

PRAGMATIC TRANSFORMATIONS IN THE TRANSLATION OF RELIGIOUS-EDUCATIONAL TEXTS: NEUTRALIZATION, INTENSIFICATION, AND CONCRETIZATION

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Abstract. Using Nouman Ali Khan's Revive Your Heart: Putting Life in Perspective and its Uzbek translation Qalbingni uyg'ot as material, this paper examines how pragmatic effect is rendered in religious-educational texts. It focuses on three phenomena: the omission of an evaluative component, the conversion of a rhetorical question into a direct judgment, and the concretization of a general moral message through a specific life situation. Drawing on comparative, contextual, and pragmatic analysis, the study explores how these translation transformations relate to the author's communicative intention and to the effect exerted on the reader. The results show that pragmatic effect in translation may be weakened, intensified, or shifted into a different communicative form. The study argues that evaluating religious-educational translation requires attention to pragmatic adequacy as well as semantic equivalence.

Keywords: religious-educational discourse, translation transformation, pragmatic effect, pragmatic neutralization, communicative intention, concretization, semantic reduction, translation adequacy.

Introduction

In translating religious-educational texts, it is not enough to convey the author's ideas in another language; the translator must also preserve the author's intention to influence the reader. In such texts, moral evaluation, reproach, warning, counsel, and spiritual encouragement perform important communicative functions. For this reason, even when the meaning of individual words or sentences is retained in translation, the evaluative stance and pragmatic effect of the original may change.

Assessing translation adequacy involves not only expressing the content of the source text naturally in the target language but also taking its communicative function into account (Nida, 1964). The issue is especially pressing in religious texts, where content is often oriented toward a particular religious and moral conclusion.

The aim of this study is to conduct a comparative analysis of three types of pragmatic transformation, namely neutralization, intensification, and concretization, using Revive Your Heart and its Uzbek translation as material. The examples were drawn from the English text of the book and from the examples discussed in Chapter II of the author's dissertation on Qalbingni uyg'ot. Comparative, contextual, and pragmatic methods were used in the analysis.

Main Part

Pragmatic transformation in translation is not merely a change in sentence form. It may also involve a reorganization of the author's communicative intention and of the way the addressee is influenced. The examples analyzed reveal three distinct manifestations of this process.

1. Omission of the evaluative component: pragmatic neutralization

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Source: People ask the question, "How come Allah doesn't listen to my duʿā'?" That is a very offensive question.

Translation: "Insonlar orasida: 'Nega Alloh taolo mening duomni eshitmaydi?' deydiganlari ham bor" [Back-translation: "Among people, there are also those who say, 'Why does Allah the Exalted not hear my prayer?'"].

In the original, the author does not merely quote the question; through the sentence That is a very offensive question, he also voices a sharp evaluative attitude toward it. The Uzbek translation omits this evaluative sentence. As a result, the reader learns that such a question exists, but the author's critical stance toward it is not fully conveyed. Although part of the content is preserved, the reproachful and cautionary function of the original is weakened. This transformation can therefore be characterized as pragmatic neutralization linked to semantic reduction. The example shows that omitting an evaluative component also affects the communicative orientation of the text.

2. Conversion of a rhetorical question into a direct judgment: intensification of pragmatic effect

Source: What kind of miserable person are you that your mother does all of this for you and you can only think about what's missing?

Translation: "… siz o'taketgan badbaxt inson ekansiz. Siz uchun shuncha narsa qilgan onangizni arzimas narsalardan kamchilik topib dilini og'rityapsiz!" [Back-translation: "…you turn out to be an utterly wretched person. You hurt your mother, who has done so much for you, by finding fault over trifles!"].

The rhetorical question in the original prompts the reader to reassess his or her own behavior. The author sets the mother's many acts of kindness against the child's fixation on what is lacking, and expresses this contrast in question form. In the translation, the question is replaced by a direct evaluative judgment, siz o'taketgan badbaxt inson ekansiz. The following clause, you can only think about what's missing, is likewise expanded explanatorily as arzimas narsalardan kamchilik topib dilini og'rityapsiz.

Consequently, the original's invitation to self-evaluation becomes an open reproach in the translation. The pragmatic effect is not lost; on the contrary, it is expressed more forcefully, but its direction changes: direct accusation replaces prompting to inner reflection. The example shows that changing a rhetorical form can intensify communicative effect. At the same time, intensification does not mean that the communicative technique of the original has been preserved.

3. Concretization of general meaning: pragmatic adaptation and semantic narrowing

Source: … Allah is watching, even when you say no. (Khan, 2017, p. 95)

Translation: "Iymonli kishi 'O'zimda ham pul yo'q' deganida Alloh taolo o'zini kuzatib turganini biladi" (Xon, 2023, 137-b.) [Back-translation: "When a believer says, 'I don't have any money myself either,' he knows that Allah the Exalted is watching him"].

The phrase even when you say no in the original covers, in general terms, the refusals a person may give in various situations. In the translation, this meaning is expressed through a specific situation, "O'zimda ham pul yo'q" ("I don't have any money myself either"). In addition, the general form of address is tied to a more clearly defined religious subject through the phrase iymonli kishi ("a believer").

This transformation links an abstract moral idea to an everyday situation and thereby makes it easier for the reader to understand. However, the broad semantic range of refusal in the original narrows to a situation involving financial help. Pragmatic adaptation thus renders the meaning more lifelike, but its universality is partly restricted. The case illustrates the dual nature of concretization: on the one hand, it

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enhances the comprehensibility of the text; on the other, it may narrow the general scope of meaning in the original.

The examples analyzed make it possible to describe pragmatic transformations in terms of three main types:

Transformation	Change in the text	Pragmatik natija
Pragmatic neutralization	Omission of an evaluative sentence	The force of the critical attitude and warning is weakened
Pragmatic intensification	Conversion of a rhetorical question into a direct judgment	The effect becomes sharper; open reproach replaces inner reflection
Concretization	A general idea presented through a specific situation	Comprehensibility increases; semantic scope may narrow

These results show that evaluating translation transformations solely on the basis of grammatical form or lexical equivalence is insufficient. The significance of changes in translation is also determined by how they affect the communicative function of the text. Omitting a sentence may weaken evaluative attitude, converting a rhetorical question into a judgment may sharpen the effect, and concretization may convey a general moral idea through an example from life.

Conclusion

The comparative analysis of Revive Your Heart and its translation Qalbingni uyg'ot has shown that, in religious-educational texts, pragmatic effect shifts in different directions in the course of translation. The study examined the omission of an evaluative component, the conversion of a rhetorical question into a direct judgment, and the expression of general moral content through a concrete situation.

The results support the following conclusions:

1. The preservation of the core information of the source text does not mean that the author's evaluative attitude and communicative intention have been fully preserved.
2. Replacing a rhetorical question with a direct judgment may intensify pragmatic effect, but it also changes the manner in which the reader is influenced.
3. Concretization makes an abstract moral idea more comprehensible, but it may narrow the scope of the general meaning of the original.
4. In assessing the adequacy of religious-educational translation, semantic equivalence, the author's communicative intention, and the pragmatic effect on the reader must be considered together.

Thus, the translator's task in religious-educational translation is not limited to conveying information in another language. Alongside the content of the original, the translator must reproduce, as adequately as possible in the target language, such communicative functions as evaluative attitude, reproach, warning, and counsel. This approach makes it possible to assess the translation of religious discourse on the basis of a unity of semantic and pragmatic criteria.

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