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The peculiarities of Mukhtar Auezov's translation of William Shakespeare's play "Othello"

In the article the features of William Shakespeare's play "Othello" in Kazakh language translated by Mukhtar Omarkhanuli Auezov were demonstrated. The comparison of three variants was considered by the author: original, the version of "Othello" by Mukhtar Auezov in Kazakh language and the version by Anna Radlova in Russian. The research was conducted using a comparative method to analyze three variants of "Othello" in detail. According to the results of the study, the peculiarities of "Othello" in Kazakh language were indicated, and differences of three variants were revealed. In particular, the translation of some phrases, the use of generalization, interpreting the words of spheres of religion and mythology into Kazakh language were studied and demonstrated in detail. The article shows that Mukhtar Auezov masterfully translated one of the most famous plays of William Shakespeare into such an absolutely different Turkic language as Kazakh language. The results of the article can be applied in higher educational institutions at lectures and in practical classes as an auxiliary material for learners in the specialty of "Philology and literary studies". Moreover, provided data can be useful for research work of students, undergraduates and doctoral students.

Keywords: Shakespeare in translation, literary translation, cultural substitution, generalization technique, comparative method, mythological references, religious context.

Introduction

The translation of literary works across languages constitutes a complex process, necessitating proficiency across diverse domains. Initially, translators engage in a thorough examination of the original works and their creators. Subsequently, they delve into the contextual intricacies, encompassing the socio-historical milieu, temporal setting, and various intrinsic attributes of the work itself. Real translation work, as it was articulated by L.I. Mingazova and B.O. Orazova, is an art that involves spiritual activity and has been practiced for many centuries [1; 139].

Translators undertaking the endeavor of rendering seminal works by renowned authors exhibit a commendable resolve, given the anticipated scrutiny, critique, and analysis their efforts are bound to undergo. Mukhtar Auezov stands as no exception within this cadre of intrepid translators. He related and brought closer exemplary types of drama through translated plays [2; 7]. The initial staging of his translation of "Othello" occurred in 1939, marking its debut on the theatrical stage. Notably, contemporary audiences continue to be captivated by this rendition in the Kazakh language, serving as a testament to Mukhtar Omarkhanuli's exemplary translation quality.

The importance and impact of M. Auezov's translation endeavors were underscored by the Kazakh scholar Dandai Yskak: "A significant event in Kazakh culture was the successful translation of the drama "Othello" by M. Auezov, who made a historical contribution to the entry of Kazakh drama and Kazakh theater onto the world stage. As soon as it was translated, it was staged at the Kazakh Drama Theater and had a great success. To this day, it continues to be performed on the theatrical stage of Kazakhstan" [3].

The play "Othello", featuring a Moorish general in the Venetian army, explores numerous themes that make it a timeless tragedy, as emphasized by many scholars. For example, Peter J. Smith, in his article "A good soft pillow for that good white head: Othello as comedy", gives following description to the play "Othello": "The play is contemporary in time, space and occurrence: it is merely about infidelity (or rather suspected infidelity), about jealousy, about petty rivalry (one soldier is promoted over the head of another), and about the ubiquity and tyranny of desire" [4; 22].

Similar conclusions were also made by Kazakhstani researchers: "The richness of the theme, the clarity of ideological focus, and the deeply realistic view of everyday events raised Shakespeare's tragedies to a higher level. That is why his dramatic work has firmly established itself on the stages of theaters around the

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world and continues to excite audiences to this day” [5; 75]. Thus, the contemporaneity of play defines its topicality for the research.

The original play “Othello” by W. Shakespeare was translated into Kazakh from Russian language, as many other literary works of a great playwright. “Othello”, in turn, has been translated into Russian by more than twenty different translators, among them were N. Ketcher, P. Veinberg, A. Radlova, M.L. Lozinsky, B.L. Pasternak, and K. Morozov [6; 258]. Whereas among Kazakh writers only Mukhtar Auevov took the responsibility to translate “Othello”, and in his work he employed A. Radlova’s variant of a tragedy.

