

THE INFLUENCE OF CULTURAL DIFFERENCES ON SHORT STORY
TRANSLATION

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Annotation: This article examines how cultural differences impact the translation of short stories, emphasizing that literary translation involves not only linguistic transfer but also deep intercultural negotiation. Using comparative analysis of selected short stories and their translations, the study investigates how cultural nuances affect meaning, tone and reader reception. Concerning both, translation theory and cross-cultural communication frameworks, the study provides an analysis of how translators negotiate cultural elements, such as idioms, humor, social norms and implicit values embedded in the source text. Through detailed textual analysis, the research investigates how cultural-specific items (kinship expressions, culinary references, religious symbols and social hierarchies) are represented in the target language and what translators use to balance faithfulness to the original with readability for the target culture.

Key words: cultural authenticity, cultural differences, context, short story, translation strategies, cultural equivalents, linguistic diversity, comparative analysis

Annotatsiya: Ushbu maqola madaniyatlar o'rtasidagi farqlar qisqa hikoyalar tarjimasiga qanday ta'sir ko'rsatishini o'rganadi hamda badiiy tarjima jarayoni nafaqat lingvistik tarjima, balki chuqur madaniyatlararo muzokaralarni ham o'z ichiga olishiga urg'u beradi. Tanlab olingan qisqa hikoyalar va ularning tarjimalarini qiyosiy tahlil qilish orqali, tadqiqot madaniy kichik farqlarning ma'no, ohang va o'quvchi tomonidan qabul qilinishiga qanday ta'sir ko'rsatishini aniqlaydi. Tarjima nazariyasi hamda madaniyatlararo muloqot doirasidagi tushunchalarga tayangan holda, ushbu tadqiqot tarjimonlarning idiomalar, hazil-mutoyiba, ijtimoiy me'yorlar va matnga singdirilgan yashirin qadriyatlar kabi madaniy elementlarni tarjima jarayonida qanday muvofiqlashtirishni tahlil qiladi. Batafsil matn tahlili asosida, tadqiqot madaniyatga xos birliklar (jumladan, qarindoshlik atamaları, milliy taomlarga oid so'zlar, diniy ramzlar va ijtimoiy iyerarxiyalar) o'rganilayotgan tilda qanday ifodalanganini aniqlaydi hamda tarjimonlar asl matnga ishonchlilikni saqlash bilan birga, uni o'rganilayotgan til madaniyati uchun tushunilishi qulay shaklda yetkazish uchun qanday strategiyalardan foydalanganliklarini tahlil qiladi.

Kalit so'zlar: madaniy autentiklik, madaniy farqlar, kontekst, qisqa hikoya, tarjima strategiyalari, madaniy ekvivalentlar, lingvistik xilma-xillik, qiyosiy tahlil.

Аннотация: Данная статья рассматривает, каким образом культурные различия влияют на перевод коротких рассказов, подчеркивая, что художественный перевод представляет собой не только лингвистическую передачу, но и глубокий процесс межкультурного взаимодействия. На основе сравнительного анализа отобранных рассказов и их переводов исследование выявляет, как культурные нюансы воздействуют на смысл, тон и восприятие текста читателем. Опираясь на теоретические подходы в



области переводоведения и межкультурной коммуникации, работа анализирует, каким образом переводчики осуществляют интерпретацию и передачу культурных элементов, таких как идиомы, юмор, социальные нормы и имплицитные ценности, заложенные в исходном тексте. Посредством детального текстуального анализа исследование также изучает, как культурно-специфические элементы (родственные обращения, кулинарные реалии, религиозные символы и социальные иерархии) репрезентируются в языке перевода, а также какие стратегии используют переводчики для достижения баланса между сохранением верности оригиналу и обеспечением читаемости для целевой аудитории.

Ключевые слова: культурная аутентичность, культурные различия, контекст, короткий рассказ, переводческие стратегии, культурные эквиваленты, лингвистическое разнообразие, сравнительный анализ

1. INTRODUCTION

Translation, as both an art and a science, extends beyond mere linguistic transfer to become an intricate negotiation of culture, context, and meaning. This is particularly true in the realm of short story translation, where each narrative is embedded in a specific cultural framework that can vastly differ from the target language's cultural norms and values. The translator, then, not only acts as a bridge between languages but also as a mediator between two distinct worldviews. The influence of cultural differences on short story translation is a critical area of study, shedding light on how nuances, idiomatic expressions, and culturally specific references are transformed, preserved, or lost in the act of translation. Cultural disparities between source and target languages can affect every stage of the translation process. From deciding how to adapt culturally specific concepts—such as food, family structures, and social customs—to addressing how humor, religion, and politics are interpreted across cultural divides, each choice made by the translator carries profound consequences. As noted by Bassnett (2002), translation is not simply the exchange of words, but the transfer of culture itself. These cultural imprints often extend to narrative structure, the portrayal of character archetypes, and even the emotional resonance that a story evokes in the reader.

2. MAIN PART

This theme is particularly pertinent when considering the short story genre, known for its conciseness and dependence on subtle, context-dependent meaning. Short stories often rely on cultural knowledge that may not be easily accessible to a reader from a different background. Furthermore, issues of identity, power, and representation in translation have garnered increasing attention, as translators must navigate not only linguistic barriers but also ethical questions about cultural appropriation, accuracy, and fidelity to the original text (Venuti, 2012). The short story genre, due to its brevity and focused structure, presents unique challenges for translators, as every word and cultural nuance carries weight. In this section, we will explore how cultural differences affect the translation of short stories, examining the importance of context, idiomatic expressions, cultural references, and narrative style.

