

The Proper Name Translation

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Abstract

This article attempts to analyze translation problem of the proper name in literature. During the translation process, we have to solve some problems in translation and choose correct methods overcoming such problems. Correct translation of the proper name plays an important role in literary translation. For example, to keep the spirit of artistic translation, certain imagination of the main hero is needed. The translator must pay an attention to the Source Text and facts related to the text. The facts are supported by studies of the researchers of that field. Using the proper name as allusion is assisted in making the correct version of the translation.

Keywords: translation techniques, proper name allusion, *Genghis Khan*, source text, source language, literary translation.

Introduction

The proper name translation presents many issues and problems in in the translation of a text. The proper name translation may be not so difficult if the readers are acquainted well with the nationality of the text. But translator must pay attention to it because there are many occasions and difficulties with proper names during translation process.

There are some versions of the translation “Genghis Khan”, who was the Great Emperor of the Mongol Empire, a very popular proper name all over the world.

For example:

Of the thousands of the cities conquered by the Mongols, history only mentions one that **Genghis** Khan deigned to enter. (9, p. 3)

The banner of **Chingiz**-Khan's fortune was raised, and they issued forth. (9, p. 274)

By the arms of **Zingis** and his descendants the globe was shaken. (9, p. 79)

And above all it was due to the brilliant captainship of **Chengiz**. (9, p. 261)

There may be several versions of the same proper name, and the translator has to solve which version of the proper name is best for translation. Such choices require confirmation/affirmation from sources belonging to the research materials.

J. Weatherford said, “If common form already exists in English, I use it. Thus, I use the Persian name Genghis, simply because that spelling is more recognized than Chinggis, Jenghiz, Dzingis or many other renditions of the name. (9, p.287)

It is good explanation for common readers, but the Persian background is not given or recognized.

Genghis Khan has been used in English translations and in many popular research studies such as *The Secret History of Mongolia* by Woodman, and other works by scholars like Cleaves, Lister R.P and other well-known scholars. So **Genghis** is recognized and widely used all over the world.

Chinggis Khaan \Чингис Хаан \ is more popularly used in Mongolian literature, scientific and research works. It reflects the authentic orthography in ancient Mongolian vertical scripture version.

But there are many problems related to it. For example, connotations and implied meanings could be an integral part of some proper names and so their translation may need inclusion of such features. Such connotations and implied meanings require more specific features to be included in the translation. Sometimes, translator may use the source language proper name into the target language, and then naturalize the translated word back into a new source language proper name. In Leppihalme’s strategies, it is a translation technique for proper names. This is based on the feature that a proper name has allusion.

Retention of the Name

- a. Using the name as such.
- b. Using the name, adding some guidance.
- c. Using the name, adding a detailed explanation, for instance, a footnote.

Replacement of the Name by Another

- a. Replacing the name by another source language name.
- b. Replacing the name by another target language name.

Omission of the Name

- a. Omitting the name, but transferring the sense by other means, for instance, by a common noun.
- b. Omitting the name and the allusion together.

P. Newmark said that “There remains the question of names that have connotations in imaginative literature. In comedies, allegories, fairy tales and some children’s stories, names are translated ... , unless, as in folk tales, nationality is important.” (6, p. 215)

The translator D. Byambaa who translated “The Squire’s Tale” by Geoffrey Chaucer into Mongolian language underlined that *Cambyuskan* is **Chinggis Khan** \Чингис Хаан \ according to Jack Weatherford’s study. Also some researchers recognized that *Genghis Khan* is **Cambyuskan** in Chaucer's version in his tale. (10)

Translations of *Genghis Khan* offer a good lesson for translators and a good example for the proper name allusion in literature as well as in poetry. If translator doesn’t observe the proper name allusion, spirit of the literary work will be lost; readers can’t discover and relish the main essence of it. Replacement of the name by another should be used effectively. The translator D. Byambaa replaced the name in the following example.

Examples:

*This noble king was known as **Cambyuskan**,
Who in his time was of so great renown
That there was nowhere in the wide world known
So excellent a lord in all things.* [1, p. 44]

In Mongolian:

*Энэ тэнгэрлэг Хааныг **Чингис хаан** гэдэг байжээ.
/Ene tengerleg khaaniig **Chinggis khaan** gedeg baijee./
Эрин цагтаа агуу ихээрээ алдаршин манджээ.
/Erin tsagtaa aguu ikheeree aldarshin mandjee./
Этүгэн даяар эгнэшгүй хэмээн машид гарчээ
/Etugen dayar egneshgui hemeen mashid garchee./
Элдэв бүхнээрээ эзэн дээдэс хэмээн магтагджээ.
/Eldev bukhneeree ezen deedes hemeen magtagdje./ [1, p. 8]*

Source name was Cambyuskan.

Example: *This noble king was known as **Cambyuskan**.*

Target language name was Genghis Khan. \Чингис Хаан \.
Example: *This noble king was known as **Genghis Khan**,*

The proper name allusion is followed by replacement of the name by another. Source name was replaced by some other target language names such as **Genghis Khan** and **Чингис Хаан /Chinggis Khaan/**.

We can use them in translation practice. Theoretical guidance is used in practice to solve the problems. These proper names may or may not be proper for other readers. These may need some addition of detailed explanations. You can get more information from the translated term, and it may give them full understanding and correct concept about the proper names.

These procedures and functional equivalents and notes would have a higher potential for conveying the original features of the concept. Rendering allusion plays a role in recognition and perception of connotations.

The proper name allusions are inevitable for translation, and it is a one main factor for conveying cross-cultural implications. Mongolian and foreign readers' recognition and knowledge are different, but text is related to the history, not only to Mongolians.

The result of replacement of one original name by another, especially Mongolian, offers readers have an opportunity for enjoyment of reading the translated text as reading the source text. In the translation of a literary text we need to pay adequate attention to the allusion that a proper name carries with it. We cannot produce correct and acceptable translation if we do not take this into consideration. If this is not done, it will lead to misunderstanding and confusion for the readers, and it will decrease the quality of the translation.

Conclusion

Using allusion gives effect of the original text for the translated work for the readers. It creates an acceptable translation that produces the same feeling as well as reading the source text. It becomes a translation strategy as well as a translation procedure. But we need to assess the result it has on readers' enjoyment and recognition. It also makes a significant contribution to introducing historical issues through literature.

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