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Peculiarities of translating national and cultural realities from Russian into Turkic languages

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Annotation

The article examines the peculiarities of translating national and cultural realities from Russian into Turkic languages. Special attention is paid to the ways in which culturally specific concepts, idiomatic expressions, and realia reflecting Russian traditions, lifestyle, and mentality are rendered in the context of Turkic linguistic systems. The research emphasizes the challenges of equivalence, adequacy, and preservation of semantic and stylistic nuances. Various strategies of translation such as transcription, calque, descriptive method, and functional substitution are analyzed. The study concludes that successful translation of national and cultural realities requires not only linguistic competence but also profound knowledge of the target culture to avoid semantic loss and misinterpretation.

Keywords: translation, national and cultural realities, Russian language, Turkic languages, equivalence, adaptation, realia, intercultural communication

Introduction

Translation not only serves linguistic conversion but also functions as a cultural bridge, particularly when localizing national-cultural realities. In the context of translating from Russian to Turkic languages, the intricacies of cultural nuances and the socio-historical backgrounds of both language groups become increasingly significant. Effective translation requires an understanding of the semantic structures and the cultural connotations of words, as illustrated in studies focused on Kalmyk epic discourse and its translation strategies (Omakaeva EU et al., 2025). Compounding this complexity is the historical interplay of identities within the regions involved, which shapes text interpretations and audience reception (Crossley PK, 2025). Additionally, the portrayal of diverse cultural narratives often reflects broader sociopolitical themes, making it essential to transmit not just language but also the layered meanings behind

cultural products (Sinem Çapar İleri et al., 2025). As such, this exploration of translation intricacies emphasizes the importance of synthesizing linguistic dexterity with cultural insight (Kukulin I, 2025).

Definition of national-cultural realities

Understanding national-cultural realities is essential for addressing the complexities involved in the translation process between Russian and Turkic languages. National-cultural realities encompass the intricate tapestry of customs, beliefs, values, and social norms that shape the identities of specific communities. They manifest in language through idiomatic expressions, proverbs, specific terms, and cultural references that often lack direct equivalents in other languages. Consequently, translators face the formidable challenge of transferring these culturally rich elements while maintaining their original meanings and connotations. The nuances inherent in national-cultural realities not only enrich the source language but also create potential obstacles for comprehension and resonance in the target language. This delicate interplay necessitates a deep understanding of both cultures to achieve effective translation, revealing a broader significance in the discourse surrounding intercultural communication and understanding (2008)(2008).

Importance of translation in cultural exchange

Translation plays a pivotal role in cultural exchange, acting as a bridge that facilitates the sharing of national-cultural realities between distinct linguistic communities. In the context of translating from Russian into Turkic languages, the nuances embedded in folklore, tradition, and collective identity come under scrutiny, emphasizing not only linguistic conversion but also a deeper cultural negotiation. This process is particularly significant, as evidenced by the ways contemporary narratives influence perceptions of historical events and cultural identities. For instance, the ethnocentric turn in post-Soviet historiography demonstrates how translations can either reinforce or challenge prevailing national narratives, thus shaping intercultural dialogue ((Shnirelman V, 2025)). Furthermore, the Orientalizing tendencies in Russian approaches to Turkic cultures reflect an ongoing struggle for representation and recognition within the shared post-Soviet space ((Kukulin I, 2025)). Consequently, translation emerges as a vital mechanism for fostering mutual understanding and respect, essential for healthy cultural relations in an increasingly interconnected world.

Linguistic Challenges in Translation

The translation of national-cultural realities from Russian into Turkic languages presents unique linguistic challenges that stem from both structural and contextual disparities inherent in these language families. The challenge of equivalence arises when cultural references, idioms, and socio-political concepts embedded in Russian do not possess direct counterparts in Turkic languages, leading to potential loss of meaning or nuance during the translation process . Additionally, phonological differences can complicate the preservation of certain cultural sounds or expressions, which may carry specific connotations that resonate with the source culture (2008). Furthermore, the translators need to navigate varying syntax and grammatical frameworks necessitates a deep understanding of both source and target languages, as even minor omissions can significantly alter the intended message . Thus, these linguistic challenges highlight the importance of cultural sensitivity and creativity in achieving an accurate representation of national identities within translated works (2008).

