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POTENTIALS OF INDIRECT TRANSLATION AS A MEDIUM IN OVERCOMING DIFFICULTIES IN TRANSLATION OF KAZAKH INTELLECTUAL ABAI KUNANBAEV'S 'WISDOM' IDIOMS

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ABSTRACT

In defining the experiences of any society, idioms could be found in similar or different meanings and constructions across languages, which could result in challenges in translation of those linguistic units. However, translators are not to be considered helpless agents in such circumstances. This study explores the translation of idioms in the work titled Қапа сөз (Words of Edification) by the Kazakh intellectual Abai Kunanbaev. In his attempt to form a Kazakh national identity, Kunanbaev openly criticizes the negative traits of his people, with recommendations to overcome such attitudes and behaviors in that work. As part of his literary style, Kunanbaev achieves this purpose with idioms that serve to impart lessons for his people. The idioms on negative traits identified in the source text are assigned semantic titles and divided into two broader categories invented for future studies by the researchers of this study. Their direct translations into Turkish and Russian besides their indirect translation into English from Russian are analyzed in order to find out the assumed value of translation strategies employed in rendering these culturally laden linguistic items besides the significance of indirect translation in bringing distant cultures in contact, followed by implications on the extent of preservation of semantic and stylistic features in the target texts. The results show that while Kazakh idioms are mostly preserved in Turkish target text semantically and stylistically, yielding implications on the linguistic affinity of Turkic languages, translation by paraphrase stands out in Russian and English translations, which further points to the effect of the intermediary language on the indirect translation. The study concludes by suggesting that while translation strategies are rightly seen as the guides to overcoming the difficulties in translation of idioms, indirect translation can also be nominated as another procedure in bringing distant cultures closer to one another.

KEYWORDS: Direct Translation, Indirect Translation, Translation of Idioms, Translation Strategies, Literary Style, Intermediary Language in Translation, Abai Kunanbaev, Words of Edification.

1. INTRODUCTION

Language stands among the primary means for the discovery of societies' construction and conception of their lifestyles. Among the linguistic units that could reveal social and cultural ways of life, idioms could be attributed specific significance. "Idiomacity appears in many structural varieties and yields certain distinct subpatterns-some perhaps universal, others specific to each language" (Weinreich, 1969, p. 23). The principles of universality or culture-specificity of idioms can be traced to the definition of the term "idiom". Put simply, "idioms are classically defined as phrases whose figurative meanings are distinct from their component words" (Libben & Titone, 2008, p. 1103). On the other hand, taking the conceptual metaphors and metonymies as the basis for the idioms, these linguistic units are further defined as "linguistic expressions whose overall meaning cannot be predicted from the meanings of the constituent parts" (Kovecses & Szab c, 1996, p. 326). In both definitions, the words as the constituents of the idioms are discarded as the guides to the meaning of the whole phrase, yet it does not necessarily hold true in all cases, which further brings the "compositionality" and "noncompositionality" approaches to idioms (Gibbs Jr., 1992; Titone & Connine, 1999; Westerst hl, 2002).

Different languages and cultures bear idioms specific to their way of life, thus presenting the challenge of non-equivalence across the linguistic systems foreign to a given culture (Goshkheteliani, 2013, p. 20). Accordingly, the use of an idiom in communication in a language poses challenges for the non-native speakers of that language due to the lack of an equivalent idiom in their native language. Besides functioning as "an essential component of language that add[s] depth, color, and cultural context to our conversations" (Xalilova & Atoyeva, 2023, p. 362) and "perform[ing] communicative functions (speech acts) of various kinds, such as greetings, making comments, recommendations, or issuing warnings, prohibitions" (Murar, 2009, p. 146), idioms are also used in literary texts "to convey complex ideas and emotions with vivid imagery and cultural resonance" (Adimova, 2024, p. 66), as well as "enrich literary expression, enhance communicative effectiveness, and reflect cultural values" (Xoldarova, 2025, p. 195). Accordingly, "[idioms] enhance the distinctiveness and variety of a writer's style" (Jalilova, 2024, p. 134). Since idioms are part of the diction (word choice) in a literary text, they can be taken as constituents of an author's style.

The cultural load inherent in those phraseological

units and their stylistic contribution to narration do not come without pitfalls in translation of literary texts. Therefore, translation of idiomatic expressions could naturally be expected to pose challenges for translators (Baker, 2011, p. 68). However, these challenges are not necessarily insurmountable. The strategies proposed for translations of idiomatic expressions across languages could serve as the key to overcoming those difficulties. The strategies that Baker (2011) proposes for the translation of idiomatic expressions are adopted in this study for the discussion of idiom translation on grounds that this set is directly targeted at translation of idiomatic expressions.

The aim of this study is to determine the idioms relating to the negative attitudes of humans as criticized by the Kazakh intellectual, translator, and writer Abai Kunanbaev in his book titled *Қара с з* (*Words of Edification*). The idioms identified in the source text are further compared to the direct translations of the book into Turkish and Russian as well as the indirect translation into English from the intermediary Russian text. The aim in comparing the source idioms to the target contexts is to find out which strategy is used in translation of the idiomatic expressions with a view to providing insights to literary translators likely to encounter problems in translation of such linguistic units in their future tasks and duties. The originality of the study can be acknowledged to lie not only in the languages for the comparison of the idiomatic expressions (Turkish as a Turkic language in relation to the source language Kazakh as another Turkic language, Russian as a Slavic language and English as a Germanic language that could be taken as distant languages to Kazakh), but also in the comparison of the idiom translation strategies in direct translations (Turkish and Russian in our case) with the indirect translation (English in this study) to find out the effectiveness of indirect translation as another viable medium in overcoming translation difficulties. The categorization of source idioms based on their semantic properties can also be stated as another original contribution of the study to the relevant literature since it is seen in the analysis that semantic categorization of linguistic units ensures a systematic approach and more generalizable suggestions for overcoming difficulties in translation of idiomatic expressions.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1. *The Corpus of the Study in Relation to Abai Kunanbaev and His Language Use*

Abai (Ibrahim) Kunanbaev (1845-1904) is a poet, intellectual, translator, and the founder of Kazakh

written literature and the national literary language. He lived in the late nineteenth century, at the period of Russian imperial expansion into the Kazakh steppe. Abai's work as a translator occupies a distinctive place in the history of Kazakh literature. Beginning in 1882, he systematically engaged with Russian literary classics, and through rendering their selected works into Kazakh, he broadened the artistic horizons of national literature as well as elevated the expressive potential of the Kazakh literary language to a new level, establishing innovative forms of poetry, and integrating national literature into the broader sphere of world culture.

