Affinal Kinship Terminology in the Corpus
of Bulgarian and Ukrainian Parallel Texts

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Abstract. In this study we examine the occurrences and correspondences of terms for affinal kinship in a Bulgarian–Ukrainian parallel corpus of fiction. All instances of the terms selected for study, matching and non-matching, were located and counted, and the frequencies compared. Some of the asymmetries found may have roots in culture and history whilst others reflect diverse features of language and the practice of literary translation.

Keywords: affinal kinship terms, text corpus, corpus linguistics, parallel texts, Bulgarian language, Ukrainian language, cultural heritage.

1   Introduction

Terms for non-consanguineal (affinal) kinship are an object of no lesser research interest than terms for consanguineal kinship, which we investigated at an earlier stage on the material of a corpus of parallel Bulgarian and Ukrainian texts [1], and constitute a logical continuation of that work.

In the *Dictionary of the Ukrainian Language* the first definition of the entry *свояцтво* 'affinity' is based on the contrast between affinity and consanguinity: 'family by marriage rather than blood' [2 V. 9: 101]. Similarly, 'The system of affinity terms expresses the relations between individuals who are connected, not by blood, but as a result of a man and woman's marriage' [3: 103]. In the second dictionary definition this contrast is softened and blood kin are brought up too: 'relationship resulting from marriage: relations between the husband and the wife's blood kin, between the wife and the husband's blood kin, as well as between the kin of the spouses'. Thus the term 'affinity' can cover relations resulting from marriage, but also from already present consanguinity, that is, marital-blood relations. Marital kinship effectively involves entire families (as sets of blood kin), unlike spiritual kinship, which is restricted to particular individuals.

The history of the study of kinship terminology in Bulgarian and Ukrainian was discussed in [1].

In Bulgaria the study of kinship terms goes back to the mid-20th century. The results of several disjoint projects provided material for an unpublished volume of the

Bulgarian Ethnographical Atlas (1985) and an encyclopaedic dictionary of family relations and their names in Bulgarian dialects [4].

The system of family relationships of Bulgarian immigrants in southern Ukraine in the late 19th–early 20th century was explored in detail by Mykola Derzhavin in the context of a comprehensive study of the language, culture and life of this minority.[1]

The most comprehensive sources on Ukrainian kinship terminology are Andriy Buryachok's monograph *Terms of Consanguinity and Affinity in Ukrainian* [3] as well as the *Dictionary of the Ukrainian Language* [2] and *Etymological Dictionary of the Ukrainian Language* [6].

2 The Composition of the Corpus

The bilingual corpus consists of Bulgarian and Ukrainian parallel texts available in electronic libraries or obtained by us from paper editions through scanning, optical character recognition and error correction by *ad hoc* software tools and by hand. For this reason the corpus is composed of fictional works, mostly of novels, which dominate in such sources.

Because original and translated parallel texts for Ukrainian and Bulgarian are hard to come by, especially in online-accessible computer-readable form, we also use Bulgarian and Ukrainian literary translations from other languages as corpus material. Thus CUB has several sectors, all roughly equal in size, each of which covers parallel Bulgarian and Ukrainian texts with the same original language. The current version of CUB includes ten sectors, each measuring approximately 800,000 words on the Bulgarian and 700,000 words on the Ukrainian side, with eight original languages, namely Bulgarian, English, French, German, Italian, Polish, Russian and Ukrainian. There are two sectors with Russian and two with English originals. This amounts to an approximate total of 15 million words in the entire corpus.

3 The Experiment

The lexical items studied in this experiment were terms for affinal kinship, that is, relations resulting from marriage (marital affinity) or from related social contracts (spiritual affinity). The following groups are included:

1) parents-in-law (and their relationship to one another);

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[1] The terminology is described briefly but thoroughly, with regional variations. One's attention is drawn by the variety of terms for people of the same level of kinship but of different age, e.g., the husbands' sisters (*калина* for the elder, *ябалка* for the younger), the husband's brothers (*лале* for one who's older than the husband, *брайно*, *драгинко*, *савелько* for those who are younger) in Melitopol district, the daughters-in-law (*буля* for the elder, *булка* for the younger) in Kherson district. The term may also depend on the age of ego: in Berdyansk district and Bessarabia province the daughter-in-law is *буля* to the younger and *булка* to the older members of the family. (The suffix *-к(а)* is affectionate in Bulgarian but disparaging in Ukrainian ears; how it was understood in this case is an open question.) Another peculiarity is the use of the words *дяду* and *баба* for a man's parents-in-law by Bulgarian colonists. For the rest, the principles of the naming and partly the terminology itself are similar to the Ukrainian ones [2: 100].

