

**Linguistic Peculiarities of Translating Metaphors in Diplomatic Discourse**  
**Лингвистические особенности перевода метафор в дипломатическом дискурсе**  
**Дипломатиялық дискурстағы метафора аудармасының лингвистикалық**  
**ерекшеліктері**

Kanat Akynov

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### **Abstract**

This thesis examines the techniques of translating metaphorical expressions from English into Russian, in particular, in the context of official speeches of the presidents of Kazakhstan and Russia. Taking into account that political speeches are full of metaphors, often containing ideological and cultural meaning, the aim of the study is to analyze metaphors as a specific, figurative form of language and to identify the peculiarities of their changes depending on national differences.

The analysis of official translations of presidential speeches between 2021 and 2024, reveals a variety of strategies for translating metaphors, which in turn accounts for the emergence of semantic nuances, that is, how translation can influence policy statements at the international level.

This paper fills an important research gap, as if until now there has been no comparative analysis of Kazakh and Russian political discourse in the field of metaphor translation. The study advances the understanding of metaphor translation in diplomacy and has practical implications for linguists, translators and political scientists.

According to the qualitative research, which included the analysis of over 200 metaphorical expressions, the most common translation strategy is retaining the original metaphor, which indicates an intention to save its figurative meaning. The comparative analysis, on the other hand, allowed us to identify both common features and specific features that reflect national peculiarities.

The results of the study show that there is a need for a planned way of using metaphors in political discourse. Consequently, it can be stated that translating metaphors is also a political act, as it reflects cultural differences. In conclusion, it is recommended to pay more attention to the careful translation of metaphors in diplomatic speeches and to promote research on how different languages are used in diplomatic communication.

*Key words:* Metaphors, metaphor translation strategies, presidential addresses, politics

### Аңдатпа

Бұл диссертациялық жұмыста метафоралық тіркестерді ағылшын тілінен орыс тіліне аудару тәсілдері зерттеледі, әсіресе Қазақстан мен Ресей президенттерінің ресми сөздері контекстінде. Саяси баяндамаларда идеологиялық және мәдени мәнге ие метафоралар жиі кездесетінін ескере отырып, зерттеудің мақсаты — метафораны тілдің бейнелі әрі ерекше түрі ретінде талдау және олардың ұлттық айырмашылықтарға байланысты қалай өзгеретінін анықтау.

2021 жылдан 2024 жылға дейінгі аралықтағы президенттердің ресми аудармаларын талдау метафораларды аударудың әртүрлі стратегияларын анықтады. Бұл өз кезегінде мағыналық реңктердің пайда болуына әкеледі: яғни аударма халықаралық деңгейдегі саяси мәлімдемелердің мазмұнына әсер етуі мүмкін. Аталған жұмыс маңызды ғылыми олқылықтың орнын толтырады, себебі осы күнге дейін Қазақстан мен Ресейдің саяси дискурсы аясында метафора аудармасына қатысты салыстырмалы талдау жүргізілмеген.

Сонымен қатар, бұл зерттеу дипломатия саласындағы метафораны аударуды тереңірек түсінуге ықпал етіп, лингвистерге, аудармашыларға және саясаттанушыларға практикалық тұрғыда пайдалы бола алады. 200-ден астам метафоралық тіркесті қамтыған сапалы талдау нәтижесінде ең көп қолданылатын аударма стратегиясы бастапқы метафораны сақтау болып табылатыны анықталды. Бұл оның бейнелі мағынасын сақтап қалуға деген ұмтылысты көрсетеді. Салыстырмалы талдау жалпы ұқсастықтармен қатар, ұлттық ерекшеліктерді көрсететін нақты сипаттарды да айқындауға мүмкіндік берді.

Зерттеу нәтижелері саяси мәтіндердегі метафораларды аударуға стратегиялық тұрғыдан қарау қажеттігін растайды. Осылайша, метафораны аудару — мәдени

контексті ескеруді талап ететін саяси әрекет деген қорытынды жасауға болады.

Қорытынды ретінде дипломатиялық сөздердегі метафораларды мұқият аударуға назар аудару және тілдерарағы дипломатиялық коммуникацияны одан әрі зерттеуді ілгерілету ұсынылады.

*Кілт сөздер:* Метафора, метафораларды аудару стратегиялары, президенттік жолдаулар, саясат

### Аннотация

В данной диссертационной работе исследуются приёмы перевода метафорических выражений с английского на русский язык, в частности, в контексте официальных выступлений президентов Казахстана и России. Учитывая, что политические речи изобилуют метафорами, зачастую содержащими идеологический и культурный смысл, целью исследования является анализ метафор как специфической, образной формы языка и выявление особенностей их изменений в зависимости от национальных различий.