2.1 Context and worldview

One of the most significant obstacles translators face is the differing worldviews between the source and target cultures. A short story often reflects the social norms, historical circumstances, and cultural values of the society from which it originates. For example, a story set in a particular cultural or geographical context may include references to local customs, religious practices, or political events that do not have direct equivalents in other cultures. In an extract from “The Dead” by James Joyce: “*She was a great woman,- said Mrs. Malins, who had been recalling the days of the old country. ‘The best woman in the parish, God rest her soul. A woman of real piety, that one. Always knew how to keep a good home and raise good children.*”



None of this newfangled talk of women's rights for her. A woman knew her place." This reflects traditional Irish Catholic values, particularly in the rural Irish communities, where women were expected to uphold the sanctity of the home and family. The reference to "women's rights" subtly critiques the changing role of women in Irish society, as well as the tension between tradition and modernity. A translator must navigate these differences carefully, finding ways to preserve the story's meaning without losing its cultural depth. Sometimes, this requires adapting elements to make them accessible to the target audience without distorting the essence of the original. For instance, a short story set in a small rural village may contain references to local festivals or agricultural practices that might be unfamiliar to readers from an urban, globalized society. The translator must either explain these elements or choose an equivalent concept that still evokes the same emotions and themes, even if it is not an exact match.

2.1 Idiomatic expressions and colloquialisms

Idiomatic expressions, slang, and colloquialisms pose another challenge in short story translation. These linguistic features are often deeply tied to cultural identities and can be difficult to translate directly. A saying or phrase that is widely understood in the source language may not have an equivalent in the target language, or worse, it may lose its cultural connotation entirely if translated too literally. For example, the English expression "to kill two birds with one stone" may not resonate with speakers of other languages who have their own idioms for expressing efficiency. A translator needs to find an equivalent expression in the target language that conveys the same meaning and tone, but the choice will depend on the cultural context. This can be observed in short stories by O'tkir Hoshimov in his book "Daftar hoshiyasidagi bitiklar", particularly from an extract "Tomsuvoq": "*Qishloqda kuz pallasi tomsuvoq qilish udumi bo'lardi. Uning yozilmagan qoidasi bor. Birinchidan, hech kim tomini yolg'iz o'zi suvamaydi: hamma hasharga keladi. Ikkinchidan: beva-bechora, qo'li qisqa xonadonning uyi eng avval tomsuvoq qilinadi. keyin, navbatma-navbat davom etaveradi... O'qituvchimizning hashariga ayniqsa ko'p odam yig'ildi. Uyi katta yo'l yoqasida edi. Shundoq ko'cha chetidan loyhandaq qazilgan ekan.*" In some cases, the translator might even decide to leave the idiom out altogether and reframe the sentence in a way that retains the meaning without the local flavor. The translator's task is not just linguistic but cultural: they must decide whether to preserve the idiom's original impact or adapt it in a way that makes sense to the new audience.

2.3 Cultural references and allusions

Cultural references—whether historical events, mythology, famous figures, or popular media—are often deeply embedded in short stories. When translating, the translator must decide how to deal with these references, which may be completely foreign to the target audience. A short story may include allusions to specific historical events or figures that the audience of the target language may not recognize, making the reference lose its power. A translator can choose to either leave these cultural markers intact, with an explanation or footnote, or they can adapt the reference to something more familiar to the target audience. For example, a story that references a key moment in the history of a specific country may lose its emotional resonance in translation unless the translator provides context or finds a comparable historical event in the target culture. This challenge is particularly evident in stories that rely on humor, satire, or irony—where cultural references play a central role in shaping the narrative tone and meaning. Without careful consideration, such references can fall flat or mislead the target audience.

2.4 Narrative style and tone

Every culture has its own preferred narrative style and literary conventions. In some cultures, stories are told in a direct, straightforward manner, while others may favor more intricate, indirect, or symbolic approaches. The tone of a short story, whether it's humorous, serious, ironic, or melancholic, is often shaped by cultural expectations of how stories should be told. For



instance, a Japanese short story might favor subtlety and understatement, where the emotions of the characters are implied rather than explicitly stated. A translator working from Japanese to English must decide whether to retain this subtlety or adjust the tone to suit the more direct and expressive storytelling conventions of the target language. Similarly, humor can be deeply culturally specific, relying on shared knowledge or understanding of social cues. A translator working with a story that uses humor, especially dark humor, satire, or wordplay, may need to find ways to maintain the emotional impact of the story without losing the cultural specificity that makes it work.

2.5 Gender and Social Norms

Gender roles, class dynamics, and social hierarchies differ widely across cultures and can influence the way characters interact and how their actions are perceived. A short story from a conservative society may present gender norms that challenge or contradict those in more liberal societies. Translating such stories requires sensitivity to these differences, particularly if the social issues are central to the plot. A translator must decide how to handle such themes. In some cases, this might involve rethinking character motivations or adjusting certain narrative elements to align with the cultural norms of the target language's audience. For example, a short story that revolves around a woman's struggle for independence in a patriarchal society might need careful treatment to avoid misrepresenting or oversimplifying the social challenges involved. In this way, cultural shifts in gender and social norms can significantly affect the translation of short stories.

3. CONCLUSION

The translation of short stories is a delicate balancing act, where cultural differences play a central role in shaping how the story is understood and appreciated in a new language. Translators are not merely linguists; they are cultural interpreters who must consider the nuances of language, context, and societal values to convey the story's core meaning. The process requires a deep understanding of both the source and target cultures, as well as a keen sense of how narrative, tone, and style are shaped by these cultural forces. Ultimately, the goal of translation is to bring a piece of another culture to life for a new audience while preserving the essence of the original work.

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