

# Ukrainian

## *Жабохряк*

В яснечір слизіли штапки,  
Кружли в деленій зелеві,  
І фрусяли на всі боки,  
І шурили кві-кві.  
«Ой сину, вкусить Жабохряк!  
Зубами-гар! А клешні-хряп!  
І Джумботгах, і Бандохап,  
Що їх бояться всяк».  
Син вертомеч узяв до рук:  
І довго шуки ворогав,  
Ліг коло дерева Тук-Тук:  
І думу думував.  
А поки він думачив дум,  
То Жабохряк з вогнем в очах,  
Здійнявши дісом ликий шум,  
Прилепетів, бурчах.  
І штурх, і штрик! І раз, і два!  
Стікає кров'ю змієгад.  
Вже в сина в торбі голова,  
І рад спішить назад.  
«Ти Жабохряка поборов?  
Радітиса пора прийшла!  
Іди цьом-цьом! Щоб був здоров.  
Тобі хвара! Ула!»:  
В яснечір слизіли штапки,  
Кружли в деленій зелеві,  
І фрусяли на всі боки,  
І шурили кві-кві.

*Галина Висоцька*

## *Тварюкан*

Темнячил. Медокряки:  
Бурулькаи як хрюк.  
Та й иноиша у ставка:  
Дзьобал йржавий крюк.  
Мій хлопик вумний, бережись:  
Лячного варюка!  
Він скажнючий, як москхайль,  
Не пляш гопака!  
Він шари-ари натягнув:  
З стіни сокиру зняв:  
І галюводу заспівав:  
До лісу покуняв.  
Під дендроліпою стоїть:  
Чекає Тварюка.  
Сокирабулаву стиска:  
Його міцна рука.  
За колихтрималась земля,  
Дригачек з дуба впав.  
То вогонепікий Тварюкан:  
Над лісом проширяв.  
Луць! Хрясь! Хлобьсь!  
От біса мать!!  
Шалена бійка йде:  
Мерзеножахий Тварюкан:  
Той голову кладе.  
Ти хлопче звіра зарубів:  
Справжнісенький козак:  
Хтонічну курву ти убив:  
Всім змеюкам на жак..  
Темнячило. Медокряки:  
Бурулькаи як хрюк.  
Та й иномиша у ставка:  
Дзьобала йржавий крюк.

*Микола Фернандес-Черв'як*

# Heroes and Villains in the Ukrainian Translations of “Jabberwocky”

*Halyna Pavlyshyn*

“Jabberwocky” has been translated into Ukrainian at least seven times. One of the most sophisticated versions is a well-known translation by Mykola Lukash (1960) published in the first Ukrainian translation of *Alice in Wonderland*<sup>1</sup>. Lukash’s translation also exists in a modified version in the beautifully illustrated *Alice*<sup>2</sup> (2001); however, Lukash’s original translation is claimed to be more masterful than the version edited by Ivan Malkovych (Kolomiyets 13). Recently, Lukash’s canonical translation has been challenged by Mariya Kolyvay (2004), Inna Koval (2004), Halyna Vysotska (2005), Tetiana Tarabukina (2008) and Mykola Fernandez-Cherviak (2013) who have offered their own translations. In addition, Serhiy Kovalchuk (2010) created a new version of “Jabberwocky” for the Ukrainian translation of Tim Burton’s *Alice in Wonderland* (2010).

The translators have made various choices for their interpretations. Some attempt to be faithful to the phonetic features of the original despite the fuzziness of meaning for the Ukrainian ear. After all, the poem is nonsense, and the meaning is supposed to be unclear. For example, the “Tumtum tree” is translated as “дерево Тумтум” [derevo Tumtum] (Tarabukina 2008) and as “дерево Там-Там” [derevo Tam-Tam] (Kolyvay 2004). Other translators decided to create neologisms by combining morphemes with strong semantic meanings, even if the phonetic similarity would suffer. For instance, the “Tumtum tree” becomes “дерево Тук-Тук” [derevo Tuk-Tuk] (Vysotska 2005) which literally means a “Nock-Nock tree” and “дерево СумДум” [derevo SumDum] (Kovalchuk 2010) which means a “Sad Thought tree”. Yet, some translators dare to play

<sup>1</sup> The first Ukrainian translation of *Alice in Wonderland* (1960) had two translators: Halyna Bushyna translated the prose text and Mykola Lukash translated the poems and edited the book.

<sup>2</sup> *Alice in Wonderland. Alice Through the Looking-Glass* (2001) was translated by Valentyn Kornienko; the poems were translated by Mykola Lukash. However, they were edited and often substantially changed by Ivan Makovych, the editor and publisher of the book.

with phonemes, morphemes, and semantic meanings to match the high aesthetic standards of the original. Mykola Lukash transforms a word “baobab” [name of a tree] into “дрéво Діодід” [“drevo Diodid”]. In Ukrainian, “baba” means “grandmother”, and “did” means “grandfather,” therefore the neologism sounds like an ironic joke enriched with beautiful assonance and alliteration. Inna Koval creates “терево” [“terevo”], the English equivalent would be “the dree,” and Mykola Fernandez-Cherviak writes “дендроліпа” [“drendolyra”] or “dendro- linden,” alluding to Ukrainian nature and mythology, where ‘lindens’ are often present.