The poetess Anna Radlova was a central figure in the period of “accurate” translation. Her translations have been actively published and staged since the mid-1930s. The main characteristics of A. Radlova’s translations are associated with an orientation towards theatrical rather than book Shakespeare: brevity of constructions, emotional richness, colloquial vocabulary [7; 27]. This also underscores the rationale behind M. Auevov’s selection of her variant, as he was particularly focused on translation for the theater. This is evident in his article “Translated Plays on the Kazakh Stage”, as well as his dual role as both translator and educator-stage director, wherein he imparted the intricacies of Shakespearean dramaturgy to actors.

To conduct the research, three literary works were selected as primary sources: “The tragedy of Othello The Moor of Venice By William Shakespeare” edited by Barbara A. Mowat & Paul Werstine in English; M. Auevov’s Kazakh language variant of “Othello”, published in 2004 as a part of a collection of translated works by W. Shakespeare; and Anna Radlova’s Russian variant, “The tragedy of Othello, the Moor of Venice”, published in 1936.

The aim of the paper appears to be twofold: first, to analyze how M. Auevov translated Shakespeare’s “Othello” into Kazakh, examining specific linguistic and cultural choices made during the translation process; second, to highlight the significance of these choices in shaping the perception and reception of the play among Kazakh readers. The given research explores various aspects of the translation, including the adaptation of language and cultural references, the use of specific phrases and terminology, and the overall impact on reader comprehension and engagement. Through these analyses, the study aims to demonstrate M. Auevov’s careful consideration of the Kazakh audience’s mindset, religion, history, and culture, and how these factors contribute to the play’s popularity and enduring relevance in Kazakhstani theaters. Ultimately, the article underscores the importance of translation not only as a linguistic endeavor but also as a cultural and literary one, emphasizing the role of translators in bridging linguistic and cultural gaps and facilitating cross-cultural understanding and appreciation.

Research methods

The research will be conducted employing a comparative method to undertake a detailed analysis of three renditions of “Othello”: the original, the Kazakh translation, and the Russian translation. The study will focus on examining the translation of specific elements, including phrases, religious terminology, and mythological references, with corresponding explanations provided. Additionally, the research will explore instances of generalization techniques employed by M. Auevov, as well as instances where phrases are substituted with those unique to the Kazakh language.

Results and Discussion

Czech literary scholar Jiří Levý stated, “The playwright (and, accordingly, the translator of the drama too) needs to “build the phrase so that ... its expressive qualities are already predetermined by the very construction of the sentence” in order to “inspire the actor how to pronounce the remark” by this very construction” [8; 21].

M. Auevov employed such construction, as the Kazakh variant begins differently compared to its original and Russian variants. For example, consider the opening line of Roderigo:

Original	Russian variant in Anna Radlova’s translation	Kazakh variant in Mukhtar Auevov’s translation
<Tush,> never tell me! I take it much unkindly That thou, Iago, who hast had my purse As if the strings were thine, shouldst know of this [9; 7].	Не говори. Мне очень неприятно, Что ты, распоряжаясь, как хозяин, Моими деньгами, об этом знал [10; 180].	Жөнел! Жоғал! Өкпелемеймін мен саған. Алтынымды қалтамнан Өз мүлкіндей көруші ең. Ұятың қайда біліп жүріпсің [11; 10].

We observe that M. Auezov chose to commence with phrases: “Жөнел! Жоғал!” which convey the meaning of “go away, get lost, disappear, vanish”. Although equivalents are absent in the English and Russian versions, it is evident that the author initiated his translation in this manner to underscore Roderigo’s anger. Without such expressions, it could prove challenging for both actors and readers to comprehend Roderigo’s emotional state.

The following example illustrates how Mukhtar Auezov substituted the original phrase with one more suitable for his readers, thereby enhancing comprehension and cultural relevance.

Original	Russian variant in Anna Radlova’s translation	Kazakh variant in Mukhtar Auezov’s translation
О heaven! How got she out? О treason of the blood! [9; 19]	Как выбралась она? — Измена крови! [10; 187]	Үйден қайтіп шықты екен. Атадан азған [11;16].

