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THE SPECIFICITY OF “FANTASY” FROM TRANSLATIONAL PERSPECTIVES

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Abstract. The article presents an attempt to scientifically substantiate the need to identify "fantasy" as a distinct category within the overall hierarchy of literary genres, in order to determine the characteristics that affect translation and may constitute implicatures to be uncovered during pre-translational analysis. According to existing views, fantasy is defined by several distinctive features that set it apart from other literary forms. Central to fantasy is the presence of an invented world, one that possesses properties impossible in our reality, allowing readers to escape into realms of imagination. Magic is a fundamental element, often accompanied by magical creatures and phenomena that enrich the narrative and deepen the sense of wonder. The plots are typically adventurous, frequently involving quests, journeys, and wars that propel characters into thrilling escapades. The research findings suggest that fantasy can be recognized as a specific category in literary translation due to several defining characteristics: a) it represents the literature of the impossible, contrasting sharply with reality and featuring supernatural elements; b) it is a literature of escapism; c) the supernatural resists rational explanation and draws on contemporary symbolic concepts and interpretive ambiguity; d) it maintains a sense of wonder and magical realism, making liberal use of borrowings, neologisms, and descriptive translations to convey fantastical concepts; e) it integrates mythological elements, folklore, epic storytelling, legends, and fairy tales, as authors creatively draw on global cultural traditions; f) it encompasses various subgenres, including high fantasy, low fantasy, urban fantasy, sword and sorcery, dark fantasy, and historical fantasy.

Translating fantasy requires a specific approach due to its unique features: 1) preserving the literary concept, the author's style, intention, aesthetics, and linguistic richness, including

elements of magic and atmosphere; 2) as grotesque-fantastic literature, it blurs the lines between natural and supernatural explanations, necessitating the conveyance of ambiguity and uncertainty in translation; 3) fantasy addresses contemporary issues through imaginative worlds, prompting translators to engage with philosophical and moral questions; 4) achieving semantic equivalence is essential, given the uniqueness of the imaginary world, making it crucial to preserve both expressive and aesthetic qualities in the translation.

Keywords: literary trends, fantasy, myth, epic, fairy tales, literary translation, pre-translational analysis, literature of escapism.

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СПЕЦИФИКА «ФЭНТЕЗИ» С ПОЗИЦИИ ПЕРЕВОДОВЕДЕНИЯ

Аннотация. В статье представлена попытка научно обосновать необходимость выделения «фэнтези» в качестве отдельного направления в общей иерархии литературных жанров для дальнейшего выявления характеристик и импликатур, влияющих на перевод, которые необходимо более детально прорабатывать предпереводческого анализа. Согласно существующим мнениям, «фэнтези» характеризуется несколькими отличительными чертами, которые отличают его от других литературных форм. Центральным для «фэнтези» является наличие вымышленного мира, обладающего свойствами, невозможными в нашей реальности, что позволяет читателям перемещаться из реального в воображаемое. Магия является основополагающим элементом, часто сопровождаемым волшебными существами и явлениями, которые обогащают повествование и углубляют восприятие чуда. Сюжеты, как правило, авантурные, часто включающие поиски, путешествия и войны, которые толкают персонажей на захватывающие приключения. Согласно результатам исследования, «фэнтези» можно признать обособленным литературным направлением, с точки зрения его художественного перевода вследствие совокупности нескольких определяющих характеристик, а именно: а) представляет собой литературу невозможного, резко контрастирующую с реальностью и содержащую сверхъестественные элементы; б) имеет черты литературы эскапизма; в) включает сверхъестественное, которое не поддается рациональному объяснению и опирается на современные символические концепции и неоднозначность интерпретаций; г) сохраняет чувство чуда и магического реализма, свободно использует заимствования и неологизмы для передачи фэнтезийных элементов; д) интегрирует мифологические элементы, фольклор, эпическое повествование, легенды, сказки, поскольку авторы творчески черпают вдохновение из мировых культурных традиций; е) охватывает различные тенденции, включая высокое фэнтези, низкое фэнтези, городское фэнтези, «меч и колдовство», темное фэнтези и историческое фэнтези.

