
PROBLEMS OF GIVING NATIONAL MENTALITY IN LITERARY TRANSLATION

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ABSTRACT: Literary translation plays a crucial role in fostering intercultural communication by introducing one nation's literary and cultural heritage to another. However, one of the most challenging aspects of this process is conveying the national mentality of the source culture. The complexity arises from differences in worldview, traditions, social norms, and linguistic structures. This paper explores the various problems encountered in reflecting national mentality in literary translation, analyzing how language, cultural allusions, idiomatic expressions, and socio-historical contexts contribute to the difficulties. The study proposes strategies and solutions to overcome these challenges, highlighting the importance of cultural sensitivity, linguistic creativity, and collaboration between translators and cultural experts.

KEYWORDS: Literary translation, national mentality, cultural allusions, idiomatic expressions, linguistic structures, socio-historical context, cultural adaptation, dynamic equivalence, translation challenges, cross-cultural communication.

INTRODUCTION

Literary translation is more than a simple transfer of words from one language to another; it is a complex process that involves the conveyance of culture, ideology, and the unique characteristics of the source language's community. One of the most intricate challenges faced by translators is the task of preserving the national mentality of the original work. National mentality, reflecting the collective consciousness, values, and worldview of a particular society, is often embedded in literary texts through subtle cultural allusions, idiomatic expressions, and historical references. These elements are central to understanding the text in its original context but can be difficult to render into another language without losing their meaning and impact.

As globalization has made literature from diverse cultures more accessible, the role of the translator has become increasingly crucial in bridging cultural divides. However, translators often encounter significant obstacles when attempting to accurately convey the national mentality of the source text. This problem is not merely a linguistic one but also involves understanding and interpreting the socio-cultural nuances, historical background, and the emotional or symbolic weight carried by certain terms and phrases.

National mentality is shaped by historical, social, and cultural experiences. It includes a collective set of values, beliefs, and customs that are expressed through language and literature. In literature, these aspects are often reflected in the choice of words, idioms, stylistic devices, and

narrative structures. Literary works serve as vehicles for transmitting national culture and identity, making it crucial for translators to understand and convey these elements accurately. Language is deeply intertwined with culture, acting as both a reflection and a repository of national identity. Many elements of language, such as idiomatic expressions, metaphors, and cultural references, are grounded in the national mentality of a people. For example, idioms that are clear to native speakers often lose their meaning when translated literally. This poses significant challenges in literary translation, as such idioms may carry cultural connotations and historical significance that are difficult to replicate in the target language.

One of the most significant challenges in literary translation is conveying cultural allusions. Literary works often contain references to historical events, religious beliefs, social practices, or iconic national figures that may be unknown to foreign readers. For example, in translating Uzbek literature, concepts tied to traditional festivals like "Navruz" or specific historical figures such as "Amir Temur" might not have direct equivalents in other cultures.

Idiomatic expressions are highly culture-specific and are often rooted in the experiences and worldview of a particular society. In translation, maintaining the essence of these expressions while adapting them to the target language is difficult. For instance, the English idiom "raining cats and dogs" cannot be translated literally into most languages without losing its meaning. In the context of translating works that convey national mentality, these idiomatic expressions may be key to understanding the underlying social and cultural dynamics of the source culture.

Another problem lies in the different syntactic and grammatical structures between languages. For example, some languages, like Uzbek or Russian, tend to use long, complex sentences with numerous clauses, while English and many other Western languages favor shorter, more concise sentences. Stylistic devices, such as alliteration, rhyme, and rhythm, also differ from one language to another, and their translation can alter the tone or aesthetic of the original text.

Literary works often reflect the socio-historical context of a particular time and place. Translators may face the challenge of translating not only the text but also the historical and social context that surrounds it. Without understanding these aspects, a translation may fail to capture the spirit of the original work. This is particularly relevant in works that reflect the national struggles, triumphs, or tragedies of a people, as these are central to the national mentality conveyed through literature.

One effective strategy for translating national mentality is the use of cultural adaptation, where translators substitute unfamiliar cultural references with ones more relatable to the target audience while retaining the original text's meaning and essence. This method, known as dynamic equivalence, allows the translator to convey the same cultural impact without losing the text's authenticity.

When cultural or historical references are crucial to the narrative, but cannot be easily translated, footnotes or explanatory notes can provide additional context for the reader. This ensures that the reader gains a fuller understanding of the cultural background while still enjoying the flow of the literary work.

For particularly challenging texts, collaborating with cultural or literary experts from the source country can be invaluable. These experts can help ensure that the national mentality and cultural nuances are accurately represented in the translation, thus avoiding misunderstandings or misinterpretations.

Translators often need to strike a balance between being faithful to the original text and exercising creativity to ensure the translation resonates with the target audience. This is particularly important when dealing with idiomatic expressions and cultural references that cannot be directly translated.

The translation of literary works that embody national mentality presents significant challenges due to differences in language, culture, and socio-historical contexts. Translators must not only convey the literal meaning of the text but also the cultural nuances that define the national identity of the source culture. By employing strategies such as cultural adaptation, explanatory notes, and collaboration with experts, translators can overcome these challenges and ensure that the national mentality of the original text is accurately and meaningfully conveyed in the target language.

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