Анализ официальных переводов речей президентов в период с 2021 по 2024 годы, выявил разнообразие стратегий перевода метафор, что в свою очередь обуславливает возникновение смысловых нюансов: то есть, как перевод может влиять на политические заявления на международном уровне.

Данная работа заполняет важный пробел в исследованиях, поскольку до сих пор не проводилось сравнительного анализа казахстанского и российского политического дискурса в сфере перевода метафор.

Кроме того, данное исследование углубляет понимание перевода метафор в дипломатии и имеет практическое значение для лингвистов, переводчиков и политологов. Согласно качественному исследованию, включающему анализ свыше 200 метафорических выражений, наиболее распространенной стратегией перевода является сохранение исходной метафоры, что говорит о желании сохранить ее образный смысл. Сравнительный анализ, в свою очередь, позволил выделить как общие характеристики, так и специфические черты, отражающие национальные особенности.

Результаты исследования подтверждают необходимость стратегического подхода к переводу метафор в политических текстах. Так, можно сделать вывод, что перевод метафор – это политический акт, требующий учета культурного контекста. В заключение, рекомендуется усилить внимание к тщательному переводу метафор дипломатических речей и способствовать исследованию межъязыковой дипломатической коммуникации.

*Ключевые слова:* Метафоры, стратегии перевода метафор, президентские речи, политика

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### **Introduction**

In this chapter, the present research is introduced by providing the necessary background and rationale for the study. The purpose of this chapter is to present the reader with the essential information required to understand the research's foundation, including the research problem, the study's objectives and guiding questions, the significance of the research, and an outline of the thesis structure.

In the first section, I present to the reader the necessary background information actual to the study's context, thereby establishing the importance of diplomatic and political discourse, and the linguistic and cultural nuances involved in translating metaphorical speeches. This text will focus on the role of metaphor as a powerful tool in shaping public perception and political ideology. In the context of political discourse, the usage of metaphors has been demonstrated to exert a significant influence on the public perception of political issues, the construction of ideological frameworks, and the shaping of political decision-making processes. It is crucial to recognize the importance of this context in order to understand the broader field in which this study is situated. This highlights the importance of analyzing the use of language in high-level political communication, particularly the influential function of figurative language.

The third section describes the purpose and objectives of the study. The aim is to identify, compare and analyze metaphorical expressions in course of presidential speeches. The second section delineates the problem statement, which identifies a certain gap in understanding with regard to the comparative translation of metaphors in Kazakhstani and Russian presidential addresses in particular. The study also seeks to categorize the translation strategies used and to explore the extent to which cultural and linguistic differences influence these choices.

The fourth section of this study discusses the significance of this research. The research makes a significant contribution to the fields of metaphor theory, political discourse analysis and translation studies by offering a comparative perspective. The findings have practical implications for translators working with political texts, helping to refine approaches to translating metaphors, where both clarity and ideological nuances are critical and curious to explore. Section five concludes with a brief description of the thesis' structure, providing the reader with a guide to the chapters that follow.

### **Background**

In recent decades, political discourse has become one of the central objects of study in translation studies due to its complexity, ideological content, and frequent use of figurative language, especially metaphors, as described by Chilton and Schaffner (2002) and Musolff (2016). Metaphors act as a powerful rhetorical tool in political communication. According to Charteris-Black (2011), they simplify abstract concepts, evoke an emotional response in the audience, and help to present complex social and national issues in a clear and persuasive manner. As Reisigl and Wodak (2009) note, the role of metaphor is especially noticeable in such genres of high-level political speech as presidential addresses, which perform not only an informational but also a persuasive function, contributing to the formation of national identity.

In the post-Soviet space, Kazakhstan and Russia are two separate but historically and linguistically linked countries where presidential speeches remain key instruments of political discourse and foreign policy positioning. In Kazakhstan, programs such as the Kazakhstan 2050 Strategy and the Trilingualism Policy emphasize the importance of multilingual political communication, primarily in Kazakh, Russian, and English. The goal is to enhance the country's global competitiveness by promoting proficiency in Kazakh as the official language, Russian as the language of interethnic communication, and English as the language

of international integration, according to the Ministry of Education and Science of the Republic of Kazakhstan (2016).

As part of this policy, official policy documents, including presidential addresses to the nation, are regularly translated into English for international audiences. In Russia, the President's annual addresses to the Federal Assembly are key political speeches that articulate domestic priorities and a foreign policy vision. These texts are also translated into English and published on official platforms, reflecting Russia's desire to disseminate its political ideas to an international audience. In particular, the speeches of the President of the Russian Federation often use metaphors that emphasize the dynamic, sometimes decisive nature of the country's political course. And despite the fact that in both Kazakhstan and Russia the texts of presidential speeches are originally written in Russian, the rhetorical strategies and the communicative goals can differ significantly due to differences in national ideologies, diplomatic priorities, and approaches to state-building.