Перевод фэнтези требует особого подхода из-за его уникальных особенностей, а именно: 1) сохранение художественного замысла, стиля автора, эстетики и языкового разнообразия текста, включая элементы вербализующие магию и атмосферу; 2) будучи

гротескно-фантастической литературой, «фэнтези» стирает границы между естественными и сверхъестественными трактовками, что требует учета неоднозначности и неопределенности при переводе; 3) «фэнтези» обращается к современным проблемам посредством воображаемых миров, что приводит к необходимости для переводчика исследовать философские и моральные вопросы; 4) достижение семантической эквивалентности, учитывая уникальность вымышленного мира, что обуславливает необходимость сохранения как выразительных, так и эстетических качеств перевода.

Ключевые слова: литературные направления, фэнтези, миф, эпос, сказки, художественный перевод, предпереводческий анализ, литература эскапизма.

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Fantasy as a specific literary trend is a captivating realm that takes readers on extraordinary journeys through dimensions of the imagination. Fantasy involves the depiction of virtual worlds imbued with magic, where there is a clear boundary between Light and Darkness. These worlds may represent variations of Earth in the distant past, future, or parallel existence [28]. It is a literature that embraces the supernatural, magic, mythical creatures, and fantastical settings.

The literary trend under examination was formed relatively recently, with its development taking place during the 20th century. Today, "fantasy" is used to describe a body of literature that incorporates elements of magic, supernatural phenomena, and imaginative storytelling. It continues to be associated with the world of imagination and creativity [13; 113].

Over time, close attention has been paid to the study of fantasy texts from literary, linguistic, psychological, and philosophical perspectives, as well as from the standpoint of ethnology and contemporary cognitive science [33; 21].

There are various definitions of fantasy as a genre, often tied to attempts to distinguish it from the fantastic, science fiction, fairy tales, and horror. The ambiguity of the term presents a certain complexity, since the fantasy genre is closely linked to imagination, to images of heroes formed in the mind, and to historical eras fictionalized by authors and improvised through a variety of extraordinary words.

The word "fantasy" entered the English language via the Old French "fantasie" or "fantisie," which was derived from the Latin "phantasia." During the Middle Ages, the concept of "fantasy" was frequently associated with imaginative and visionary experiences [42]. Over time, the meaning of "fantasy" expanded to encompass fictional and imaginary elements, particularly in the realm of literature. It came to be associated with the creation of imaginative worlds,

magical beings, and extraordinary events unconstrained by the limitations of reality [18; 698]. The English term fantasy literature came into use following the publication of J.R.R. Tolkien's "The Lord of the Rings" in 1954–1955. The term initially spread only within the English-speaking world and remained an Anglicism in other languages [24; 9]. The founder of modern fantasy as a genre can be considered the philology professor J.R.R. Tolkien, who was the first to delineate the conflict between the real world of human beings and magical creatures, employing fictional characters such as orcs and hobbits, as well as fairy-tale settings such as the kingdom of the dark lord Mordor.

Fantasy has been defined as "the literature of the impossible" [6; 4], as "the polar opposite of reality" [13; 14], and as "imaginative fiction containing supernatural or impossible elements" [9; 3]. Accordingly, literary scholars F. Mendlesohn and E. James rightly observe that "the most obvious construction of fantasy in literature and art is the presence of the impossible and the inexplicable" [11; 3].

Some researchers seek to classify all literature of the unusual into a single category of the fantastic, "creating a very large pile composed of horror, fantasy, science fiction, the occult, weird tales" [8]. To define the fantasy genre, it seems necessary to distinguish it from other genres of fantastic literature.

Fantasy researchers argue that fantasy is a legitimate form of fiction possessing its own set of means and ends. This literature is by no means intended solely for children but also for adults, representing "a set of images searching for a form, which in time becomes, through art, a whole sub-creation having the inner consistency of reality" [12; 60]. It is a serious genre of literature that occupies an equal position among other genres.

W.R. Irwin calls for a strict distinction between "the fantastic/science fiction" and "fantasy." The fantastic is embodied in a conscious anti-reality, requiring a violation of accepted reality and nothing more. Fantasy, by contrast, involves the rhetorical construction of an internally consistent extrapolation of one or more fantastic elements [6].

