DIRECT AND INDIRECT TRANSLATION STRATEGIES IN "DICK WHITTINGTON AND HIS CAT"



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Abstract

In the research, I analyze the direct and indirect translation strategies used in rendering phraseological units from the English folkt ale "Dick Whittington and his cat" into Romanian. The present analysis is grounded in the translation procedures formulated by Jean-Paul Vinay and Jean Darbelnet in their work "Stylistique comparée du français et de l'anglais" / "Comparative Stylistics of French and English" (1958/1995). These procedures are commonly grouped into direct strategies and indirect strategies. The conclusions will verify whether indirect strategies are prevalent in the English–Romanian translation due to the typological distance between English (a Germanic language) and Romanian (a Romance language).

Keywords: *phraseological units, folktales, translation, direct and indirect translation strategies*

1. Introduction

This paper is an attempt to present some of the procedures recommended in the specialized literature and apply them to the translation of phraseological units that can be found in the folktale *Dick Whittington and his cat*.

The tale was selected primarily due to its abundance of phraseological units, which were extracted sequentially, following their order of appearance in the text. These units were identified from both a semantic and pragmatic perspective, based on the classification outlined below. The taxonomy adopted — considered the most suitable for the aims of this research — integrates idioms found in the established classification proposed by Eckhard Roos.

Although the selected classification will be briefly described, the phraseological units themselves will not be categorized by type. Instead, they will be treated as independent analytical units, since the focus of this study lies not in their typology, but in the *translation strategies* employed to render them in Romanian. Particular attention is given to the use of *direct* (e.g., literal translation, borrowing) and *indirect* strategies (e.g., modulation, equivalence, transposition), as defined in contemporary translation theory.

The final conclusions will assess the validity of the working hypothesis, namely that *indirect translation strategies are more frequently employed* when translating from English into Romanian, due to the linguistic and cultural differences arising from the fact that these languages belong to distinct language families.

2. Phraseological units

The classification of phraseological units proposed comprises elements of Eckhard Roos (2001, p. 51) taxonomy and serves very well the purpose of the research in the sense that it allows a wide variety of idioms to be considered.

1. Social formulae are the idioms which fulfil phatic functions in communication (e.g. *see you later*, *take care*); these social formulae play an essential role in maintaining politeness in everyday communication as they often follow established conventions;

2. Gambits are idiomatic expressions used to structure discourse and facilitate communication. They convey specific intentions or attitudes. (e.g. *to sum it up*, *I see what you mean*) and serve as conversational tools to structure dialogue, convey intentions, and enhance the flow of communication. They are essential for effective and engaging conversations;

3. Expressive formulae are idiomatic expressions used to convey strong emotions, surprise, frustration, or emphasis (e. g. *No way*, *Oh boy*). These expressive formulae are valuable for conveying emotions and reactions in everyday conversation. They add color and emphasis to language and help communicate feelings and attitudes effectively.

3. Translation Strategies

Given the numerous complexities involved in identifying, understanding, and interpreting idiomatic expressions, idioms constitute a major challenge—and therefore a crucial area of study—for trainee translators. To address these difficulties, translators often rely on a range of procedures, including both direct and indirect translation strategies. Viewing translation as a process of transfer between language systems and focusing on units below the sentence level, Jean-Paul Vinay and Jean Darbelnet, in their seminal work "Stylistique comparée du français et de l'anglais" (1958), later translated into English as "Comparative Stylistics of French and English" (1995), outline a comprehensive model of translation procedures developed for the French-English pair, yet applicable across other language combinations.

In what follows, the direct and oblique (indirect) procedures proposed by these two Canadian linguists, as applied to the phraseological units in the corpus, will be discussed briefly.

3.1. Direct translation strategies

Generally, as outlined by Vinay and Darbelnet (1995:31–35), translators operate within two overarching methodological approaches: direct (literal) translation and oblique (indirect) translation. These two modes represent a continuum between closely adhering to the source language structure and adapting more freely to the target language norms.

