseologicalisms, proverbs and sayings of the native language, expanding the meaning of the poem.

## **SUMMARY**

Thus, the activity of the Tatar writer Robert Minnullin in the field of translation enriches Tatar children's literature, introduces the young reader to the poetic heritage of different peoples. The works translated by the poet into the native (Tatar) language combine the educational potential inherent in them; they are aimed at acquainting the child with the traditions of different peoples, their way of life. The surrounding nature, which is reflected in almost every poem, is a source of beauty and inspiration for poets, which enriches the spiritual world of the young reader. The poet preaches moral and ethical norms, praised by national authors.

R. Minnullin pays to the perception of the world around the children, their, psychology, which is very accurately and colorfully transmitted through the Tatar language. On the one hand, the works, translated by R. Minnullin, preserve the national features of the original work; on the other hand, they become the property of the Tatar reader, because the translator uses rich possibilities of his native tongue.

## **CONCLUSIONS**

According to E.V. Breus, the field of translation is based on three, constantly changing substances: Man, Text and Time. The text in relation to the person acts in two respects: Author / Reader, and in relation to translation it appears in three substances: Author / Translator / Reader (Breus, 2002: 23). In this regard, it can be said that the reflection of personal ideas in the translated text depends on the translator's creative energy. Robert Minnullin's translations are characterized as free translations, where the creative poetic talent of an interpreter is clearly traced.

## **ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS**

The work is performed according to the Russian Government Program of Competitive Growth of Kazan Federal University.

## **REFERENCE LIST**

- Aristovich P.A. Dryness of the artistic translation: author's abstract. diss. to. philol. n. - Tbilisi, 1984. - 250 p.
- Barkhudarov L. S. (1975). Language and translation. M. 420 p.
- Breus E.V. (2002) Translation as an act of interlingual communication // Interaction of languages in the translation process. as a factor of intercultural communication. Krasnodar, pp. 21-26.
- Galimullin F.G., Galimullina A.F., Mingazova L.I. (2014) The development of the literatures of the people of the Volga region in multi-ethnic Russia. Journal of Language and Literature 2014; 5(3), 248-252. DOI: 10.7813/jll.2014/5-3/42.
- Galimullin Foat G., Galimullina Alfiya F., Mingazova Liailia I. (2016) Common roots, common spirituality: literary relationships of the tatar and azerbaijani literature in the context of the dialogue of cultures// The Social Sciences. Year: 2016. Volume: 11 Issue: 16 P. 3940-3945.
- Gimadieva, G., Mingazova, L., Sayilov, G., & Sayfulina, F. (2017). General Roots, General Spirituality: Literary Interrelations of Literatures in the Aspect of Cultural Dialogue. Journal of History Culture and Art Research, 6(4), 497-504. doi:http://dx.doi.org/10.7596/taksad.v6i4.1118
- Hamidullin L. (2012) Tatar Literature and the Problems of Translation // Idel, No. 11.
- History of Tatar literature. (2015) In 8 volumes: T 3., 19th century. Kazan: Tat.knigoizdat, 551 p.

- Komissarov V.V. (1990) Translation theory (linguistic aspects). M.: Vysshaya shkola., 387 p.
- Mallaliev G.N. Problems of literary translation of poetry (on the basis of poetic texts of Russian and Tabasaran literatures): the author's abstract. diss. candidate of philological sciences. - Makhachkala, 2006. 24 pp.
- Mingazova Liailia and Sulteev Rustem. (2014) Tatar and English Children's Folklore Education in Folk Traditions // *Western Folklore* 73.4 (Fall 2014): 410-431.
- Minnegulov H. (2008) And the Tatar needs an interpreter... // *Madani Zhomga*, 10 October.
- Minnullin R. (2004) I want to make friends / *Collected works: poems, literary criticism, creative portraits, reviews for children: T.2.* Kazan: Magarif, 360 p.
- Minnullin R.M. (2007). *Works in 7 volumes. T.7.* Kazan: Tatar publishing house., 420 p.
- Nagimov N.I. Translations of Sagit Sunchelei in Western European literature: author's abstract. diss. candidate of philological sciences. - Kazan, 2006. 23 pp.
- Rakhmanov Z.A. (1991). Problems of literary translation and literary relations: the author's abstract. diss. candidate of philological sciences. - Dushanbe, 1991 - 24 p.
- Saifulina Flera, Gafiyatova Elzara (2018). The Reflection of the Field "Forest" in the National Literature // *Abstracts & Proceedings of SOCIOINT 2018- 5th International Conference on Education, Social Sciences and Humanities, 2-4 July 2018- Dubai, UAE.* pp.391-400.  
[http://www.ocerints.org/socioint18\\_e-publication/abstracts/papers/276.pdf](http://www.ocerints.org/socioint18_e-publication/abstracts/papers/276.pdf)
- Safina G.F. Lyrics by A.S. Pushkin in translations into the Tatar language: history and poetics: avtoref. diss. candidate of philological sciences. - Kazan, 2014. 23 p.
- Yusupova N.M., Sayfulina F.S. Gainullina G.R., Ibragimov B.Kh. (2016) Fiction adaptation characteristics in tatar literature of the second half of XX century // *European Journal of Science and Theology*, February 2016, Vol.12, No.1, pp. 213-222. URL: <http://www.ejst.tuiasi.ro/issue12.html>
- Yuzeyev I. (1978) In our ranks. Robert Minnullin // *Lights of Kazan*, No. 3. P. 186.
- Yusupov R. (1975) Translation problems. Kazan: Tatar Publishing House, 322 p.
- Zakirov, A., Sayapova, A., Solnyshkina, M. (2017). The Images of Stiva Oblonsky and Konstantin Levin in "Anna Karenina" by Leo Tolstoy: Intuitive Perception of Life. *Revista Publicando*.  
[https://www.rmlconsultores.com/revista/index.php/crv/article/view/950/pdf\\_705](https://www.rmlconsultores.com/revista/index.php/crv/article/view/950/pdf_705)
- Zagidullina D. Laws of literature and time (2000). Kazan: Tatar publishing house, 272 p.