In Uzbek literature science fiction, the fantastic and fantasy are regarded as one cohesive fantastic genre. In terms of translation, we distinguish fantasy as an independent specific literary trend due to its unique narrative structures and thematic focus on entirely imagined worlds. This distinction presents unique challenges in translation, as it requires careful attention to distinct tone, preserving literary concept, authors unique style, pragmatic and cultural context of fantasy works. Accurately conveying these elements is essential to ensure richness and imaginative qualities of the original texts are preserved for Uzbek readers.

In terms of the translation process, science fiction and fantasy differ according to multiple criteria. These literary forms draw on different sources: fantasy is rooted in fairy tales and myths, whereas the sources of science fiction are utopias and futuristic novels associated with technological progress. In fantasy, worlds are constructed that do not exist anywhere, while science fiction typically depicts some unknown space of the future. If higher, superhuman forces are at work in fantasy, in science fiction they are, as a rule, absent. Fantasy can treat the laws of nature as it pleases, even to the point of directly violating them. In science fiction, all miracles receive a scientific explanation; in fantasy, however, no explanation is needed, because the miracle is something self-evident. Science fiction depicts, in principle, possible future changes, discoveries, possible worlds, and civilizations existing in the galaxy, whereas fantasy depicts something manifestly impossible, at least in our world. Science fiction "seems to mimic the image of our world, but makes it stranger" [27; 119], while fantasy creates an entirely different world. The Polish writer S.Lem, for example, clearly distinguishes between fantasy and science fiction, because science fiction describes the probable, and the author is thus constrained by certain boundaries. He is forced to give an explanation for the incredible, to justify it scientifically or pseudoscientifically. The science fiction genre is more formalized than fantasy. It reflects the universe in which certain physical laws are familiar for us to operate. But in fantasy these laws do not exist, they hold elements that go beyond the limitations of the real world: "Lily Potter willingly sacrifices herself to protect Harry from Voldemort, her love creates a powerful shield of protection. This act of selflessness results in Voldemort's Killing Curse rebounding and rendering him powerless against Harry. Lily's love acts as a powerful form of magic that defies even the darkest magic" [14] – the concept that would be challenging to translate in a science fiction context, but can be more readily conveyed in the fantasy.

As has been noted, science fiction is generally more formalized, while fantasy allows for greater flexibility in worldbuilding and the treatment of natural laws. This has significant implications for the translation process, as translators must carefully navigate the unique properties of each genre. For fantasy, the focus may be on preserving the sense of wonder and magical realism, potentially through a more liberal use of borrowings, neologisms, and descriptive translations to capture the essence of fantastical concepts. In contrast, science fiction translations may require a more rigorous approach, with an emphasis on technical accuracy and scientific plausibility in order to maintain the integrity of the fictional world.

S.N. Manlove defines fantasy as literature that evokes wonder and contains a substantial and irreducible element of the supernatural with which mortal

characters or readers interact, at least partially: "fiction evoking wonder and containing a substantial and irreducible element of supernatural with which the mortal characters in the story or the readers become on at least partly familiar terms" [10; 46]. This definition builds on J.R.R. Tolkien's understanding of fantasy, who, in discussing "fairy stories," emphasizes the importance of miracle and the necessity of fantastic events in the narrative that defy rational explanation, arguing that within a fantasy text, the supernatural must remain irreducible to any rational explanation or framework [16].

Researchers agree that the fantasy world is a secondary, often parallel realm characterized by its own rules and physical laws. It may significantly differ from reality while incorporating familiar elements, featuring diverse characters, magical creatures, and phenomena. This carefully crafted, autonomous world is fundamental to fantasy literature, which is often classified as literature of escapism. According to Yu.Borev escapism in literature should be understood as "works of literature oriented toward showing an illusory artistic reality that can take the person away from difficult, hectic life, from the modern world of unfulfilled hopes and conflicts into the world of dreams and peace of mind". [20; 141]

