

Raluca Sinu, Transilvania University of Braşov, Romania

DOI:10.17951/lsmll.2024.48.3.125-136

The Translation of Nature Terminology in Literary Texts: A Case Study

ABSTRACT

This paper investigates the way nature-related terms are rendered in literary texts, highlighting possible explanations for the translation decisions. The discussion will be illustrated with examples of terms related to wetland and to the vegetation specific for this area, extracted from the novel *Where the crawdads sing* (2018) by Delia Owens and its Romanian translation. The conclusions show that there are several reasons why the translator may opt for a less accurate rendering of nature terminology, including the translator's perception of the aim of the target text, e.g. entertainment rather than information, or the translator's (limited) knowledge of the field.

KEYWORDS

nature terminology; literary text; equivalence; wetland; vegetation

1. Introduction

This paper will focus on the place of nature terminology in the translation of literary texts. Its aim is to examine the translators' attitudes towards such elements as reflected by their treatment of these lexical items. The analysis will be based on examples extracted from the novel *Where the crawdads sing* by Delia Owens, first published in 2018. It will not discuss specific translation strategies, but rather tendencies observed in the case of several related terms selected from the novel and its Romanian translation by Bodgan Perdivară, *Acolo unde cântă racii* (2019). The paper's starting point is the assumption that in literary translation the accurate rendering of nature terminology is not a high priority, the story is more important, so the translator tends to (over)simplify the terminology.

The novel presents the story of Kya Clark, also called the Marsh Girl, who is abandoned by her family as a child, and grows up virtually alone in the swampy area south of Barkley Cove, a quiet town on the North Carolina Coast of the

Raluca Sinu, Departamentul de Lingvistică teoretică şi aplicată. Facultatea de Litere, Universitatea Transilvania din Braşov, B-dul Eroilor nr. 25, Braşov, raluca.sinu@unitbv.ro, <https://orcid.org/0009-0000-3727-6770>

United States. The action of the novel is placed in a marsh, natural setting which is at times treated as a character in the novel, because for Kya her natural surroundings are as important as the other human characters, and sometimes even more important.

As far as the structure of the paper is concerned, the second section provides some theoretical insights into the translation of nature terminology, while the third looks at the Romanian translation of examples of nature terms extracted from the above mentioned novel. The final section revisits the initial assumption, attempting to draw some possible conclusions.

2. Nature terminology in translation

Starting from Kasprzak's (2011, p. 17) opinion that "lexical items which function as terms, be it folk or scientific, behave in quite a complex fashion in translation and hence deserve attention", several observations can be made on the translation of such items in literary texts. First, nature terms help construct the imagery of the literary text, and this "imagery is closely connected with the environment the two languages and cultures have evolved in" (p. 75), i.e. the "environmental and cultural background" (p. 79) in which the nature terminology (English and Romanian in our case) are immersed. Considering the relationship between the two languages in contact, a successful translation of terms and names depends on the translator consulting credible and relevant resources (p. 28). This may place additional pressure on the literary translator, who most often is not a specialist in another professional field.

Second, it should be noted that:

terms label conceptual structures and, like grammar, can be said to be more or less conventional in a given language. Their conventionalisation involves gestalt perception and unequivocal imagery behind them. Items visualised with effort or as a batch of not quite uniform possible images are less conventional. (Kasprzak, 2011, p. 17)

This, in turn, may deter the translator from being as accurate as the author in rendering the terminological dimension of the text, prompting him/her to simplify the lexical level, by generalization or even by omission, although this may change both the style of the text and its lexical density.

Generalization can be viewed as a tendency in translation (some consider it universal), but also as a translation strategy or technique. The latter is explained as the replacement of a specific (or concrete) term by a more general (or abstract) one (Vinay & Darbelnet, 1972, p. 9). When discussing non-equivalence at the word level, Baker (2011) suggests translation by a more general word (superordinate), which can also be interpreted as a form of generalization. For Pym (2016), generalization and specification represent the ends of the same continuum, changes in degrees of generalization and specification reflect the way "the translator is

zooming in to show greater detail, or zooming out so as to grasp the basic outline” (p. 226).

