



## THE ROLE OF CULTURE IN TRANSLATION

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### ABSTRACT

*In this article, the dictionary and terminological meaning of the word culture is highlighted, and it is stated that the Arab countries are divided into classifications by orientalists in the study of the culture of the Arab world. When learning a foreign language, especially Arabic, and translating classical and modern texts written in it, it is necessary to deeply master the traditions and culture of the Arab people. The influence of cultures on each other through translation is reflected in the following, first of all, translation provides readers with facts and ideas specific to foreign cultures, and it further expands the reader's worldview. The article also provides examples of terms and expressions specific to each region.*

**KEYWORDS:** *culture, Arabs, geographical location, cultural elements, customs, special words, phraseological expression, gesture.*

Over the centuries, the concept of "culture" began to acquire a new meaning. At first, under the word "culture" were understood works of art, literature, music and other fields, in the modern world the importance and scope of the concept of culture is increasing, that is, under the word "culture" people's national traditions, their way of life, behavior, thinking and understanding of the surrounding world are understood.

"Culture" comes from the Arabic word "Madina" (city). Arabs called people's life into two types: one is "bedouin" or "desert life" and the other is "civilized life". Bedouins are nomadic peoples who live in the deserts of the steppes, and culture is used for peoples who live in cities and have their own way of life. Among the definitions given to the word "culture" in Europe, the definition of the famous English ethnographer, one of the founders of anthropology, Edward Taylor (1832-1917) is considered the most perfect. According to him, "culture is the development of humanity through the high-level organization of an individual and the whole society in order to simultaneously contribute to the development of human morals, power, and happiness."<sup>1</sup>

Currently, linguistics, in particular, translation, is studied without separating it from culture, because when translating the original language, it is impossible not to take into account the customs and traditions of that language. Therefore, in the process of translating works in the Arabic language, the translator should be aware of the history, social system, daily customs and traditions of the Arabs.

Most ordinary people in Uzbekistan have a common misconception that "Arabs" means a people who speak Arabic, and their place of residence is "Arabia". There are more than 20 Arab countries, and although they have a single language, their culture and traditions are unique and different.

According to the data of 2015, the total number of Arabs exceeds 350 million, more than 150 million live in Asia, and about 200 million live in Africa. The majority of Arabs believe in Islam, but there are also Christians living in Egypt, Lebanon, Palestine, Jordan, Syria and other Arab countries.

Orientalists have divided the Arab world into six major regions in terms of culture:

1. **South Arabian cultural region.** This region covers the territory of the present Republic of Yemen and the Sultanate of Oman. This region is historically the home of the oldest civilization of Arabia.

2. **Cultural region of Arabia.** This region, together with region number 1, has been the cultural and historical center of the Arab world since the pre-Islamic period and is a unique component of Islamic culture.

3. **Syrian or Eastern Mediterranean cultural region.** It covers the urban and agricultural areas of Syria, Jordan, Lebanon, and the territories of present-day Palestine. Muslims, Jews, Christians and Sabians lived together in this region. In this

<sup>1</sup> Taylor E.B. Primitive culture. – M., 1989. – P. 18



regard, Arabs living in this region differ from other Arabs in appearance and culture. Jerusalem, the holy city of three religions, Damascus, the capital of the Umayyad Caliphate, Aleppo, Beirut and other historical cities are located here.

4. **The cultural region of Mesopotamia:** Tigris, Euphrates and surrounding areas. Agriculture and urban culture are well developed in this region, together with region 3 and partly as in region 5. Here is the history of Islam and the cities of Kufa, Basra and Baghdad, which occupy an important place in the development of science, are located.

5. **The cultural region of the banks of the Nile River:** it includes the Arab regions east of Egypt, Sudan, and Libya. The starting point of the Arabization of the African continent. It is the region of the formation of Arab-Muslim civilization, and the first established university in the Islamic world, Al-Azhar, is located. For centuries, the city of Alexandria was the main Muslim port of the Mediterranean Sea.

6. **The Maghreb cultural region:** northern and northwestern Africa, the habitat of Arabs and Arabized tribes from the western part of Libya to Mauritania. In the Middle Ages, Muslims moved from this region to Gibraltar and then to the Iberian peninsula, creating a flourishing center of Islamic culture in Spain or Andalus. In this region there are Tripoli (Tarablus), Kairouan, Algiers, Fas, Rabat and other cities.

If we pay attention to the location of the regions above, according to their geographical location, the Arabs lived in the desert, river, sea, mountainous areas and cities. This, in turn, greatly influenced the culture, customs and language of the people who lived in these places. For example, in the cultural region of South Arabia and Arabia (numbers 1 and 2), poetry has been developed since ancient times. The local Arabs appreciate poetry and celebrate holidays and family gatherings. Arabs living in the cultural region of Syria or the Eastern Mediterranean are skilled entrepreneurs and farmers. The Arabs living in the cultural region of the banks of the Nile River are distinguished by their sedentary lifestyle, and skilled entrepreneurs, farmers, famous intellectuals and scientists have grown up among them.

