



CULTURAL FACTORS IN TRANSLATION

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Abstract: *This article examines the linguistic, cultural, and cognitive dimensions of translation, emphasizing their crucial role in shaping the translation process and the final translated product. The discussion demonstrates that successful translation requires an integrated approach that takes into account not only language structures but also cultural contexts and mental processes involved in understanding and producing meaning. It explores major theoretical frameworks, including linguistic, functional, cultural, and communicative approaches, and discusses how these perspectives address key issues such as equivalence, fidelity, meaning, and context.*

Key words: *Culture, linguistic skills, target language, etiquette, religion , beliefs , compatibility.*

Culture profoundly influences translation. A text is embedded in the cultural environment of its origin, and some elements may not have direct equivalents in the target culture.

The differences in history, geographical location, local customs, religious beliefs, etc due to translation, there are some problems that prevent people from understanding each other correctly. Thus, translation is not only the translator's linguistic skills, but also to be aware of relevant cultures. In this sense, translation is not translation only words, sentences or articles from the source language into the target language, but also means movement between cultures.

We know that every nation has its own culture and it appears in different forms in nations. First, if we give a definition of the word culture, this concept can describe the customs of a certain people or nation, as a reflection of traditions, norms of behavior, belief systems and values.

Culture is important in determining specific community or a specific group of people. Cultures, especially popular culture, which leads to the expansion of ethnic customs and traditions or religious values increase the need for translation.

The cultural characteristics of each region are different, translators need to focus not only on how to convey the same meaning, but also they should try to show the difference between the two cultures. Translations serve to spread information, knowledge and ideas.

Key considerations include:

Culture-bound terms: Proper names, idioms, proverbs, and humor often require adaptation. For example, translating a proverb literally may confuse the target audience.

Social and historical context: Awareness of historical events, social norms, and political systems is crucial for accurate interpretation.

Intercultural mediation: Translators act as cultural mediators, adapting texts so they are understandable and culturally appropriate for the target audience.

Untranslatability: Some concepts may have no direct equivalent. Translators must find creative solutions such as explanation, substitution, or omission while preserving the overall meaning and effect.

Cultural factors in translation involve adapting non-linguistic elements like idioms, social norms, humor, religious references, and customs to fit the target audience, ensuring meaning isn't lost; for example, translating an English idiom like "break a leg" to its equivalent in another language, or adapting a formal Japanese greeting involving bowing to a culture using handshakes, to convey the correct level of respect and social interaction

Literal translations of phrases like “kick the bucket” (to die) or “it's raining cats and dogs” make no sense; translators find culturally relevant equivalents, like a Spanish saying "de perdidos al río" (for a penny, for a pound) for a desperate situation.

“Break a leg” means good luck, used for performers. “Spill the beans” means to reveal a secret, like letting confidential info out. Both are common English idioms where the literal meaning differs from the figurative, used to add color to language, with origins in superstition and ancient practices, respectively, according to some theories.

Break a leg (Good Luck)

Meaning: To wish someone success, especially before a performance or important event, stemming from theater superstitions.

Example: “You're going to be great in the play tonight-break a leg!”.

Spill the beans (Reveal a Secret)

Meaning: To disclose private or secret information, possibly by accident.

Social Etiquette & Norms: In some cultures, directly saying “no” is impolite, so translators must soften refusals. A Japanese greeting's bow needs adaptation when translating to a handshake culture.

Japanese Bowing: A bow signifies respect, which differs from a handshake in Western cultures.

Japanese bowing, or ojigi, is a nuanced gesture of respect, humility, and gratitude, differing from Western handshakes by using physical inclination to show social hierarchy and emotion, with deeper, longer bows for formality/apology (e.g., 30-45 degrees) and shallower nods for casual greetings (around 15 degrees), reflecting cultural values of harmony over physical contact.

Key Aspects of Japanese Bowing (Ojigi)

Meaning: It's a silent language conveying respect, thanks, apology, or greeting, valuing humility and social harmony.

Nuance: The depth and duration of the bow communicate the level of respect or sincerity, not just a simple “hello”.

Depth Levels:

Eshaku (15°): Casual greeting or acknowledging acquaintances.

Keirei (30°): Standard greeting for first meetings or showing general respect.

Saikeirei (45-60°): Deep bow for sincere apologies, deep gratitude, or formal situations.

Contrast with Western Culture: Instead of touch (handshake), bowing uses body language, avoiding physical contact while still showing warmth and connection, a useful adaptation in modern times.

Cultural Significance: It's ingrained from childhood and emphasizes politeness and respect, even for foreigners who try, are often met with understanding and warmth.

Wordplay based on specific cultural knowledge often requires complete rewriting or explanation, as puns rarely translate.

This idea is correct, because jokes and word games (puns) often depend on specific characteristics of a certain culture, historical events or language, so it is difficult to send them without losing their original meaning when translating them into another language, sometimes requiring a complete restoration (adaptation) or explanation. This is especially useful in games with multiple meanings, idioms and proverbs.

Cultural Layers: One nation's humor may be incomprehensible to someone from another culture.