2) sons-in-law and brothers-in-law;
3) daughters-in-law and sisters-in-law;
4) stepparents, stepsiblings (and half-siblings), stepchildren;
5) godparents and godchildren.

All instances of these terms in the corpus, matching and non-matching, were located and counted.

In most cases a word has other meanings in addition to the terminological one, which need not be primary, but may be a semantic extension and even depend on the form of the word. To take the word *сват* as an example, the meaning 'a spouse's parent or relative in relation to the other spouse's parents or relatives' is secondary, it refers to the vaguely defined word *родич* 'relative', and only the plural form *свати* is interpreted as 'the parents of one member of a married couple'. The word has two more meanings, namely 'a person who approaches a desired marriage partner on behalf of a would-be spouse or their family; a matchmaker at a marriage rite' and the derived metaphorical 'a person who actively proposes someone for a position or urges someone to engage in some work'. The last two meanings are obviously of no interest to our investigation.

The large number of terminological meanings that some words have also complicates the situation. Such are Ukrainian *швагер* '1) wife's brother; 2) sister's husband; 3) brother's husband' [2 V. 11: 426] and *швагрова* '1) wife's sister; 2) husband's sister; 3) brother's wife' (ibid.). In view of the examples from texts written at different times and in different places, the marker *regional* is unexpected, especially when referring not to a particular meaning but to the whole entry.

4   Parents-in-Law

The terms for spouse's parents, as well as their correspondences, are relatively straightforward. Both languages have words for a man's father-in-law and mother-in-law and a woman's father-in-law and mother-in-law, these being respectively *тъст*, *тъща*, *свекър*, *свекърва* in Bulgarian and *тесть*, *теща* (dimin. *тещенька*), *свекор*, *свекруха* in Ukrainian.

In the Bulgarian texts in the corpus *свекър* appears 3 times, *свекърва* 7 times, and *тъст* and *тъща* 19 times each, every time with the matching Ukrainian term in the parallel text. In the Ukrainian times there are further 2 occurrences of *свекор* and *тесть* and 3 of *теща* with no matches on the Bulgarian side (the relevant person is mentioned by name, by a complex description, or not at all).[2] The greater frequency with which a man's (compared to a woman's) parents-in-law are mentioned reflects the content of most texts, most protagonists of whom are men. There is also a slight hint of the Ukrainian preference (noted in [1]) for the use of kinship terms.

For denoting the relationships between a couple's parents-in-law, the two languages have the terms *сват* 'son/daughter's father-in-law = son/daughter-in-law's father' and Bulgarian *сватя*, Ukrainian *сваха* 'son/daughter's mother-in-law = son/daughter-in-law's mother'. The masculine word appears 14 times on both sides

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[2] In one place in the Bulgarian translation of Mykhailo Kotsiubynsky's *Fata Morgana* we find *зет* 'son-in-law' for Ukrainian *тесть* 'father-in-law', an obvious translator's oversight.

and 2 times in the Ukrainian only; this excludes 5 occurrences on which the word, in the plural number, has its other meaning, 'matchmaker' (member of a delegation sent by the prospective bridegroom or his family to the bride's). The feminine word has only 3 occurrences in the corpus.

5 Sons and Brothers-in-Law

In Bulgarian a man is *зет* to his wife's parents and siblings, *девер* to his brother's wife, *шурей* to his sister's husband, and *баджанак* to his wife's sister's husband. The first three words are Slavic in origin, and have etymological and semantic counterparts in Ukrainian (*зять*, *дівер* and *шуряк or шурин* respectively), but that language also uses the Germanic loan *швагер (швагро)*, which may denote any brother-in-law relation. The fourth Bulgarian word is a loan from Turkish. Its best counterpart in Ukrainian is *свояк*, which also has the meanings 'wife's brother' and 'kinsman, associate'.