It was also Abai who demonstrated, through his creative work, that the Kazakh language had the capacity to express philosophical, scientific, and abstract concepts widely used in the languages of highly cultured nations by finding equivalents within the native language itself and articulating the deepest of thoughts with precision, extending his reputation from the local to the international arena. In Abai's philosophical teachings and writings, he also reverberates on the purpose of human existence, the path toward achieving that end, the meaning of being and the inherent interconnections and universal laws that govern the world as well as emphasizing an even higher form of spiritual perfection, that is, the refinement of the soul. He is particularly renowned for his masterpiece titled *Words of Edification*. We can find Kunanbaev's philosophy in this work, extended to his personal and political teachings accompanied by criticisms against the negative attitudes of Kazakh people towards life in the new order, also followed by moralistic recommendations with a view to the formation of Kazakh national identity. In his book consisting of 45 chapters, Kunanbaev "criticizes and mostly complains about [the attitudes] related to laziness, boastfulness, ignorance, and wastefulness of his people [and] provides Islamic values in order to reach a high degree of good morality" (Kayaalti, 2021, p. 74). For example, in Chapter 43 in the *Words of Edification*, Abai explores the differences between bodily and spiritual desires in human nature, emphasizing the importance of cultivating moral character and achieving spiritual growth.

The language that Abai Kunanbaev uses in his works has been studied by several scholars. "There are many linguistic differences in Abai's Words" (Kurmanbai & Adilov, 2021, p. 149). It is further suggested that "topics such as double words, phraseology, proverbs, and semantics of the poet's vocabulary in the Abai language" need further analysis (Kurmanbai & Adilov, 2021, p. 149). Based

on this recommendation, *The Words of Edification* is analyzed to find the idioms and the strategies in their translations. Taking idiomatic expressions of a linguistic community as culturally laden items bearing semantic qualities specific to that culture, this study is based on the suggestion drawn from the analysis of the translations of culture specific items in Abai's *Words of Edification* that "it is hardly possible to find full equivalence for culturally bound metaphors, and literal translation may lead to misinterpretation" (Zhabayeva, 2022, p. 20). Another rationale behind the study can be tied to the study on translation of phraseological units in Abai's poetry, which concludes by stating that "none of the translators could find in English and Russian languages appropriate phraseological units that would be similar to the author's phraseology" (Kozhakanova et al., 2012, p. 573).

2.2. Translation Strategies and Translation Route for the Words of Edification

Given the difficulty in translation of the idiomatic expressions as phraseological units used by Kunanbaev in the *Words of Edification*, the translators are expected to oscillate between preserving the semantic content of the text and the author's style. With this dilemma in hand, translators are not to be left helpless in rendering the culturally laden idioms into the target languages. The primary means of overcoming these difficulties should come from the use of translation strategies (Adelnia & Dastjerdi, 2011; Shojaei, 2012; Kovács, 2016; Gulay, 2018; Kang & Yang, 2022). While we can find several different sets of strategies applicable to the translation of idiomatic expressions in the relevant literature (Vinay & Darbelnet, 1958/2000; Nida & Taber, 1969; Newmark, 1988; Baker, 2011), Mona Baker's (2011) set of strategies stands out among these propositions in that it is specifically directed towards the translation of idioms while the others are targeted at broader and more general levels of interlingual translatability, yet still applicable to translation of idioms.

Even if translation strategies could greatly contribute to informed decision-making by translators in interlingual translation of idioms, it is also hardly surprising that these strategies can never be taken as 'one fitting all sizes. Rather, the cultural and linguistic proximity or distance between the source and target literary polysystems will also have effects on the decision-making process by the translators. It is also important to note that the extent of potential proximity or distance between the source and target cultures and languages could even have a

decisive effect on the route of translation. When the source and target languages are distant from each other historically and politically, it might be difficult to find competent translators between these two languages, which could result in the decision to resort to indirect translation. Indirect translation "is said to be more frequent in the reception of (geographically, culturally and linguistically) distant literary systems" (Rosa, et al., 2017, p. 114). The target cultures, namely Turkish and Russian in this study, can safely be acknowledged to be historically tied to the source culture Kazakh. Just as Turkish and Kazakh are both Turkic languages (Kornfilt, 2018) with social and historical ties (Johanson et al., 2020), it is no wonder that Kazakh and Russian cultures used to share a common land, and thus lived under similar political and social conditions during the Soviet era, which could explain Shaibakova's (2019) suggestion of widespread Kazakh-Russian bilingualism observed today and Madiyeva & Suprun's (2023) proposition for the use of Russian in the communicative space of Kazakhstan. Therefore, translations from Kazakh to Turkish and Russian would be expected to take the direct translation route. On the other hand, "the well-established tradition of Russian-Kazakh/Kazakh-Russian translation [has resulted in] a significant contribution of Russian culture as an intermediary to the process of English texts' translation into the Kazakh language" (Mirzoyeva et al., 2024, p. 242). Moreover, "Russian culture has been playing a part of European culture intermediary for a very long period of time, and has been functioning as a source of information unavailable in Kazakh language" (Zhumabekova & Mirzoyeva, 2016, p. 189). Therefore, Russian language has been serving as the bridge between the Anglophone world and Kazakh culture for long years.

The intermediary role of Russian language between Kazakh and English-speaking world is obvious in indirect translations. While direct translation involves rendering a source text from its original language into another language by a translator with the command of the source and target languages and cultures, indirect translation involves rendering a text into another language from an already translated text, rather than from the original language of the source text. While translating an original Kazakh text into Russian could be given as an example to direct translation, translating that Kazakh text into English from the intermediary Russian translated text can be categorized as indirect translation. According to Rosa et al. (2017, p. 114), "[indirect translation] apparently occurs due to a lack

of translators or of linguistic competence in the ultimate SL, or due to difficulty obtaining the original text or translating from a geographically and/or structurally distant language". Based on this suggestion, the geographical, historical, and cultural distance between two societies could result in lack of competent translators with a strong command of source and target languages, leading to indirect translation from an intermediary language. Despite some disadvantages associated with indirect translation, "it has been crucial to the dissemination of literatures of non-major cultures or less spoken languages. World literature would have lost much but for translation done indirectly via mediating text(s)" (Wenjie & Andersen, 2017, p. 182).

Based on the literature review here, it can be suggested that literary translation between languages already poses important challenges, which can be further multiplied when the culturally loaded idiomatic expressions are commonly used in the source text. Even if translation strategies are posited as the primary means of overcoming those challenges, the assumed "inferior" role of indirect translation can also be neutralized with its contribution to the solution of translation problems. Therefore, this study also adopts indirect translation besides translation strategies as the viable medium in overcoming difficulties associated with literary translation.