The most important characteristic of the fantasy is considered to be the violation of the laws of our world. For example, B.Attebery defines fantasy as "any narrative in which the violation of what the author considers to be the laws of nature is an important part of the fictional world". [1; 2] Fantasy genre is a kind of game, and while playing it, one must accept all the rules and twists of this game, as B.Attebery believes. "Fantasy evokes surprise by allowing us to see the impossible, and the familiar becomes new and strange". [1; 3] Fantasy originated as a dream of a world of personal freedom. Freedom above the law, economy, moral frameworks of society, and any limitations. Fantasy appeals not to reason and logic, but to emotions and dreams, it is irrational. specific trend

Modern fantasy easily and skillfully combines mythological elements, traditions of mythology, folklore, epic story telling, legends, fairy tales and Romanticism, since fantasy authors creatively construct their composition on world culture. Fantasy has roots in ancient mythology and folklore, which were essential storytelling traditions in many cultures. These mythological and fantastical tales provided the foundation for later works of fantasy. The legend of King Arthur, formed in Great Britain, underlies most fantasy texts, which pay close attention to the mythology and medieval culture of England, Scotland, Scandinavia, Germany and many other regions of the world. For example, fantasy also draws on classical Chinese, Japanese and Korean novels and stories, in which

magic is seen as an integral part of culture. Authors such as J.R.Tolkien drew heavily from mythological sources to create their fantasy worlds, helping to establish it as a genre with distinct identity.

Myth plays a significant role in fantasy literature, serving as a foundation for creating fantastical worlds and developing magical systems. Fantasy authors often draw inspiration from various cultural mythologies, weaving elements like gods, mythical creatures, prophecies, and ancient artifacts into their narratives. [27; 136] By integrating these mythic components, authors ground their fictional worlds in a sense of ancient history and deep-rooted beliefs, enriching the culture, religion, and lore of their settings and enhancing their authenticity.

When translating fantasy texts versus myths, there are several key differences. In essence mythologies are more than just tales, they contain reflections on human condition and offer insights into mysteries of life. While they employ gods, monsters, and supernatural elements, they remain connected to reality. Mythology serves as a fundamental reference point for various cultural phenomena, with fantasy drawing heavily from these mythic traditions. The concept of the monomyth, as presented by J.Scott Campbell highlights the universal nature of mythic experiences throughout human history.[3; 74] By understanding these distinctions, translators can effectively navigate the unique challenges of each genre and ensure the core qualities of fantasy and myth are conveyed in translation process.

Folklore and epic are characterized by generalization and laconic characterization of the heroes, while the authors of modern fantasy endow the heroes of their books with individuality, which is impossible to find in folklore and medieval epic fairy tales. [32; 45] In fantasy literature, authors often draw inspiration from ideological and aesthetic elements of folkloric traditions. They incorporate these elements into their stories, creating a sense of familiarity and connection with the readers. By doing so, they draw upon collective cultural knowledge and evoke a sense of nostalgia and recognition. Epic presented in fantasy involve grand adventures and feature heroic characters. [19; 204]

The archaic type of epic includes mythical tales and legends in fantasy works. This type of ancient epic is associated with a historical-heroic epic, which is reflected in Beowulf [4; 51], the Elder Edda [7; 11], the Song of the Nibelungs [5; 335] and a number of other works. In archaic epics the supernatural and magical elements are often presented as an accepted, naturalistic part of the narrative world. The fantastical occurrences are woven seamlessly into the story, without a strong sense of them being separate from the "real" world. Translators of archaic epics must maintain this suspension of disbelief, rendering the magical events as matter-of-fact and natural, rather than as extraordinary occurrences.

The heroic epic - characteristic of fantasy teaches to distinguish good from evil, instructs how one should live, personifies ancient wisdom, includes plots and motifs taken from previous oral folk poetry, but the historical background against which the hero's fantastic deeds unfold are signs of heroic epics, which distinguish an epic poem from a folk tale.[31; 34] Heroic epics often feature protagonists that embody archetypal heroic qualities, such as bravery, honor, and loyalty. Translators should aim to capture the timeless, symbolic nature of these characters, rendering them as exemplars of cultural ideals. Fantasy narratives on the other hand, may present more psychologically complex, individualized heroes with nuanced character arcs. Translators must be adept at conveying these multi-dimensional personalities and character developments.

