



DIRECT CONNECTION OF STEREOTYPICAL CONCEPTS WITH CULTURE AND SOCIETY IN LITERARY TRANSLATION

Toshtemir Alimov

Associate Professor, Department of English

Doctor of Philosophy (PhD) in Philology Karshi State University

E-mail: toshtemiralimov@gmail.com

Tel: +998 91 636 61 01

Abstract

The article describes the direct connection of stereotypical concepts with culture and society in literary translation.

A stereotype is an opinion formed or learned by external factors that reflects the beliefs of a person or a member of a certain society and how he behaves and fulfills the requirements of written or unwritten rules of a certain group. Stereotypes may not always reflect reality, but stereotypes begin to form from the day a person is born. Stereotypes are directly related to culture.

Keywords: Stereotypes, measure, standard, model, racial, cultural gender stereotypes, language culture.

Introduction

All cultures around the world have specific rules (stereotypes) that compel their members to behave in certain ways. When this becomes the norm, people outside that society begin to assume that every individual belonging to that culture behaves in the same way. Neither individuals nor society appreciate those who do not conform to stereotypes, because they challenge others' expectations and force them to reconsider their ideas.

Stereotypes vary across cultures, societies, and individuals, which often leads to some confusion, as the stereotypes of one society may not apply to another. In the article "Girls, Boys: Myths, Stereotypes, and Gender Differences" by Patricia B. Campbell and Jennifer N. Storo, it is stated: "If a book, toy, or tool is considered for boys or girls, it is likely a stereotype." In the article "Stereotypes and



Explanations” by Craig McGarty, Vincent Y. Yzerbyt, and Russell Spears, it is stated: “...a stereotype is a set of related beliefs.”

The term “stereotype” is defined in several well-known dictionaries around the world. For example, the prestigious American Merriam-Webster dictionary states: “A stereotype is a generalized and oversimplified idea held about a group, a mental image formed incorrectly.” The British Cambridge English dictionary explains the term as: “A stereotype is a set of beliefs held by people about someone or something, often incorrect.” Another dictionary defines a stereotype as: “A stereotype is a fixed general image or set of characteristics representing a particular type of person or thing.” The following three points help to better understand stereotypes:

- a) Stereotypes help explanation – they assist the receiver in grasping and understanding the essence of a situation.
- b) Stereotypes are energy-saving tools – they imply a reduction in the mental effort required by the receiver.
- c) Stereotypes reflect common group beliefs – they should be formed in accordance with the norms and views of the social group to which the receiver belongs. As a term in social psychology, a stereotype refers to certain beliefs associated with any category of people, as well as specific patterns of behavior used to define an entire group or their general conduct. A stereotype is a concept very similar to terms such as “custom” and “tradition.” These ideas or beliefs do not always accurately reflect reality.

The word stereotype originates from the French language. The French term stéréotype comes from stère, meaning “solid, firm,” and type, meaning “to print, to form.” Initially, this term was used in typography. In 1798, Firmin Didot first used it to describe a printing plate that could reproduce any printed work. Instead of the original, a duplicate or stereotype of the plate was used for printing. From a typographical perspective, the first use of the word stereotype dates back to 1850, meaning “to make permanent without change.” However, it was not until 1922 that the term stereotype was first used in its modern psychological sense by the American journalist Walter Lippmann in his work *Public Opinion*. According to Lippmann, “A stereotype is a method by which people, based on prior social experience, perceive and interpret information accepted by society throughout



history when studying and understanding the world around them.” Gradually, the term began to be widely used both in everyday speech and in mass media.

To summarize the above ideas, stereotypes are firmly established attitudes in our minds toward certain groups of people or objects. These attitudes often arise from making judgments without fully studying or analyzing the object being stereotyped, or from generalizing and overgeneralizing characteristics typical of most members of the studied group. They can also emerge by comparing the stereotyped object with other objects, examining similarities and differences, and categorizing. If the created stereotypes are well-founded and align with public perceptions, they can become a shared belief of the group.

Types of Stereotypes

There are several types of stereotypes, among which the most common and widely discussed are racial, cultural, and gender stereotypes.

