



## THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN TRANSLATION AND CULTURE

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**Kudratova Sitara Rashidovna**

Bsmi, The Teacher Of English Language Department, Uzbekistan

### ABSTRACT

Learning a language, culture and translation and the relationship between them become one of the most important issues for humanity due to socializing round the globe. Thus, translation is a very effective factor not only for communicating, but also exchanging cultures and knowledge. Let's look at the terms of language, culture and translation, and their contents.

### KEYWORDS

Language, culture, translation, relationship, communicating, dictionaries, interpretation, translators, transformation between different languages.

### INTRODUCTION

There are several definition related with language, for instance, the words, their pronunciation, and the methods of combining them used and understood by a community (Merriam-Webster); language, a system of conventional spoken, manual (signed), or written symbols by means of which human beings, as members of a social group and participants in its culture, express

themselves (Britannica); or another one, a particular manner of expression (YourDictionary). It is obvious that definitions given to the word "language" are variety, and if you pay attention to all of them, you can see common meanings, such as language used for interacting and expressing feelings. And here is clearer and shorter one – language is a system of the speech which people use to communicate. Not only does it help us to interact and interpret, but also share ideas

with others and identify ourselves. Language is a phenomenon and a factor that links different cultures and a way of expressing feelings and ideas that people try to convey. Should you want to be aware of different cultures, first, you have to learn their language. Only if you study the languages of new nations, you start to understand their culture.

Meanings of culture in the dictionaries: the customary beliefs, social forms, and material traits of a racial, religious, or social group (Merriam-Webster); the way of life, especially the general customs and beliefs, of a particular group of people at a particular time (Cambridge Dictionary). Telling the truth, the first highly influential definition about the term “culture” came from Edward Tylor<sup>1</sup> “that complex whole which includes knowledge, belief, art, law, morals, custom, and any other capabilities and habits acquired by man as a member of society.” In short, it is a characteristics and knowledge of a particular group of people. In addition, the Center for Advanced Research on Language Acquisition goes a step further, defining culture as shared patterns of behavior and interactions, cognitive constructs and understanding that are learned by socialization. Thus, culture can be seen as the growth of a group identity fostered by social patterns unique to the group.

As for the term of translation, it can be defined as an act, process, or instance of translating: such as a rendering from one language into another (Merriam-Webster); Translation is an activity that aims at conveying meaning or meanings of a given linguistic discourse from one language to another (Oxford Handbooks). In short, it is a process where the words

or text are translated from source-language into target language or vice-versa. Moreover, there is a term “interpretation” which is used as interchangeable with translation. However, there is a difference that distinguishes them from each other, which translation refers to the written language, and interpretation to the spoken word. Even though they have difference, both of them do the same act that is reworking text from one language into another to maintain the original message and communication.

So what is correlation among those terms?

Language and culture – it is impossible to learn one without knowing the other. Although they are two different things, they meet at one point. And that reveals language and society will not be separated. Anthropologists would have difficulty understanding a culture without becoming familiar with its language and vice versa. In fact, neither one can exist without the other. Ken Hale, a well-known linguist, discusses the relationship between culture and language. He claims that when a language loses a piece of culture is also lost, since culture has a strong influence on the language. We can conclude from that phenomenon, customs, traditions, and interpersonal interactions are all influenced by culture.

Culture, language and translation – language is a vital means of socializing and interaction among people. Not only does language reflect and express facts and observations, but also attitudes and behavior. If culture and translation work in a correlation, those will aid to build the bridge the gaps that different languages might create. From the past it is witnessed that there are diverse of nations and within nations too

<sup>1</sup> E. Tylor. Primitive Culture. New York: J.P. Putnam's Sons. 1920

there are so many languages which are spoken in the worldwide. So, translation and interpreting, since that time, is still continuing to be an element of healthy cultural exchange.

### The Influence of Culture on Translation

As it has been aforementioned, translation is the activity where the word or text is transferred from one language into another one. During this process, there are some factors which effect on translation. One of the predominant one is culture. There are two main aspects of the influence of culture on Translation: one is the influence on the translator and the two is the influence on the translation activities. Culture can not only promote translation activities, but also influence and even restrict translation activities to some extent.