When discussing simplification at the lexical level, which is of interest here, as a universal tendency in the translated text, Laviosa-Braithwaite (2001, p. 288) quotes several principles according to which it may operate, including, among others, the use of superordinate terms when there are no equivalent hyponyms in the target language, approximation of the concepts expressed in the source language text, or use of ‘common-level’ or ‘familiar’ synonyms.

As for the effects generalization can have in translation, Popovič (1974, as cited in Kubáčková, 2009, p. 45) believes that “no shift, be it generalization, specification, or even a zero shift, should be a priori qualified as negative, undesirable, or positive”, because “generalization may deprive the translation of some colour [...], but specification can also have a negative effect by offering an almost ready-made interpretation” (p. 45).

In view of the above, it can be concluded that almost any translation decision taken in respect to terminology can have a plausible justification, for example, to ease the reading process for the readers interested in entertainment, not in scientific accuracy (Kasprzak, 2011, p. 13).

Thus, the treatment of nature terminology in a literary text is ultimately determined by the translators’ (general and specific) knowledge and their attitude towards the target text and readers. They may be sensitive to nature terminology and want to preserve it as part of the flavour of the original text, or they may reduce the terminology in order not to distract the readers from the story. They may feel it is their task to expose readers to a different world, and use the translation “to ‘teach’ new concepts or new categorisations of concepts to representatives of a foreign culture by applying correct lexical labels” (Kasprzak, 2011, p. xvi), or they may attempt to reduce the differences considering that readers want to recognize the natural world in the text.

3. About wetlands and vegetation

As a zoologist and conservationist, Owens is very attentive to the details of the natural world depicted and, at the same time, she can describe the areas with the terminological accuracy of a professional. For the translator, however, the relevant question is how important this accuracy is in depicting the action. On the one hand, generalization flattens the imagery of the text and may affect its credibility if the readers are aware of the author’s background. On the other hand, it may facilitate the reader’s interaction with the text, especially for those who are not accustomed with the ecosystems described in the novel, and, thus, keep them focused on the story. It should be mentioned that some of the translation decisions might be motivated by the differences between the wetland landscape in North Carolina (USA) and in Romania.

We will be looking at two series of related terms: the first refers to wetland, the second refers to vegetation from this area. The sources used for information about the items and their translations include general dictionaries (paper and online) and various websites accessible to non-specialist, considering that the Romanian translator himself is not a specialist in the natural world.

3.1. Wetland

As the plot of the novel unfolds in the marsh, the author employs a series of related terms to refer to the natural landscape, namely *marsh*, *swamp*, *bog*, *mire* and *quagmire*. Before discussing their Romanian translation, it is useful to distinguish their meanings and stylistic marking. Thus, *mire* (“boggy or marshy area; dirt or mud”) is marked as literary in *Collins Dictionary* online, it is also considered more literary and figurative than the other terms by Kasprzak (2011, p. 80). It occurs only once in the novel (see Example 1a). The related term *quagmire*, defined as “a soft wet area of land that gives way under the feet; bog” (*Collins Dictionary*), is also found only once (see Example 1b). As illustrated in Example 1, both are translated in Romanian as *smârc* (see definition in Table 3 below).

Example 1a¹

EN: She'd always found the muscle and heart to pull herself from the *mire* (p. 145)

RO: Mereu găsisse tăria să se tragă din *smârc* (p. 159)

Back translation: She had always found the strength to pull herself from the mire

Example 1b

EN: She knew his favorite lagoons and paths through difficult *quagmires* (p. 354)

RO: Îi ştia lagunele favorite şi căările prin *smârcuri* greu de străbătut (p. 368)

Back translation: She knew his favorite lagoons and paths through quagmires difficult to cross

