



Original Research Paper

The role of cultural awareness in translation

Nahida Heydarova¹

<https://orcid.org/0009-0008-8738-4217>

Elgune Huseynova¹

<https://orcid.org/0008-9808-8748-4217>

Inji Haydarli¹

<https://orcid.org/0007-0106-8778-4217>

¹ *Nakhchivan State University, Nakhchivan, Azerbaijan*

Article history

Received: 05.06.2026

Revised: 11.06.2026

Accepted: 18.06.2026

*Corresponding Author: Nahida Heydarova, Nakhchivan State University, Nakhchivan, Azerbaijan;
Email: nahide_90@yahoo.com

Abstract

Translation plays a crucial role in overcoming language barriers and fostering cross-cultural communication. However, successful translation extends beyond mere linguistic skills it requires a deep understanding of the cultural context in which language is used. This article explores the importance of cultural understanding in translation, emphasizing the inseparable relationship between language and culture. It highlights how cultural nuances, such as idioms, regional dialects, and social taboos, can influence translation accuracy. The article also discusses the role of cultural competence, stressing that translators must not only grasp the cultural norms and values of the target audience but also adapt their translations accordingly to ensure cultural appropriateness. By recognizing the critical role of cultural context, translators can produce more effective, accurate, and culturally sensitive translations, which are essential in today's increasingly globalized world.

Keywords: *Translation; cultural understanding; language and culture; cultural competence; idioms; regional dialects; cultural nuances*

Introduction

Translation is a vital activity that helps people overcome language barriers and communicate across cultures. However, translating text from one language to another is no easy task. Successful translation requires not only linguistic skills but also cultural understanding, as language is inseparable from the cultural context in which it is used. Cultural nuances, idioms, and other cultural expressions can be lost in translation, leading to misunderstandings and misinterpretations.

The Relationship Between Language and Culture

When examining the relationship between language and culture, it is important to consider that language is a product and carrier of culture; therefore, culture is deeply ingrained in language. Here is an explanation:

The Role of Language as a Product of Culture

Culture and language are closely intertwined, and language is considered a product of culture.

Language reflects the values, beliefs, traditions, and customs of the people who speak it (Ismayilli et.al.2025). For example, some languages have words unique to their culture, and it is impossible to translate them into other languages without losing their original meaning. Therefore, to fully understand a language, it is necessary to understand the cultural context in which it is used.

The Role of Language as a Carrier of Culture

Language is not only a product of a culture; it is also a carrier of that culture. Language serves as a vehicle for transmitting culture from one generation to the next. Language reflects speakers' worldviews and contains elements that express their cultural identities. It can also influence the way people think, behave, and interact with each other.

The Impact of Culture on Translation

Culture can have a significant impact on the translation process. Cultural differences can pose challenges for translators, as they must accurately convey the meaning of the source text while also providing a culturally appropriate translation for the target audience. A translator lacking cultural understanding may translate the text word for word, resulting in distorted or inaccurate translations. Therefore, cultural understanding is crucial for accurate and effective translations.

Cultural Nuances in Translation

There are various cultural nuances a translator must consider when translating from one language to another. Cultural idioms and expressions, regional differences and dialects, as well as taboos and etiquette, are among these challenges (Babasoy et.al.2025). To produce an accurate and effective translation that preserves the original meaning and cultural significance of the text, a translator must thoroughly understand the cultural context in which the source text is used. Here's a look at why cultural nuances can be a challenging task in translation:

Taboos and Etiquette

Taboos and etiquette are also important considerations in translation. Different cultures may have different social norms, customs, and beliefs, and it is important to be aware of these when translating. For example, in some cultures, discussing certain topics, such as politics, religion, or sexuality, may be taboo. A translator should consider these cultural sensitivities and avoid using language that may be unacceptable or inappropriate for the target audience.

The Role of Cultural Competence in Translation

Cultural competence is the ability to understand, appreciate, and work effectively with people from diverse cultures. In the context of translation, cultural competence involves accurately understanding the cultural context of the source text and producing an appropriate and culturally sensitive translation (Baker, 2011). Developing cultural competence in translation requires a willingness to learn about different cultures and adapt to new ways of thinking and communicating. Some strategies translators can use to develop



cultural competence include studying specific linguistic and cultural aspects of the target audience, seeking feedback from native speakers, and learning about cultural backgrounds and developments (Nuri, 2025).

Conclusion

In conclusion, cultural understanding plays a crucial role in translation. A translator lacking cultural competence may not be able to produce accurate and effective translations. To address challenges such as language equivalence, cultural differences, contextual ambiguities, and time constraints, translators must continually develop their cultural competence. This ensures accurate and effective translations that are culturally appropriate for the target audience. By recognizing the importance of cultural understanding in translation, we can ensure that translations are effective tools for promoting cultural understanding and communication.

References

1. Baker, M. (2011). In Other Words: A Coursebook on Translation (2nd ed.). Routledge.
2. Babasoy, Y. B., Zeynalova, K., Sadigova, N. E., & Ismayilli, T. M. (2025). Functional semantic character of affirmation in English in the aspect of cognitive linguistics. *Universidad y Sociedad*, 17(3), e5214-e5214.
3. Ismayilli, T. (2024). Navigating complexities in medical text translation: Challenges, strategies, and solutions. *Acta Globalis Humanitatis Et Linguarum*, 1(2), 170-176.
4. Ismayilli, T., Mammadova, K., Ibrahimli, N., & Heyderova, N. (2025). Confirmation gestures, mimics and their effects on foreign language learning: Examples of EFL students. *Pegem Journal of Education and Instruction*, 15(2), 198-206.
5. Nuri, A. B., & Ismaili, T. M. (2025). The linguistic characteristics of ChatGPT-assisted academic writing in higher education: A lexico-grammatical and discourse-analytical perspective in EFL contexts. *Science, Education and Innovations in the Context of Modern Problems*, 8(10), 1314-1319.

XÜLASƏ

Tərcümə prosesində mədəni şüurun əhəmiyyəti

Nahidə Heydərova

Elgünə Hüseynova

İnci Heydərli

Naxçıvan Dövlət Universiteti, Naxçıvan, Azərbaycan

Tərcümə dil maneələrinin aradan qaldırılmasında və mədəniyyətlərarası ünsiyyətin inkişafında mühüm rol oynayır. Lakin uğurlu tərcümə yalnız dil bacarıqları ilə məhdudlaşmır, eyni zamanda dilin



istifadə olunduğu mədəni kontekstin dərinəndən anlaşılmasını tələb edir. Bu məqalədə dil və mədəniyyət arasındakı ayrılmaz əlaqə vurğulanaraq, tərcümədə mədəni anlayışın əhəmiyyəti araşdırılır. Məqalədə idiomlar, regional dialektlər və sosial tabular kimi mədəni nüansların tərcümənin düzgünlüyünə necə təsir etdiyi göstərilir. Həmçinin tərcüməçilərin yalnız hədəf auditoriyanın mədəni norma və dəyərlərini anlamasının deyil, eyni zamanda tərcüməni həmin mədəniyyətə uyğun şəkildə uyğunlaşdırmasının vacibliyi qeyd olunur. Mədəni kontekstin rolunu düzgün dərk edən tərcüməçilər daha dəqiq, effektiv və mədəni baxımdan uyğun tərcümələr yarada bilirlər ki, bu da qloballaşan dünyada xüsusi əhəmiyyət daşıyır.

Açar sözlər: *Tərcümə; mədəni anlayış; dil və mədəniyyət; mədəni kompetensiya; idiomlar; regional dialektlər; mədəni nüanslar*

