

Translated special literature – Heinrich Kawall and his book „Dieva radījumi pasaulē” (“God’s creatures in the World”)

Summary

The study provides an insight into the life history of a Baltic German pastor H. Kawall and illustrates his contribution into the knowledge transfer in the field of botany and during the early stages of the Latvian botanical terminology development. Mainly his work “God’s Creatures in the World” („Dieva radījumi pasaulē”, 1860), which is the Latvian translation of the book “Die Naturgeschichte für Kinder und Elementarschüler, oder erster Unterricht über das Mineralreich, Pflanzenreich und Tierreich, mit über 300 kolorierten Abbildungen” (1855), is described in the study. The study discusses translation strategy used by H. Kawall in the Latvian translation when searching for equivalents of German botanical terms and thinking about the addressee of his work. The Latvian botanical terms used in H. Kawall’s work are also analysed in relation to the contemporary botanical terminology. The research of older translations is instrumental in understanding the history of translation; the findings of the research are useful for contemporary translation practice.

Keywords: special literature, translation, special lexis, botanical terms

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Introduction

This article is published for the first time in a Latvian language in the magazine *Valoda – 2019. Valoda dažādu kultūru kontekstā*. XXIX collection of scientific papers. Daugavpils: Saule, 2019, pp. 70-75 (ed. in chief Svetlana Polkovnikova), but is published here in English with the aim to reach a wider audience. Also new insights have been added to the article in this English version. One of the first works in Latvian, which provides insight into the diversity of the animal, plant and mineral world, is the book of Heinrich Kawall, published in 1860, “God’s Creatures in the World” (*Deewa raddijumi pasaulē*). The work is translated from German and provides explanations of the most important concepts of the science of botany, zoology and mineralogy, Latvian terms are offered; the second part of the work includes a wide range of plant names and descriptions of the plants are given. Although this work also contains parts dedicated to zoology and mineralogy, this study looks more closely at the second part of the work devoted to the plant world. The aim of the study is to describe this work from the macro-structural aspect of the text, as well as to review the strategies and approaches used in translating the special lexis of botany, using the descriptive, content analysis and comparison method. The study provides an insight into Heinrich Kawall’s life, as well as the description of the models of translation of the special lexis and terms of botany provided in the “Plant Kingdom” section of the aforementioned work.

Insight into the origins of the formation of botanical terminology

Certain botanical terms, in particular plant names, have been included in works published as early as in the middle of the 17th century – in the first printed Latvian dictionary “Lettus” (1638) and its appendix “Phraseologia” (1638), written by the Baltic German linguist and pastor Georgs Mancelis (*Georg Mancelius, also Manzel*). Later in the 18th century, botanical terms are also included, for example, in Gotthard Friedrich Stender’s work published in 1774 “The Book of High Wisdom of the World and Nature” (*Augstas Gudribas Grahmata no Pasaules un Dabbas*) and “Lettisches Lexikon”.¹

In the books published in the second half of the 18th century, the names of individual plants are used in conjunction with the scientific names of the taxa. These works were mostly in German, and they were German studies. Some of these important publications in German include, for example, the work of the Baltic German August Wilhelm Hupel “Topographische Nachrichten von Lief- und Ehistland”, published in 1777,² as well as the nature description “Versuch einer Naturgeschichte von Livland” published by Jakob Benjamin Fischer in 1778.³ The second revised edition of this work written by Fischer in German also includes the names of plants and animals in Latvian alongside the German names.⁴ Whereas in the early 19th century, in 1803, the botanical manual “Botanisches Taschenbuch für Liv-, Cur- und Ehistland” was published by the botanist David Hieronymus Grindel.

Special botanical literature, i.e. the first books on the nature in Latvia, were mostly written by German authors. The articles on flora were regularly published in the German natural scientists’ journal “Correspondenzblatt des Naturforscher-Vereins zu Riga”. Of course, at this time and henceforth, botanical-related names, in particular utilitarian and decorative plant names, are mentioned in periodicals such as the list of the assortment of cereals and other goods on the market published in the newspaper “Mājas viesis”, such as *meeschi, kweeschi, sirņi, kaņepes*.⁵ Advertisements for the sales of seeds were published in newspapers in German and Russian, e.g. *Spargel – Спаржа, Anemonen – Анемоны*, for some plants their Latin names are also included such as *Löwenmaul (Antirrhinum majus) Львиное Рыло (Антиринумь)*.⁶ During this time, publications on plant cultivation and care, as well as on exotic plants are available in periodicals in German as well, such as in the newspaper in German “Düna Zeitung” — *Orchideen, Chrysanthemen*.⁷

Since a wide range of botanical special literature in German and also Russian was already available during this period, translations of these works were needed. At this time, there had been as much as several hundred translations on the subjects of nature science.⁴ The work “God’s Creatures in the World” (hereafter – DRP) published in 1860 has also been translated.