Fantasy literature often draws on traditions from chivalric romances, a subgenre that features elements of medieval chivalry, knighthood, and courtly love. These stories include knights, quests, castles, and magical elements, heavily influenced by medieval legends like the Arthurian tales. Chivalric romance contributes to an idealized medieval setting typical in fantasy, using a formal, elevated narrative tone that reflects its aristocratic roots. Translators must capture this courtly refinement, while fantasy texts may employ a broader range of tones, from lyrical to conversational.

The rise of fairy tales and the Romantic movement in the 18th and 19th centuries played a significant role in shaping fantasy literature. [30; 512] A prominent literary critic and translator V.L.Gopman considers "fantasy" as a type of science fiction, a literary fairy tale that allows much greater freedom than science fiction in justifying the original plot situation. Many foreign science fiction scholars classify fantasy as a free genre, the central idea of which is "a symbolic commentary on modern society". [23; 86]

As J. Sinisalo and S. Winker-Piefo note: "Firstly, a fairy tale is always an allegory. The nature of the tale is such that it is difficult to assign it to a specific time. Fairy-tale characters do not have a 'face' — they are types designated by epithets, for example 'evil queen' or 'proud princess.' If they have a name, it simply exists with the addition of an epithet: Little Red Riding Hood or Snow White. Secondly, in fantasy, characters and places have names, origins, and histories. Thirdly, folklore and folk tales have no author; for the fantasy genre, the presence of an author is an integral part of the literature. This genre is subject to copyright, which is not the case with folk tales" [24; 8].

At the same time, J.I. Vykulova defines the magical literary fairy tale as "a work of a fantastic, magical nature, representing the miraculous adventures of traditional, author-invented fairy-tale characters" [21; 12]. Moreover, fairy tales are oriented towards both adult and child audiences. J.R.R. Tolkien argued that

fairy tales are not exclusively intended for a child audience, and he considered his own works to be fairy tales. Despite this, contemporary researchers regard "The Silmarillion" and "The Lord of the Rings" as typical examples of the fantasy genre. By navigating these key differences, translators can effectively bridge the gap between fantasy literature and the rich, timeless tradition of fairy tales, preserving the unique qualities, cultural significance, and imaginative power of each form.

Modern fantasy is characterized by a mixture of literary trends; active interaction with other literary genres constantly renews and modernizes the genre, lending it diversity and allowing it not to be restricted within certain frameworks or to fall into self-repetition. Over time, fantasy has evolved and diversified, encompassing various subgenres, from high fantasy to urban fantasy, steampunk, and more [37]. The popularity of fantasy novels has become an integral part of popular culture, cementing the genre's standing as a distinct and beloved literary trend.

Fantasy has evolved and expanded, giving rise to a multitude of subgenres and becoming a significant part of modern literature and popular culture. The greatest attention was paid to their research and description by S.A.Gogoleva, T.S.Lazareva, J.Clute, C.Sambuchino and others. Having studied the classifications of fantasy genres proposed, we can distinguish the following main subgenres:

High Fantasy, also known as epic fantasy, is a subgenre distinguished by its grand settings and extraordinary characters. It occurs in a fictional "secondary world", separate from our own, with its own rules. This subgenre often features conflicts between good and evil and heroes on epic quests.

Low Fantasy also known as intrusion fantasy, where magical events disrupt an otherwise ordinary world. Unlike high fantasy, which occurs in entirely fictional realms, low fantasy focuses on realistic settings infused with fantastical elements, creating ambiguity between reality and supernatural. The term "low" refers to the reduced presence of traditional fantasy elements, not the quality of the work. [17]

Urban Fantasy is a subgenre that blends supernatural elements with contemporary city settings, allowing writers to explore classic fantasy concepts without creating entirely new worlds. It combines imaginative plots and characters within familiar environments, merging ordinary with extraordinary. Fantastical elements, such as magic and paranormal beings, may be hidden or openly integrated into society. This subgenre often draws from urban legends, fictional technologies, and established supernatural lore. Examples may include J.Butcher's "Dresden Files", J.K.Rowling's "Harry Potter" and P.Briggs "Mercy Thompson".