In the categorization that follows, the first three procedures fall under the umbrella of direct translation strategies, which preserve a close correspondence between source and target languages:

Procedure 1: Borrowing

Borrowing is the most straightforward form of translation, where a word or expression is transferred unchanged from the source language (SL) to the target language (TL). For example, *sushi* (from Japanese) or *croissant* (from French) are integrated directly into other languages without modification. This method reflects minimal linguistic adaptation, functioning as a form of lexical importation.

Procedure 2: Calque

A calque is a special type of borrowing in which the structure or meaning of a foreign expression is retained, but its individual elements are translated literally into the TL. For instance, the English greeting "Compliments of the Season!" becomes "Compliments de la saison!" in French (Vinay and Darbelnet, 1995, p. 32).

Procedure 3: Literal Translation

This strategy entails a word-for-word rendering of the SL into the TL, maintaining grammatical correctness and idiomatic acceptability within the target language. It is typically used when there is a high degree of structural and semantic equivalence between the two languages, allowing for a faithful transmission of both form and content.

3.2. Indirect translation strategies

There may be instances where certain stylistic nuances cannot be directly translated into the target language due to structural or metalinguistic disparities, potentially leading to alterations in syntax or vocabulary. In such cases, more sophisticated techniques, known as oblique (or indirect) translation methods, may need to be employed.

Procedure 4: Transposition

The technique known as transposition entails substituting one part of speech for another while preserving the overall meaning of the communication.

Apart from serving as a distinct translation method, transposition can also be utilized within a single language.

For example, Vinay and Darbelnet note that "Il a annoncé qu'il reviendrait" [Rom. *A anunțat că se va reîntoarce*] can be reformulated by replacing a subordinate clause with a noun phrase: "Il a annoncé son retour" [*Și-a anunțat reîntoarcerea*] (Vinay & Darbelnet, 1995, p. 36).

Procedure 5: Modulation

Modulation involves altering the structure of the message through a shift in perspective. Such an adjustment is deemed necessary when a direct or literal translation results in a grammatically correct sentence that nevertheless sounds unnatural or awkward in the target language.

A common example of fixed modulation is the translation of "The time when..." into "Le moment où..." [Momentul în care...] (Vinay & Darbelnet, 1995, p. 37).

Procedure 6: Equivalence

Occasionally, two texts can depict the same scenario employing entirely distinct stylistic and structural approaches. In these instances, we encounter a method that yields texts of equivalent significance.

Vinay and Darbelnet illustrate a classic instance of equivalence by discussing the spontaneous cry of an amateur who accidentally hits their finger with a hammer: in Romanian, the exclamation might be "Au!", whereas in English it would be "Ouch!" (Vinay & Darbelnet, 1995, p. 38).

Procedure 7: Adaptation

Adaptation is employed when the situation referenced in the source text is unfamiliar or non-existent in the culture of the target language. In such cases, the translator must create an analogous scenario that elicits a comparable response from the target audience. Consequently, adaptation is regarded as a particular form of equivalence—specifically, situational equivalence.

This strategy is frequently used in the translation of idiomatic expressions or culturally specific references.

Example: The French children's book title "Le Petit Chaperon Rouge" becomes "Little Red Riding Hood" in English. Although the two names differ linguistically, the adaptation preserves the cultural archetype of the character within each tradition.

4. Translation strategies in "Dick Whittington and his cat"

In the following section, I examine the translation strategies applied to the phraseological units identified within the corpus derived from the tale *Dick Whittington and His Cat*. This analysis focuses on how culturally embedded expressions, idioms, collocations, and other fixed phrases have been rendered in the target language, with particular attention to the use of direct

and oblique translation procedures. Special consideration is given to instances where structural, cultural, or semantic disparities necessitated shifts in meaning, form, or imagery.