3. METHODOLOGY

The original Kazakh book titled *Words of Edification* by Abai Kunanbaev is analyzed for the use of idiomatic expressions as part of his literary style. In Kunanbaev's attempts to form a national identity for Kazakh people, he is found to use idioms frequently in his book. His criticisms against the Kazakh people for their negative traits are particularly found in the form of idiomatic expressions. Therefore, the idioms addressing the negative traits of Kazakh people are identified and categorized on the basis of their semantic content by the researchers of this study. The analysis of the source idioms on negative traits of people yielded two major categories. Four idioms that Kunanbaev warns and criticizes Kazakh people against are titled as insincerity, impulsiveness, trickery, and dishonesty, which are categorized as "idioms on negative attitudes to others" in this study. The other seven idioms are titled self-underestimation, limits of endurance, lack of resourcefulness, reluctance in their acts, self-lowering, inefficiency, and feeling of helplessness against difficulties, categorized as "idioms on feelings of self-inadequacy". The titles

and category names are suggested by the researchers of this study in order to draw attention to the general semantic qualities of source idioms. It is also important to note that the titles and categories identified and analyzed in the source text should not be taken to characterize or identify the whole Kazakh nation, but rather they are used by Kunanbaev as warnings against Kazakh people in his quest to establish an ultimate national identity and raise consciousness of the negativities that some people in the nation could demonstrate. The idioms identified in the source text are further compared to their direct (Turkish and Russian) and indirect (English) translations to determine how the difficulty in their translations is overcome based on Baker's (2011) set of translation strategies for idiomatic expressions, with implications on the semantic and stylistic preservation of the source author in the target texts.

The motive behind the use of translation strategies could be tied to the broader conception of the term "strategy", which implies the set of skills to be employed in the decision-making process when faced with difficulties. "[As] an idiom may have no equivalent in the target language [and] may be culture-specific [...], the contexts in which they can be used and their frequency of use may be different in the source and target languages" (Baker, 2011, pp. 71-75). Based on this proposition, translation of idiomatic expressions necessitates an informed decision-making process. Therefore, it is only natural that the issues like "the [lack of] ability to recognize and interpret an idiom correctly and the difficulties involved in rendering the various aspects of meaning that an idiom conveys into the target language" (Baker, 2011, p. 68) require the use of translation strategies in rendering the idiomatic expressions into a target culture. Here lies the rationale for Baker's (1992, 2011) proposition of the strategies for translation of idiomatic expressions.

While Baker (1992, pp. 72-77) proposes four strategies in translation of idiomatic expressions in the first edition of her book, she adds another two strategies in the second edition of the book in 2011. The first strategy in the updated version is "using an idiom of similar meaning and form", which "involves using an idiom in the target language which conveys roughly the same meaning as that of the source-language idiom and, in addition, consists of equivalent lexical items" (Baker, 2011, p. 76). However, it is less than often that such a match between two languages or cultures can be found. As the second strategy, Baker (2011, p. 78) proposes "using an idiom of similar meaning but dissimilar form", which can be used more frequently than the

former since "it is often possible to find an idiom in the target language which has a meaning similar to that of the source idiom, but which consists of different lexical items". While these two strategies are already available in the 1992 original print of the book, the third strategy titled "borrowing the source language idiom" is added in the updated version (Baker, 2011, p. 79). In this strategy, the source idiom is repeated in the target context in all its foreignness, manifested through the foreign words as the constituents of the source idiom. The fourth strategy, already available in the 1992 version, is titled "translation by paraphrase", which is proposed as "the most common way of translating idioms when a match cannot be found in the target language or when it seems inappropriate to use idiomatic language in the target text because of differences in stylistic preferences [between] the languages" (Baker, 2011, p. 80). While the first three strategies still require the use of an idiomatic expression in the target context, translators do not make use of an idiom in the target context in this fourth strategy, rather they reproduce the meaning of the source idiom by saying it in other words in the target language, benefiting from the everyday use of the language. As the fifth strategy, added to the set of strategies in the updated version, Baker proposes "translation by omission of a play on idiom". In this strategy, "only the literal meaning of an idiom is rendered in a context that allows for a concrete reading of an otherwise playful use of language" (Baker, 2011, p. 84). While this strategy could be claimed to lead to a loss in the literary use of the language or the stylistics of the source author, it still allows for the reproduction of the clear meaning of the source context for the target reader. Baker (2011, p. 84) already suggests that this strategy tends to be used when "the play on idiom is very difficult to reproduce in other languages". Therefore, even if the form and content are inseparably linked in a literary text, this strategy can at least allow the translator to render the meaning in the target text. As the last strategy already given in the original version, Baker proposes "translation by omission of entire idiom". As its name already suggests, "an idiom may sometimes be omitted altogether in the target text. This may be because it has no close match in the target language, its meaning cannot be easily paraphrased, or for stylistic reasons" (Baker, 2011, p. 85).

Among the six strategies proposed for translation of idiomatic expressions by Baker (2011), the strategies titled "translation by paraphrase", "translation by omission of a play on idiom", and

“translation by omission of entire idiom” come with losses in the style of the source literary text. However, Baker (2011, p. 86) also discusses the “compensation” strategy very briefly by stating that it could be employed in the situations where “one may either omit or play down a feature such as idiomaticity at the point where it occurs in the source text and introduce it elsewhere in the target text” particularly if the translator is to “make up for any loss of meaning, emotional force or stylistic effect which may not be possible to reproduce directly at a given point in the target text”. Therefore, form might not necessarily be sacrificed in translation of a literary text with the use of “compensation” strategy when one of these three strategies is used for any reason in translation of idioms.

The set of strategies identified and classified by Mona Baker (1992, 2011) on the basis of translators’ decisions in rendering idiomatic expressions into another language has been used in quite some studies in the relevant literature (Yalçın & Büyüksaraç, 2017; Fitriyah, 2020; Putri & Wahyuningsih, 2021; Altuntaş & Kuleli, 2022). This set is also used in this study with a view to the comparison of the source idioms in Abai Kunanbaev’s *Words of Edification* in Kazakh to its direct translations into Turkish and Russian besides the indirect translation to English. In deciding if the

target expressions can be taken as idioms in the target languages and cultures (an important procedure in that the potential strategy identified in the target text largely depends upon the reproduction of the meaning through a target idiom or a literal meaning), these target signs are checked through comprehensive online dictionaries for idiomatic expressions in each language

4. FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

The idioms regarding the negative attitudes and behaviors of people in Abai Kunanbaev’s work are presented together with their Turkish, Russian, and English¹ translations with a discussion on the meanings of the source idioms and the meanings reproduced in the target texts as a result of the strategies used in translation. The strategies in the translation of idioms are identified and discussed with a focus on the set of strategies posited by Mona Baker (2011). This part is divided into two subheadings based on the semantic categorization of the idioms on negative traits of people.

4.1. Idioms On Negative Attitudes to Others

The idioms found to address negative traits like insincerity, impulsiveness, trickery, and dishonesty are discussed in this subheading.

Table 1: Idiom On Insincerity.

