

## **Difficulties of Translation of National and Cultural Realia in Imaginative Texts**

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### **Abstract**

The linguistic relationship between the source text and the translated text is considered from different positions: language and culture, language and thinking, language and worldview, language and society, language and nature. This research is devoted to the problem of translation of the linguistic realia associated with the wedding ceremonies of the Kazakh people, in the aspect of the interaction of languages and cultures. The article makes an attempt to study the nationally-colored vocabulary presented by the realia of Kazakh culture, and to analyze their transmission into Russian. The results formulated in this research have been relating to the peculiarities of the influence of the Kazakh actual environment, culture and language on the corresponding Russian phenomena. Particular attention in the article is paid to identifying those translation transformations that allow preserving the national and cultural originality of the original literary text in the process of translation from Kazakh into Russian. The analysis is carried out on the material of the Kazakh original and Russian translated contexts of the literary works of Dukenbai Doszhan, the notable author of historical fiction. As a result of the study of the "Matchmaking"-related lexical-semantic group of the realia of the Kazakh culture, some translation techniques were identified that are most typical for the transfer of nationally biased units into Russian, including: transcription (transliteration) with translation explanations in footnotes, comments or within the text; generalized approximate and assimilating techniques.

**Keywords:** national-cultural specificity, literary translation, nationally biased lexical units, ethnocultural vocabulary, language equivalents, translation techniques.

**Published/ publié in *Res Militaris* (resmilitaris.net), vol.12, n°3-November issue (2022)**

## 1. Introduction

Most realia as the objects of material and spiritual culture reflect the way of life and the way of thinking of a certain concrete society and have no analogues in another culture, respectively, and in the language of this culture there are no lexical units denoting these unknown cultural concepts.

The specificity of the subject, conceptual content of realia plays an important role in the text of a work of art, since, being “their” elements of the original language, they “do not contrast with the context of the original” (Fedorov, 1983). In the text of the translation, the realia act as vivid exponents of the national flavor of the “foreign” culture, as a result of which the stylistic load of the translated text significantly increases in comparison with the original text. Therefore, they always contrast with the context of the translation.

Therefore, the translation of realia, that is, "culture-specific words", as defined by the Polish linguist Anna Wierzbicka (1999), it becomes a rather laborious and complex search for translation solutions that involve not only the transfer of the conceptual content of these units, but also the "alignment" of their functional and stylistic characteristics in order to achieve an equal impact of the original text and the translated text on the reader.

## 2. Methods

The current research had been implemented on the basis of the translations of the literary text - several stories by the Kazakh writer of the late twentieth century Dukenbai Doszhan and their translations into Russian. The materials for this study were selected by their explicit orientation towards the Kazakh culture, which, in accordance with our initial hypothesis, should have led to a fairly frequent use of units in them that can be attributed to nationally colored lexemes.

The main methods of linguistic research were the analytical method and comparative analysis. The scientific and scientific-methodological literature on the study of the issue of the national component in the theory and practice of translation as the most important feature of realia, closely related to the transmission of realia during translation, as well as scientific concepts in modern domestic and foreign works, has been analyzed using the analytical method (Iskhakova et al., 2020; Yerbulatova et al., 2019; Nurieva et al., 2016; Gulshat Galiullina et al., 2018; Kasemu et al., 2018; Galimova et al., 2017). The comparative method reveals the differences between two of the genetically and typologically unrelated languages the Russian and the Kazakh ones.

## 3. Results and Discussion

Let's examine, review and analyze the problem of interaction of languages and cultures through the prism of translating the realities of Kazakh traditional culture of the "Matchmaking" lexical-semantic group into the Russian language. Researched nationally-

biased vocabulary is represented in the “İne ūşyndağy ömir” (‘Life at the tip of a needle’) story by Dukenbai Doszhan as well as the text of its translation by Vladimir Gundarev. The choice of this work is justified by the wide and varied content of the realia, reflecting the most important side of the spiritual and material environment of the Kazakh people.