For clarity and ease of comparison, the phraseological units and their corresponding translation strategies are presented in tabular form. This format allows for a systematic overview of the original expressions, their translated equivalents, and the specific procedures employed — such as literal translation, modulation, transposition, equivalence, adaptation, omission, or addition. The use of a table also enhances the visibility of recurring patterns, contrasts in approach, and strategic tendencies, offering a more accessible and coherent perspective on the translator's decision-making process within the narrative and cultural context of the tale.

***Pragmatic idioms* (Roos, 2001)**

1) Social formulae

No.	Source text	Target text	Direct / Indirect procedure	Translation procedure
1.	Why don't you go to work, my lad?	De ce nu munceşti băiete?	Indirect procedure	Modulation
2.	What business have you there, you lazy rogue?	Cară-te pramatie leneşă, strigă ea. Ce cauți aici pe pragul casei unui domn respectabil aş vrea să ştiu?	Indirect procedure	Equivalence
3.	Why do you lay there, my boy?	De ce stai întins aici, băiete?	Direct procedure	Literal translation
4.	Poor fellow, get up	— Bietul de tine, scoală-te să vedem ce te doare.	Indirect procedure	Modulation
5.	They all had something that they were willing to venture except poor Dick	Numai V Dick nu a apărut în fața stăpînului	Indirect procedure	Omission
6.	When poor Dick heard this	Cînd sărmanul Dick a auzit asta	Direct procedure	Literal translation
7.	Fetch your cat then, my good boy	Du-te şi adu pisica atunci V, băiete	Indirect procedure	Omission

8.	All the company laughed at Dick's odd venture; and Miss Alice, who felt pity for the poor boy, gave him some money to buy another cat.	Dick s-a urcat la mansardă, a adus sărmana pisicuță şi, cu lacrimi în ochi, a dat-o căpitanului. Toată lumea a rîs de marfa lui Dick. V Aşa s-a despărțit Dick de pisică care a doua zi a fost dusă pe corabie.	Indirect procedure	Omission
9.	Turn again, Whittington, Lord Mayor of London	Dick Whittington vino-napoi, 'napoi Primar al Londrei te vrem noi	Indirect procedure	Adaptation
10.	"Lord Mayor of London!" said he to himself.	— Primar al Londrei! a repetat Dick pentru sine.	Indirect procedure	Adaptation
11.	to be Lord Mayor of London	să ajung primar al Londrei	Indirect procedure	Adaptation
12.	Well, I will go back	Bine, mă voi întoarce	Direct procedure	Literal translation
13.	if I am to be Lord Mayor of London at last.	dacă sînt făcut să ajung primar al Londrei.	Indirect procedure	Adaptation
14.	Here they were placed, as it is the custom of the country	s-au aşezat pe pernuțe şi covoare întinse pe duşumea, căci aşa era obiceiul în acea țară	Direct procedure	Literal translation
15.	The captain jumped for joy; he remembered poor Whittington and his cat, and told the king he had a creature on board the ship that would despatch all this vermin	- În Anglia, spuse căpitanul V, avem un animal micuț pe care-l ținem în casă, special pentru a omorî şi mînca şobolanii. Se numeşte pisică.	Indirect procedure	Omission

	immediately.			
16.	the news these gentlemen have brought you	de veştile bune pe care ţi le aduc aceşti domni	Indirect procedure	Adaptation
17.	and they were attended to church by the Lord Mayor	şi că la nuntă au fost invitaţi şi Lordul Primar al Londrei	Direct procedure	Literal translation