Source idiom	Turkish translation	Russian translation	English translation
“Әке-үке” десіп (Kunanbaev, 2011, p. 5)	gözünün önüneyken ‘ağabey, amca’ der (Kunanbayev, 2014, p. 18)	При встрече лебезящие (Kunanbaev, 2021, p. 148)	fawn over (Kunanbaev, 2021, p. 260)

The first idiomatic expression analyzed in this study is about the insincerity of people in social interactions. The source idiomatic expression ““Әке-үке’ десіп” (saying brother)² in Kazakh refers to “acting friendly when face to face”. Indeed, this idiomatic expression implies that people generally hide their true feelings or thoughts when they interact with another person face to face; however, they explain their real intentions on these people in their absence, implying the insincere manner people might adopt in social interactions. This idiomatic expression is translated into Turkish as “gözünün önüneyken ‘ağabey, amca’ der” (saying elder brother, uncle when face to face). The translated context in Turkish target text cannot be taken as an idiom. Rather, the meaning of the source idiomatic

expression is explicated to the target reader with the addition of the expression “gözünün önüneyken” (when face to face). Therefore, this translation can be given as an example to “translation by paraphrase”. On the other hand, this idiomatic expression is translated into Russian as “При встрече лебезящие” (fawning when meeting), which does not function as an idiomatic expression in the Russian language and culture. Despite that, the meaning of the source idiomatic expression is still translated into the Russian target text. Therefore, the idiomatic expression translation strategy here can also be taken as “translation by paraphrase”. When it comes to the indirect translation, this source idiom is rendered into English as “fawn over”, which functions as a phrasal verb and also as an idiomatic

¹ The Russian and English translations are compiled in the same book published in 2021.

² In the analysis of the idiomatic expressions in this part of this study, the source idioms here and hereafter in Kazakh language

and their translations into Turkish and Russian are rendered into English word for word by the researchers of this study.

expression in English. Hence, the strategy here can be labeled as “using an idiom of similar meaning but dissimilar form”. As can be seen from the analysis here, while the meaning of the idiomatic expression is preserved through “paraphrasing” in direct translations, the indirect translation comes with “using an idiom of similar meaning but dissimilar form”. As a general rule, the intermediary text Russian is to have an effect on the indirect translation since the translators of the indirect texts naturally take the intermediary texts as the source text rather

than the original source texts. Accordingly, the English indirect translation might be expected to follow the translation strategy of the intermediary text. Given that the indirect translator does not encounter any idiomatic expression in the intermediary language, it is an interesting finding that the indirect translation adds to the literary style of its supposed source (intermediary) text yet preserves the style of the original source text while the direct translations sacrifice the style for the preservation of semantic features.

Table 2: Idiom On Impulsiveness.

Source idiom	Turkish translation	Russian translation	English translation
Басы бір ауырмай қалмаса керек (Kunanbaev, 2011, p. 13)	başı ağrısız kalmasa gerek (Kunanbayev, 2014, p. 24)	Ни о чем не задумается (Kunanbaev, 2021, p. 154)	unlikely to give much thought to (Kunanbaev, 2021, p. 266)

The second idiomatic expression “Басы бір ауырмай қалмаса керек” (doesn’t care to think) describes a poor behavior of a person in everyday life. The original idiom “Басы бір ауырмай қалмаса керек” implies a person who does not reflect on anything and never thinks deeply or does not consider the consequences of an act, referring to acting impulsively. It is translated into Turkish as “başı ağrısız kalmasa gerek” (their head should not go free from pain). This Turkish target expression refers to a situation where one is usually expected to be under trouble due to some misdeeds. The phrase “başı ağrımak” (have a headache) as part of the Turkish expression is an idiom in Turkish culture, which means ‘being in trouble’. The idiom is integrated into a broader phrase in the Turkish target context. Since the target expression is reproduced with an idiom constructed with similar grammatical structure and lexicon, the strategy here can be labeled as “using an idiom of similar meaning and form”. When it comes to the Russian translation of this idiom, we find the expression “Ни о чем не задумается” (does not think about anything), which does not function as an idiom in Russian language and culture. Here, the idiom is translated with expansion and explanation of its source meaning, therefore this translation decision can be claimed to be based on the strategy titled “translation by paraphrase”. On the other hand, this idiomatic expression is translated into English as “unlikely to give much thought to”. In this target expression, the

phrase “give much thought to” can safely be taken as an idiomatic expression in English. However, the structure and lexicon used in the indirect translation significantly differs from the source idiom even if the meaning is preserved for the target readership. Therefore, the translation strategy here can be shown as an example to “using an idiom of similar meaning but dissimilar form”.

While all target texts in Table 2 can preserve the meaning of acting impulsively without much thought about the process and the result, Turkish source text can also conserve the style of the source author. However, the preservation of semantic features is not accompanied by the source author’s style in the Russian direct translation. The striking finding with regard to the target contexts in Table 2 concerns the stylistic deviation of the indirect translation from its source (intermediary) text yet its conformity to the (Kazakh) original source text as in Table 1. This does not mean that Russian is not rich in idioms. On the contrary, these findings support the initial assumption in this study that indirect translation could also serve as the means to overcoming difficulties in translation. While the Russian direct text only preserves the semantic features of idioms, the English indirect translation from Russian can conserve both the semantic and stylistic qualities of the original source text. Therefore, the translation strategies for idioms can vary across languages and cultures even in the case of indirect translations.

Table 3: Idiom on Trickery.

Source idiom	Turkish translation	Russian translation	English translation
Құлық саумақ (Kunanbaev, 2011, p. 15)	kurnazlık уармақ (Kunanbayev, 2014, p. 26)	Кормиться хитростью (Kunanbaev, 2021, p. 155)	to live by cunning (Kunanbaev, 2021, p. 267)

The idiom “Құлық саумақ” in Table 3 refers to

another common negative behavior in society, which

could damage interpersonal relationships in social life. The source idiomatic expression “Қулық саумақ” (to milk trickery) cites the ideas that individuals tend to deceive people to attain their aspirations through deception and manipulation of others. This idiom is translated into Turkish as “kurnazlık yapmak” (to do trickery), which cannot be taken as an idiomatic expression. Rather, the Turkish target expression is an explication of the meaning of the source idiom, therefore this could be given as an example to “translation by paraphrase” strategy. Likewise, this source idiomatic expression is transferred into Russian target text as “Кормиться хитростью” (to live by cunning), which actually does not have an idiomatic use in Russian language. Nonetheless, the semantic sense of the idiomatic expression is still made manifest into the recipient language. Taking this into consideration, the applied translation strategy here can be classified as

“translation by paraphrase”. Similar to the direct translations, this idiomatic expression is translated into English language as “to live by cunning”, which can be considered to show the effect of the Russian direct translation as the intermediary text to the indirect translation. Under the influence of the direct translation, the translation strategy in the indirect translation can be regarded as “translation by paraphrase”. The indirect translator remains loyal to the translation strategy in the source (intermediary) text and preserves the semantic quality, which is different from the findings in Table 1 and Table 2. This divergence from the findings in Table 1 and Table 2 also implies that the indirect translator does not stick to one single orientation in translation, but rather tries to achieve semantic equivalence in the contexts referring to negative traits criticized in the source (intermediary) text.

Table 4: Idiom on Dishonesty.