In the following table the Bulgarian terms label the rows, the Ukrainian ones the columns, and every cell contains the number of times when the two terms match (or, where the row or column is labelled by a dash, when the other term is used with no corresponding kinship term of this set in the parallel text).

	——	*дівер*	*шуряк*	*швагер*	*зять*	*дамат*	*приймак*	*свояк*
——		3	3		16	3	1	9
девер	9	**18**	1					1
шурей	1	1	**10**	2				1
зет	8	1	4	7	**125**	5	16	1
дамат						**6**		
баджанак								**3**

The labels of the table's rows and columns include two words that weren't mentioned above: these are *дамат*, from Turkish *damat* 'son-in-law', occasionally used in Pavlo Zahrebelny's *Roksolana* (though absent from interpretative dictionaries [2, 6, 7]) and its translation as a title of the sultan's son-in-law, and Ukrainian *приймак* (and its cognates) 'foster-child; son-in-law living with his wife's family', which corresponds, when used in the second sense, to Bulgarian *заврян зет* or *приведен зет*.

The correspondences are mostly regular, though there is some confusion, mostly (but not exclusively) in translations from Western European languages, where a single term such as English *brother-in-law* covers a wide range of relations.

6 Daughters and Sisters-in-Law

In Bulgarian a woman is *снаха* to her husband's parents and siblings, *зълва* to her brother's wife, *балдъза* to her sister's husband, and *етърва* to her husband's brother's wife. The fourth doesn't appear in the corpus at all. The Ukrainian counterparts of the others are *невістка*, *зовиця* and *своячка* (rarely *своякиня*), respectively; in addition, there is the suffix *-ова* 'wife of …', which can be used for

building kinship terms, but is only employed once in the corpus, in the word *синова* 'son's wife = daughter-in-law', which is labelled as regional in [2].[3]

	——	зовиця	своячка, своякиня	невістка	синова
——				1	13
зълва		**2**		3	
балдъза	1		**4**		
снаха	10		2	**46**	**1**

All five irregular correspondences are from translations from Western European languages, where the systems of affinal kinship terms are less differentiated than in Bulgarian and Ukrainian.

The total number of occurrences tallied in this table is but a third of the number in the preceding one, which again reflects the sources' prevailing interest in men.

7 Stepparents, Stepsiblings, Stepchildren

There are 18 occurrences of Ukrainian *вітчим* 'stepfather' in the corpus; in the Bulgarian parallel texts the corresponding word is *пастрок* on 13 occasions, *отчов* on 1 and *втори баща* lit. 'second father' on 3, and on 1 occasion the person is not referred to in any way.

Stepmothers are brought up 24 times, and named *мачуха* in Ukrainian on all occasions but 1, and *мащеха* in Bulgarian on all occasions but 3 (on 2 of those the expression is *втора майка* lit. 'second mother'). The choice of wording can have a bearing on the connotation, because the words for 'stepmother' tend to have a negative ring, whereas 'second mother' is more positive because it highlights 'mother'; this is, however, not always taken into account. In example (1) the Bulgarian translator has found 'stepmother' too harsh; in example (2) the Ukrainian translator has found 'mother' too mild.

(1) Bg: *— За вас тя беше почти като <u>втора майка</u>, нали? — пита ме мадам. ¶ — Спокойно можем да кажем — като <u>майка</u>.*

Uk: *— Для вас вона була майже як <u>мачуха</u>, правда? — питає мене мадам. ¶ — Ще більше: майже як <u>мати</u>.*

De: *«Für euch war sie ja fast wie eine <u>Stiefmutter</u>, was?» fragt mich die Madame. ¶ «Sagen wir ruhig eine Art <u>Mutter</u>.»*

"'She was a kind of <u>stepmother</u> to you, wasn't she?" the Madame asks. ¶ "Say rather a kind of <u>mother</u>.'"