2) Gambits

No.	Source text	Target text	Direct / Indirect procedure	Translation procedure
1.	For all this Dick Whittington was a very sharp boy	În ciuda sărăciei lui, Dick Whinttigton era un băieţel foc de isteţ	Indirect procedure	Modulation
2.	for the foolish country people at that time thought that	pentru că neştiutorii săteni credeau, pe vremea aceea, că	Indirect procedure	Modulation
3.	As soon as the waggoner heard that poor Dick had no father or mother	De îndată ce căruţaşul a aflat că Dick nu are nici mamă nici tată	Direct procedure	Literal translation
4.	Poor Dick ran till he was tired, and had quite forgot his friend the waggoner; but at last, finding it grow dark, and that every way he turned he saw nothing but dirt instead of gold, he sat down in a dark corner and cried himself to sleep.	Dar nu erau, aşa că el a cercetat mai departe, şi mai departe şi ca să nu lungim vorba vă pot spune că s-a rătăcit şi n-a mai găsit drumul înapoi la căruţă. V A venit seara şi sărmanul Dick era atît de obosit, încît s-a strecurat într-un gang şi s-a pitit pe nişte trepte şi a plîns pînă a adormit.	Indirect procedure	Omission

5.	At last a good-natured looking gentleman saw how hungry he looked	În sfîrşit, un om de treabă l-a văzut cît e de flămînd	Direct procedure	Literal translation
6.	That I would, but I do not know how to get any	Aş face-o, dar nu ştiu unde să capăt de lucru	Indirect procedure	Modulation
7.	Just at that time Mr. Fitzwarren himself came home to dinner	Tocmai în acel moment, domnul Fitzwarren în persoană se întorcea acasă.	Direct procedure	Literal translation
8.	who was finding fault and scolding him from morning to night, and besides, she was so fond of basting, that when she had no meat to baste, she would baste poor Dick's head and shoulders with a broom	Îi căuta nod în papură şi-l chelfănea de dimineaţă pînă seara şi, pe lîngă asta, îi şi mai plăcea să-1 frigă cu untură fierbinte. Cînd nu-1 opărea, îl bătea în cap şi pe spate cu mătura	Direct procedure	Literal translation
9.	At last her ill-usage of him was told to Alice, Mr. Fitzwarren's daughter, who told the cook she should be turned away if she did not treat him kinder.	V Dar Alice, fata domnului Fitzwarren, a aflat cum se poartă bucătăreasa cu băiatul şi i-a spus că dacă continuă să fie rea cu Dick va vorbi cu tatăl ei să o dea afară.	Indirect procedure	Modulation
10.	The next day he saw a girl with a cat, and asked her if she would let him have it for a penny. The girl said she would, and at the same time told him the cat was an excellent mouser.	Cum mergea el aşa pe stradă, a zărit o fetiţă ducînd în braţe o pisică neagră. — Cît ceri pe pisică? a întrebat el. — Nu vreau s-o vînd, răspunse fata. V E tare bună la prins şoareci.	Indirect procedure	Omission

11.	and in a short time he had no more trouble with the rats and mice	În curînd, pisica a alungat toți șoarecii și șobolanii și Dick nu a mai avut necazuri cu ei	Indirect procedure	Modulation
12.	Soon after this, his master had a ship ready to sail	Nu mult după aceasta, negustorul a pregătit o corabie ca să plece cu negoțul	Indirect procedure	Modulation
13.	At last poor Dick could not bear this usage any longer	În cele din urmă, Dick ajunse la capătul răbdărilor.	Direct procedure	Literal translation
14.	so he packed up his few things	Așa că și-a împachetat nimicurile pe care le adunase	Direct procedure	Literal translation
15.	He walked as far as Holloway, and there sat down on a stone, which to this day is called Whittington's Stone, and began to think to himself which road he should take as he proceeded onwards.	În curînd, a ajuns pînă la Highgate unde s-a așezat pe marginea drumului, întrebîndu-se în ce direcție s-o apuce. Toate drumurile erau la fel pentru el și nu se putea hotărî. Și apoi, deodată, în liniștea deplină a dimineții, a auzit bătînd clopote îndepărtate.	Indirect procedure	Modulation
16.	While he was thinking what he should do, the bells of Bow Church, which at that time had only six, began to ring, and he fancied their sound seemed to say to him:	Erau clopotele bisericii Bow din Cheapside V și, ascultîndu-le, lui Dick i se păru că lui i se adresează, spunîndu-i	Indirect procedure	Omission
17.	Well, I will go back, and think	Bine, mă voi întoarce și n-am să	Indirect procedure	Omission

