

# LEXICAL TRANSFORMATIONS IN THE KAZAKH-ENGLISH TRANSLATION

(on Abai's poetry and prose)

Almanova Biybinaz, a 2<sup>nd</sup> year MA student,

Translation Studies Department, Al-Farabi KazNU,

Subject prof.: Dadebaev Jankar

*Nature can die, but humans are immortal...*

It is important for the translator to understand and feel special style of the author he translates. Using a different language from the author's the translator must reflect the author's emotions and feelings, his style and his features. However, would it be enough to cover the style only? Or are there other pitfalls before translators? Thus, we focus on the issue that what requirements are put for translators in order to deal with the source text in terms of its originality, lexical meaning, ways and procedures to handle as a best option for his translation.

According to I.R. Galperin, stylistic problems of translation may be approached from several angles: language styles, their peculiarities, their goals and interrelation; stylistic meaning of words; stylistic devices, their nature and structure, their expressive function; foregrounding of linguistic means for stylistic purposes and its attention-attracting function [5;24].

Thus, we have founded it necessary to learn Abai's writing style not only as a poet and translator but a prosperous man of politics and philosophy seen through his wisest words and sayings brought in the Kazakh life. In fact, Abai who is a great poet of steppe was the first to enrich Kazakh poetry with philosophy. His poetry is powerful by color and literacy as well as being melodic and *mysterious*.

Accordingly, it should be noted that translator render a various types of transformations and methods in their translation. However, when it comes to Abai's poems there are no other ways to transmit moral lessons but the understanding of the harmony of the thoughts. Therefore, the following poem can have been translated by the type of transformation types such as **generalization**.

In Kazakh (original):

*Өлсе өлер табиғат, адам өлмес*

*Ол бірақ қайтып келіп, ойнап күлмес*

***Мен мен менікінің айрылғанын***

*Өлді деп ат қойыпты өнкей білмес.*

*Көп адам дүниеге бой алдырған*

*Бой алдырып, аяғын көп шалдырған*

*Өлді деуге сыя ма айтыңдаршы*

*Өлмейтұғын артына сөз қалдырған.*

In English:

*Nature can die, but humans are immortal,  
but they can't return, nor joke and laugh again.*

*The ignoramuses called death*

***the parting between "I" and "mine".***

*Many are captives of the transitory,  
and so they trip and fall.*

*But can one say "died" about one  
who left behind immortal words?*

Generalization is a type of lexical transformations which is used to generalize the similar meanings into the whole meaning. It is usually seen when two or more sentences are changed into one sentence in its overall thoughts. We tend to believe that above mentioned poem has been translated into English through generalization by Richard McKean.

As a result of our analysis, we have researched the conceptual meanings of the poem into the human life in its original context. The translator refers to use of the rhythms "a-b" and "a-b".

In Russian:

*Природа смертна, вечен человек,  
Но где же он? Где жизнь его? Где век?  
«Я» и «мое» меж ними расставанье  
Надежды смертью нарекли навек.  
В плену минут, покуда плоть жива  
Ты на ухабах держишься едва  
Не говори: «он умер!» - он оставил (ведь)  
Другим свои бессмертные слова.*

Indeed, its Russian translation might represent the reader its rhythms like "a-a-b-a", which keeps the original image both in the meaning and picturesqueness. It is fairly difficult to translate poems as they follow a definite image and style of the poet, which requires the translator to be a poet as well. In order to support the statement above, we would suggest our own translation verse from its source language such as Kazakh and interpretation straightly into English.

\*\*\*

*Nature can die, though humans are immortal  
They can't return nor joke and joy again at all  
The stupid would say he's gone if he's dyeing*

*After making apart “I” and “mine”.*  
*There are many to be born into the world,*  
*But, they have pitfalls to stand in life*  
*How to bear one’s word “he is died”?*  
*If there are immortal words left behind.*

According to the types of semantic changes in the translation, there exists the same meaning of the object which was transmitted as well as the relationship of concepts of the poetry lines which correlate with the author’s intention. The Kazakh poetry has a unique structure of expressing minds due to its deepest language varieties.

