

TRANSLATION AS A FORM OF CULTURAL IDENTITY AND CHALLENGES OF TRANSLATING LITERARY TEXT INTO KARAKALPAK LANGUAGE

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Annotation: This paper explores the cultural challenges faced in translating literary texts into the Karakalpak language, a Turkic language spoken primarily in Uzbekistan. It examines the complexities of cultural nuances, idiomatic expressions, and the preservation of cultural identity through translation. The study highlights specific examples and offers insights into how translators can navigate these challenges to achieve fidelity to both the source text and the target culture.

Key words: Translators' identity; culture; translation of literary texts, Karakalpak language.

Translation is not merely a linguistic exercise; it is an intricate process that involves navigating cultural landscapes. The Karakalpak language, with its unique linguistic features and cultural heritage, presents specific challenges when translating literary works. This paper aims to investigate the cultural barriers encountered in this process and the strategies employed by translators to overcome them.

The Karakalpak Language and Culture

The Karakalpak language is part of the Kipchak branch of the Turkic languages and is spoken by approximately 500,000 people, primarily in Karakalpakstan, an autonomous republic within Uzbekistan. The rich oral traditions, folklore, and historical narratives form an integral part of Karakalpak culture. Understanding these cultural elements is crucial for translators as they work to convey not just words but meanings deeply rooted in cultural contexts.

Cultural Nuances in Literary Translation

Literary texts often contain idiomatic expressions, cultural references, and social norms that may not have direct equivalents in the target language. For instance, proverbs and sayings that resonate with a specific culture may lose their essence when translated literally.

Example: The Uzbek proverb “Yurakdan yurakga yo'l bor” (There is a path from heart to heart) may need to be adapted in translation to convey its emotional weight effectively in Karakalpak.

Studies of Translation Challenges

To illustrate the cultural challenges in translating literary texts into Karakalpak, this section will analyze specific examples:

Example from “Surginde” translated from A.Chexov into Karakalpak language “Слово воробей вылетит не поймашь” and its equivalent “Aylilg’an so’z – atilg’an o’q”

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Translation involves various methods and strategies that translators can employ to convey meaning from one language to another. Here are some of the most commonly recognized methods of translation:

Word-for-Word Translation

This method translates each word in the source text directly into the target language, often maintaining the original structure. It’s useful for technical or literal texts but can lead to awkward or nonsensical phrases in more complex texts.

Literal Translation

Similar to word-for-word translation, but allows for some adjustments in grammar and syntax to make the text more coherent in the target language. It aims to preserve the original meaning while making the text readable.

Faithful Translation

This approach seeks to convey the precise meaning of the source text while maintaining its stylistic elements. The translator remains loyal to the original text’s context and intent, often used in literary translations.

Semantic Translation

Focuses on the meaning and context of the original text rather than a strict adherence to the form. It aims for an equivalent effect on the target audience, balancing fidelity to the source and readability.

Communicative Translation

Prioritizes the reader’s understanding and response over strict fidelity to the source text. This method adapts idioms, cultural references, and expressions to resonate with the target audience.

Idiomatic Translation

Involves translating phrases and expressions in a way that captures their idiomatic meanings rather than translating them literally. This method is often employed in literary and colloquial texts.

Free Translation

A more liberal approach that does not adhere closely to the original text. The translator focuses on conveying the overall message or theme rather than specific wording, often used for creative works.

Transcreation

A method where the translator recreates the original message in a new cultural context, often used in marketing and advertising. It involves significant adaptation to ensure the message resonates with the target audience.

Adaptation

This method modifies elements of the source text to suit the cultural context of the target audience. It may involve changing references, names, or settings to make them more relevant or relatable.

Back Translation

Involves translating a text back into the original language after it has been translated into another language. This method is often used for verification and quality assurance in translation processes.

Machine Translation

Utilizes software and algorithms to translate text automatically. While machine translation has improved significantly with advancements in AI, it may still lack nuance and cultural sensitivity compared to human translators.

Translation, as a mean of communication between different languages and societies, is inevitably undertaken in a cultural environment. Translator, as the key performer of the translation process, has a significant influence on his translation. A translator didn't out of nowhere: he or she is a member of a certain nation; he or she lives in a particular country in a particular period of time; he or she is a product of a specific culture, and all the factors such as race, gender, class, education, ideological features and soon have an impact on the translation itself.