Thus, symbolic and strategic importance of metaphors in presidential speeches, their translation into English presents not only linguistic but also cultural and ideological difficulties. According to Schäffner (2004) and Newmark (1988), translating political metaphors requires careful consideration of semantic shifts, cultural frameworks, and pragmatic implications that can often lead to loss of meaning, distortion, or recontextualization. Despite the growing scholarly interest in metaphor and its translation, there remains a significant gap in comparative research on how metaphors are conveyed in the diplomatic discourse of Kazakh and Russian presidential speeches, especially in terms of strategies used, shifts in meaning, and cross-cultural interpretation

Situated at the intersection of political linguistics and translation studies, this study examines how metaphors function in diplomatic rhetoric and how they are used and explored in different linguistic and cultural contexts. The study is based on a corpus of official English

translations of speeches by the presidents of Kazakhstan and Russia between 2021 and 2024 and aims to deepen the understanding of the practice of metaphor translation in the context of international political communication.

### **Statement of the Problem**

Metaphors are a powerful rhetorical tool in political discourse, allowing leaders to articulate complex concepts, evoke emotional responses, and shape dominant national narratives. Translating such texts, especially those of high importance such as presidential addresses, it faces with significant challenges due to cultural, ideological, and linguistic nuances.

However, the majority of extant research on metaphor translation is somewhat isolated, as it focuses on monocultural features. For instance, research conducted on Russian political discourse and speeches reveal that ideological and military metaphors predominate, as evidenced by the works of Junhui (2018) and Lifan (2022). However, within the framework of Kazakhstan, this field remains unexplored. As asserted by Aizhan et al. (2021), the translation of metaphors in political speeches and texts remains an area of research that has been inadequately explored in Kazakhstan, necessitating further systematic investigation. A major problem is the lack of research examining the differences between Kazakhstan and Russia. This deficit hinders our understanding of the metaphorical implications in these texts and the ways in which ideologies may exert linguistic influence on the development of metaphors. Furthermore, the problem is compounded by the fact that, as Schaffner (2004) and Newmark (1988) declared, the process of translating metaphors is often excluded or circumvented due to the inherent complexity of the task, which can lead to misinterpretation of the original message. The present study addresses a significant lacuna in contemporary research activities: namely, the absence of studies that examine and compare the strategies of metaphor reinterpretation in Kazakh and Russian presidential speeches. Absent such a

comparison, it is impossible to comprehend the norms of translation and the ideological framework employed in the international projection of political discourse in the post-Soviet space. This study uses a corpus of translated presidential speeches from 2021-2024 to identify recurring patterns in the use of metaphors and translation strategies. The findings contribute to theoretical developments in translation studies and contribute to a more nuanced understanding of diplomatic communication.

### **Purpose of the Study and Research Questions**

The present study aims to investigate how metaphors are translated from Russian into English in the context of official presidential addresses from Kazakhstan and Russia. This investigation is informed by a previously identified research gap and the relevance of metaphor translation in political discourse. The specific objectives of the research are as follows:

1. To identify and examine the translation strategies employed in the context of metaphors in official Russian-English translations.
2. To analyze the conceptual and contextual inconsistencies that arise in the process of metaphor translation.
3. To compare metaphor translation strategies employed in presidential addresses delivered in Kazakh and Russian.

The study seeks to answer the following research questions:

1. What translation strategies are employed in rendering metaphors in the diplomatic discourse of presidential addresses from Russian into English?
2. What conceptual and contextual inconsistencies emerge in the translation of metaphors in the diplomatic discourse of presidential addresses?
3. How do metaphor translation strategies in Kazakhstani presidential addresses differ from those in Russian presidential addresses?

### **Significance of the Study**

This research is significant both practically and theoretically. First, it covers the lack of cross-cultural translation and its research in the post-Soviet space.

Despite the common historical and linguistic heritage shared by Kazakhstan and Russia, significant disparities emerge in their political ideologies and foreign policy strategies.

Presidential addresses in both countries fulfil two functions: firstly, they inform the public; secondly, they contribute to the legitimacy of the government, national identity and international image. It is therefore vital to consider the translation of metaphors into English when assessing the perception of these countries on the global stage. The following reasons underpin the importance of metaphor translation strategies. Firstly, metaphors in political discourse are not merely a stylistic device; they shape the vision of a nation, its foreign policy priorities and internal reforms. The manner in which these translations are executed can exert a significant influence on the manner in which an international audience perceives a nation's political stance and ideological orientation, as stated by Schäffner (2004) and Musolff (2016). Consequently, a metaphor expressing unity or renewal can be preserved, softened, or replaced, depending on the communicative objectives of the translator or institution.