Source idiom	Turkish translation	Russian translation	English translation
Ақ ты қара деп, я қараны ақ деп (Kunanbaev, 2011, p. 36)	aka 'kara', karaya 'ak' demek (Kunanbayev, 2014, p. 44)	Называя белое черным или черным белым (Kunanbaev, 2021, p. 170)	swear on their lives that white is black or black is white (Kunanbaev, 2021, p. 284)

As another idiomatic expression in Table 4, the Kazakh idiom “Ақты қара деп, я қараны ақ деп” (to call the white ‘black’ and the black ‘white’) implies a situation where a person deliberately distorts the reality and denies the truth. This idiom expresses a negative connotation, alluding to dishonesty or injustice. This source idiomatic expression is rendered into Turkish as “aka ‘kara’, karaya ‘ak’ demek” (to call the white ‘black’ and the black ‘white’). This target context cannot be considered an idiomatic expression in Turkish, nor is it an explanation on the meaning of the source idiom, but rather a literal translation. This literal translation in the Turkish target context “allows for a concrete reading of an otherwise playful language [in the source text]” (Baker, 2011, p. 87), which can be considered “translation by omission of a play on idiom”. However, we find the expression “Называя белое черным или черным белым” (to call the white ‘black’ and the black ‘white’), which actually functions as an idiomatic expression in Russian language and culture. In Russian, this target idiom means a deliberate distortion of the truth, that is, when a person intentionally presents falsehood as a truth. As a result, the translation of the idiomatic expression can be regarded as an instance of “using an idiom of similar meaning and form”. This strategy classification can be justified by the fact that Russian language possesses the same expression that is

structurally and semantically close to the Kazakh idiom. On the other hand, the source idiom is translated into English as “swear on their lives that white is black or black is white”, which does not function as an idiomatic expression in English, but rather literal translation of the source idiomatic expression. Hence, the strategy here can be recognized as “translation by omission of a play on idiom”. As the strategy in the indirect translation differs from the strategy in its source (intermediary) text, as is the case in discussion of the contexts in Table 3, the suspicion raised by the findings in Table 1 and Table 2 that the indirect translator could have also benefited from the original source (Kazakh) text is discarded here, supporting our justification in discussion of Table 3 that the indirect translator aims to keep loyal to the semantic qualities of the source (intermediary) text.

While the semantic qualities of the source idioms in Tables 1-4 are preserved in all three translated texts, the Turkish direct translation preserves the style of the source author in only one context with the use of the strategy “using an idiom of similar meaning and form”, which can be attributed to the genetic, cultural, and historical ties between these two Turkic languages. However, the style associated with diction is sacrificed three out of four times in the Turkish direct translation, which could imply that for all the genetic ties between languages, different

cultures established in distant geographies still perceive and experience similar phenomena or events in different ways. Yet, the findings as regards the translation of idioms on negative attitude to others also discards the potential effects of geographical proximity on perception of similar experiences given that the source idioms are rendered through paraphrase in three out of four times in Russian direct translation. It is only in one case that the diction of the source author is preserved in the Russian direct translation. Once members of the same land, even Kazakh and Russian cultures can be said to differ in their perceptions of the same phenomena with the predominant use of the “translation by paraphrase” strategy. When it comes to the English indirect translation, things get more complicated. While the indirect translation is not expected to preserve the stylistic features of the original source text, strangely enough, it is found to preserve the source author’s style in half of the

contexts with the use of idioms, deviating from its source (intermediary) text in three out of the four contexts in style. This finding demonstrates that the indirect translation is no more faithful to the style in its source (intermediary) text than its source text is to the original source text. From these findings, it can safely be concluded that the strategies in translation of idioms in all three target texts are geared towards the preservation of the semantic qualities rather than stylistic concerns, which seems to justify the valuable position of indirect translation in bridging distant cultures.

4.2. Idioms On Feelings of Self-Inadequacy

The idioms found to address negative traits like self-underestimation, perceived limits of endurance, lack of resourcefulness, reluctance, self-lowering discourse, inefficiency, and helplessness against difficulties are discussed in this subheading.

Table 5: Idiom On Self-Underestimation.

Source idiom	Turkish translation	Russian translation	English translation
Құлы, күңі құрлы да жоқпыз (Kunanbaev, 2011, p. 7)	kulu, cariyesi kadar da değilsek (Kunanbayev, 2014, p. 18)	Мы не стоим и их невольников, слуг (Kunanbaev, 2021, p. 148)	we are not even fit to be their servants (Kunanbaev, 2021, p. 261)

When it comes to the fifth idiomatic expression of the source text in Table 5, the source idiom “Құлы, күңі құрлы да жоқпыз” (We are not even considered equal to a slave or a bondwoman) usually refers to people who feel themselves undervalued or disrespected by other people within the community. In many contexts, it highlights the feelings of injustice, inequality, and a lack of appreciation besides social exclusion and diminished status. The above-mentioned idiomatic expression is translated into Turkish as “kulu, cariyesi kadar da değilsek” (if we are not even servant or bondwomen to them). It is interesting to see the Turkish idiom “kul olmak” (submit to) is used together with a collocation “kulu cariyesi” (servant and bondwoman to someone), and these two phrases are merged under one expression in the target text. Since this Turkish expression still bears the metaphor as signified by the idiom “kul olmak” (submit to), this could be considered “using an idiom of similar meaning and form” strategy with the signs in the target expression bearing significantly similar linguistic items to the source idiom. On the other hand, this idiom is translated into Russian as “Мы не стоим и их невольников, слуг” (We are not worth even their slaves and servants), which does not act as an idiomatic expression in the Russian language and culture.

However, the meaning in the source idiomatic expression is still preserved in this direct translation. Thus, the translation strategy here can be counted as “translation by omission of a play on idiom” since the literal meaning of the source idiom is translated into the target text without consideration for its expressive dimension and without further explication. Similarly, the source idiomatic expression is translated into English as “we are not even fit to be their servants”, which is not accepted as an idiomatic expression in English culture, but a literal translation is produced in the indirect translation. Consequently, the strategy titled “translation by omission of a play on idiom” is used in this indirect translation, which is not surprising given that the indirect translation is reproduced from the Russian target text the intermediary language. This example can clearly show the effects of the intermediary language on the indirect translation. Not aware that the original source context involves the use of an idiom as part of the style of the author, the indirect translator preserves both the semantic and stylistic aspects of its source (intermediary) text just as the Turkish direct translation conserves the style and semantic organization in its source (Kazakh) context.

Table 6: Idiom On Individual Limits Of Endurance.