If A. Radlova’s translation adhered closely to the original, M. Auezov made the decision to alter it to the phrase “Атадан азған”. While the word “ата” typically translates to “grandfather”, it holds multiple meanings and nuances. In the given context, it reflects the Kazakh cultural belief that blood lineage passes through the male line, from father to child. Additionally, according to the Kazakh dictionary, “азу” signifies “to take the wrong path” [12; 36]. Hence, readers can discern that the phrase “Атадан азған”, chosen by M. Auezov, conveys a similar meaning to both the English and Russian equivalents of “treason of the blood”. This demonstrates the translator’s adeptness in finding an alternative phrase with comparable significance within the Kazakh language.

The play “Othello” incorporates numerous references to mythological creatures, which adds complexity to Shakespeare’s work and gives it a distinct feature. However, this also presents several challenges during the translation process. This can be attributed to the relatively limited familiarity with Greek mythology, not only among Kazakh people but also among Turkic communities as a whole. Consequently, the names of various mythological creatures mentioned in “Othello” may be unfamiliar to them. The adept handling of such situations in the translation process demonstrates the skill and mastery of the interpreter.

For instance:

Original	Russian variant in Anna Radlova’s translation	Kazakh variant in Mukhtar Auezov’s translation
By Janus, I think no [9; 23].	Нет, Янусом клянусь! [10; 189]	Жоға, құдай үшін [11; 18]

Mukhtar Auezov employed the technique of generalization to enhance the clarity of certain terms for Kazakh readers. Instead of utilizing the unfamiliar term “Janus”, he opted for the word “құдай”, meaning “God”, thereby ensuring greater comprehension among his audience. Indeed, the decision to employ a more commonly understood term such as “God” rather than retaining “Janus” was apt.

The next example also demonstrates the usage of generalization:

Original	Russian variant in Anna Radlova’s translation	Kazakh variant in Mukhtar Auezov’s translation
It is a business of some heat. The galleys Have sent a dozen sequent messengers [9; 23]	Должно быть, дело жаркое. С галер Двенадцать вестников друг другу вслед [10; 189]	Тағы пәле бар білем. Кемеден бірі, артынан біреуі, [11; 18]

The word “Кеме” carries the meaning of “ship” or “vessel”. It appears that M. Auezov chose not to use the term “galley”, as its specificity might hinder comprehension for his readers and detract from the overall understanding of the text.

Furthermore, given that “Othello” incorporates numerous mythological references, occasional parallels can be drawn between Roman mythology and Turkic traditions. For example:

Original	Russian variant in Anna Radlova's translation	Kazakh variant in Mukhtar Auevov's translation
A sennight's speed. Great Jove, Othello guard, [9; 65]	Пришел. Юпитер, сохрани Отелло [10; 213]	Я тәңірі, Отеллоны сактай гөр, [11; 38]

If in Roman mythology the god of the sky and thunder was named as Jove, then Turkic people referred to him as Tengri. The example provided above illustrates the substitution of word “Jove” with the word “тәңірі” in Kazakh, which translates to “Tengri” in English.

Russian literary scholar Vladimir M. Rossels asserted, “After all, a translated work belongs simultaneously to two creators — the author and the translator, moreover, in fact, belongs to two literatures!” [8; 5]. The same principle applies to “Othello” translated into the Kazakh language, as evidenced by the examples provided above and below.

Like any skilled interpreter, M. Auevov endeavored to find improved variants for certain phrases in his native language. By doing so, the work would become more comprehensible and appealing to readers. For instance:

Original	Russian variant in Anna Radlova's translation	Kazakh variant in Mukhtar Auevov's translation
For this was brief — I found them close together At blow and thrust, even as again they were When you yourself did part them [9; 97].	Недолго было это, — я увидел Их в дикой драке, в том же положении, Когда вы развели их [10; 233].	Әп-сәт еді — көз алдымда Қырық пышак, барлық жайы Өзіңіз кеп айырғандай [11; 53]

“At blow and thrust” generally conveys the meaning of “fighting, hitting, kicking, pushing”, and similar actions. However, M. Auevov opted not for simple form, but instead chose to infuse the translated variant with its own Kazakh peculiarity. “Қырық пышак” denotes “stabbing” or a “knife fight”. Although Cassio used a sword in the altercation, the author adeptly found an appropriate phrase in the Kazakh language. While the meaning is preserved, the manner in which the author presented it was ideal.

