THE INFLUENCE OF CULTURAL MISMATCH ON THE TRANSLATION AND USE OF LINGUISTIC ITEMS

F.M. Tursunov
Doctor of Philological Sciences, Professor
of the Department of Comparative Linguistics and
Translation Theory, The Tajik International University
of Foreign Languages named after Sotim Ulughzoda

Abstract *After the collapse of the Soviet Union, its former republics began communicating directly with other Western countries. It can be justified by the facts that, at the end of the last century, we witnessed the revival of national and religious elements of the peoples included in this huge Union. The analysis of the cultural elements affecting the selection of translation methods and the use of specific linguistic items is of linguistic interest.*

Keywords: cultural element, language items, English language, interpretation, translation technique, translation process, use of other languages' items.

According to the theories suggested by prominent Russian and Western scientists, there are some groups of words and expressions that do not have their direct equivalents in other languages – lexical units, idioms, grammatical units, abbreviations, terms, etc. [9; 10; 11]. Along with other factors, this is due to the cultural mismatch of language items.

Peter Newmark classifies cultural words as follows: 1) ecology: flora, fauna, hills, winds, plains; 2) material culture: food, clothes, houses and towns, transport; 3) social culture: work and leisure; 4) organizations, customs, activities, procedures, concepts: political and administrative, religious, artistic; and 5) gestures and habits

[6, 95].

Thus, the words of a language that refer to the beliefs, social customs, historic events, symbols, foods and drinks, geographical formations, and the art and culture of a specific country are considered culture-specific items [4, p. 15].

In this article, we will be dealing with some groups of culture-specific words and expressions, such as geographical formations, personal names, foods, etc. """ and the influence of cultural mismatch on the translation and use of linguistic items by translators and Western newspapers such as *The New York Times* (NYT), *The Guardian* (G) and the electronic texts of Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty (RFE/RL).

It should be noted that "even though the same things, events, and attributes may exist in the referential world, the systems of reference do not match one-to-one across languages" [5, 89] due to different local, cultural, and regional reasons.

It is worth mentioning that mostly transcription/transliteration is used for the translation of culture-specific words, as in the following examples from English into Tajiki:

1. 'Leah, cut a **sandwich** or two (3, 100). - Ли, якчанд **сандвич** омода созед (12, 93).

2. ' Fifty **miles**' (3, 43). - Панҷоҳ **мил** роҳ (12, 39).

3. Miss Smith put into my hands a border of muslin two **yards** long, together with needle…..(3,55). **-** … духтархонум Смит порчае докаро ба дарозии ду **ярд** ҳамроҳи сӯзану ангуштвона дод…..(12,51).

In the first example, we can see **sandwich** as a culture-bound word**.** Indeed, there are some cases when the English words are known throughout the world and make no difficulties for non-English readers to understand. The translation can be

limited here only to transcribing or transliterating a lexical unit, as is the case with **sandwich**. The same is the case with the examples in sentences 2 and 3.

However, there may be cases when an explanation is needed for culture-bound items less known to the receptor.

Note some examples below:

Наво (8,32) – *Navo* (the third part of the Shashmakom) (1, 212).

Абҷад (7, 93) – *Abjad*, the Arabic system of numerology (2, 112).

As it is clear from the above sentences, the translator describes the regionally culture-specific words for the English reader.

We keep in mind that culture-specific items not only cause problems for translation, but they are also challenging elements when writing about people for non-native readers.

These are the examples:

There is a group of words that includes the proper use of Tajiki culture-specific words and expressions and where the rules of transcription/transliteration are observed.

1. "Villagers from **Bachamazor**, Tajikistan collect river water" (G, 17 Feb 2010).

2. "The captives are being held near **Obigarm**, 50 miles east of Dushanbe, the Tajik capital" (*NYT*, 14 Feb 1997).

3. "Juraboev heads a public school in the village of **Qarotogh**, west of the capital, Dushanbe" (*RFE/RL*, 21.11.2012).

The geographical terms ***Bachamazor, Obigarm, Qarotogh***, are easily understood from their context, and their transcription/transliteration is correct.

We find the use of the word *somoni* as a name of national currency interesting: "For example, a jacket and pants cost 800 **somonis** (about $170) but my monthly salary is 500." (RFE/RL, 21 Nov 2012). We used to see ***samani*** in the English texts. However, the author of the sentence used it in a way that is closer to its Tajiki pronunciation and retains its national flavor.

Some other geographical names such as *Khujand* (NYT, 3 Sep 2010), *Qurghonteppa*, *Kulob*, *Khorugh* (RFE/RL, 21 Sep 2012), and *Panj* (NYT, 27 Oct 2010; 9 June 2011; G, 12 Jan 2010), the names of newspapers such as *Ruzi Nav* and *Charoghi Ruz* (G, 3 Aug 2004), personal names such as *Bibisoro Sayidova* (NYT, 24 Dec 2008), *Ruhullo Juraboev* (RFE/RL, 21 Nov 2012), etc., are used the same way as above following Tajiki transcription/transliteration and pronunciation rules and procedures.