Source idiom	Turkish translation	Russian translation	English translation
Жан шыдай ма екен? (Kunanbaev, 2011, p. 13)	can dayanabilir mi? (Kunanbayev, 2014, p. 26)	Выдержит ли душа? (Kunanbaev, 2021, p. 54)	can a soul bereft of? (Kunanbaev, 2021, p. 266)

As presented in Table 6, the Kazakh idiomatic expression “Жан шыдай ма екен?” is commonly implied to describe intense suffering, grief, or an unbearable situation. The source idiomatic expression “Жан шыдай ма екен?” (can the soul withstand it) functions as a rhetorical question that conveys doubt regarding humans’ capability to endure severe situations in life, also pointing to the limited endurance capacity inherent in human beings. We also find an idiomatic expression “can dayanabilir mi?” (can the soul withstand it?) in Turkish direct translation. In fact, this expression is commonly used in negative or question forms in Turkish, yet it is only a rhetorical question to imply the negative meaning as in the source text. Since the source and target idioms are constructed in the same grammatical and lexical forms in both languages and cultures, this could be categorized as “using an idiom of similar meaning and form” strategy in translation of idioms. On the other hand, the target expression “Выдержит ли душа?” (can the soul withstand it?) in Russian is not considered an idiomatic expression in Russian linguistic and cultural context. Despite

that, the meaning is still conveyed to the target reader by “translation by omission of a play on idiom”, stripping the metaphorical meaning yet reproducing the literal meaning in the target text. As to the English indirect translation, this source idiom is translated by paraphrasing the source idiom as “can a soul bereft of?”, which is not viewed as an idiom in English culture.

While the Turkish direct translation of this Kazakh idiom still points to the common perceptions of similar experiences by both Turkic languages, the translation choice in the fifth idiom in Table 5 persists for the Russian direct translation here, with the idiomaticity omitted to render the semantic qualities of the source context. This can be tied to the translator’s choice to introduce the Kazakh intellectual Kunanbaev’s enlightening wisdom to the target culture rather than his style in forming a national identity. Encountering no idiom in the source (intermediary) context, the English indirect translator also introduces the “what” by Kunanbaev rather than the “how” of literariness.

Table 7: Idiom On Lack Of Resourcefulness.

Source idiom	Turkish translation	Russian translation	English translation
Шығ ар есігін таба алмай (Kunanbaev, 2011, p. 14)	çıkılır eşiği bulamamak (Kunanbayev, 2014, p. 26)	Отчаявшись найти выход (Kunanbaev, 2021, p. 154)	to remain trapped in (Kunanbaev, 2021, p. 266)

The idiomatic expression “Шығар есігін таба алмай” in Table 7 conveys notions of helplessness, confusion, and entrapment. The source idiom “Шығар есігін таба алмай” (unable to find an exit door) depicts a person who is trapped in a difficult circumstance and unable to discover a solution. Its Turkish translation, “çıkılır eşiği bulamamak” (unable to find the exit doorstep) is an everyday expression in Turkish language. However, it also bears the connotative meaning of “not being able to find a solution” in Turkish culture, with the metaphorical meaning obtained through the use of the signs “çıkılır eşik” (exit doorstep) to refer to a “solution”. Even though this target expression is not an idiomatic expression in Turkish culture, the metaphorical meaning accompanied by the connotative signification in this target expression could still be categorized under “using an idiom of similar meaning and form” strategy with the lexical items and grammatical form preserved in the

Turkish target text. However, this idiomatic expression is reproduced in Russian as “Отчаявшись найти выход” (despairing of finding a way out), which does not play a role as an idiomatic expression in Russian culture. On the contrary, the meaning of the idiomatic expression is explicated to the Russian reader. Therefore, the strategy used in the Russian target text can be considered “translation by paraphrase”. When it comes to the indirect translation, the source idiomatic expression is translated into English as “to remain trapped in”. The expression “trapped in” can be used as a collocation as well as an idiomatic expression in English to refer to “getting one into such a position that one has little choice but to do something unwanted” (Spears, 2005, p. 714). Therefore, the strategy in the indirect translation can be taken as “using an idiom of similar meaning but dissimilar form”, conveying the stylistic features of the original author using a target idiomatic expression reproduced with a different

linguistic construction. However, the preservation of the original author's stylistic features of diction in the indirect translation does not necessarily point to a deliberate translation choice to keep loyal to the original style. This proposition could be supported with the findings in Table 5 and Table 6, in which the indirect translation does not opt for any idiomatic expression for literal translations of the idioms in the Russian translation. On the contrary, it could be

taken as an endeavor of the indirect translator to use metaphorical language in translation of a poet, enlightener, and translator as the source text writer. Even if the indirect translation does not take the original Kazakh text as its source text, the features commonly attributed to the original writer could have been taken as the basis in organizing the style in the indirect translation.

Table 8: Idiom On Acts Of Reluctance.

Source idiom	Turkish translation	Russian translation	English translation
Көкіректен, жүректен келмейді (Kunanbaev, 2011, p. 14)	yürekten gelmez (Kunanbaev, 2014, p. 26)	Не из груди, не из сердца (Kunanbaev, 2021, p. 155)	neither from belly nor the heart (Kunanbaev, 2021, p. 267)

The idiomatic expression “Көкіректен, жүректен келмейді” (does not come from the soul and heart) as shown in Table 8 implies that what is said or done does not come from one's inner self or heartfelt desire, but it is performed unwillingly. In Turkish translation, the expression “yürekten gelmez” (does not come from the heart) is the negated form of the idiomatic expression “yürekten gelmek” (to come from the heart) to imply the meaning “with bells on”. As the Turkish target expression is constructed through a similar linguistic and lexical structure, the strategy here can be labeled as “using an idiom of similar meaning and form”. This idiomatic expression is translated into Russian as “Не из груди, не из сердца” (not from the chest, not from the heart), which indeed does not function as an idiomatic expression in Russian culture. Despite that, the meaning of the idiomatic expression is preserved in this direct translation with a meaning akin to that of the source expression. However, the meaning is reproduced through the literal translation of the

components of the source idiomatic expression. Thus, the translation strategy in this context can be labeled as “translation by omission of a play on idiom”. In English indirect translation, the idiomatic expression is translated as “neither from belly nor the heart”, which is not considered an idiomatic expression in the English culture, either. While English language has an idiomatic expression “with bells on” for this source sign, the meaning is reproduced through literal translation. Hence, the translation strategy here can be regarded as “translation by omission of a play on idiom”. The general tendency in the previous contexts can also be seen here with the Turkish direct translation preserving both the semantic and stylistic features of the source text while the Russian direct translation focusing on the semantic qualities, a choice that can be attributed to the potential textual-linguistic norms as part of the operational norms taken by the translator in the choice of words, idioms and style³.

Table 9: Idiom On Self-Lowering Acts.