	nothing of the cuffing and scolding of the old cook, if I am to be Lord Mayor of London at last.	mă mai gîndesc la chelfăneala pe care o primesc de la bucătăreasă, dacă sînt făcut să ajung primar al Londrei V.		
18.	The ship, with the cat on board, was a long time at sea; and was at last driven by the winds on a part of the coast of Barbary	În sfîrşit, au ajuns pe Coasta berberă	Indirect procedure	Modulation
19.	The captain wondered at this,' and asked if this vermin were not very unpleasant.	— Ce mare năpastă trebuie să fie şobolanii aceştia pentru Maiestatea Voastră, spuse căpitanul. V Totdeauna năvălesc şi vă tulbură aşa?	Indirect procedure	Omission
20.	The merchant, bustling up instantly, opened the door, and who should be seen waiting but the captain and the factor, with a cabinet of jewels, and a bill of lading, for which the captain lifted up his eyes and thanked heaven for sending him such a prosperous voyage.	Veşti bune pentru domnul Fitzwarren! a spus o voce şi cine altul intră înăuntru decît căpitanul corăbiei *Unicorn* urmat de agentul comercial care ducea o casetă plină de bijuterii şi o listă cu mărfurile de pe corabie V.	Indirect procedure	Omission
21.	They then told the story of the cat, and showed the rich present that the king and queen had sent	daruri bogate trimise de rege şi regină sărmanului Dick, în schimbul pisicii. Oricît ar fi fost negustorul de	Indirect procedure	Omission

	for her to poor Dick. As soon as the merchant heard this, he called out to his servants.	mulţumit de succesul afacerii lui era şi mai fericit de norocul lui Dick. V Se adresă pe dată unuia din servitor:		
22.	He then sent for Dick, who at the same time was scouring pots for the cook	Dick, în acel moment curăţa oalele pentru bucătăreasă şi era plin de grăsime şi funingine	Indirect procedure	Modulation
23.	he began to think they were making game of him, at the same time begging them not to play tricks	bietul Dick credea că vor să-şi bată joc de el şi şi-a rugat stăpînul să nu-şi pună mintea	Indirect procedure	Modulation
24.	Dick next asked his mistress, and then Miss Alice, to accept a part of his good fortune; but they would not, and at the same time told him they felt great joy at his good success.	Apoi, Dick a încercat să-i dea o parte din comoară domnişoarei Alice care totdeauna fusese bună cu el şi-i luase partea, dar şi ea a refuzat V.	Indirect procedure	Omission
25.	now looked upon him as fit to be her sweetheart; and the more so, no doubt, because Whittington	îl privea cu alţi ochi. Toţi şi-au dat seama că cei doi ţineau unul la celălalt V.	Indirect procedure	Omission

3) Expressive formulae

No.	Source text	Target text	Direct / Indirect procedure	Translation procedure
1.	so she called out to poor Dick: "What business have you there, you lazy rogue?...	Cară-te pramatie leneşă, strigă ea. V Ce cauţi aici pe pragul casei unui domn respectabil	Indirect procedure	Omission