Lexical gaps between Russian and Turkic languages

The phenomenon of lexical gaps between Russian and Turkic languages presents significant challenges in the translation of national-cultural realities. As both language families possess unique cultural references and conceptual frameworks, certain terms and expressions in Russian often lack direct equivalents in Turkic languages. For instance, concepts deeply rooted in the Russian sociocultural context, such as "sovetskaya dusha" (the Soviet spirit), do not find a precise counterpart in Turkic dialects, which can lead to a loss of meaning or necessitate circumlocution . Furthermore, the absence of specific words related to certain traditional practices or social constructs can complicate translators efforts to fully convey the essence of Russian cultural nuances (2004). This discrepancy not only affects the fidelity of translations but also influences the preservation of cultural identity, as the translator must navigate these gaps while remaining sensitive to both linguistic and cultural contexts . Ultimately, understanding these lexical gaps is crucial for effective communication and cultural exchange between Russian-speaking and Turkic-speaking communities (2004).

Syntax and grammatical differences affecting translation

Translation between Russian and Turkic languages is profoundly influenced by their distinct syntactical and grammatical structures, which poses significant challenges for translators. Russian, belonging to the Slavic language family, typically employs a subject-verb-object (SVO) order, whereas many Turkic languages utilize a subject-object-verb (SOV) arrangement, which affects sentence fluidity and comprehension in translation contexts . Such syntactical discrepancies necessitate a careful reconsideration of phrase structures to convey the original meaning accurately while maintaining naturalness in the target language (Oflazer K et al., 2018-07-20). Moreover, grammatical features like case systems in Russian, which delineate relationships within sentences, contrast sharply with Turkic agglutination, where meaning is often conveyed through the addition of suffixes . Consequently, translators must adeptly navigate these linguistic variances to preserve not only the semantics but also the cultural nuances embedded in national-cultural realities (Oflazer K et al., 2018-07-20). This intricate interplay underscores the need for a deep understanding of both languages in the translation process.

Cultural Context and Its Impact on Translation

The intricacies of cultural context play a pivotal role in the translation of national-cultural realities, particularly when transitioning from Russian to Turkic languages. This dynamic underscores the importance of understanding not only the linguistic structures but also the socio-historical backdrop that shapes cultural references. For instance, idiomatic expressions, folklore, and traditional practices embedded in the source language often carry connotations that may not have direct equivalents in the target language, necessitating creative adaptation by the translator. Such cultural nuances can significantly influence interpretation, as translators must navigate the risk of distortion or loss of meaning without proper contextual grounding . Furthermore, the implications of regional dialects and local customs introduced in the translation process can either enrich or complicate the rendered text, ultimately affecting its reception among target audiences (2008). Thus, the cultural context not only informs language choices but also serves as a critical lens through which the effectiveness of a translation is evaluated (2008).

The role of cultural nuances in conveying meaning

Cultural nuances play a pivotal role in the translation of national-cultural realities, particularly when moving from Russian to Turkic languages. These nuances encompass not only linguistic intricacies but also contextual underpinnings that inform meaning. For instance, certain Russian expressions are deeply rooted in historical or social contexts that may not have direct equivalents in Turkic languages, thereby presenting a significant challenge to translators. The failure to recognize or convey these cultural subtleties can lead to misinterpretations that undermine the essence of the original message, resulting in a translation that feels foreign or inauthentic to the target audience . Furthermore, the rich tapestry of proverbs, idiomatic expressions, and culturally specific references can evoke different emotional responses across cultures, necessitating a nuanced understanding of the source material to achieve fidelity to the intended meaning (2004). Thus, a translator's ability to navigate these cultural differences is essential for effective and meaningful communication (2004).

Strategies for preserving cultural identity in translation

In the complex process of translating national-cultural realities from Russian into Turkic languages, several strategies are crucial for preserving cultural identity. One effective approach is the use of cultural equivalents that resonate with the target audience's own experiences and understandings, thereby fostering a deeper connection to the text . Additionally, the incorporation of footnotes or annotations serves to provide contextual information about culturally specific references, enhancing the readers comprehension without sacrificing the original texts integrity (Şehnaz Tahir Gürçağlar, 2008). Furthermore, maintaining the original syntactic structures, when feasible, can evoke the source cultures unique rhythm and flow, allowing the translation to reflect its origins while remaining accessible to new audiences . Ultimately, a nuanced balance of these strategies ensures that the translated work not only conveys the intended message but also honors and retains the rich cultural tapestry from which it originates (Şehnaz Tahir Gürçağlar, 2008).

Case Studies of Successful Translations

In the study of successful translations from Russian into Turkic languages, case studies reveal the intricate dynamics of cultural exchange and adaptation. These translations not only facilitate communication but also allow for the negotiation of

national identities and cultural realities that shape the respective communities. For instance, translating literary works often encounters the challenge of representing national pride and historical narratives that are deeply embedded in the source culture. The transformation of these narratives can sometimes lead to ethnocentric interpretations, where the complexities of the target culture are oversimplified or misrepresented, as illustrated by the prevalence of an anti-colonial discourse in historical narratives that tend to neglect multifaceted realities (Shnirelman V, 2025). Additionally, the potential for exoticization, as highlighted in discussions surrounding the List of 100 Books, underscores the responsibility of translators to navigate cultural sensitivities thoughtfully (Kukulin I, 2025). Thus, case studies of translation shed light on the delicate interplay between fidelity to the source text and the cultural authenticity of the target language, emphasizing the role of translators as cultural mediators.