Source idiom	Turkish translation	Russian translation	English translation
Көз сүзіп, тіленіп (Kunanbaev, 2011, p. 15)	göz süzerek, dilenip (Kunanbaev, 2014, p. 26)	Вьмаливать с бегающими глазами (Kunanbaev, 2021, p. 155)	deceit (Kunanbaev, 2021, p. 267)

The next idiomatic expression “Көз сүзіп, тіленіп” (squinting and begging) is mostly used in a negative sense in the source culture. The source idiom “Көз сүзіп, тіленіп” refers to people who lower themselves and ask for something in a self-degrading manner. This idiomatic expression is translated into Turkish as “göz süzerek, dilenip” (batting eyes and begging). As part of the target expression, “göz süzmek” (batting eyes) implies

making sheep's eyes but throwing a considerate eye as an idiom in Turkish. On the other hand, the part “dilenip” (begging) is the literal translation of the source sign “тіленіп”. While the reproduction of the source idiom through the Turkish idiom “göz süzmek” (batting eyes) could be given as an example to “using an idiom of similar meaning and form” strategy, the following part “begging” is the complementary meaningful unit to the Turkish

³ The terms related to norms are adopted from Gideon Toury (2021) in this discussion.

expression which could ultimately be labeled as “translation by paraphrase”. In the other direct translation, this source idiom is translated into Russian as “Вымалывать с бегающими глазами” (to beg with darting eyes), which omits the connotative meaning in the source context. As a result, the translation strategy can be taken as “translation by omission of a play on idiom”. When it comes to the indirect translation, the source idiomatic expression is rendered into English as “deceit”. Since the source and target signs are distinctly different from one another in meaning, no trace of the source idiom can be found in the indirect translation. Therefore, the strategy here can be regarded as “translation by

omission of entire idiom”. It is only in this context that we find the indirect translation omitting an entire idiom. However, this does not undervalue the significance of the indirect translation as a possible solution to difficulties in translation between two distant cultures with the previous eight contexts conveying the semantic qualities and partly preserving the style of the original source text. Therefore, while translation strategies are the significant means in overcoming difficulties in translation of idioms into other cultures, indirect translation by itself serves as a worthwhile mechanism to bring distant cultures in contact.

Table 10: Idiom On Inefficiency.

Source idiom	Turkish translation	Russian translation	English translation
Өнерсіз иттің ісі (Kunanbaev, 2011, p. 15)	hünersiz itin işi (Kunanbayev, 2014, p. 26)	Удел никчемных существ (Kunanbaev, 2021, p. 155)	a worthless existence (Kunanbaev, 2021, p. 267)

The idiomatic expression “Өнерсіз иттің ісі” (the work of an unskillful dog) in Table 10 metaphorically conveys the endeavors which are ineffective and unproductive when individuals lack the necessary skill or practical knowledge to achieve desired results. The idiomatic expression is rendered to Turkish as “hünersiz itin işi” (the work of an unskillful dog). The sign “dog” is used to refer to people in the lowest rank of the society in terms of dignity. As can be understood, the Turkish target expression is indeed a literal translation of the source idiom. However, it is not purely denotative, either, with the use of the sign “dog” in its associative meaning. Therefore, the strategy here can be taken as “translation by paraphrase”, rendering the meaning of the source idiom explicit for the target reader. Likewise, we find the expression “Удел никчемных существ” (the destiny of worthless creatures) in Russian target text. This expression is not recognized

as an idiom within the framework of Russian language and culture. For this reason, the strategy in translation of this idiomatic expression in this context could be considered as an example of “translation by paraphrase”. By the same token, the source idiom is translated into English as “a worthless existence” which does not operate either as a phrasal verb or as an idiomatic expression in English. Accordingly, the translation strategy employed in the indirect translation can also be classified as “translation by paraphrase”. As can be seen from the context in all target texts, the idiom regarding the criticism on potential feelings of inefficiency by Kazakh people is conveyed to the target readers with a focus on the semantic qualities. While the target cultures also have idioms relating to feelings of inefficiency, the translators are seen to favor the semantic features over style in this context.

Table 11: Idiom On Helplessness Against Difficulties.

Source idiom	Turkish translation	Russian translation	English translation
Аузымыз бармайды (Kunanbaev, 2011, p. 33)	dilimiz varmaz (Kunanbayev, 2014, p. 42)	Мы молчим (Kunanbaev, 2021, p. 169)	we keep our peace (Kunanbaev, 2021, p. 283)

As can be seen in Table 11, the source idiomatic expression “Аузымыз бармайды” (we dare not speak) conveys an idea of a person who is reluctant to say something, when the words do not come easily; that is, when someone feels embarrassed, hesitant or lacks the courage to utter certain words, implying the feelings of helpless in negative situations. This idiom is translated into Turkish as “dilimiz varmaz” (our tongue cannot utter this), an idiom almost always used in the negative form. As in

the source idiom, this target idiom in Turkish also refers to a situation when the speaker is reluctant to utter words. Therefore, reproduction of the source meaning in the Turkish target text through an idiom constructed with lexicon different from the Kazakh idiom can be labeled as “similar meaning but different form” strategy. In the Russian target text, we find the expression “Мы молчим” (we keep silence), which is not used as an idiom in the Russian culture, yet conveying the source meaning to this

direct target language. Hence, the translation strategy adopted in this instance corresponds to “translation by paraphrase”, with explication on the meaning of the source idiom in the target context. As to the English indirect translation, the idiomatic expression is rendered into English as “we keep our peace”, which functions neither as a phrasal verb nor as an idiomatic expression in English language and culture, but rather as a clarification of the meaning of the source idiom in the target text. Thus, the translation approach applied in this idiomatic expression can also be labeled as “translation by paraphrase”.

Of the seven source idioms under the semantic category of feelings of self-inadequacy as devised in this study, five of them are translated into Turkish direct target text with comparable idioms in Turkish, showing the akinness between the Turkic languages both in the experiences of life and social perception of these experiences. On the other hand, while the meanings of the experiences on feelings of inefficiency narrated in the source text are also preserved in the Russian direct translation, none of the target contexts are given with idioms, but rather through literal meaning or paraphrase of the source context. This finding points to an overwhelming tendency of the Russian translator to convey the enlightening “wisdom words” of Kunanbaev for his nation based on the content of these pieces of advice rather than their stylistic features. Finally, the English indirect translation is heavily influenced by the style in the intermediary Russian text. In one context in the indirect translation, the piece of advice on self-lowering acts is omitted from the target text while all other six lessons by Kunanbaev are preserved for their meanings. It is quite natural that the indirect translator keeps loyal to the semantic qualities in the intermediary text since the latter serves as the sole source text for the indirect translation. Yet, probably as a result of familiarity with the source author’s style, the idiom on lack of resourcefulness is reproduced with another idiomatic expression in the indirect translation while its source (intermediary) text does not use any idiom in that context. As a result, Turkish and Russian readers learn Kunanbaev’s pieces of advice for Kazakh people on feelings of self-inadequacy through translation strategies for idioms as employed by the direct translators while Anglophone readers are presented this information through indirect translation, which refers to the potential role of indirect translation in overcoming translation problems.