The excerpt below shows another example of the translation of the name of a Goddess:

Original	Russian variant in Anna Radlova's translation	Kazakh variant in Mukhtar Auevov's translation
Her name, that was as fresh As Dian's visage [9; 145]	Ее ведь имя чисто, Как лик Дианы [10; 261]	Оның аты әулиейей таза еді [11; 76]

“Dian”, originally defined as a goddess of women and of nature, became associated with the Greek Artemis and was later venerated as the goddess of the moon and the hunt [13; 90]. There is no direct equivalent in Turkic mythology, which led the interpreter to utilize the most suitable term, “әулие”, meaning “saint” or “holy”.

The following example demonstrates how M. Auevov adeptly substituted the original phrase with Kazakh equivalent without altering its meaning:

Original	Russian variant in Anna Radlova's translation	Kazakh variant in Mukhtar Auevov's translation
But sith I am entered in this cause so far [9; 147]	Но раз уж я зашел так далеко [10; 262]	Белшеден бір-ақ батқан соң [11; 77].

While the Russian version was translated directly, Mukhtar Auevov opted to use a phrase that would be more comprehensible for Kazakh readers. Thus, he employed the phrase “белшеден бату”, which translates to “go too far” or “to be locked into an untenable position”.

Another example of employing the same technique is provided below:

Original	Russian variant in Anna Radlova's translation	Kazakh variant in Mukhtar Aueзов's translation
Can ransom me into his love again [9; 161]	Что выкупить любовь его нельзя [10; 272]	Жүзі маған жылынбаса [11; 84]

The Russian and English variants are the same: “ransom his love”, whereas the Kazakh translator found the perfect phrase in Kazakh language, “жүзі жылыну”, which means “to become kind” or “to soften”.

In light of this, we would like to reference the words of the French theorist G. Mounin, who asserted, “If a translator deviates from verbatim accuracy, then he always does so for reasons behind which his entire civilization stands” [14; 85-86].

The translation of words from a religious context had a significant impact on the translated version of “Othello” in Kazakh language. Words from other religions, which were unfamiliar to Kazakhs, who are predominantly Muslims, were translated by M. Aueзов in a more appropriate and understandable manner. For example:

Original	Russian variant in Anna Radlova's translation	Kazakh variant in Mukhtar Aueзов's translation
Patience, thou young and rose-lipped cherubin [9; 197]	Терпенье, нежногубый херувим [10; 295]	Нәзік ерін періште едің [11; 102]

“Cherubin” is entirely unfamiliar to Kazakh readers, prompting M. Aueзов to translate it as “періште”, meaning “angel”. Consequently, the word retains its original meaning while remaining comprehensible to individuals of other religious backgrounds.

A similar example is provided below:

Original	Russian variant in Anna Radlova's translation	Kazakh variant in Mukhtar Aueзов's translation
No, as I am a Christian! [9; 199]	Нет, клянусь христовой верой [10; 296]	Емеспін, иманыммен ант етем [11; 103].

Radlova translated it as “I swear by Christian faith”, whereas in the Kazakh language, the translator used the word “иман”. The meaning of the word “Иман” in Sharia is to confirm and accept without any doubt the exact judgments that came to the Holy Prophet from Allah, and sincerely believe in their truth [15].

The next excerpt also reveals the translation of a religious context:

Original	Russian variant in Anna Radlova's translation	Kazakh variant in Mukhtar Aueзов's translation
Well, do it, and be brief [9; 237].	Молись же, только кратко [10; 320].	Намаз оқы, қысқа оқы [11; 122].

If in W. Shakespeare's and A. Radlova's variants the word “pray” was used, then in M. Aueзов's variant the word “намаз” was employed, which is typical only for Muslims. The meaning of the word is prayers performed by Muslims.

In concluding our analysis, we would like to reference the words of the Russian literary scholar Vladimir M. Rossels, who remarked that “The end result of the creative process is not translation itself, but its perception, or, as Jiří Levý says, concretization in the mind of the reader” [8; 19].