The most frequent term is *marsh* (199 occurrences), followed (at a distance) by *swamp* (37 occurrences) and *bog* (10 occurrences); their features are described in Table 1 below based on the information provided by general language dictionaries. For Kasprzak (2011, p. 80), marsh “has the lowest degree of specification”, while “swamp and bog are in all likelihood seen as concealing underwater fathomless liquid mud deposits, hence as more treacherous than marsh”. In addition, there are also two instances of *marshy* (p. 7), in Romanian *băltit* (p. 15) and *mlăştinoasă* (swampy, p. 272), and one instance of *marshland* (p. 165), translated as *ţinuturile mlăştinoase* (swampy lands, p. 179). In the case of *swamp*, the author uses *swampy areas* (p. 71), in Romanian *peticelor de*

¹ All emphases are added.

smârc (p. 83), and *swamped-out woods* (p. 321), rendered in Romanian literally as *codri mlăștinoși* (p. 335).

Table 1. Features of the terms *marsh*, *swamp* and *bog*

MARSH	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - low, wet land - low poorly drained land - covered with tall grasses, characterized by aquatic, grasslike vegetation - often treeless - located near a lake, a river, or the sea
SWAMP	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - very wet, soft land - permanently or periodically covered with water - with wild plants growing in it - usually overgrown and sometimes partly forested - characterized by growths of shrubs and trees
BOG	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - an area of land which is wet and muddy, soft ground - composed mainly of decayed vegetable matter

It is interesting to note that Owens mentions these three terms from the *Prologue*, where she attempts to make a clear distinction between *marsh* (title of Part I) and *swamp* (title of Part II). She describes *marsh* as a “space of light” (p. 3), filled with sun and life, whereas *swamp*, made up of “low-lying bogs”, is “still and dark, having swallowed the light in its muddy throat” (p. 3); it is represented as a place of decay and decomposition.

In the *Prologue*, the translator chooses to render *marsh* as *baltă*, *swamp* as *mocirlă*, and *bog* as *limbi joase de pământ* (low land patches). He preserves the same distinction *balta* vs. *mocirlă* for *marsh* vs. *swamp* in the titles of the two parts of the book, which mark the development of the story from Kya’s childhood and adolescence (Part I) to her youth, the murder charge brought against her and the ensuing trial and verdict (Part II). However, this distinction is not preserved throughout all the chapters of the novel, as indicated by the fact that, for example, the term *marsh* – which occurs in all of the chapters of the book – was translated as *baltă* 98 times, and as *mlăștină* 94 times², whereas *swamp* was translated as *mlăștină* 16 times, and as *mocirlă*, 10 times. Although *mlăștină* is not used at all in the *Prologue*, it appears to be treated as some kind of superordinate in the Romanian translation, because *marsh*, *swamp* and *bog* are all translated as *mlăștină* at least once in the novel, as illustrated in Table 2 below.

Looking at the features of the Romanian terms illustrated in Table 3 below (again based on general Romanian language dictionaries, whose definitions were translated into English), we can notice that, unlike the English terms in Table 1 above, which refer to land, *baltă* and *mocirlă* are described as bodies of water, whereas *mlăștină* and *smârc* refer to land covered by water or mud. Also, *mocirlă* and *mlăștină* are used figuratively with similar meanings, *baltă* has no figurative meaning recorded in the dictionary, but it has a certain pragmatic load deriving

² For a quantitative and qualitative analysis of the translation of *marsh*, see Sinu (2024).

from its use in various idiomatic expressions³, while *smârc* is used in fairy tales, so some of its connotations might be transferred by users to its denotative meaning.

Table 2. Translation variants for the terms *marsh*, *swamp*, *bog*, *mire* and *quagmire*

English term	Romanian translations				
marsh	baltă	mlaștină	zone inundate (flooded areas)	pajiști inundate (flooded meadows)	zonă mlaștinoasă (swampy area)
swamp	mocirlă	mlaștină	smârc	baltă	Swamp Guinea
bog	smârc	mlaștină	sărătură (salty land/ mud)	limbile (joase) de pământ (low patches of land)	teren (inundat și) nedestelenit (virgin land)
mire	smârc	-	-	-	-
quagmire	smârc	-	-	-	-