About the author of the work Heinrich Kawall

Although in the encyclopedia published in Latvia^{8,9} only one first name of Kavala is given – Johann (*Johans*), the author’s full name is Johann Heinrich Carl Kaval (in Latvian – *Johans Heinrihs Karls Kavals*). This article uses the first and last name that the author himself has indicated in the work DRP – Heinrich Kawall (in Latvian – *Heinrihs Kavals*). The dates of birth and death of Heinrich Kawall in the works published in Latvia and the German researchers’ publications also vary. According to *Baltisches Biographisches Lexikon Digital*,¹⁰ Heinrich Kawall was born in Jelgava on 3 March 1799, but died at the age of 82 on 17 January 1881 in Puze. Information provided by encyclopedias issued in Latvia shows that his birthday is 14 March 1799 and the date of death is 29 January 1881.^{8,9} It may be presumed that the dates in the encyclopedias issued in Latvia are not indicated correctly, because in the newspaper satire about Pastor Kawall in “*Libauische Zeitung*” 17 January is given as the date of his death.¹¹ Most likely, the date changes in the Latvian and German sources are related to the transition from the Julian calendar to the Gregorian calendar, which includes 11 days of adjustment.

Heinrich Kawall studied in an elementary school, county school and Jelgava Secondary School. From 1818 to 1821 he studied theology in Tērbata, but from 1821 to 1823 he was a teacher in Kurzeme (Lestene). Studied chemistry and physics with the French chemist and physicist Joseph Louis Gay-Lussac, and the chemist Louis Jacques Thénard. He loved to travel and had visited Germany, France, Austria, Lombardy and Switzerland. From 1827 to 1829 he worked as a tutor at Abava Manor in Kurzeme, but since 1935 he was a pastor in Puze. (BBLD-e)¹⁰

The Baltic German pastor devoted all his free time to exploring local nature, first of all plants, then animals and since 1860 minerals as well. He gathered a collection of 10,000 various insects as well as minerals, and later worked for the Tērbata Society of Naturalists. He was also known for promoting natural sciences for Latvians. He was the member of several societies of naturalists, in 1845 he also became the co-founder of the Riga Society of Naturalists and in 1870 was elected as an honorary member of this society. His name has been well known in Latvian literature not only because of the work “God’s Creatures in the World”. Heinrich Kawall regularly wrote articles in German, French and Latvian. His articles have been published in the aforementioned journal “*Correspondenzblatt des Naturforscher-Vereins zu Riga*”, and Heinrich Kawall’s articles devoted to natural sciences have been published in the publication “*Latviešu avīzes*” (more than 200 articles). Heinrich Kawall introduced Latvian names for all three of the natural worlds, as well as collected and published Latvian plant and animal names. He conducted a critical examination of the sections in Latvian devoted to natural sciences in the lexicon of G. F. Stender, as well as the terms of natural sciences in the translation of the Bible.^{10,12}

“God’s creatures in the World”: General characteristics and models of translation of botanical special lexis and terms

Heinrich Kawall translated the book “God’s Creatures in the World” from the work “*Die Naturgeschichte für Kinder und Elementarschüler, oder erster Unterricht über das Mineralreich, Pflanzenreich und Tierreich, mit über 300 kolorierten Abbildungen*”¹³ published in 1855 in German. Heinrich Kawall gave his book a different name than the one in German. A similar approach has been taken in other textbooks further translated from German to Latvian.⁴ The foreword of the book is the author’s (Kawall 1860:III) message to readers quoted in modern script below:

“This book originates from another one, written in German, but, dwelling on it on my own, I have given up a few words, changed the order of a few words, and added a few, as it appeared for me to encourage better understanding and contemplation, and thus I hope that this book will be good both for young people who want to learn something, and those who are already out of school, as well as those who want not only to teach themselves, but to teach others, and that the book gives you much more of what the reader can see and hear rather than the things one will perhaps never see”.

It should be noted that the author of the work Heinrich Kawall seeks to adapt the translation to the needs and understanding of Latvian readers, and in this introductory quotation he indicates that the book is primarily meant for the purpose of teaching. The author also emphasises the diversity of plants, animals and minerals described in the work, which is essential, because perhaps not everyone at that time had the opportunity to see exoticness in life.