In this regard, we can definitely say that M. Aueзов focused not only on translating the play but also on its perception by Kazakh readers.

Conclusions

The popularity and acceptance of W. Shakespeare's play in Kazakhstan are closely linked to how M. Auevov presented it as if it were written specifically for Kazakh people. Throughout the translated work, M. Auevov carefully considered the mindset, religion, history, culture, and other peculiarities of the Kazakh people. These factors contributed to the value of the translated work and facilitated its assimilation among Kazakh audiences. Mukhtar Auevov adeptly selected appropriate words and phrases, and his substitutions were more than suitable. The Kazakh version of the play "Othello" is written in a literary language that is easily understandable for its readers. The enduring popularity of the play in Kazakhstani theaters over time underscores its immortality and perfection.

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Мұхтар Әуезовтің Уильям Шекспирдің «Отелло» пьесасының аудармасының ерекшеліктері

Мақалада Мұхтар Омарханұлы Әуезов аударған Уильям Шекспирдің «Отелло» пьесасының қазақ тіліндегі ерекшеліктері көрсетілген. Автор үш нұсқаны салыстырып қарастырған, яғни: түпнұсқа, Мұхтар Әуезовтің қазақ тіліндегі «Отелло» нұсқасы және Анна Радлованың орыс тіліндегі нұсқасы. Зерттеу Отеллоның үш нұсқасын егжей-тегжейлі талдаудың салыстырмалы әдісімен жүргізілді. Нәтижесінде қазақ тіліндегі «Отелло» нұсқасының ерекшеліктері көрсетіліп, үш нұсқаның айырмашылықтары анықталды. Атап айтқанда, кейбір сөз тіркестерінің аудармалары, жалпылауды қолдану, дін және мифология салаларының сөздерін қазақ тіліне аудару егжей-тегжейлі зерделеніп, көрсетілді. Мақалада Мұхтар Әуезовтің Уильям Шекспирдің әйгілі пьесаларының бірін қазақ тілі сияқты мүлде басқа түркі тіліне шебер аударғаны көрсетілген. Мақаланың нәтижелерін жоғары оқу орындарында дәріс және практикалық сабақтарда «Филология және әдебиеттану» мамандығының студенттеріне кө-

мекші материал ретінде пайдалануға болады. Сонымен қатар, берілген мәліметтер студенттердің, магистранттар мен докторанттардың ғылыми-зерттеу жұмыстарына пайдалы болуы мүмкін.

Кілт сөздер: Шекспир аудармада, көркем аударма, мәдени алмастыру, жалпылау тәсілі, салыстырмалы әдіс, мифологиялық сілтемелер, діни контекст.

Г.А. Хасенова

Особенности перевода Мухтаром Ауэзовым пьесы Уильяма Шекспира «Отелло»

В статье продемонстрированы особенности пьесы Уильяма Шекспира «Отелло» на казахском языке в переводе Мухтара Омархановича Ауэзова. Автором рассмотрено сравнение трех вариантов: оригинал, вариант «Отелло» Мухтара Ауэзова на казахском языке и вариант Анны Радловой на русском языке. Исследование было выполнено с помощью сравнительного метода детального анализа трех вариантов «Отелло». В результате были указаны особенности варианта «Отелло» на казахском языке, выявлены различия трех вариантов. В частности, подробно изучены и продемонстрированы переводы некоторых фраз, использование обобщений, перевод слов сфер религии и мифологии на казахский язык. В статье показано, что Мухтар Ауэзов искусно перевел одну из самых известных пьес Уильяма Шекспира на такой совершенно другой тюркский язык, как казахский. Результаты статьи могут быть применены в высших учебных заведениях на лекциях и практических занятиях в качестве вспомогательного материала для студентов специальности «Филология и литературоведение». Кроме того, предоставленные данные могут быть полезны для научно-исследовательской работы студентов, магистрантов и докторантов.

Ключевые слова: Шекспир в переводе, художественный перевод, культурная замена, прием обобщения, сравнительный метод, мифологические отсылки, религиозный контекст.

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