Three translators mentioned in this paper all enjoy a reputation of high quality, and they have different cultural identities. In this paper, through comparative analysis of their translated versions and their cultural identity, the author explored how a translator's cultural identity influence his translation.

4. Case Studies of Translation Challenges

To illustrate the cultural challenges in translating literary texts into Karakalpak, this section will analyze specific examples:

Example 1: Folklore and Mythology

Translating traditional folklore requires an understanding of the cultural significance behind stories. For instance, tales featuring mythical creatures or

historical figures may carry meanings that are not universally understood. A translator might choose to provide footnotes or explanations to bridge cultural gaps.

Example 2: Modern Literature

Contemporary works may include references to technology, urban life, or global issues that differ significantly from the rural context of many Karakalpak speakers. Adapting such references without losing the author's voice poses a significant challenge.

5. Strategies for Overcoming Cultural Challenges

Translators can employ various strategies to address cultural challenges:

Cultural Adaptation: Adjusting references and idioms to align with the target culture while maintaining the original meaning.

Footnotes and Glossaries: Providing additional information for readers unfamiliar with certain cultural references can enhance understanding.

Collaboration with Cultural Experts: Engaging with local scholars or cultural practitioners can help ensure that translations are culturally sensitive and accurate.

The Definition of Cultural Identity

Culture is a system of shared beliefs, values, customs, behaviors, and artifacts that the members of a society use to cope with their world and with one another, and that are transmitted from generation to generation through learning. This definition includes not only patterns of behavior but also patterns of thought (shared meanings that the members of a society attach to various phenomena, natural and intellectual, including religion and ideologies), artifacts (tools, pottery, houses, machines, works of art), and the culturally transmitted skills and techniques used to make the artifacts. This is a commonly accepted definition. It includes most of the major aspects of culture. And we should also clear what is identity.

Identity is to define oneself against what one is not: to be English is to know yourself in relation to the French, and the hot-blooded Mediterranean, and the passionate traumatized Russian soul. You go round the entire globe: when you know what everybody else is, then you are what they are not. The essential concept about identity is the recognition of some characters or features that function as the yardstick of belongingness or exclusion, that “define” a person or a group. Therefore, identity is always involved in comparing with “the other”. When one's personal identity integrates with the culture he's from or the cultures he experiences, one's cultural identity is under formation.

As Hamers and Blanc succinctly put it “the integration of the complex configuration that is culture into the individual's personality constitutes his cultural

identity.” It is obvious that identity is in the dynamic process of constructing. The construction of the translator's cultural identity is mostly based on his or her cultural ideological, tropism of value, and culture blood, concerned with personal and collective attitudes, from native, national and global perspectives. Relationship between.

Cultural Identity and Translation

Relationship between Cultural Identity and Translation

Due to cultural differences the audience which translation is intended for usually has different expectations and understanding of the texts from the audience who read the originals, and the status of the texts is usually different in source and target cultures. In current translation studies, the signification of culture has drawn more and more attention. Culture has become an undetectable part of translation studies. Translation is not just a practice of conversion of languages, but rather a exchange between cultures. A translator doesn't come out of nowhere, he or she has a primary identity: he or she is a member of a certain nation; he or she lives in a particular country in a particular period of time; he or she has certain religious belief, and all the factors such as race, gender, class, education, ideological features have an impact on the translation.

They all leave a detectable trace in the translation work. Different historical time has different norms and standards on translation, which are greatly determined by target readers and the purpose of translation, therefore, translators, in order to produce satisfactory translations suiting his time and culture, would adopt certain translating strategies. Besides, the translator's native culture and nation affect his choices too. Therefore, the study of the translator will reveal to us what's usually hidden but secretly influences the translation.

The translation of literary texts into the Karakalpak language presents unique cultural challenges that require careful consideration and innovative strategies. By recognizing the importance of cultural context and employing adaptive techniques, translators can facilitate a deeper understanding of literary works while preserving the essence of both source and target cultures. Future research should focus on developing guidelines for translators working with minority languages, ensuring that cultural integrity is upheld throughout the translation process.

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