The two works (DRP and NKE) are similar in length by the number of pages. The length of NKE without attachments (images) is 204 pages, while the length of DRP without attachments (images) is 210 pages. Part 2 of NKE “*Das Pflanzenreich*” consists of 89 pages, i.e. pages 36 to 125, while in the DRP this part consists of 80 pages: pages 38 to 118. Similarly to the NKE introductory part that contains an authors’ foreword (*Vorrede*), DRP also contains an author’s foreword titled “*Dievs palīdz!*” (*Deews palīdz!*). After the foreword, NKE has an alphabetical list on 9 pages of names (terms) used in the book, while the DRP has a table of contents called “*Kas šinī grāmatā izstāstīts*” (*Kas schi grahmatā izstahstihts*). The following structure of the two works is similar: after the introduction the main part of the book follows. DRP, the same as NKE, has 3 parts:

1. *Minerālu valsts* (Mineral Kingdom (*Das Mineralreich* (NKE)));
2. *Augu valsts* (Plant Kingdom (*Das Pflanzenreich* (NKE)));
3. *Dzīvnieki* (Animals (*Das Tierreich* (NKE))).

The names of minerals in Latvian have not been studied in depth, but this would be a topic worthy of a separate study; this special vocabulary could also be studied in Kawall’s translated book. There are also no comprehensive studies of the history of zoological terminology in Latvian, but the origins of zoological terminology could be dated back to the 18th and 19th centuries. One of the resources for zoological terms is this translated book by Kavals, the chapter *Animals*. This article will only describe the section on Plant Kingdom in more detail, as the other sections are the subject of a separate study.

Before looking at the language material, it should be noted that in DRP, just as at the end of NKE, approximately 300 lithographed and colored images on 20 pages are included; there is also a colored image on the cover of the book. DRP was issued by a German publisher from Jelgava G. A. Reiers.¹⁴ Unlike NKE, DRP has a two-page list of the latest books of the publisher and trader Reyher before the image section.

Further the examples excerpted from Part 2 of the DRP “*Augu valsts/Plant Kingdom*” and this language material have been compared in part of the examples with the corresponding source text in the work published in German (NKE). It should first be noted that in his work Heinrich Kawall did not include the definition provided in Part 2 of NKE,¹³ which explains that the science of studying plants is called botany:

Das Pflanzenreich – Diejenige Wissenschaft, welche sich das Studium der Pflanzen zur Aufgabe gemacht hat, heißt Botanik.

The definition of the concept of botany would have been a good addition to the work though, especially if the book was intended for obtaining basic knowledge of science. Here it should be mentioned that the word *botany* as a foreign word had already been interpreted before the publication of DRP, for example in the newspaper “Mājas viesis” No. 11:¹⁵

“Botanika, tas irr: ziņņa par stahdeem, augļeem, kohkeem, zahlehm, suhnahm, pekkahm”.

Perhaps Kawall thought that this foreign word would not be understood by the Latvians. However, this is the reason it should have been explained in the work. The specific lexis of botany used in Heinrich Kawall’s DRP can be divided into the following groups:

1. Morphology of plants and their parts (e.g. *sakne, sēkla, zieds*);
2. Plant inoculation (*potēšana, pumpurēšana (Oculiren), sajūgšana (Copuliren)*);
3. Plant names (*ozoli, vītoli, liepas, magonis, dzeguzes=kurpes u.c.*);
4. Other special lexis (*krūmi, zāles*).

When viewing the source language material (NKE) and Heinrich Kawall’s translation (DRP), several models of translation of the special lexis of botany come into sight.