Table 3. Features of the Romanian terms *mlaștină*, *baltă*, *mocirlă*, *smârc* (see *dexonline*)

MLAȘTINĂ	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - natural land depression, which collects the water from precipitations, floods or the underground water which cannot be drained - on whose bottom mud accumulates facilitating the growth of reed and other aquatic plants <p>Also used figuratively: <i>corrupt/vitiated social environment</i></p>
BALTĂ	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - permanent still water, with its own sources and from overflowing nearby streams or rivers - usually not very deep and with rich aquatic vegetation <p>Used in several idiomatic expressions.</p>
MOCIRLĂ	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - still water (of small size) resulting from rain, floods, etc. - full of slime, mud; slimy, muddy place <p>Also used figuratively: moral decay, corruption, environment of moral decay</p>
SMÂRC	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - swampy area, covered in vegetation, where spring water cannot flow away - (in fairy tales) faraway and dangerous land where the sea has its source or when sea water flows

It is also worth mentioning that the translator seems to have taken into consideration the distinction made by the author in the Prologue between *marsh*, on the one hand, and *swamp* and *bog*, on the other, because *smârc* is never used to translate *marsh*. However, the translations of the three English terms overlap when they are rendered as *mlaștină*, and in three distinct cases *swamp* is translated as *baltă* (see Example 2), which seems to contradict the author's comments in the Prologue.

³ E.g. *A rămâne* (sau *a sta*, *a zăcea*) *baltă* = to languish, to come to a halt. *A lăsa baltă* (ceva) = to abandon someone or something. *A da cu bâta în baltă* = to spoil something or offend someone. *Are balta pește* = There is plenty of fish in the sea.

Example 2a

EN: Where's yo' hat, swamp rat? (p. 30)

RO: La popa la poartă, șobolan de baltă! (p. 39)

Back translation: [the first part is the beginning of the children's rhyme in Romanian, literally] *At the gate of the priest's house*, here followed by *marsh rat*, instead of the usual Romanian rhyme.

Example 2b

EN: Through the swamp to the Swamp Guinea (p. 51)

RO: prin bălți până la Swamp Guinea (p. 61)

Back translation: through marshes up to Swamp Guinea

Example 2c

EN: As likely as snow fallin' in the swamp (p. 69)

RO: Mai degrabă o să ningă în baltă (p. 80)

Back translation: More likely there will snow on the marsh.

In Example 2a the decision is motivated by the translator's attempt to recreate the rhyme in the original, using Romanian material and preserving the word *rat* rendered accurately as *șobolan*. The three syllables in the word *mlaștină* would have made it impossible to preserve the rhyme. However, in Examples 2b and 2c, there is no apparent reason to translate *swamp* as *baltă* instead of *mlaștină*.

Mocirlă is only used to translate *swamp*, although it is listed as an equivalent for all the three terms under discussion in two of the largest general English-Romanian dictionaries available. However, in the case of *swamp*, *mocirlă* occurs as a translation for the adjective *swampy*, as illustrated in Table 4 below.

Table 4. Equivalents listed in general English-Romanian dictionaries

Term	Levițchi and Bantaș (2004)	Academia Română. Dicționar Englez-Român
marsh	ținut sau pământ mlaștinos; mocirlă, mlaștină	1. teren mlaștinos; mlaștină, mocirlă, baltă, brahnă. 2. Atr. Mlaștinos, cu mlaștini
swamp	mlaștină, baltă; băltoacă, smârc	mlaștină, baltă
swampy	mlaștinos, mocirlos	mlaștinos, mocirlos
bog	mlaștină, mocirlă	mlaștină, mocirlă, băltoacă

The other translation variants listed in Table 2 above were not discussed because they occur very rarely and they are very general, e.g. *flooded areas*, *flooded meadows*, *virgin land*, etc.

3.2. Wetland vegetation

This section looks at the translation of different types of vegetation which occur in the novel. Only five of the terms in this series will be examined, i.e. *grass*,

brambles, reeds, weeds and *palmetto(s)*, as illustrated in Table 5 below, although more can be found in the text.

