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CENTRAL ASIAN CULTURAL WORDS IN LITERAL TRANSLATION

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Abstract

As the interest in studying Uzbek literature has grown in recent years, it is pertinent and crucial to translate Uzbek literature into other languages in a sufficient and comparable manner in order to familiarize and educate the international population with Uzbekistan's customs and culture. The goal of this study is to determine how to translate Central Asian cultural words (realities) into English by direct translation in the prose of Uzbek writers. This article's subject of study is the literary work "Боги Срединного мира" by contemporary Uzbek writer Galina Dolgaya in Russian, and Robin Thompson's English translation "The Gods of the Middle World". Both works were carefully reviewed and analyzed from a comparative perspective.

Keywords: *cultural words, non-equivalent vocabulary, transliteration, descriptive translation*

Introduction

Among the crucial elements of intercultural integration at this point in societal evolution are literary and scientific endeavors in the field of literary translation. Given that a people's identity and the nation in which they reside are shaped by cultural terms (realities), translators face a number of delicate problems that must be handled with careful consideration. It is common knowledge that a people's language reflects their culture, traditions, and customs. As such, every aspect of a people's linguistic identity and culture can be found in their language, particularly in literary works.

The challenges of interpreting cultural terms (realities) have been greatly assisted by the excellent contributions of numerous translation academics. Consequently, the em-

inent Russian scientist A. V. Fedorov (1968) suggests in his scholarly publications that the term "realia" was first applied to describe the particulars of the home environment. More broadly, "realities" include "ethnographic and folkloric concepts, characteristic objects of material culture from the past and present, features of the geographical environment," as well as "facts of history and the state structure of national society," according to another Russian scholar, V. S. Vinogradov (2001).

Renowned Bulgarian scholars in this domain, S. Vlahov and S. Florin (1980), define "realities" as non-equivalent vocabulary, stating that "these words, being carriers of national or historical color, generally do not have exact correspondences (equivalents) in other languages, and therefore cannot be

translated on a general basis, requiring a special approach.” Researches from other foreign countries, including P. Newmark (1981) and J. Lyon (1981), have defined “realities” using terms like “cultural words” or “cultural terms.”

For Uzbek scholars like Sh. Sh. Sharipov (2015) and M. T. Tillyaev (2001), one of the main fields of inquiry is the examination of the challenges associated with translating national and cultural peculiarities in the field of translating “realities.” According to their definition, “realia” is a linguistic unit that communicates certain historical, geographical, social, and cultural realities of a nation or place while also reflecting the national and cultural peculiarities of the source language.

Research methods

We utilized descriptive and comparative approaches for our research, which involved identifying notions of cultural words and phrases in the novel and comparing their translation into English with the reality used in the original Russian text.

Analysis and results

Uzbek author Galina Dolgaya urges readers to travel back in time thousands of years

...река повернула, растерзала по пути
рукотворный *курган* и умчалась
в степь...

...в которых нашли сосуды для хранения
священного напитка жрецов *сомы-хаомы*.

... в каждом существе есть дух. Его
называют «ла».

2) principally, *proper names and geographic names* were translated using transcription, also known as transliteration:

Древнюю *Маргиану* не знаешь?

...и вместе будем читать о раскопках
в *Гонур-депе*.

Тансылу порывисто оглянулась.

... меня отдают в жены *Ульмасу*, сыну
Бурангула – предводителя большого
племени, род которого, как наш, идет от
Гургана...

in her fiction book “Боги Среднего мира” (Dolgaya G., 2023). By doing so, she reveals a wealth of fascinating information about the past of the ancient towns that formerly comprised modern-day Uzbekistan. Consequently, the original text is quite interesting to study in terms of the use of cultural words (realities) because of the historical focus of the work.

This book was translated into English under the title “The Gods of the Middle World” (Dolgaya G., 2013) by English translator and Central Asian researcher Robin Thomson, who did it straight from the source, making his translation the most accurate and suitable.

Based on the classification of cultural words suggested by V.N. Krupnov (1976), we gained the following information by analyzing the original text in Russian and the translation into English, where the target of study was Central Asian culture words and their translation:

1) two approaches to translating *religious ritual realities* into English were transcription (transliteration) and explanatory (descriptive) translation. Thus, in order to evoke the historical setting and the customs of the peoples of Central Asia, the translator kept culturally designated lexemes in the translation:

...the river changed course at this point,
tearing at a *kurgan* – a *burial mound* – as it
passed, before racing out onto the steppe...

... where vessels had been found for the
storage of the sacred drinks of the oracles,
soma-haoma.

... every creature has a spirit. They call it
“*la*”.

Don’t you know about ancient *Margiana*?

... and together we’ll read about the excavations at *Gonur-depe*.