		aş vrea să ştiu ?		
2.	What business have you there, you lazy rogue?	Ce cauți aici pe pragul casei unui domn respectabil aş vrea să ştiu?	Indirect procedure	Equivalence
3.	we will see how you will like a sousing of some dishwater	o să vedem noi dacă-ți place o baie cu apa de la spălat vasele	Direct procedure	Literal translation
4.	"No, indeed, sir," said Dick to him	Nu, domnule, nu, îi răspunse Dick	Indirect procedure	Modulation
5.	"No, indeed, sir," said Dick to him	Nu, domnule, nu, îi răspunse Dick	Indirect procedure	Adaptation (sir)
6.	let me see what ails you	— Bietul de tine, scoală-te să vedem ce te doare.	Indirect procedure	Modulation
7.	They all had something that they were willing to venture except poor Dick, who had neither money nor goods, and therefore could send nothing	Numai Dick nu a apărut în fața stăpînului pentru că el nu avea nimic de trimis V.	Indirect procedure	Omission
8.	For this reason he did not come into the parlour with the rest; but Miss Alice guessed what was the matter	V Observînd că el nu era acolo, Alice l-a chemat şi l-a întrebat dacă nu ar vrea şi el să trimită ceva cu această corabie	Indirect procedure	Omission
9.	but the father told her this would not do, for it must be something of his own	Tatăl ei însă i-a spus că V fiecare servitor trebuie să trimită ceva care să-i aparțină şi nu ceva oferit de o altă persoană.	Indirect procedure	Omission
10.	but the father told her this would not do, for it must be something of his own	Tatăl ei însă i-a spus că fiecare servitor trebuie să trimită ceva care să-i aparțină şi nu ceva oferit de o altă persoană.	Indirect procedure	Modulation

11.	Dick went upstairs and brought down poor puss, with tears in his eyes, and gave her to the captain; for he said he should now be kept awake again all night by the rats and mice.	Dick s-a urcat la mansardă, a adus sărmana pisicuță şi, cu lacrimi în ochi, a dat-o căpitanului. V Toată lumea a rîs de marfa lui Dick.	Indirect procedure	Omission
12.	Why, to be sure, I would put up with almost anything now, to be Lord Mayor of London	Cum să nu, sînt sigur că aş răbda orice numai ca atunci cînd voi fi cu adevărat bărbat să ajung primar al Londrei	Indirect procedure	Equivalence
13.	"Oh yes," said they, "very offensive; and the king would give half his treasure to be freed of them, for they not only destroy his dinner	- Domnule, spuse regele oftînd, fiecare masă se desfăşoară cam la fel. Înţelepţii şi doctorii pe care i-am consultat mi-au răspuns că nu este leac împotriva acestor monştri. V Aş da jumătate din averea mea celui care mă va scăpa de această năpastă.	Indirect procedure	Omission
14.	for they not only destroy his dinner, as you see, but they assault him in his chamber, and even in bed	Şi nu numai că-mi iau mîncarea din faţă, V dar mă atacă şi în cameră şi în pat	Indirect procedure	Omission
15.	"Run, run!" said the queen; "I am impatient to see the dear creature."	V — Adu pisica la palat în seara aceasta să vedem ce poate.	Indirect procedure	Omission
16.	"Run, run!" said	V — Adu pisica la	Indirect proce-	Omission

	the queen; "I am impatient to see the dear creature."	palat în seara aceasta să vedem ce poate. Dacă e în stare să facă minunile despre care ai pomenit, îți voi face o ofertă.	dure	
17.	Upon which the captain called: "Pussy, pussy, pussy!" and she came to him.	Căpitanul a chemat-o strigînd pis, pis, pis şi pisica s-a îndreptat spre el.	Indirect procedure	Modulation
18.	However, when the captain stroked the cat. and called: "Pussy, pussy," the queen also touched her and cried, "Putty, putty," for she had not learned English. He then put her down on the queen's lap	După ce a alintat-o căpitanul, a alintat-o V şi regina care şi-a pus-o în poale	Indirect procedure	Omission
19	the queen also touched her and cried, "Putty, putty,"	După ce a alintat-o căpitanul, a alintat-o şi regina V care şi-a pus-o în poale unde pisica a început să se joace	Indirect procedure	Omission
20.	when somebody came tap, tap, at the door	cînd auzi deodată o bătaie la uşă	Indirect procedure	Equivalence
21.	"Who's there?" says Mr. Fitzwarren.	Cine-i acolo? a întrebat domnul Fitzwarren.	Direct procedure	Literal translation
22.	"I come to bring you good news of your ship Unicorn."	Veşti bune! Veşti bune pentru domnul Fitzwarren!	Indirect procedure	Modulation
23.	"Ye fetch him-— we will tell him of the same	Trimite imediat după domnul Whittington,	Indirect procedure	Modulation