The Influence of Culture on Translators. First of all, how culture impacts on translators? Translation is one of the means of communication where information and culture exchange between the languages. As it is accepted, not only translators, but also their knowledge, experience, and living environment will be

a key role in the process of translation. Wang Dongfeng analyzed several aspects of it: aesthetic interference, political interference and ethical intervention. If we go deep into and disclose the meaning of them, the former term reveals the imposition of an aesthetic, which is cultural, correlated with the national culture, reader's experience on the artistic experience of other nationalities. The second term which is political interference refers the politically motivated decision to prevent an agency from using state-of-the-art science; and last one, which is ethical intervention, is the services provided by an individual ethicist or an ethics team or committee to address the ethical conflicts involved in a specific clinical case. So, the translator should recognize the cultural factors while translating the text into target language that is accepted by the reader, since a successful translator are able to deal with cultural factors during the process of translation. They should be aware of the culture of two languages, should be an expert on cultural understanding, can easily do flexible transformation of cultural orientation, should have both high cross-cultural sensitivity and a level of cultural evaluation.

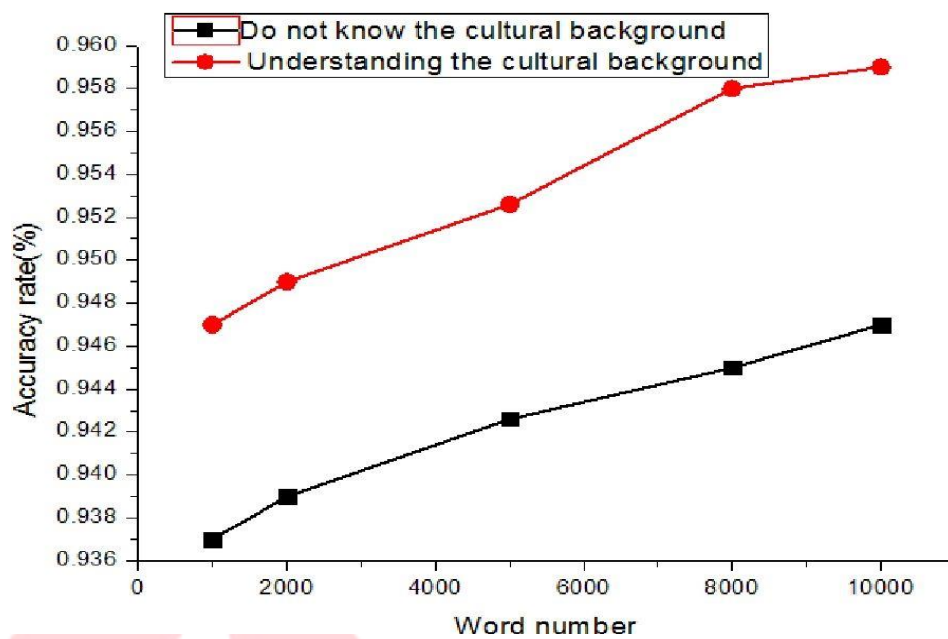


Figure 1. The relationship between

relationship understanding of

cultural background and the accuracy of translation

Here, it is vividly seen that translators with good cultural background will convert texts or words more accurately compare to those who do not know culture of both languages. Another predominant feature is that the more words interpreters gain, the higher accuracy rate will be in their speech. From the graphs it is clear that, although translators possess about 10000 words but without any cultural background, their accuracy rate shows lower point than their counterparts with cultural knowledge. Thus, the translation can never replace the original work completely, "coexistence" is the need of contending, and the "coexistence" also provides the reader with the possibility of choosing and judging.

### Role of translation in culture

As it has been said that translation and culture are intimately connected, which the latter gives birth to language. Wilhelm von Humboldt shared this opinion of translation in a letter addressed to A. W. Schlegel,

dated July 23, 1796: "All translation seems to me simply an attempt to solve an impossible task. Every translator is doomed to be done in by one of two stumbling blocks: he will either stay too close to the original, at the cost of taste and the language of his nation, or he will adhere too closely to the characteristics peculiar to his nation, at the cost of the original. The medium between the two is not only difficult, but downright impossible". So, no matter how much it is easy or difficult the words, they all contain cultural features of source language. Thus, translation without deep cultural context can be dangerous, especially when meanings are critical, that is to say he must respect at the same time the cultural source of point of view and the target culture.