In Kazakh (original):  
*Жасымда ғылым бар деп ескермедім,*  
*Падасын көре тұра тексермедім,*  
*Ержеткен соң түспеді уысыма,*  
*Қолымды мезгілінен кеш сермедім. [1:43]*

The original is expressed by the word expressions such as “*Ержеткен соң түспеді уысыма*” which stands for the meaning “*I have grown enough to learn to*”. In addition, the fourth line “*Қолымды мезгілінен кеш сермедім*” means it was too late to care about the knowledge, which relates to the feelings like regret, feel sorry for the a part of his life. It belongs to **substitution** of the whole meaning.

In Russian:  
*Я презрел познание, юноша пустой,*  
*Видал пользу в нем, но шел стезей другой.*  
*Возмужал – наука из-под рук ушла,*  
*Поздно к ней ты устремился, разум мой!*  
*Кто повинен, что **остался я ни с чем,***  
*Смолоду учась, я был не такой! [2:38]*

\*\*\*

*К наукам я холоден в юности был*  
*Их пользу я видел, но смысла не знал*  
*По зрелости лет потянулся я к ним*  
*Увы, ухватить их я суть опоздал.*

In contrast, its English translation is also compiled by **substitution** and **addition** which applies the whole meaning in the way of positioning its original meaning in the second language. If we compare its variant equivalents, then we could see how the meaning substitutes to its target equivalents. What’s more, there is also a lexical-grammatical type of transformations called

addition in the Russian translation. The expressive and imaginary color of the fourth line is expressed by the additional word “Увы”, which stands for “sorrow” due to its context.

In English:

*When I was young I didn't give much thought to knowledge*

*I saw its use: but didn't test it out*

*When I grew up I didn't know how to latch onto it*

*I stretched out my hand to it late [2:21].*

In fact, the English translation covers ,more precisely, a lexical-semantic type of transformation such as *differentiation* shown in the expressions like “Жасымда” and “Ержеткен соң” relating to its source expressions “When I was young” and “When I grew up”. Syntactically, such kind of structure lies upon the word order and clauses of the language. However, we could propose other implications to its translation in the following way:

\*\*\*

*When I was young I ain't care about knowledge*

*Though I saw its use, didn't regard its need,*

*When I grew up I ain't know how try again*

*As it was too late for me to concern or heed .*

It is necessary to focus on the target text culture while translating the original. In some cases of the literary English language, we could see the term “ain't” means “am not, is not, has not, did not, have not”, which is used in poetry lines in English for rhetorical effect. Thus, we have implied the mentioned term in our ideal translation.

There is also another genre of writing which is so-called *prose*. In the period of his creative evolutionary life, Abai writes prose about personality and the world around him in which expressed his feelings towards people and personal reflections on life. For instance, we could start with the *Book of Words*. His prominent sayings are still being researched which highlight the life of Kazakh people and specific ways of thoughts.

### **Word One.**

*In Kazakh (original): Бұл жасқа келгенше жақсы өткіздік пе, жаман қткіздік пе, айтеуір бірталай өмірімізді өткіздік: алыстық, жұлыстық, айтыстық, тартыстық-аурешілікті көре-көре келдік. Енді жер ортасы жасқа келдік: қажылдық, жалықтық; қылып жүрген ісіміздің баянсызын, байлаусызын көрдік, бәрі қоршылық екенін көрдік.*

Abai considered using his words in a philosophical, didactics way under the conception of Islam religious conditions. In this way, he avoids the usage of a lot of words in his saying. In turn, his words became quotes for everyday life as well being proverbs in literary use.

The Russian translation refers to the **generalization** of the whole ideas in the text. Because, the original word expressions are rendered by Russian words through general meaning.