Several translation strategies can also be seen in the naming of the characters. The greatness of the hero (“my son” with “his vorpal sword”) and monstrosity of the villains (“Jabberwock” and the “Jubjub bird”) are represented with varying intensity. The choice of names establishes a certain mood and suggests the intended audience. The two most distinct ways of representing the hero and the villains can be found in the translations by Halyna Vysotska (2005) published in the journal of translations *Всесвіт* [*Vsesvit*] and Mykola Fernandez-Cherviak (2013), published online.

Vysotska’s poem sets a playfully innocent mood targeting little children. She refers to the hero as “son” who has a “вертомеч” [“vertomech”] or “twiddle-sword.” In the scene where the Jabberwock is killed, the narrator expresses admiration by saying that this is a time to rejoice, wishing the son strong health and saying to him “kiss-kiss.” The poem uses onomatopoeia imitating the sounds of nature; many words used in Vysotska’s translation refer to animals. This connects the translation to traditional Ukrainian folktales dominated by animal characters (Nasiedkina 331). “Jabberwocky” becomes “Жабохряк” [“Zhabokhriak”] or “Frogpiggy”; he should be feared because of his “teeth” and “claws” despite his humorous name (Bohuslavska 206). The “Jubjub bird” is presented as “Джумбоптах” [“Jumboptakh”], perhaps a reference to a well-known cartoon with an elephant called Jumbo. All these elements are suitable for a bed-time family reading. The parents could play with the words to provide their children with an improvised theatrical performance, where the poem could be complemented by their intonation, cuddles and kisses. This translation empowers little children not to be afraid of monsters and to feel that they can be heroes.

The translation by Fernandez- Cherviak (2013) is aimed at an adult readership; it is a political satire written during the Ukrainian Revolution of Dignity. It seems to be an attempt to capture the myths of Maidan through the means of art (Kozak 9-10). In this interpretation, Carroll’s “my son” is transformed into “Мій хлопчик вумний” or “my cleverish boy” and “Ти хлопче” which is an equivalent of “you,

young man.” Moreover, instead of using “his vorpal sword,” the hero carries an axe. The situation with naming the Jabberwock is even curiuser here. The young man is warned to watch out for “Лячного Тварюка! Він скаженючий, як москхайль, не пляше гопака!”, which literally means “Scary Animal-an who is mad as a Muscovite and who does not dance hopak”.<sup>3</sup> Both of these descriptors have deep cultural roots linked to Ukrainian poems by Taras Shevchenko and the patriotic discourse of 2013 (Kulyk 603- 606). The word used for “Jabberwocky” is “Тварюкан” [“Tvariukan”], or “Animal- an,” which if translated back into English is an ironic twist of the Ukrainian word “Тварюка” [“Tvariuka”] with sounds like a combination of the words “animal” and “hooligan”.

The Jubjub bird is absent. The combat scene at the end of the poem conveys a political message. It says: “Ти хлопче звіра зарубів: / Справжнісенький козак: / Хтонічну курву ти убив: / Всім змеюкам на жаж”. This can be translated back into English as “You, young man, killed<sup>4</sup> the animal, / You are a real kozak<sup>5</sup> / you killed a chwonc whore: / Now, all the snakes will be scared”. The reference to folktales is evident in the mentioning of snakes: snake- people in Ukrainian folktales are the equivalents of dragons in Western European tales. It is difficult to imagine the poem being read to little children because of the word “whore”, the repetition of the verb “to kill” and the overall serious mood.

The two discussed translations, therefore, are aimed at different audiences and can serve distinct purposes. Vysotska’s translation is a playful, sweet, almost sugary poem mostly faithful to the original and suitable for bed-time family reading, whereas Mykola Fernandez-Cherviak’s interpretation sounds almost like a parody of Carroll’s nonsense. It is an ode to a mythical Ukrainian hero (kozak who kills snake-people and dances hopak) and a grim political satire aimed at adults. This brief comparison of these two translations shows how the poem keeps inspiring Ukrainian poets to introduce various audiences to the beauty, monstrosity and cleverness of “Jabberwocky.”

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<sup>3</sup> The Revolution of Dignity, also referred to as Maidan or Euromaidan, was known for thousands of rioting people dancing on the streets of Ukraine in winter; the famous joke of the time was “The one who does not jump is a Muscovite”. The dancing was important because the temperature would often fall below zero, and dancing helped people to stay warm while protesting on the street. Hopak is a Ukrainian national dance.

<sup>4</sup> Here, the verb “to kill” imitates the way of talking used by the ex-Premier Minister Mykola Azarov.

<sup>5</sup> Kozak is the Ukrainian warrior in the 16<sup>th</sup>-18<sup>th</sup> centuries.

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