(Erich Maria Remarque, *Der schwarze Obelisk* 'The Black Obelisk')

(2) Bg: *Бог нареди така, че <u>жестоката майка</u> войната извика дивия атаман от тая пустош, в която като вълк беше отнесъл плячката си [...]*

Uk: *Бог зробив так, що війна, <u>лиха мачуха</u>, відкликала дикого отамана з цієї пустки, в яку він, наче вовк, потяг свою здобич.*

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[3] Dictionaries also list *братова (братиха)* 'brother's wife' and *швагрова* 'wife's sister; husband's sister; brother's wife'. The variety of affinity terms used by Bulgarian colonists that Derzhavin presents [5] seems to have become obsolete.

Pl: *Bóg to sprawił, że wojna, <u>sroga matka</u>, odwołała dzikiego atamana z tych pustkowi, do których łup swój jak wilk uniósł.*

'God arranged that War, <u>the stern mother</u>, called away the wild ataman from the fastnesses to which like a wolf he had carried his plunder.'

(Henrik Senkiewicz, *Ogniem i mieczem* 'With Fire and Sword')

For stepsiblings and half-siblings both languages use the regular terms with the modifiers *доведен* 'brought', *заварен* 'found',[4] *несъщ*[5] 'not genuine', *природѐн* 'further born' (in Bulgarian), *зведений* 'settled', *однокровний*, *єдинокровний* 'of the same blood = father', *єдиноутробний*, *одноутробний* [7] 'of the same womb = mother' (in Ukrainian); occasionally, however, translators omit any marking:

(3) Bg: *Промяната в мис Феърли се отразяваше на <u>сестра ѝ</u>.*
Uk: *Зміна, що сталася в міс Ферлі, відгукнулася в душі її <u>сестри</u>.*
En: *The change in Miss Fairlie was reflected in her <u>half-sister</u>.*

(Willie Collins, *The Woman in White*)

In the corpus a total of 23 mentions of step- and half-siblings were found that are labelled as such in at least one of the two languages. On one occasion the word half-sister, correctly rendered in Bulgarian as *природена сестра*, is mistranslated into Ukrainian as *двоюрідна сестра* 'cousin'. The rest are summarised in the table, which shows how *зведений* 'step-' is sometimes used in lieu of *єдиноутробний* 'half-'.

	——	*зведений*	*однокровний*
——		4	
доведен		**5**	
заварен		**1**	
природѐн	1	2	
несъщ		3	5
полу-			**1**

For stepchildren the same modifiers can be used. In addition, in Bulgarian the contractions *доведеник*, *завареник* 'stepson' and *доведеница*, *завареница* 'stepdaughter' exist, but are rarely employed; and Ukrainian has the terms *пасерб* or *пасинок* 'stepson' and *пасербиця* or *падчерка*/*падчірка* 'stepdaughter'. In the corpus there are 4 mentions of stepsons and 4 of stepdaughters.

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[4] The first word reflects the point of view: if the wife moves house after the marriage (which is usually the case), her children are referred to as brought along and the husband's, as found in place. The difference is often ignored when talking of half-siblings: in the translation of Bolesław Prus' *Pharaoh*, the same person (a son of the protagonist's father and a different mother) is referred to as *доведен брат* on one occasion and *заварен брат* on another.

[5] Missing in dictionaries but present in Nevyana Rozeva's translations of *Great Expectations* by Charles Dickens and *The Forsyte Saga* by John Galsworthy.

	——	зведений	пасерб	пасинок		пасербиця	падчерка, падчірка
——					——	1	
заварен			1	1	заварен	1	2
доведен	1	1			доведен		

8   Godparents and Godchildren

Godparent relationships are a complex concept area and one characterised by much intercultural variation.

The main terms, *кум* (m.) and *кума* (f.), are shared by the two languages, and their traditional meaning is 'godparent of one's child(ren)'. They may or may not denote the converse also, 'parent of one's godchild(ren)'. In contemporary Bulgarian the prevailing meaning is 'official witness at one's wedding' (irrespective of the possible baptism of children), and the husband and wife are *кумец* and *кумица* (morphological diminutives of the same words) of their *кум* and *кума*. Finally, the words are often extended, especially in Ukrainian, to mean simply 'friend, neighbour, gossip'; in this they are similar to Italian *compare* and *comare*.