		spuse el.		
24.	Pray call him Mr. Whittington by name."	Trimite imediat după domnul Whittington, spuse el.	Indirect procedure	Omission
25.	for when some of the servants said so great a treasure was too much for him, he answered, "God forbid I should deprive him of the value of a single penny." He then sent for Dick,	Oricît ar fi fost negustorul de mulţumit de succesul afacerii lui era şi mai fericit de norocul lui Dick. V Se adresă pe dată unuia din servitori:	Indirect procedure	Omission
26.	at the same time begging them not to play tricks with a poor simple boy, but to let him go down again, if they pleased, to his work.	şi şi-a rugat stăpînul să nu-şi pună mintea cu un netot ca el şi să-l lase să se ducă V să-şi termine treaba.	Indirect procedure	Omission
27.	"Indeed, Mr. Whittington," said the merchant,	Nimeni nu-şi rîde de dumneata, domnule Whittington, spuse negustorul.	Indirect procedure	Equivalence
28.	and I wish you may long enjoy them!	Îţi doresc din tot sufletul să te bucuri de ele	Indirect procedure	Addition
29.	and I wish you may long enjoy them!	Îţi doresc din tot sufletul să te bucuri de ele V	Indirect procedure	Omission
30.	and I wish you may long enjoy them!	Îţi doresc din tot sufletul să te bucuri de ele	Direct procedure	Literal translation
31.	Poor Dick hardly knew how to behave himself for joy.	Sărmanul Dick nu prea ştia cum să-şi exprime bucuria.	Direct procedure	Literal translation
32.	"No, no," answered Mr. Fitzwarren	Nu, nu, spuse domnul Fitzwarren	Direct procedure	Literal translation

33.	now looked upon him as fit to be her sweetheart; and the more so, no doubt, because Whittington was now always thinking	îl privea cu alți ochi. V Toți şi-au dat seama că cei doi ţineau unul la celălalt. Totdeauna Dick îi oferise domnişoarei Alice daruri	Indirect procedure	Omission

5. Conclusions

The presence of a significant number of *Expressive Formulae* (33), *Gambits* (25), and *Social Formulae* (17) in *Dick Whittington and his cat* suggests several important features regarding its pragmatic richness, dialogic nature, and socio-cultural depth. Here's what can be said: The tale demonstrates a strong presence of pragmatic phraseological units, which reflects a language rich in social interaction. These units function not only to convey meaning, but also to manage relationships, express attitudes, and maintain conversational flow.

Furthermore, the high number of expressive formulae implies that characters in the tale frequently express emotions, attitudes, or judgments, such as surprise, admiration, disapproval, or empathy. This enhances character development and reader engagement, making the tale more vivid and emotionally resonant.

The use of gambits suggests the tale has a strongly dialogic structure. This points to naturalistic speech, storytelling through interaction, and possibly oral tradition origins. Last but not least, social formulae indicate that the tale includes routine interactions grounded in social norms. This contributes to the cultural authenticity of the narrative and offers insight into the social etiquette of the setting.

Related to the translation strategies used, it can be noticed that out of seventy-five pragmatic idioms, only in fifteen cases, direct strategies were used, while the remaining sixty required oblique (or indirect) translation techniques such as modulation, transposition, equivalence, adaptation, or omission.

This notable imbalance between direct and oblique strategies strongly supports the working hypothesis: that pragmatic idioms, particularly those embedded in culturally or contextually marked discourse, often resist direct translation. Their meaning typically depends on pragmatic function, socioocultural norms, and conversational context, which cannot be conveyed through a word-for-word approach.

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