Racial Stereotypes

Racial stereotyping refers to classifying people into groups based on the diversity of their external characteristics, such as facial features, body type, skin color, hair color, eye shape, nose width, and lip shape. A clear example of racial stereotypes is the discrimination between white and Black populations in the United States. One of the prevalent racial stereotypes in America is the belief that white people are superior to Black people in terms of appearance. According to this stereotype, individuals with physical traits associated with white people (light skin, bright, straight hair, oval face shape, thin lips, and narrow nose) are considered more advantaged than others.

Historical sources indicate that Black and white people have been discriminated against based on skin color since the era of slavery. By the end of the slavery period, white people were provided with better social, economic, and educational opportunities. Nevertheless, there are also stereotypes attributing positive traits to Black people; for example, the belief that Black individuals are good athletes. Considering that the above stereotypes are not fully grounded in reality, it can be said that stereotyping does not allow for completely accurate judgments.



Cultural Stereotypes

Culture encompasses the way of life, customs, beliefs, ideas, language, religion, art, and literature of people in a particular society. Stereotypes formed about these characteristics of society members are called cultural stereotypes. According to Lawrence Blum, stereotypes are cultural units widely understood by members of a society or culture as well as by those who do not possess the stereotype.

For a long time, scholars studying the differences between men and women aimed to find scientific evidence for gender stereotypes and, in doing so, to justify stereotypes related to gender roles. However, this issue remains unresolved: most studies have found far more similarities than differences between the two genders. Measurements of physiological reactions and facial expressions show no differences in direct emotional responses between men and women. Other scientific evidence confirms that men experience anger, sadness, and anxiety as often as women, but they express anger and suppress other negative emotions, whereas women tend to suppress anger and express sadness and fear. Like other social stereotypes, gender stereotypes reflect gender inequality. These types of stereotypes can negatively affect both women and men. Many stereotypes attribute positive qualities to women, such as intuition and caring. According to experts, in societies where such stereotypes exist, these character traits are valued less than the rationality and activity typically associated with the dominant gender. So why do we use stereotypes? There are several reasons that demonstrate their significance. First, stereotypes help with understanding and forming concepts. During the stereotyping process, information is filtered, and the most frequently observed and widely recognized traits within a particular group are selected and generalized, making the information compact, simple, and concise. In environments overwhelmed by large amounts of information, the best method for the receiver is to filter or reduce the informational load.

Second, stereotypes save the time and effort we spend in understanding an object. Viewing people as members of a particular group conserves our energy because we do not focus on all the individual-specific information about each person.

Third, the reason we use stereotypes is that they have become shared beliefs within a group. Stereotypes are adopted widely only when they align with public perceptions. If a stereotype is not accepted by most people, it fails to attract attention. When individuals within a group possess highly diverse personal



characteristics, a stereotype does not form. Widespread stereotypes help in understanding the behavior of certain group members. For example, the stereotype “Indians love singing and dancing” helps us understand that many Indians enjoy singing and dancing.

Social Gender and Gender Stereotypes

The definition of social gender is largely based on stereotypical classification. Cameron defines a stereotype as a behavior that includes a tendency to generalize: “A stereotype is an explanation of behavior, personality, and other traits of entire groups (for example, Italians are emotional; Black people are good at sports).”

According to Romeyn, “Gender stereotypes are a set of beliefs about the characteristics of men or women, for example, men are stronger and more aggressive, women are passive, women talk more than men,” and so on. Gender stereotypes are often associated with “uncertain aspects of character” as well as with race, class, culture, age, and other factors.

In society, there are usually norms regarding gender roles; that is, how men and women should behave, what personal traits they should possess, and how they should act according to their biological sex. Talbot argues that if we consider gender stereotypes as ideological prescriptions for behavior, then people are expected to act according to the stereotypical roles associated with their gender. As a result, in the process of translation, if the social aspects of gender in the source culture differ significantly from those in the target culture, the translator should adapt the translation to fit that culture. Moreover, if languages express gender in diverse ways, translators need to develop a system that highlights these differences. Translators must decide what to naturalize and what to explain.