1. The author uses a comparison with “kā” (*how*) in the translation of botanical special lexis units, for example, the German *die handförmige Knolle* (NKE 1855:37) has been translated into Latvian as follows: *sakne kā bumbulaina rohka* (Kawall 1860:39) or *die sogenannte abgebissene Wurzel* (NKE 1855:37) as – *sakne, kas izskattahs kā nokohdums*. (Kawall 1860:38)
2. In DRP, Heinrich Kawall uses a descriptive translation after the proposed Latvian botanical terms or botanical names with the construction “nosauc par”, “sauc par” (“*is named*”, “*is called*”), for example, (...) *dascheem ne redz ne kahdus pihschļu=kahtiņus, citeem atkal pihschļu=celiņu ne redz – un tad zeedus sauc par nepilnigeem*. (Kawall 1860:46); *ķirbišši, ko sauc ari par Turku=gurķeem*. (Kawall 1860:73)
3. When introducing a new term into the work, an additional explanation written behind a colon is often added: *Sajuhggschana ir schi: gohda=zariņu un mezcha=kohku tā saween* (...) (Kawall 1860:52);
4. To demonstrate a link between words, the hyphen “=” which was common during this time is used in two-word combinations, for example, *greezuma=pohteschana, barribas=augi, indewes=augi* (Kawall 1860:52–54). Very often, the author has used the hyphen to translate the German compounds from NKE, for example, *Giftpflanzen – indewes=augi, Arzneipflanzen – zahļu=stahdi, Zwiebelgewächse – sihpolu= augi, Obstbäume – augļu=kohki*. Nowadays, parts of these words in Latvian are compounds, for example, *sīpolaugi, augļkoki*.
5. When offering several variants of Latvian translations and terms, constructions with “jeb” are used: e.g. *pee “gaiļa=pehdahm” jeb gaiļa=peescheem, zeedu=lappas jeb zeedu=krohnis* (Kawall 1860:44), *ohzola=auglis jeb zihle* (Kawall 1860:50), *lauka=puppas jeb cuhku=puppas* (Kawall 1860:61). “Jeb” has also been used in the translation when providing reference of foreign words and words of Latvian origin: *skorzonere jeb melnsaknes* (Kawall 1860:69).

6. Behind the proposed translation, a different explanatory word is given in parentheses in Latvian, which can be a direct transfer from German, such as *lupte* from the German *Luft*: (...) *tam waijaga ka siltums, gaiss (lupte)* (...) (Kawall 1860:50); the synonymous name of the plant may also be given in brackets: *dahrza pupas (Turku puppas)* (Kawall 1860:60).

7. Behind the proposed Latvian translation, the author also provides the German equivalent or explanation in German in brackets: *pumpureschanu (Oculiren), sajuhgschana (Copuliren)* (Kawall 1860:52). Sometimes a reference to the language is given next to the German equivalent, the abbreviation “vāc.”, e.g. *skohstiņi (wāhc. Spargel)* (Kawall 1860:70), *mescha kohki (wāhc. “Wildlinge”)* (Kawall 1860:78).

8. The parts of the Latvian name of the plant are connected by an apostrophe after the first part of the compound, where the component of the first part is without an ending, e.g. *sarkan'kahpohsti jeb ziļ'kahpohsti, balt'kahpohsti jeb galwu=kahpohsti* (Kawall 1860:62), *akmiņ'ohzoli* (Kawall 1860:100). Nowadays, some of these words are compounds – *akmeņozoli, galviņkāposti*, but some are two-word groups – *baltie kāposti, sarkanie kāposti*.

The examples described above provide an insight into the translation techniques used by Heinrich Kawall, which is to a certain extent in line with the traditions of translation of that time, such as the so-called free report translation, explanations in brackets, and the use of foreign words. However, it should be noted once again that Kawall is a Baltic German pastor, thus the translation techniques he has used are to be connected with the source text in German. The translation shows the influence of the source language, which is also the pastor’s native (German) language, on the practice of translation of special lexis and terms and term creation (e. g. loanwords, direct transfers). Word links where the hyphen is used are mostly compounds nowadays, for example, *gaiļpieši (gaiļa=peeschi), ziedlapas (zeedu=lappas)*. Analysing the impact of contact languages on Latvian and the appearance of loanwords in Latvian,¹⁶ J. Baldunčiks has already collected several examples of the early use of loanwords. The findings in this study correspond to the models already compiled by him, such as the structures where the foreign name or explanation is enclosed in brackets behind the translation.

Conclusion

It should be emphasised that this article provides only an insight into the work of special literature, which is one of the first translations of a manual in the field of botany from German into Latvian. The description of the translated special literature and the examination of the translation of special lexis units presented in this study are necessary because it provides some complement to the idea of the development of the translation models of special lexis (including terms) in the Latvian language at a certain time frame. The conclusions of the study can be linked and compared with the results of translations of other works in the respective period. Since this study is only a small insight into one of the translated works of special literature, this study should certainly be expanded by conducting a detailed study of certain terms used in the work and the impact of the Latvian terminology used in the work on future texts of the botanical field. Further research should be devoted to the analysis of Kaval’s translation in terms of mineralogy and zoology.

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Conflicts of interest

The author declares that there is no conflict of interest.

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