It is well-known that the spiritual, non-material culture of Kazakhs is closely related to deep traditions, conditioned by both philosophical views and religious sets of beliefs of the people. Therefore, their study seems necessary for a deeper understanding of the national traditional culture of the people.

Traditions are sets of material and spiritual cultural values, which are expressed in the elements of social and cultural heritage and are preserved in society for a long time. Among the spiritual values is the tradition of matchmaking. Such traditions dictate the implementation of certain customs and rituals.

The diversity and frequency of realia, their nationally-colored specificity, the absence or insufficiency of the necessary background knowledge and associative connections in the Russian-speaking reader poses the most difficult task for the translator to convey the unique originality of Kazakh culture, embodied in the language of the D.Doszhanov's prose.

In the ancient and the modern ethnic Kazakh society, the ceremonies of matchmaking and wedding events take place in several stages, each of which carries a deep meaning of the culture of the Kazakh people. All stages are accompanied by wedding.

As an example, let us look through and review the lexical elements of the “*SYRĜA SALU*” and “*BATA*” ritualized speech situation in a comparative aspect.

The materials of the data of the Kazakh-Russian dictionary indicate that “*syrĝa salu*” is a wedding ceremony that consolidates matchmaking (<https://sozdik.kz/ru>).

The realia of “*SYRĜA SALU*” in Kazakh culture symbolizes the final agreement between matchmakers. “The tradition is as follows: two *jenge*- daughters-in-law lead the bride out to the matchmakers, holding her by the arms. The groom's mother takes off the girl's earrings and puts on the future daughter-in-law others brought for matchmaking. This means that the bride now has a new status and belongs to the groom's family. All relatives on the part of the bride, as well as two *jenge*- daughters-in-law, who took the bride out, are given gifts” (<https://toibiznes.kz>).

Wed the use of the “*SYRĜA SALU*” phrasal realia in D. Doszhan's story: ... qūda bolaiyq desip, qalyñdyqqa syrĝa tağyp kədemizdi jasap körelik te! (Doszhan, 2003) - ‘... we will betroth you; we will give the bride decorations, we will perform all the rituals that are required in such cases’ (Doszhan, 2011; Cahapay & Labrador, 2021; Callao, Jarne, & Wroblewski, 2021).

The realia in the expression *syrĝa tağu kəde* is conveyed using a generalized

approximate (hyponymic) translation, in which the lexical unit denoting a specific concept in the Kazakh language is conveyed by the Russian lexical unit denoting a generic concept: *syrğa* (earrings) - decoration. It should be noted that the loss of color of the realia in this case is compensated for with the help of a broad context: "... we will perform all the rituals that are required in such cases." Such generic substitutions are also part of the lexicogrammatical transformations leading to the syntactic restructuring of the sentence.

Let's turn to bilingual dictionaries: *BATA* (Kazakh) - blessing, parting words, wishes (Russian); Blessing (Russian) – *alğys bata*; *aq bata*; *bata* (Kazakh); Parting words (Russian) - *bata* (Kazakh); Wish (Russian) - *bata*; *tilek*; *talap-tilek* (Kazakh).

Let's consider the derivatives from the lexeme *BATA*: *aq bata*- blessing during the engagement, *aq batasyn beru* - sincerely bless the marriage; *bata beru*- to give a blessing (in poetic form); *bata būzu*- to break the oath; break a vow; *batasyn alu*- to receive a blessing (starting a business); *dastarqanğa bata beru* - say a good wish after a meal; *oñ bata*- good wishes; blessing; *oñ batasyn beru*- to bless; *teris bata*- a wish for evil; a curse; *teris bata beru*- curse (stretching out bent arms, palms down); *bata qylu*- providing material assistance to the family of the deceased ones [Kazakh-Russian dictionary/Russian-Kazakh dictionary].