Table 5. Translation variants for the terms *grass, weeds, reeds, brambles*, and *palmetto(s)*

English terms	Romanian translations				
grass	iarbă	buruieni			
cord grass	stufăriș	ierburi			
saw grass	păpuriș	ierburi/ iarbă înaltă		bălării	
eelgrass	tufe de iarbă				
salt grass	ierburile de apă sărată				
swamp grass	buruieni din smârc				
marsh grasses	ierburile din baltă				
wild grasses	buruieni				
tall grass	iarbă înaltă	plaur			
blade grass	buruieni				
weeds	bălării	buruieni			
seaweed(s)	alge	ierburi de mare			
sour weed	măcriș				
duckweed	mătasea-broaștei				
reeds	păpuriș	stufăriș		stuf	
brambles	tufișuri	bălării	rugi de mure	desiș	tufe
palmetto(s)	palmieri pitici	palmieri-evantai		palmieri	

The word *grass* occurs 52 times in the novel (plus three times as the adjective *grassy*) either with modifiers (e.g. *swamp grass, marsh grass, wild grass, tall grass, blade grass, green grass*) or without them, but also as part of the names of different species of grass (spelt as one word or two words⁴). In the case of the latter category, Table 6 below offers possible translations for the Romanian terms, mostly based on the Latin names of the family and species. It partially validates the data illustrated in Table 5, which show that the most frequent Romanian equivalents employed are *iarbă* (grass) and *buruieni* (weeds), both generic terms for various plants belonging to the family *Gramineae* (now known as *Poaceae*), plants which are not (at least usually) cultivated, while the former represent a source of food for animals.

Only two specific terms occur in translation, namely *păpuriș* and *stufăriș*, referring to groups of the plants *papură* and *stuf*. The Latin name of the families to which they belong appears to indicate that they are, in fact, types of reeds, i.e.

⁴ For example, *cordgrass* and *cord grass*, the latter is the spelling encountered in the novel. Also, *sawgrass* and *saw grass*, with the latter occurring in the text.

papură (*Typha*) – cat tail (*Typha latifolia*), reed mace (*Typha angustifolia*); *stuf* (*Phragmites*) – reed (*Phragmites communis*), which does not reflect the genus/family to which the original terms belong. In fact, *cord grass*, *eelgrass* and *salt grass* can be translated as *iarbă*, while for *saw grass* several sources suggest the translation *ceapraz*⁵. The name of the plant is not very well known, which might explain why the translator opted for two Romanian terms more familiar to the audience, although they are not faithful renderings of the original.

Table 6. Species of grass and their Romanian translation

Term	Romanian translation
cord grass (genus <i>Spartina</i>)	iarbă, plante din genul <i>Spartina</i>
saw grass (<i>Cladium jamaicense</i>)	ceapraz (<i>Cladium jamaicense</i>)
Eelgrass (genus <i>Zostera</i> , esp <i>Z. marina</i> , family <i>Zosteraceae</i>)	<i>Zostera marina</i> , iarbă de mare
salt grass (genus <i>Distichlis</i>)	iarbă sărată de pe malul mării, iarbă sărată interioară și iarbă sărată deșertului (<i>Distichlis</i>)

The same translation solutions are employed in the case of *grass* with generic modifiers, e.g. *swamp*, *marsh*, *tall*, *wild*, *blade*, the first two show the origin *iarbă din* (grass from), then *iarbă înaltă* (tall grass), and *buruieni* (uncultivated/wild grass). It should also be mentioned that the combinations *bend of grass* and *grassy bend* are rendered as *plaur* (a compact aquatic formation, dominated by reed, which floats at the surface of the water, cf. dextonline), although *bend* is also defined as “the curved part of a river” (*Collins Dictionary*), so it could be linked to the bank of a river, rather than to floating islands of vegetation.

