



INDIRECT TRANSLATION AS A MECHANISM FOR CONCEPTUAL TRANSFORMATION: LINGUOCULTURAL CHANGES IN THE PROVERB SYSTEM

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In the context of globalization and intensive intercultural interaction, translation is increasingly viewed not merely as a linguistic operation but as a form of cultural transmission. A translator encounters not only the lexico-grammatical system of a foreign text, but also a different worldview embedded in linguistic structures. This is particularly evident in the translation of proverbs, as they represent stable folklore units that encode national values, cultural stereotypes, and behavioral models. Unlike neutral utterances, a proverb condenses the generalized life experience of a people; therefore, its translation is inevitably connected with the transformation of conceptual content. In this regard, indirect translation is of particular interest, as it functions as a mechanism of linguocultural change within the proverb system.

Modern translation theory emphasizes that translation does not involve the mechanical reproduction of a text, but rather the interaction and correlation of two cultural systems. According to V. N. Komissarov, translation requires taking into account differences in linguistic and cultural norms, since any text functions within a specific social environment [Komissarov, 1990, p. 37]. In the case of proverbs, this task becomes even more complex: the translator deals with a unit in which linguistic form is inseparably intertwined with a national value system. A proverb thus functions not only as a means of communication but also as a carrier of cultural memory, transmitting stable patterns of perceiving and interpreting reality.

In linguoculturology, a proverb is regarded as a representation of a concept—a mental unit of collective consciousness that includes conceptual, figurative, and value components. A concept is formed through the historical experience of a people and reflects their ideas about the world, the individual, society, and morality. V. A. Maslova emphasizes that stable linguistic units preserve a “nationally specific vision of the world” [Maslova, 2001, p. 54]. Consequently, the translation of a proverb inevitably affects a deep cultural layer in which the axiological dominants of a particular ethnos are concentrated.

Indirect translation refers to the transfer of a text not directly from the source language, but through an intermediate language or an already adapted cultural model. In the history of literature and folklore, this practice was widespread: many ancient and Eastern texts entered national traditions through intermediary languages, which inevitably influenced their semantic structure. Within the framework of descriptive translation theory, G. Toury argues that translated texts tend to orient themselves toward the norms of the receiving culture and conform to its expectations [Toury, 1995, p. 56]. This observation is especially relevant for proverbs, since they are incorporated into an existing system of values and adjusted accordingly.



One of the key mechanisms of conceptual transformation in indirect translation is the replacement of the figurative base. Imagery in a proverb functions as a cultural code, conveying the specifics of historical experience, everyday realities, and ideological attitudes. If the original image proves incomprehensible or culturally irrelevant in the receiving environment, it is often replaced with a more familiar one. For example, the English proverb "The early bird catches the worm" is, in a number of cultures, rendered as the Russian expression «Кто рано встаёт, тому Бог подаёт». In this case, the zoomorphic image of the bird and the worm—characteristic of the English-speaking tradition—disappears, while the religious component becomes more prominent. The concepts of TIME and LABOR are preserved, yet their interpretation changes: the pragmatic model of initiative and efficiency gives way to a moral-religious orientation toward divine reward.

Such shifts reflect a change in the axiological center. In English culture, emphasis is placed on personal initiative and productivity, whereas in the Russian interpretation the idea of higher justice and divine favor is foregrounded. A. Wierzbicka notes that cultural differences become visible in the distinct interpretative scenarios applied to similar life situations [Wierzbicka, 1996, p. 112]. Indirect translation thus becomes an instrument for reinterpreting the original concept in accordance with the cultural expectations of the receiving community.

Another mechanism of transformation involves changes in the value component. The Latin expression "Homo homini lupus est," disseminated through various European languages, has received different interpretations across cultures. In some traditions, it is understood as a statement about the natural aggressiveness of human beings; in others, it functions as a moral warning against cruelty. When a text enters a new cultural environment, it becomes integrated into a different semiotic system. As Yu. M. Lotman observed, a text transferred into another cultural space inevitably begins to function according to new laws [Lotman, 2000, p. 132]. As a result, the concept of MAN in this proverb may shift from a neutral philosophical observation to an explicit ethical evaluation.

Indirect translation may also generate additional semantic nuances. Biblical proverbs transmitted through Greek and Latin translations frequently acquired new interpretations. The expression "An eye for an eye, a tooth for a tooth" is perceived in some cultures as a principle of proportional justice, while in others it symbolizes cruelty or revenge. In each case, the concept of JUSTICE correlates with national legal and moral traditions. Thus, indirect translation not only conveys meaning but reshapes it in accordance with the cultural context.

Linguocultural transformations affect not only individual proverbs but the paremiological system as a whole. Borrowed expressions that have passed through several linguistic filters gradually become integrated into the national corpus and interact with traditional units. This may result in the expansion of the semantic field of certain concepts or in a redistribution of value emphases. In the modern era, under the influence of English-speaking culture, expressions associated with success, efficiency, and personal responsibility are increasingly widespread in many languages. Their integration demonstrates the dynamism of national systems and their capacity for adaptation.

In the Uzbek cultural tradition, where collectivism, respect for elders, and family harmony occupy a central position, the adaptation of foreign proverbs is often accompanied by the strengthening of their moral and ethical dimension. Even if the source text has a pragmatic orientation, indirect translation may impart additional moral significance. In Russian culture,



borrowed proverbs frequently acquire philosophical depth and emotional resonance, reflecting the particular features of national world perception. In the English worldview, by contrast, emphasis tends to be placed on rationality and individual responsibility. Passing through these cultural filters, indirect translation functions as a mechanism for adapting concepts to a new value system.

It is important to note that conceptual transformation does not necessarily imply distortion. On the contrary, indirect translation may foster cultural enrichment by expanding the conceptual space of a language. Proverbs that have traversed multiple cultural environments often acquire a more universal character while retaining national nuances. This process reflects an ongoing dialogue between cultures and demonstrates the flexibility of linguistic systems.

At the same time, excessive adaptation may lead to the erosion of cultural specificity. If an image is entirely replaced by a neutral formula, the proverb loses its historical grounding and becomes an abstract maxim. Maintaining a balance between adaptation and authenticity therefore remains one of the key challenges in translating folklore units.

Thus, indirect translation should be regarded as a complex linguocultural mechanism of conceptual transformation. Through interlingual mediation, figurative structures are altered, axiological dominants shift, and cultural components are either introduced or diminished. Proverbs, as carriers of national values, are particularly sensitive to such processes, since they encode collective experience and worldview. The study of indirect translation therefore contributes to a deeper understanding of intercultural communication and reveals the dynamics of change within the linguistic picture of the world in the context of global cultural exchange.

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