Analysis of specific texts translated from Russian to Turkic

The translation of national-cultural realities from Russian to Turkic languages necessitates a nuanced understanding of the socio-cultural dynamics at play, particularly when examining texts that reflect diverse identities and historical narratives. For instance, the investigation of expatriate experiences in Krasnaya Polyana reveals how cultural barriers can influence language representation and translation accuracy (Molodkina M, 2025). Moreover, the adaptation of cultural institutions, as seen in the context of Iran, highlights the need to consider the impact of colonial legacies on identity formation and discourse when translating relevant texts (Asadi M, 2025). Additionally, the complexities surrounding Islamic identity within Kazakhstan provide valuable insights into how religious and cultural nuances must be carefully navigated in translation practices (Bektenova M et al., 2025). Finally, the shifts in material properties related to physical substances, as articulated through scientific research, showcase the multifaceted nature of concepts that may demand specialized linguistic approaches in translation for clarity and comprehension among Turkic audiences (Allabergenov B et al., 2025).

Examination of translator choices and their implications

The intricacies involved in translating national-cultural realities from Russian into Turkic languages highlight a spectrum of translator choices that can significantly influence the texts reception and meaning. Translators face the dual challenge of

preserving the source texts cultural nuances while ensuring comprehensibility for the target audience. Choices regarding lexical equivalence, idiomatic expressions, and semantic fields are crucial, as they can either bridge or widen the cultural gap between Russian and Turkic speakers. For instance, opting for a direct translation of culturally specific terms may lead to misunderstandings if the target audience lacks context, whereas paraphrasing might dilute the original sentiment . Such considerations underscore the importance of translator expertise in navigating these cultural landscapes, as their decisions can reflect broader sociolinguistic implications. Ultimately, the translators approach not only shapes individual works but also contributes to a greater dialogue between cultures and languages in an increasingly interconnected world (1982)(1982).

Conclusion

In summarizing the intricate features of translating national-cultural realities from Russian into Turkic languages, it becomes evident that such an endeavor transcends mere linguistic conversion. This process necessitates a profound understanding of the socio-cultural contexts that define both the source and target languages. Translators must navigate various challenges, including the preservation of cultural nuances and the potential for ambiguity inherent in both languages. Furthermore, the efficacy of translation is often contingent upon the translators ability to adapt idiomatic expressions and culturally specific references, ensuring they resonate with the target audience without losing their original significance. Ultimately, successful translation not only facilitates communication but also fosters a deeper appreciation for each culture's distinct heritage. By recognizing these complexities, we underscore the importance of cultural competence in translation, ultimately enriching the dialogue between Russian and Turkic linguistic communities (Moral M et al., 2008-12-23)(Moral M et al., 2008-12-23).

Summary of key findings

The translation of national-cultural realities from Russian into Turkic languages reveals several key findings that underscore the complexities and nuances involved in this linguistic endeavor. Firstly, it is evident that cultural connotations play a significant role in determining the adequacy of the translated text, as notable discrepancies often arise when cultural contexts are not aligned, leading to potential misinterpretations .

Furthermore, the use of idiomatic expressions and culturally specific references highlights the necessity for translators to not only possess linguistic proficiency but also a deep understanding of both source and target cultures (2007-10). Additionally, varying structures and syntactic norms in Turkic languages can complicate direct translations, necessitating creative adaptation to preserve meaning without compromising cultural significance . Overall, these findings accentuate the essential balance between fidelity to the source material and the need for cultural resonance in translation practices (2007-10).

Future directions for research in translation studies

As translation studies continue to evolve, future research should prioritize the interplay between cultural nuances and linguistic frameworks, particularly in the context of translating national-cultural realities from Russian into Turkic languages. This pursuit requires a nuanced examination of how cultural specificity impacts translation decisions, influencing not only semantics but also the broader socio-political context of the texts involved. Researchers might adopt interdisciplinary approaches, combining insights from anthropology, sociolinguistics, and cognitive science to enhance understanding of cultural translation dynamics. Moreover, the rise of digital and multimedia texts necessitates an exploration of how new technologies—such as machine translation and localization—affect traditional practices of translation. Addressing these aspects comprehensively will not only enrich translation theory but also provide practical applications that foster deeper intercultural communication between Russian and Turkic-speaking populations, thereby laying a robust foundation for future scholarly inquiry (1995-03)(1995-03).

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