Sword and Sorcery is a subgenre that focuses on fast-paced, action-oriented adventures featuring skilled warriors, magic-users, and quests. [2; 230] These stories tend to be more focused on individual heroics and personal struggles rather than epic conflicts. Sword and sorcery often feature morally ambiguous characters and takes place in a world filled with danger and supernatural threats. Examples include Robert E. Howard's "Conan the Barbarian" stories and Michael Moorcock's "Elric of Melniboné" series.

Dark Fantasy explores darker themes and often incorporates elements of horror. These stories can feature morally ambiguous characters, gothic settings, and a sense of impending doom. [15; 177-179] Dark fantasy often delves into the darker aspects of human nature and may include graphic violence and unsettling imagery. Examples include George R.R. Martin's "A Song of Ice and Fire" series, "Game of Thrones" and Joe Abercrombie's "First Law" trilogy.

Historical Fantasy merges fantastical elements with real-world historical settings. It reimagines historical events and introduces magical elements into a particular time period. [22; 85-88] Historical fantasy can offer a blend of real-world history and imaginative storytelling, combining elements of both subgenres. Examples include Susanna Clarke's "Jonathan Strange and Mr. Norell" and Naomi Novik's "Temeraire" series.

Fairy Tale Fantasy traditional tales, offering new perspectives and twists while modernizing settings and expanding character development. A defining characteristic in J.R.R. Tolkien's fairy tales is the concept of "Faerie", a Secondary World rooted in mythological imagination. [34] Each story unfolds within its own unique Faerie, which is more than just a physical realm, it represents a broader, elusive concept of enchantment and wonder where the ordinary meets the magical. [34] In Faerie, the laws of nature can be altered, and extraordinary beings thrive. Notable examples include Marissa Meyer's "Lunar Chronicles" and Gregory Maguire's "Wicked".

Studying the subgenres of fantasy E.N. Kovtun identified several effects that are achieved through use of the imaginary:

- The effect of extraordinariness is achieved by presenting readers with elements and events that deviate from the norms and expectations of the real world. This captivates readers attention and stimulates their imagination as they encounter fantastical creatures, magical powers, and extraordinary realms;
- The effect of sharpening and accumulating meaning stems from the ability of fantasy literature to delve into the essence of the phenomena it explores. By presenting these phenomena in imaginative and metaphorical ways, fantasy allows readers to extract deeper meanings and insights. It provides

a unique perspective on social, moral, and philosophical issues, often by symbolically representing them through fantastical elements and situations. The effect of abstract realization is closely tied to the visual nature of fantasy. By presenting complex concepts and problems through vivid and tangible imagery, fantasy can make abstract ideas more accessible and comprehensible. It allows readers to engage with intricate social, moral, or philosophical dilemmas by providing tangible representations and visual metaphors.

- The effect of retrospection in fantasy is achieved by drawing connections between literary plots and timeless archetypal patterns. Fantasy narratives often incorporate elements of mythology, folklore, and ancient storytelling traditions. By evoking these archetypes and connecting contemporary stories to universal themes and symbols, fantasy literature creates a sense of depth and resonance, inviting readers to reflect on the enduring aspects of human experience. [25; 54-55]

Having analyzed various classifications of the characteristics of fantasy, we can identify fantasy as a specific literary trend on the basis of its unique narrative structures and thematic focus on entirely imagined worlds. This distinction presents particular challenges in translation, requiring careful attention to tone, literary concepts, the author's distinctive style, and the pragmatic and cultural contexts of fantasy works. By engaging readers' emotions and intellect, fantasy allows for the exploration of profound themes and should be recognized for its own subgenres and peculiarities, which set it apart from science fiction. Translating fantasy literature presents a unique set of challenges that demand a multifaceted approach from the translator. At the core of these challenges lies the need to preserve the distinctive linguistic and narrative elements that are essential to crafting a compelling fantastical world. Therefore, in the process of pre-translational analysis, the translator should identify not only the linguistic barriers that impede the adequate reconstruction of conceptual integrity in the target text, but should also proceed from the identification of the abovementioned issues in order to reveal the deeper semantics of the source text.

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