The situation is the same for the noun *weed* (10 occurrences). When used with its general meaning, i.e. wild plant that grows uncultivated, it is translated as *bălării* or *buruieni*, both of which grow uncultivated, but the former is found on uncultivated land, whereas the latter grows in crops or gardens. Less generic, *seaweed*⁶ refers to a number of marine algae, *duckweed* (genus *Lemna*) are “small, free-floating aquatic perennials that combine to form a green ‘carpet’ on the surface of the water”⁷, while *sour weed* (*Rumex acetosella*⁸) is a particular species of perennial weeds⁹. For *seaweed* the translator alternates between *alge* and *ierburi*

⁵ <https://www.proz.com/kudoz/english-to-romanian/botany/4862525-saw-grass.html> (retrieved on February 1, 2024)

⁶ <https://oceanservice.noaa.gov/facts/seaweed.html> (retrieved on February 1, 2024)

⁷ <https://www.rhs.org.uk/weeds/duckweed> (retrieved on February 1, 2024)

⁸ <https://www.planetayurveda.com/sheeps-sorrel-rumex-acetosella/> (retrieved on February 1, 2024)

⁹ https://www.inaturalist.org/guide_taxa/619269 (retrieved on February 1, 2024)

de mare, which are also generic. *Duckweed*¹⁰ was rendered (quite inaccurately from a terminological perspective) as *mătasea-broaștei* (*Spirogyra*), although the genus *Lemna* is made up of species called *lintiță* in Romanian, for examples *lintiță de apă* (*Lemna minor*). In the case of *sour weed*, the translation is more accurate because *măcriș* (*Rumex acetosa*) belongs to the same family.

Unlike *weeds*, which may be related to the water or not, *reeds* (9 occurrences) are “tall grasses of the genus *Phragmites*, esp *P. communis*, that grow in swamps and shallow water and have jointed hollow stalks” (*Collins Dictionary*). The translator employed two terms discussed previously, i.e. *păpuriș* and *stufăriș*, referring to groups of the plants *papură* and *stuf*. The Latin name shows that *reeds* correspond in fact only to *stuf* (*Phragmites*). However, *păpuriș* occurs only twice as a translation solution for *reeds*.

Returning to the land, the noun *brambles* (genus *Rubus*¹¹), which occurs 12 times, exhibits the most variation in translation with five different solutions (see Table 5 above) displaying very different degrees of specificity. The most specific equivalent is *rugi de mure* (*Rubus spp*), literally “bushes of blackberries”, used twice. The other four variants are equally general, but they stress different aspects, thus *bălării* (uncultivated plants) renders the fact that the brambles in question are wild, while *desiș* (bush), *tufișuri* (bushes, shrubs) and *tufe* (underbush) make reference to the shape and thickness of brambles. A possible explanation for the translator’s preference for generality might be the fact that the fruit of the brambles is never mentioned, so the plant is treated just like *grass*. It should be mentioned that *desiș* derived from *des* (thick) is employed to translate the combination “thick brambles”.

The last example is *palmetto* (17 occurrences), the only plant which is not specific to Romania. It covers a species of the palm family¹². If *brambles* had the highest degree of variation in translation, *palmetto* is at the other extreme, as all the translation solutions include the word *palmier* (palm tree), i.e. *palmier evantai* (*Chamaerops humilis*¹³) in five instances, and *palmier pitic* (*Chamaedorea*¹⁴) in six cases.

4. Conclusions

The examples analysed above show that an accurate rendering of nature terminology is not achieved every time. As the natural setting is always present in the story, it cannot be overlooked, however, the terms are not translated precisely, for example, from the point of view of their family or species when it comes to vegetation.