Tansylu looked round abruptly.

... they are offering me to be the wife of *Ulm*, son of *Burangul*, the chief of a great tribe, whose family, like ours, stems from *Gurgan*...

| | |
|--|--|
| ...окружающий оазис между Черными горами и озером Арысь... | ... surrounded the oasis between the Black Mountains and Lake Arys... |
| 3) additionally, explanatory footnotes were included for the reader's better knowledge of the cultural terms of <i>daily life and</i> | <i>lifestyle</i> that were likewise transcribed, or transliterated: |
| ... камча в детской руке взлетела ввысь... | Held in a child's hand, the <i>kamcha</i> * flew upwards... (* <i>kamcha</i> – a whip or lash) |
| ...большой дастархан...кумыс течёт рекой... | ...a large <i>dastarkhan</i> * ...the <i>kumys</i> ** was flowing... (* <i>dastarkhan</i> – a large cloth spread on the ground on which food is spread and people eat. ** <i>kumys</i> – an intoxicating drink made of soured mare's milk) |
| На глаза попался хурджун... | Her eye was caught by the <i>khurjun</i> * ... (* <i>khurjun</i> – a rectangular bag made of hide, usually with two compartments and designed to be placed over a horse's back) |
| Таргитай дождался, когда поднимут низ кошмы ... | Targitay waited for them to lift the bottom of the <i>koshma</i> * ... (* <i>koshma</i> – a felt mat made of sheep or camel wool) |
| ... очередной яйлак рядом поставим... | ... we'll build another summer <i>yailak</i> * next to them... (* <i>yailak</i> – a summer nomad camp on the mountain pastures) |
| 4) <i>cultural allusions and onomatopoeic words</i> that lend the text an emotional quality were translated into the translation while | remaining transcribed (transliterated) in the original language: |
| – Кош, кош! | Kosh! Kosh! |
| ... и тихонько позвала: «Хох, хох, хох...» | ... and called softly: “Hokh, hokh, hokh...” |
| 5) depending on whether a meaningful counterpart exists in the target language, <i>the names of the local flora and wildlife</i> were | translated using either transliteration or direct translation: |
| Он был стройным и быстрым, как архар. | He was slender and as fast as <i>an argar or wild ram</i> . |
| Ковыль, сайгаки... | <i>Feather grass and saiga...</i> |
| ... тени от веток айланта... | The shadow of a twig of <i>ailanthus</i> ... |
| 6) transliteration, explanatory translation (descriptive), and explanatory footnotes | were some of the methods used to transfer <i>ethno-folklore concepts</i> : |
| ... и подражая акыну... | ... and imitating <i>a folk poet or akyn</i> ... |
| ... с лоснящимися щеками батыр... | ... a robust <i>batyr</i> * with shiny cheeks... (* <i>batyr</i> – a brave warrior, strong man, hero) |
| ... оделась джигитом... | ...she put on the clothing of a <i>djigit</i> * ... (* <i>djigit</i> – a young man, a brave young horseman) |

7) a footnote providing clarification was included along with the transcription meth-

od (transliteration) used to translate cultural terms representing *natural phenomena*:

... в жаркое время высыхающей до
такыра...

... in the hot season, dried out into *takyr**
... (* *takyr* – smooth, level ground, often
rich in clay, whose distinctive form is creat-
ed when rivers or lakes dry up)

Conclusion

We have arrived at the following findings based on the previously provided information. Translating cultural phrases from Central Asia is among the most difficult tasks a literary translator must perform. To accurately and effectively transmit the national background, one must possess a strong knowledge of both the source and target languages. Because Robin Thompson spent several years living in Central Asia and was familiar with the customs, way of life, and culture of the people who call this region home, he was able to translate the novel with remarkable accuracy.

The translator's fluency in both Russian and English means that the literary work was translated straight from the source, avoiding the need for an interlinear translation. This is another noteworthy aspect of the translation.

In order to translate the Central Asian cultural words in R. Thompson's novel translation, various methods were used, including transliteration (transcription),

which helps to convey national color more accurately, explanatory translation (descriptive translation), which compares cultural words with semantically similar meanings in the target language, and explanatory footnotes for those Central Asian cultural words that needed more detailed explanation in order for the English-speaking readers of the novel to understand them better.

As a result, the translator would select the translation technique based on the kind of Central Asian cultural terms that required to be translated, while also considering the literary work's genre. The translator must decide which translation style best captures the essence of the target country while maintaining the artistic work's national flavor, since many elements play a role in this decision. The novel "The Gods of the Middle World," which Robin Thompson translated into English, effectively captures the historical mood and era of the Central Asian region due to the careful selection of translation techniques for cultural terms.

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