The following lexical units contain the incorrect application of transcription/transliteration and pronunciation rules and procedures for Tajiki culture-specific items:

1. "A worker shoveled cotton onto a truck in a factory in **Shaartuz**, in southern Tajikistan" (*NYT*, 14 Oct 2008).

2. "A village and cotton fields near **Shartuz** both disappeared when irrigation ended there" (*NYT*, 31 Aug 2008).

3. "The **Nurek** dam is the world's tallest. Another planned for **Rogun** will be even higher" (*NYT*, 31 Aug 2008)

As we can see from the above examples, the words in our regional concepts have their English versions with the influence of the Russian versions. The fact is that *The New York Times* gives two improper versions of the same word 'Shaartuz' and 'Shartuz', while the proper English version could be ***Shahritus***, which

indicates the correct pronunciation of the word in the Tajiki language and causes no difficulty for speakers of English in terms of pronunciation. The same can be said of the words 'Nurek' and 'Rogun', because there is no Nurek or Rogun in the Tajiki language, although there are the words ***Norak*** and ***Roghun***.

The geographical names ***Tursunzade***, ***Khudjand*** (NYT, 03 Oct 2000), ***Garm*** (NYT, 22 Oct 1996), and ***Shurabod*** (NYT, 09 Jul 2011), and personal names such as ***Tokhir*** (G, 02 Jan 2012), etc. belong to the group above. That is, they are used with the Russian pronunciation of the words while they could have the following simple and proper English versions corresponding to ***Tursunzoda, Khujand, Gharm, Shuroobod***, and ***Tohir***.

In fact, there are many more examples where the transcription and pronunciation do not resemble either the Tajiki or the English forms of the words, although they refer to purely Tajiki national concepts and should not have anything to do with the Russian forms.

The following geographical names have Russian transcription and pronunciation:

1. "But fighting between the opposition and Mr. Nabiyev's supporters, who are concentrated in **Khodzhent** and in the southwestern regions of **Kulyab** and **Kurgan-Tyube**, has increased in recent weeks, with several hundred Afghan Tajiks infiltrating across the border to fight for the opposition." (*NYT*, 8 Sep 1992)

2. "Russian troops have started tactical military exercises at Russia's **Lyaur** military test field near the Tajik capital, Dushanbe" (*RFE/RL*, 19 Sep 2012).

As we can see, the authors of these articles are telling about the lives and events of Tajiks to an English-speaking audience and unreasonably using the Russian forms of Tajiki words instead of using their proper English forms.

Moreover, those events and the two languages have no relation to the Russian language, and the English language has all the means by which to write them as follows: ***Khujand, Kulob, Qurghonteppa,*** and ***Lohur.***

The geographical and personal names require no further explanation, given that they usually become clear from the context, but their transcription and pronunciation should also retain the color of the original language to a certain extent.

The use of some names of Tajik and Uzbek foods also falls into this group:

1. "A spokesman … said residents of the regional capital, Khoruq, were offered pots of the national dish, **plov**, to express the president's thanks for the welcome they had given him during a visit earlier this week" (*RFE/RL*, 23 Sep 2012).

2. "**Kebabs** of pure lamb fat, crisp and smoky, perfume every dining room. Platters of **plov** are enormous" (*NYT*, 18 Jan 2006).

Of course, these words create no particular difficulties for the English reader to understand them because the authors of the articles provide explanations of Tajiki and Uzbek culture-specific words where appropriate. By way of example, in the English sentences we could see expressions such as ***national dish*** and ***lamb fat***, but the original words should have the form ***palov and kabob*** because neither the content of the article nor the author of the article has anything to do with the Russian language.

There is another group of examples that represents the use of not only the Russian spelling of regional words in English texts, but also the use of Russian synonyms for Tajiki and Uzbek words:

"And warm chewy bread called **lepeshka**, like a huge bialy, keeps coming until you say stop" (*NYT*, 18 Jan 2006) and many others.

In the sentence the author means 'bread' by the word ***lepeshka*,** which is clear from his explanation in the text. But there is no '***lepeshka'*** in the Tajiki and Uzbek languages at all. The proper word for this in both languages is ***non***.

These types of misspellings should never occur because they may create precedents for further mistakes and the misuse of culture-specific items in the Tajiki and Uzbek languages. Today, even after the collapse of the Soviet Union, the Russian language still has a positive impact on language processes in the region; however, care should be taken to avoid misuses as shown in the examples above.

Thus, as the analysis shows, cultural mismatch affects the selection of translation strategies in the translation process, as well as the use of culture-specific linguistic items, due to the local, regional, and cultural specificity of languages, and the lack of language units with generic meaning components and the same referential meanings. For the category of the language units under consideration, transcription and transliteration is mostly used as the translation method.

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