Translation Issues Related to Social Gender

As mentioned earlier, the definition of social gender is based on stereotypes and depends on socio-historical and contextual factors. Since these factors vary from one place, society, culture, context, or historical period to another, translators often face complex challenges. Nissen provides examples showing how translators deal with the problem of gender in translation. As an example, he refers to a scene in Daphne du Maurier’s novel *Rebecca*, in which the main characters, Maxim and his wife, invite relatives to their house in the English countryside. After dinner,



Maxim's sister-in-law expresses her surprise about the cook as follows: "The same cook, Maxim?"

According to Nissen, throughout the novel there is no information about the cook or their gender, which creates difficulties for translators in indicating the cook's gender. Nissen presents examples of how different translators rendered the sentence into five grammatically distinct languages.

French: la meme cuisinière [female]

Italian: lo stesso cuoco [female]

Spanish: el mismo cocinero [female]

Portuguese: a mesma cozinheira [male]

German: dieselbe Köchin [male]

In Nissen's example, three translators assumed the cook's gender to be female, while the other two chose male. According to him, translators made their decisions based on their own knowledge or the norms of their respective societies. In another example, Nissen demonstrates how translators' expectations regarding social gender can vary across different translated versions of the same source text. His example is taken from Bernard Shaw's *Back to Methuselah*: "One of my secretaries remarked this morning how good and young I look."

Regarding these translations, Nissen writes:

French: Un de mes secrétaires [male]

Italian: Uno dei miei segretari [male]

Spanish: Una de mis secretarias [female]

Portuguese: Uma das minhas secretárias [female]

German: Einer meiner Sekretäre [male]

As Nissen points out, this example also reveals differences in translation: three translators identified the character as male, while two considered the secretary to be female. This shows that, since the text provides no indication of the referent's gender, translators must adapt their choices to fit the norms of the target language's society.

In conclusion, it should be emphasized that in modern life we use stereotypes knowingly or unknowingly and often operate based on stereotypical views. We have seen that stereotypes are exaggerated, incorrectly formed concepts that can create negative impressions.



REFERENCES

1. Alekseeva, I.S. Text and Translation. Issues of Theory. – Moscow: International Relations, 2008. – 184 p.
2. Alimov, T.A. Translation Theory. Translation in the Field of Professional Communication. – Moscow: Editorial URSS, 2005. – 160 p.
3. Vinogradov, V.S. Lexical Issues in Translating Literary Prose. – Moscow, 1978.
4. Vinson, L. Simultaneous Translation from Russian into English: Techniques, Skills, Guidelines (Translation from English). – Moscow: RyuValent, 2017. – 320 p.
5. Klimenko, M.P. Linguocultural, Cognitive, and Translation Aspects of the Thematic Group “US Money.” Dissertation for Doctor of Sciences. – Moscow, 2003. – 190 p.
6. Baker, M. Linguistic and Cultural Studies: Complementary or Competing Paradigms in Translation Studies? In: Übersetzungswissenschaft im Umbruch: Festschrift für Wolfram Wilss, Angelika Lauer, Heidrun Gerzymisch-Arbogast, Johann Haller, and Enrich Steiner (eds.), Tübingen: Gunter Narr, pp. 9–19.
7. Bell, R.T. Translation and Translating: Theory and Practice. London – New York: Longman, 1991. – 298 p.
8. Carrol, J.B., & Casagrande, J.B. The Function of Language Classification in Behaviour. In: Maccoby, E., Newcomb, T.M., & Hartley, E.L. (eds.), Readings in Social Psychology, 3rd ed., New York: Holt, Rinehart & Winston, 1958. – pp. 18–31.
9. Cole, M., Gay, J., Glick, J., & Sharp, D.W. The Cultural Context of Learning and Thinking. London: Methuen & Co., 1st ed., 1971. – 304 p.

Websites

1. Mark, H. (2007). Difference between male and female structures (mental and physical). Retrieved December 24, 2007, from www.steadyhealth.com
2. Mark Reese, Edward. By Gone Days (O‘tkan kunlar). eBook. Retrieved from <https://www.amazon.com>
3. Moghaddas, Bahram. (2013). The Effect of Gender in Translation Accuracy of Iranian English Translators. International Journal of Management and Humanity Science. Retrieved March 1, 2016, from <https://www.researchgate.net/publication/281280126>.