5. CONCLUSION

Focusing on the idioms demarcated with a scope on the criticism of potential negative attitudes of Kazakh people in the *Words of Edification* by the Kazakh intellectual Abai Kunanbaev, this study investigates the strategies in Turkish, Russian, and English translations of the relevant idioms identified in the source text. While the Turkish and Russian target texts are taken as the direct translations of the work, English target text is adopted as the indirect translation from Russian as the intermediary language. Since Abai Kunanbaev attempts to form a Kazakh national identity in his works including the *Words of Edification*, he does not refrain from criticizing the negative attitudes of his own people, extending these criticisms to suggest the ways out for a purely moralistic society. In such criticisms, he is found to use a total of eleven idiomatic expressions in the source text. The idioms are established as the negative attitudes of people like insincerity, impulsiveness, trickery, dishonesty, self-underestimation, perceived limits of endurance, lack of resourcefulness, acts of reluctance, self-lowering discourse, inefficiency, and helplessness against difficulties. These semantic labels on the meanings of the idioms are devised by the researchers of this study to pinpoint the content of the lessons taught by Kunanbaev to Kazakh people. These semantic labels are further classified under two broader semantic categories, namely “idioms on negative attitudes to others” and “idioms on feelings of self-inadequacy”, also devised by the researchers of this study. As a result of this categorization, it is seen that Kunanbaev warns the Kazakh nation against potential mistreatment of other people and undervaluing their own potentials and capabilities, which demonstrates the enlightening strength of this book. These source idioms are later compared to their translations in the target texts based on the set of idiom translation strategies as propounded by Mona Baker (2011). The identification of the translation strategy is ensured through the discussion of the meanings and forms of the source and target idioms.

The most frequent translation strategy identified in the Turkish direct translation is “using an idiom of similar meaning and form” (in translation of five contexts), followed by “translation by paraphrase” (in translation of four contexts). This suggests that the idioms in Kazakh language and culture can mostly be found in Turkish language and culture, as well (Arslan & Arslan, 2019, p. 76). This can be tied to the cultural and linguistic similarities between Kazakh and Turkish peoples, with both languages categorized as Turkic languages (Johanson & Csató, 2015; Serdalina, 2024). While the Turkish translation

is also found to bear “using an idiom of similar meaning but dissimilar form” in translation of one Kazakh idiom, implying equally different worldviews in construction of idioms referring to similar sets of experience, the strategy titled “translation by omission of a play on idiom” is found only in one context in Turkish target text. Identification of these last two strategies also points to the challenges in translation of Kazakh idioms into Turkish culture, partly stemming from the relative differences between the two cultures (Akhmetbekova & Montanay, 2024, p. 246). Therefore, the similarities between Kazakh and Turkish as the Turkic languages and the corresponding resemblances in their cultures could allow the translators to be able to make informed decisions in translation of idiomatic expressions by preserving the style of the author; however, caution must also be taken in translation of those linguistic units between these two cultures to allow for the employment of other idiom translation strategies when a semantically equivalent idiom cannot be obtained in the target culture due to the inevitable differences between the two cultures.

When it comes to the translations into Russian, “translation by paraphrase” (in six cases) and “translation by omission of a play on idiom” (in four cases) stand out in frequency, implying the absence of comparable sets of experience and expressions between the Kazakh and Russian cultures since an otherwise relative similarity could be expected to result in the use of strategies of “using an idiom of similar meaning and form” or “similar meaning but different form”. It must be acknowledged that Kazakh and Russian speech communities have been in contact for centuries, which implies that the two cultures could be expected to assign similar phrases to shared sets of experience. Yet, the findings in this study point to the opposite situation, confirmed with findings from the relevant literature (Iskhakova et al., 2020). All this implies that translation of idioms between Kazakh and Russian languages could compel the literary translator to be as creative and as cautious as possible to be able to render the meaning, and accordingly the content of the source text to the target culture even if stylistics losses could occur particularly in translation of literary texts. This conclusion also implies that the Russian target translation is aimed towards conveying the enlightening lessons by Kunanbaev rather than the style. These conclusions regarding the Turkish and Russian direct translations also highlight the importance of akinness between language families (the case between Kazakh and Turkish) rather than

geographical or historical contact (the case between Kazakh and Russian peoples) in translation of culturally loaded idioms. Yet, this significance can be restricted to the preservation of the literary style rather than semantic qualities.

Regarding the English indirect translation from the intermediary language (Russian), it can be concluded that “translation by paraphrase” (in translation of four contexts) and “omission of a play on idiom” (in translation of three contexts) are identified as the most frequent strategies in translation of Kazakh idioms into English. However, the reason for this result cannot be attributed to the distinct ways of life between the Kazakh and English cultures; rather, the effect of the Russian target text as the intermediary text to the English indirect translation could be nominated as the rationale behind this conclusion. Since the English translator only has the Russian text as the intermediary source text in hand, it is plausible to expect that a paraphrased content for a source Kazakh idiom in the Russian target text might give no hint of an idiom use for the English translator. Taken from another perspective, ten of the eleven contexts with idioms in the original source text are already translated through “translation by paraphrase” and “omission of a play on idiom”, which means that the indirect translator finds only one idiom in the source (intermediary) text. All this implies that the operational norms by the indirect translator do not involve the word choice regarding the style, but rather preservation of the meaning. Therefore, the translation strategies sought in the indirect translation are only analyzed in order to determine the extent to which indirect translations could deviate from the original source text in comparison to the direct translations. As a result of this analysis, the indirect translation is found not to lose the semantic qualities of the original source text when the semantic qualities of the intermediary text are closely followed. However, one major suggestion emanating from this conclusion is that if the intermediary text of an indirect translation is chosen from a direct translation whose language is genetically linked to the original source language (as is the case between Kazakh and Turkish as Turkic languages in our case), the style is also more likely to be preserved. As the style in Turkish direct translation is mostly preserved, the preservation of the semantic qualities could also be accompanied by the conservation of the style in the indirect translation. This suggestion can also be taken as one of the original contributions of this study in that no such recommendation can be found in the relevant

literature. This modest suggestion can also lead to one of the major conclusions of this study that the translation strategies for idioms should not be taken as the sole means to overcoming problems with translation of idioms; rather, indirect translation can also be nominated as an alternative solution to translation of idiomatic expressions even between distant cultures as long as the intermediary text is chosen among the direct translations most akin to the original source text in terms of linguacultural features and language families.

As a result, it could be suggested that literary translators show utmost care in translation of idiomatic expressions since those phraseological units manifest their importance not only in meaning but also in the authorial style (Ahmed, 2024). Even when the source and target cultures are distinctly

different, the set of strategies for translation of idioms as propounded by Mona Baker (2011) as well as the route of indirect translation could serve as an invaluable compass in guiding the translators to make informed decisions particularly when the translators feel obliged to sacrifice one of the sides of the coin, that is the content or style. As for the recommendations for future studies, it could also be suggested that the recent direct English translation of Abai Kunanbaev's work titled *Words of Edification* could also be compared to its indirect translation to be able to compare and contrast the strategies in translation of idioms. It is through such a study that the effects of direct and indirect translation can safely be ensured in translation of idioms as culturally laden phraseological units.

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