The importance of passing from one culture to another during a translation from one language to another is required in all textual translation. This requirement motivates, and even gives a particular pleasure, to

translators who must know how to manipulate the beautiful interdependence between a translation and culture. They forage the cultural fields of each culture and enrich the references and the context of their translation, bettering its quality and relevance. There is interdependence between languages and culture which incidentally improves the translation, because it is a way to enrich the meaning.

Language is the carrier of culture, culture is the soil of language, and translation is the bridge of intercultural communication. Translation occurs as a result of human activity that allows people to exchange ideas and opinions, regardless of their different languages and cultures. Translation is a kind of cross-linguistic, cross-cultural and cross-social communication. As a kind of communication, the main purpose is nothing but to establish equivalence between the source text and the target text. In other words, as the receiver of the source message and the sender of the target message, the translator should try his best to convey all the contents of the source text into the target text, otherwise, translation as a kind of communication would end in failure.

Words which are connected with culture are called culture-bound words. Culture-bound words are generally rendered in the borrowing language through transcription, transliteration, and calque translation. What is most important in translating culture-bound words is the receptor's perception and reaction. A translator should be aware of the receptor's potential problems and, taking into account the receptor's background knowledge, choose the best means of

translation. Before translating, it is necessary to check whether a loan word exists in the target language, whether its meaning corresponds to that of the source language word. Translators sometimes can add their opinion as addition to author's work but carefully. They should be aware of the traditions of that nation, their relationship to each other, the author's work, all scientific and literary sources. Otherwise, it is natural for the translator to make similar errors.

There is an example of taken from short story "New Year's by Party" Rakhmat Fayzi. Uzbek women never go to the wedding parties and any kind of ceremonies with empty hands. They take there some food, some kind of cloth with themselves. The main hero of the story Bakhri khola's words:

- Ҳамма гап биз хотинларнинг эскича расми-  
русмимизда "Олинг куда,  
беринг куда" расми ўлсин. Мана мен ...<sup>2</sup>

Russian translation (translated by L.Bat and P.Kodirov):

- Да, всему виной наши глупые старые обычаи:  
"Бери, кума, - верни,  
кума!"<sup>3</sup>

English translation (G.Khanna and D.Skvirskiy):

"Of course, the whole trouble was caused by our ridiculous old customs:

<sup>2</sup> Rakhmet Feyzi. New Year's Party / Uzbekistan speaks. Short stories. Foreign Languages Publishing House. Moscow, 1958, - R.133 (further English examples are taken from this book and indicated in the brackets beti).

<sup>3</sup> A'. Hashimov. Spring is health. T.: Literature and art publishing house named after Gafur Gulum . 2001. B. 340

“Take it, old girl – return it, old girl!”<sup>4</sup>

Uzbeks have a habit. Depending on the present the guest has brought to the host’s house, he should return it accordingly when he goes back to his house.

There is also such a proverb in the Uzbek language “бор товоғим, кел товоғим, келишингда қуруқ бўлсанг ўрта ерда син товоғим”. This proverb is translated into Russian word by word as “иди, мой поднос, вернись, мой поднос, а не вернешься, чтоб черт тебя унес”. The English translator using the Russian version translated it as “go my tray, return, my tray, and if you don’t return may the devil take you”. This idiom does not exist in both Russian and English languages. It was translated in the way of word-by-word and it was accepted as the correct version. The translator who used the original language could not find the suitable equivalent. That is, here the translator could not find an equivalent to this idiom when translating from the original into another language, and used the calque translation method.

One of the difficulties a translator comes across is selecting a suitable equivalent. It should be as expressive as the original and correspond in style and connotation, and convey an adequate meaning.

The importance of translation in culture and language is high because it pushes the wheel ahead for better communication between two parties. Furthermore, translation is a wonderful multicultural bridge. Perhaps more than just a bridge, translations are the key to multicultural dialogues; dialogues that are the best guarantees of peace. The relationship between culture and translation help to break the bonds that different

languages might create. And a translator is a peacemaker, the builder of bridges between cultures, between peoples, and between languages.

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<sup>4</sup> One day of the peasant / A day of the peasant. Tashkent "classical word". 209. P. 23.

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