Language specificity: phonetic similarity of a word or two different meanings of the same word are lost in translation (for example, other meanings of the Uzbek word “red”).

Need for explanation: Some jokes require the translator to provide a brief explanation about that culture, which can reduce the originality of the joke.

Example:

If an Uzbek joke uses words such as “red”, “blue” after the sentence “Kishda ham...” and reveals their different meanings (for example, “red” means color, “red” means village). When you translate it into another language, the joke is ruined because it doesn't have that cultural context.

Therefore, instead of translating, translators often try to create a new joke by adapting that game to the local culture.

Religion and Beliefs: Phrases like “God bless you” or “Inshallah” (if God wills it) carry weight and must be handled with care or replaced by culturally equivalent expressions, notes Traducendo, as detailed in this article about how culture impacts translation.

When translating religions and beliefs, especially when translating religious texts, it is important to maintain terminological accuracy, understand the cultural context, and preserve the spiritual essence, because these words mean not only a certain concept, but also deep historical, philosophical, and social meanings, which indicates the need for a translator's philological and theological knowledge.

Key aspects of the translation process:

Terminology: correct selection of the exact meanings of words such as “Religion”, “Belief”, “Spirituality”, “Faith” in the context of the language being translated.

Cultural compatibility: adaptation of specific concepts (eg “karma”, “heaven”, “destiny”) of the translated religion (for example, Buddhism, Islam, Christianity) to the cultural and religious-philosophical background of the new language.

Preservation of spiritual value: conveying without losing the spiritual content of prayers, stories, ceremonies, and laws mentioned in religious texts.

Religious Studies: Knowledge of international terms in Religious Studies (for example, “Apocalypse”, “Exclusivism”, “Syncretism”) and their correct translation.

English “Faith” is often translated as “belief” or “belief2, but can sometimes be replaced by "Din" (for example, "a people of a certain faith").

The translation of words such as “God” (God) and “Lord” (Lord) varies depending on the specific deity or supreme power of each religion (for example, “Allah” (Allah) or “Yahweh” (Yahweh)).

Why it matters:

Religion and beliefs are at the center of human life, and misinterpreting them can lead to misunderstandings and even serious problems in religious relationships. Therefore, correct expression of these concepts is very important when translating in these areas, especially in a situation where freedom of conscience of every person is guaranteed according to the Constitution of the Republic of Uzbekistan.

Customs & Traditions: Translation of terms such as “Navruz holiday” or “suzma” into other languages preservation of their content requires great attention.

The role of ethnocultural units in the translation process is the customs of the people and ethnocultural units originating from cultural life are important artistic works constitutes a part. For example, terms like “Qizil suzana” or “to‘y dasturxoni”. has no direct equivalent in other cultures.

The main task of the translator is preserving the national variety of terms in translation.

For example, the phrase “red suzani” is translated into English as “red suzani”, a traditional Uzbek “embroidered cloth” is a clear example of this.

Different methods are used in the translation of ethnocultural units. The widest common approaches are:

Transliteration and Transcription: In this method, the pronunciation or written form of a word kept as original as possible. For example, “suzani” is transliterated to the form “suzani”.

Explanation: The text of the translation includes additional comments and national features will be explained to the student. For example, “a wedding table traditionally filled with Uzbek dishes.

Using analogical equivalents: Close concepts in another culture is translated using For example, traditions of the Uzbek people such as “wedding ceremony”.

It is expressed as “wedding ceremony”, but the national identity is partial may disappear.

Problems arising in the process of translation of ethnocultural units the following problems are observed during reflection:

Differences between language and culture: For example, the meaning of the term “suzani” to convey its historical and cultural significance with an necessary explanation for correct explanation.

Loss of national color: translation of national concepts such as “wedding table” is difficult to preserve their content. Otherwise, the reader cannot feel the cultural significance of these concepts.

Terminological ambiguities: Often when translating ethnocultural units their literal equivalents do not exist, which is a misnomer or may lead to unclear expression. For example, the word “beat”. The ritual significance in Uzbek culture is not clearly reflected in other languages.

Lack of contextual fit: Ethnocultural units to another culture there is a risk of context corruption in adaptation. For example, the word “plate” is English can be translated by the simple word “dish”, but in Uzbek does not adequately express its role in weddings or holidays in the culture.

Incomprehensibility for the reader: Ethnocultural units are often used in translation a full explanation may be difficult for the reader. In such cases it is necessary to add additional comments to the translation, which makes the text too difficult for the reader can make it more complicated.

To overcome these problems, the translator:

- Having knowledge of intercultural communication;
- Application of translation methods appropriate to the context of the text;
- If necessary, he should use additional comments and dictionaries.

Translation of ethnocultural units related to ancient traditions is a unique creative process, preservation of national identity and other culture requires clear delivery to the representatives. Competence and correctness of the translator approach determines the quality of literary translation. Preservation of national characteristics and to each ethnocultural unit separately to ensure intercultural communication approach is important. At the same time, ethnocultural units in the translation process students and participants of cultural communication by correctly reflecting their individuality important information for scientific research in this direction for translators and experiments must be continued. This approach makes the national literary heritage global serves to introduce the scale.

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