**In Russian:** *Хорошо я жил или плохо, а пройдено немало: в борьбе и ссорах, судах и спорах, страданиях и тревогах дошел до преклонных лет, выбившись из сил, пресытившись всем, обнаружил бренность и бесплодность своих деяний, убедился в униженности своего бытия.*

However, the following translation uses a lexical-semantic translation so-called **sense development** expressed by the “*travelling a long road fraught*” instead of “*a lot and enough*”, which develops the expressiveness of the context. In addition, there is also a phrase which means “*at my elderly age*” and it is rendered by the expression like “*these advanced years to find myself at the end of my tether*”.

**In English:** *Whether for good or ill, I have lived my life, travelling a long road fraught with struggles and quarrels, disputes and arguments, suffering and anxiety, and reached these advanced years to find myself at the end of my tether, tired of everything. I realized the vanity and futility of my labors and the meanness of my existence.*

Sometimes, there are some linguistic factors of the language which can be a great challenge for translators. Such kind of difficulty is met in the following sentence. In order to cope with Russian and English translation, the translators have employed the **antonymic translation** for the expression “*Көкірек толған қайғы кісінің өзіне де билетпейді*”. The target variants will be “*Печаль омрачает нам душу*” in Russian and “*Sorrow darkens the soul*” in the English translation.

The idea of word construction in his **words** relate to some specific thoughts. As M. Avesov pointed in 1933 that the importance of words are not based on an absolute melody of the words, but the philosophical turn-out which can be coordinated with either Islam religion, cognition, or knowledge and art [4:38].

### **Word Five**

**In Kazakh (original):** *Көкірек толған қайғы кісінің өзіне де билетпейді, бойды шымырлытып, буынды құртып, иә көзден жас болып ағады, иә тілден сөз болып атылады.*

**In Russian:** *Печаль омрачает нам душу, леденит тело, сковывает волю и, наконец, изливается словами из уст или слезами из глаз.*

**In English:** *Sorrow darkens the soul, chills the body, numbs the will, and then bursts forth in words and tears.*

Lexically, phraseological units play important role in the literary work as they represent the culture and language features. It is often observed that only competent translators can deal

with specific phrases and idioms. Hence, they use mostly substitutions and modifications in translation. For instance, the Kazakh ethnic idiom “*буынды құртын*” is rarely met in other cultures. So, the task here undergoes to find subsequent variant of the idiom or just a phraseological unit, which might well change the lexical meaning of the context.

In conclusion, there are a lot differences between languages according to the model such as Kazakh-English-Russian. As languages vary, their structure and features are distinguished owing to language patterns. As a consequence of our research and analysis, we tend to make some implications on the usage of lexical transformations in the translation. Either Russian or English languages does not employ the same transformations. On the basis of the our research the following types of transformations are believed to have been used in the translations:

- ❖ Differentiation (English)
- ❖ Substitution (Russian)
- ❖ Generalization (both English and Russian)
- ❖ Addition (Russian)
- ❖ Sense development (English)
- ❖ Antonymic translation (both English and Russian)

Scientifically, according to the research materials and case study results, on the one hand, the Kazakh source text can be translated into English via such types of transformations as differentiation, generalization, sense development and antonymic translation. On the other hand, Russian translations can refer to substitution, generalization, addition, and antonymic translation. In its turn, generalization is considerably employed in translations from Kazakh into English and Russian.

### *References*

1. Abai (Ibrahim) Kunanbaev. 1970 Selection/Translations from Kazakh. Moscow. Literary Literature. p.43
2. Abai Kunanbaev. 2005. “*Abai: Book of words*”. Abai International Club. Amanat; Cemey. pp.8-21.
3. Abai Kunanbaev. 2007. «Kara Soz» «Kniga Slov» London.: EL Bureau,.(ed. 1995). p.51
4. Avezov M.O. 1967. “*Abai Kunanbaev. Scientific articles and researches*”. Almaty. p.38
5. Galperin I.R. 1977. Kishinev.: “*About the analysis of the language and style of the writer. Collection of articles*”; Shtiintsa, p.24.