Of the 68 occurrences of Ukrainian *кум* in the corpus, 53 correspond to the same word in Bulgarian. The remaining 15 bear witness of the easy use of the word in colloquial Ukrainian outside its literal meaning; 11 of them are in translations from Italian (8 in *Decameron* by Giovanni Boccaccio[6] and 3 in *The Adventures of Pinocchio* by Carlo Collodi).

The Ukrainian word *кума* along with its diminutives (*кумася*, *кумонька*, *кумочка*) appears 55 times. The Bulgarian texts have *кума* 8 times, *кумица* 26 (all in the translation of *Decameron*), *кумичка* 4, *кум* 2, and other words (or no particular counterpart) 15 times, the latter again mostly in translations from Italian (*Decameron* and Alberto Moravia's *Two Women*).

Contrariwise, there are only 4 occasions on which there is *кум* (*кума*, *кумица*) in Bulgarian but no such word in Ukrainian.

Godparents proper are called *кръстник* and *кръстница* in Bulgarian, and godchildren, *кръщелник* and *кръщелница*. In Ukrainian the terms are *хрещений (батько)*, *хрещена (мати)*, *хрещеник* or *похресник*, and *хрещениця* or *похресниця*. The correspondences are straightforward, but there are three things to note. First, while the numbers of godsons and goddaughters mentioned are approximately equal (9 and 8), godfathers outnumber godmothers significantly (16 to 3). Second, there is one occurrence on which the Bulgarian text names a godparent relation and the Ukrainian the converse godchild one:

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[6] The jocular rhyming compounds *кум-недоум* 'Gaffer Shortwits', *кум-легкодум* (word coined by the Ukrainian translator Mykola Lukash) 'Gaffer Lightmind' and *кум-товстосум* 'Gaffer Moneybags' (Day 7, Novel 3) underline the stylistic nature of the term.

(4) Bg: *Нали едно момиче от тяхното село, дето Хома му е <u>кръстник</u>, учи в Киев!...* 'Doesn't a girl from their village, whose <u>godfather</u> Khoma is, study in Kyiv!'

Uk: *У Хоми в самого <u>хрещениця</u> вчиться в Києві!..* 'Khoma himself has a <u>goddaughter</u> studying in Kyiv!'

(Oles Honchar, *The Standard-Bearers*)

Third, in the Ukrainian translation of Bogomil Raynov's *Don't Make Me Laugh*, *кръстник* 'godfather' is mistranslated as *хрещеник* 'godson' three times, likely resulting from a confusion of the Bulgarian word with Russian *крестник* 'godson'.

9   Conclusions and Future Work

Terms of affinal (marital and spiritual) kinship are much more sparingly used in texts than terms of consanguineal kinship. None the less, some conclusions can be drawn that generally confirm the ones made in our earlier study [1].

As on the material of blood kinship terms, we repeatedly see how terms for male kin, or for men's kin, predominate in the texts, most of which have been written by men, for men and about men. An exception is the domain of stepparents: stepmothers are mentioned more often than stepfathers.

Also noticeable is a preference for the use of kinship (in this case affinal kinship) terms in Ukrainian, whereas Bulgarian writers and translators use proper names and other descriptions somewhat more readily.

In general the bilingual corpus does not do justice to the wealth of kinship terminology registered in dictionaries. This is a typical trait of research text corpora: historicisms, archaisms, dialecticisms are rare. At the same time the study of the corpus puts to a test the dictionary's definitions and reveals translators' neologisms, which may be prospective additions to the dictionary. Also it offers an incentive to rethink and specify dictionary annotations such as *regional* in the light of contemporary texts.

Such studies are likewise useful from the point of view of the investigation of the translator's kitchen, especially through examples of translator's false friends (occasionally involving a third language) or of confusion of different kinds of kinship (e.g., stepsiblings and half-siblings), which may attest to the loss of relevance of the corresponding distinctions at the contemporary stage of social development. And of course it is a stage for setting problems for more profound research on large monolingual corpora.

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