¹⁰ <https://www.frontiersin.org/articles/10.3389/fsufs.2019.00117/full> (retrieved on February 1, 2024)

¹¹ <https://gardenerspath.com/plants/fruit/brambles/> (retrieved on February 1, 2024)

¹² <https://www.picturethisai.com/wiki/Arecaceae.html> (retrieved on February 1, 2024)

¹³ <https://www.flowertime.ro/palmier-evantai-1055.html> (retrieved on February 1, 2024)

¹⁴ <https://www.horticultorul.ro/flori-de-apartament-gradina/chamaedorea-sau-palmierul-pitic/> (retrieved on February 1, 2024)

The translator's approach to terms referring to wetland involves a lot of variation, the terms are translated into Romanian using different equivalents, and, at the same time, one and the same equivalent is used for several English terms. Sometimes it is difficult to understand the reasons behind this variation, since they are not related to the meaning of the terms. In the case of vegetation, the translator opted most often for generalization, with a few exceptions where the specific (and correct) name of the plant was used, e.g. *sour weed* rendered as *măcriș*, or *brambles* as *rugi de mure*. There is also the tendency to use general equivalents which are more familiar to the audience, e.g. *păpușiș* and *stufăriș* denoting vegetation that grows almost on or near every body of water.

As stated earlier, this attitude may be explained by the translator's desire not to distract the reader from the story, although in this case the story is very closely connected to the natural environment in which it takes place, as the main character spends her life in the marsh, and the murder she is accused of takes place in the marsh. Kasprzak (2011) also quotes the translator's insufficient knowledge as a possible reason for generalization, but, as shown above, clarifications concerning the English and Romanian terminology can be obtained from general language dictionaries (monolingual and bilingual) or from a wide range of available websites dealing with nature, natural remedies or horticulture. This would indicate that the translator did not consider accuracy as a priority in rendering nature terminology, despite the author's professional background.

It should also be mentioned that the wetland-related terms discussed here are not used symbolically in the novel, with the exception of *marsh* and *swamp*, and to a certain extent *bog*, which the author defines in the Prologue through the opposition light vs. darkness (see 3.1 above). In fact, the highest lexical variation is recorded for these terms, which seems to indicate that the translator was aware of their symbolism and tried to preserve it in each situation, by sacrificing consistency in favour of using different lexical solutions, even when those solutions involved simplification or generalization.

To conclude, the aim of the analysis was to show how translators may cope with nature terminology in literary texts and the reasons behind their decisions. The case study presented here seems to indicate that generalization and simplification are considered appropriate solutions in dealing with nature-related terms, and that terminological accuracy is not a priority, at least not always, in rendering the natural landscape in fictional texts, despite the potential loss of information.

References

- Academia Română. Dicționar englez-român* (2004). Univers Enciclopedic.
 Baker, M. (2011). *In Other Words. A Coursebook on Translation* (2nd ed.). Routledge.
Collins Dictionary. <https://www.collinsdictionary.com/dictionary/english/>
 Dexonline. <https://dexonline.ro/>

- Kasprzak, W. (2011). *Translating Nature Terminology*. Cambridge Scholars Publishing.
- Kubáčková, J. (2009). *Keeping Czech in Check: A Corpus-based Study of Generalization in Translation*. *SKASE Journal of Translation and Interpretation*, 4(1), 33–51. http://www.skase.sk/Volumes/JTI04/pdf_doc/03.pdf
- Laviosa-Braithwaite, S. (2001) Translation Universals. In M. Baker (Ed.), *Routledge Encyclopedia of Translation Studies* (pp. 288–291). Routledge.
- Levițchi, L., & Bantaș, A. (2004). *Dicționar englez-român*. Editura Teora.
- Owens, D. (2018). *Where the Crawdads Sing*. Corsair.
- Owens, D. (2019). *Acolo unde cântă racii* (B. Perdivară, Trans.). Pandora M.
- Pym, A. (2016) *Translation Solutions for Many Languages. Histories of a Flawed Dream*. Bloomsbury Academic.
- Sinu, R. (2024). “Lexical Variation in the Romanian Translation of *Where the Crawdads Sing* by Delia Owens”. In M. Burada, O. Tatu, & R. Sinu (Eds.), *Perspectives on Language Research* (pp. 148–162). Cambridge Scholars Publishing.
- Vinay, J. P., & Darbelnet, J. (1972). *Stylistique comparée du français et de l’anglais*. Marcel Didier.
- Levițchi, L. & Bantaș, A. (2004). *Dicționar englez-român*. Bucharest: Editura Teora.