The *BATA* Institute in Kazakh culture is rooted in the distant past of Kazakh nomads. Initially, the term *BATA* was religious in nature, its content included the following senses as "blessing", "wishes of the prayer", pronounced in the native language after reading the *DŪĞA* (prayer) in Arabic. Over time, the traditional meaning has been added to the religious meaning of the *BATA* lexeme.

Let's consider the distinctive features of these values. Thus, the "religious" *BATA* is performed during mourning events, for example, at a funeral, after reading a prayer over the body of the deceased; "Traditional" *BATA* is performed at special events, holidays, events.

For example, at weddings (*toi*), matchmaking (*qūdalyq*), ceremony of opening the bride's face (*betaşar*), laying the child in the cradle (*besikke salu*), circumcision of the fetters of a child who begins to walk (*tysaukeser*), during a commemoration ceremony (*as*), during harvest time, before a battle, a long journey, etc. You should distinguish between the meanings of the lexemes *BATA* and *TILEK*, where the latter corresponds to such Russian lexical units as wishes, congratulations and cheerful toast.

The *BATA* supplications are often read in the poetic form, which differs from the blessing in the Russian language world outlook. According to Kazakh customs, the *BATA* should be reproduced by a respected *aksakal* (the patriarchal leader of a family) or some other older men and women. According to Islamic canons, the *BATA* is pronounced only in the native language. The use of the *-BATA* lexeme in its traditional meaning and its translation can be traced in the following example from the investigated story of *Dukenbay Doszhan*, compare: ... "köremiz, batamyzdy beremiz ... (Doszhan, 2003). - '.. let's look at

your betrothed, bless' (Doszhan, 2011).

At this point of his work Vladimir Gundarev had been using the assimilating translation in order to find some familiar realia with the help of the Kazakh-Russian cross-cultural connections (batamyzdy beremiz – let us bless). In our opinion, this technique leads to the loss of the color of the Kazakh realia, the content of which contains culturally significant information about one of the most ancient and important stages of the traditional rite of Kazakh-exclusive BATA BERU collocation, that is, the blessing of the elders for the marriage of the young, i.e., customs and ceremonies, each of which has its own name in the language.

#### **4. Summary**

So, the conducted research of the factual material allows us to confirm the hypothesis that the areas of language and culture intersect. When studying languages in a comparative aspect, certain discrepancies or coincidences that exist between languages of different systems are revealed.

The difference between the considered realia lies in the fact that Kazakh lexemes form a special group of derivative words, the content of which is associated with the meaning of the realia from which they originated. In addition, they are characterized by a number of morphological and syntactic features (affixation, compatibility).

The results which had been obtained in the analysis of the transfer of the Kazakh realia into the Russian language make it possible to identify the most common techniques in translation practice:

- transcription (transliteration), more often with additions and deployments;
- generalized approximation procedure, and
- assimilating techniques, and so this means imposition of the native “familiar” cultural and linguistic picture of the world on the foreign “outlandish” environment.

#### **5. Conclusions**

The analysis of lexical units with a national-cultural component of meaning was carried out on the material of the Kazakh original and Russian translated contexts of the literary works of the writer Dukenbay Doszhan.

As a result of the study of the realities of the Kazakh culture of the “Mathcmaking” lexical-semantic group, translation techniques were identified that are most typical for the transfer of nationally-colored units into Russian. Among the popular techniques for translating national and cultural units from the Kazakh language into Russian in a literary text are such techniques as transcription (transliteration) with translation explanations in footnotes, comments or within the text; generalized approximate and assimilating techniques.

The aforementioned examples have confirmed over and over again the idea, that translators need to have a special approach in resolving issues related to the transfer of nationally-colored lexical units from one language to another, because according to Marianne Lederer the transfer of realities in a literary text becomes difficult to find the most suitable means of nomination in the target language “able to convey with maximum completeness the implicit world expressed by the means of the original language” (Lederer, 1994).

## Acknowledgements

This paper is performed as part of the implementation of the Kazan Federal University Strategic Academic Leadership Program.

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