The fact that we have religious and educational values and some traditions that connect us with the Arab peoples is very useful in translating the works of the Arab peoples or dealing with them. We can see this in food, behavior and other customs of everyday life. For example, Arab tribes eat food with their hands like we do, but they drink tea or coffee after a meal. Let's get acquainted with the Arab ceremony of drinking coffee and serving it to a guest:

The rules of serving coffee have remained unchanged for hundreds of years. After greeting the guest and transferring him to a suitable place, the owner of the house hands him a cup of coffee with his right hand. The guest should also receive the cup with his right hand. Coffee is usually served to guests from right to left. In this regard, the Arabs cite the following saying:

القهوة على اليمين لو كان أبو زيد على الشمال "Give the coffee from the right even if Abu Zayd is sitting on the left" (Abu Zayd

Hilali is from the tribe of Bani Hilal, a famous hero of the Arabic epic). Coffee is served to the guest at least three times. The first time is when a guest visits, the second time is after giving fruit, and the third time is after a meal. These three coffee transfers have their own names: the first "for pleasure (للكيف)", the second "for the guest (للضيف)", the third "for the sword (للسيف)". The last custom of drinking coffee "for the sword" goes back to the ancient Bedouin custom. That is, the guest who drank the third coffee became a "blood brother" in Uzbek and stood by his side with his sword in good and bad days. Pouring coffee into the cup is also considered disrespectful to the guest.

The guest is also required to follow certain rules. He should not refuse the first coffee, because this is an expression of disrespect to the host. This can be rejected by an enemy who did not come to reconciliation, a person who came to the owner of the house with a request, or a suitor who came to ask for his daughter. The guest should also drink the second cup of coffee. Drinking the third coffee is optional. Usually, more than three coffees are served to relatives and dear guests of the host. To express one's unwillingness to drink coffee, the cup is shaken to the side and placed on the table saying "بس كافي، بس" Kafī, bas - "enough". If coffee is served during the mourning ceremony, after drinking it one should say (الترحم على المتوفي) "At-tarahhum alal mutawaffī". It means "May God have mercy on the dead" in Uzbek.

The process of transferring cultural elements to another language environment through translation is a complex issue. There are a number of phrases and actions in a single greeting. Usually, when men greet each other, they shake hands. Women can conditionally kiss (they press each other's cheeks several times). Residents of the United Arab Emirates greet each other by touching their noses. Such a greeting is usually between people who are very close to each other or relatives, for example, father-son, mother-child, etc. Special words are used when asking about the situation. It is not proper for the guest (if he is a man) to ask about the host's wife. Arab women are addressed by the name of their eldest child (such as Umm Ahmad).

The expression of some formalities is also very complicated, for example, the word meaning "thank you" is expressed differently in Arabic depending on the situation.



شكرا ، جزاك الله ، شكرا جزيلاً

السلام عليكم Hello or Good bye

Clothes, jewelry, and food items also cause problems in translation. For example, it is useless to translate the taste of food or its characteristics to someone who has never heard of it. Another important point is that shoes are a symbol of insult in Arabs. Offensive words are associated with him (ابن جزمة - shoe boy). Europeans who participated in some official meetings sat cross-legged in front of their Arab hosts and showed the soles of their shoes to the hosts, causing diplomatic scandals.

Traditions and customs are also a part of culture. Whether it is a wedding, mourning, or a festival, its history, significance, and symbolism hidden at its core pose difficulties for the translator. For example: عيد شم النسيم - Spring festival in Egypt

Beliefs and feelings change as we move from culture to culture. White can represent purity and black can represent evil in some cultures. This means that culture consists not only of concrete things like cities, organizations, and schools, but also of abstract things like ideas, customs, family patterns, and languages. In a word, culture means the way of life of society. It can easily change and disappear.

Language is a social condition, without which there is no social activity. In the process of translation, we face a foreign culture. Therefore, our understanding of foreign culture is the key to our success. Because translation is an intercultural phenomenon.

The influence of cultures on each other through translation is reflected in the following, first of all, translation provides students with facts and ideas specific to foreign cultures. He broadens the student's worldview and teaches them that other nations have their own culture and that these customs and cultures should be respected. The great educational role of translation is shown in this way.<sup>2</sup>

As mentioned above, the Arabs lived in a very wide area due to their geographical location. In the poems and phraseological expressions of the Bedouin Arabs living in the desert, the image of the camel is often found, while in the words and proverbs of the settled Arabs, we can find the name of dates, wheat, olives and other fruits. For example, wheat and olive trees are the most important crops grown not only in Egypt, but also in other Arab countries. Therefore, we can find many proverbs and wise words related to them:

أَلْقَمُحٌ وَالزَّيْتُ عَمُودُ الْبَيْتِ، عِمَارَةُ الْبَيْتِ خُبْزٌ وَزَيْتٌ

**Wheat and olive oil are the pillars of the house, bread and olive oil are the foundation of the house.**

The biggest challenge in translation is distinguishing between cultures. People belonging to a certain culture look at something based on their worldview. In Arabs, winter is a rainy and pleasant season. We can quote their sayings related to this season. For example:

إِلَيَّ مَا بِيْحَرْتُ فِي الشِّتَا يَسْتَعْطِي فِي الصَّيْفِ

**He does not plow the land in winter, but he asks for alms in summer.**

On the contrary, A. Neubert, a famous German linguist of the 20th century and one of the bright representatives of translation theory, said in his research that we should translate the opening lines of Shakespeare's eighteenth sonnet into Arabic:

"Shall I compare thee to a summer's day..." (May I compare you to a summer's day?...) can the Arabs accept the meaning of the word "summer" in the sense that Shakespeare intended in the text? Actually, Shakespeare in this text "summer day" is a warm and beautiful day, and the summer heat is considered the most unpleasant period for the Arabs.

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