Secondly, the analysis of the translation of metaphors from these different contexts makes it possible to identify how national identity is conveyed and reinterpreted in a multilingual format. For example, Kazakhstan, promoting the Strategy "Kazakhstan-2050" and the policy of national branding, seeks to position itself as a modern, progressive and multilingual state. It is evident that Russian rhetoric is predominantly characterised by notions of sovereignty, tradition, and greatness. Thirdly, the majority of research on metaphor translation strategies focuses on Western political discourses; the post-Soviet space remains unexplored.

Ultimately, the research will facilitate progress in the fields of linguistics and translation.

### **Outline of the Thesis**

This study is divided into five sections, which are logically organised to ensure a comprehensive analysis of the topic. The text takes up the following aspects: the general context, the relevance of the study, the formulation of the problem, the objectives, the research questions and the justification of the importance of the topic. This is followed by a literature review that includes theoretical approaches to metaphor, its translation and existing research in the field of political discourse. The methodological section describes the research design, the principles of corpus selection, the metaphor identification procedure (MIP) and the translation framework. The analytical part discusses the results of the study, including a comparison of the use of metaphors and translation strategies in the presidential speeches of Kazakhstan and Russia. The article concludes with a summary of the key findings, their implications for translation practice and policy, and suggestions for further research.

### **Literature Review**

In the intricate web of international relations, effective communication stands as the linchpin, serving as the conduit through which nations articulate their policies, negotiate agreements, and navigate the delicate balance of diplomacy. Within this intricate tapestry, the realm of translation and interpretation plays a pivotal role, acting as the silent facilitator that ensures messages traverse linguistic boundaries with precision and nuance. Translating diplomatic discourse is a complex task in which linguistic subtleties and cultural connotations are key to successful intercultural communication. Translation of diplomatic discourse is an extremely interesting and important aspect of any peace policy. Accurate and correct transmission of necessary information is the key to successful diplomatic relations. It is well known that translation and interpretation of diplomatic discourse have their own peculiarities and intricacies that deserve careful consideration. Figurative language, and in particular, the pervasive use of metaphors and their translation, precisely forms these peculiarities and complexities as they function as a powerful conceptual tool in political reality (Lakoff & Johnson, 1980; Charteris-Black, 2011). The purpose of this literature review will be to determine the importance and relevance of this topic today, as well as to identify the views of authors of current research in some form related to this topic. The following literature review will be structured in a theoretical research approach, as it will contain comparisons and classifications. The significance and contemporary relevance of diplomatic translation in a broader context and strategies related to the translation of metaphors in this critical area will be explored.

The first section of the literature review includes an examination of the theoretical foundations and meaning of metaphor and establishes their relevance in diplomatic discourse. In the second section, I examine key strategies for translating metaphors to form an idea of how translators use metaphorical language. Next, I will discuss the conceptual and contextual

shifts that arise when translating metaphors. In the next section, cultural aspects affecting metaphor translation will be discussed, and I will compare Kazakh and Russian diplomatic discourse by highlighting different national styles.

### **Theoretical Foundations and Significance of Metaphors**

In this section I will consider the essence of metaphor and discuss foundational theories to better understand the significance of metaphors, especially in diplomatic discourse.

#### ***Defining Metaphor***

The conceptualization and perception of metaphor have changed significantly over time. Such classical views, in particular Aristotle's, regarded metaphor as a decorative linguistic device used to enhance expression and make language vivid and persuasive (Aristotle, 2017; Aristotle & Kennedy, 2006). According to the Merriam-Webster dictionary (n.d.), metaphor is described as a form of speech that relates to one object or concept and applies to another to underline their similarity or analogy. Davidson (1978) argues that metaphors, as opposed to conventional and traditional views of metaphor, do not have a unique semantic meaning different from literal interpretation. Lakoff and Johnson (1980) claim that metaphors are not just linguistic or decorative devices, but they are fundamental cognitive structures that shape perception and view on the world. This confirms that while metaphors have traditionally been seen as a form of speech used primarily for rhetoric, modern research highlights its fundamental role in human thought and language. According to Lakoff and Johnson (1980), our abstract concepts, such as time, love or ideas are difficult to understand directly, so they are structured by metaphors based on familiar, concrete physical and social experiences.

According to Dickins (2005), metaphors function by transferring meaning from the source domain, that is, from a particular or physical one, to a target domain or, more simply,

to an abstract one. This complements the underlying theory of Lakoff and Johnson (1980) that metaphors are cognitive tools for understanding abstract concepts.

Although these theories emphasize the cognitive dimensions of metaphor, recent studies also highlight the role of culture in shaping metaphorical thinking and usage. Recent research challenges traditional views by emphasizing the contextual and dynamic nature of the metaphor. Metaphors are multifaceted in nature, and contextual application varies from different factors. According to Prandi and Rossi (2022), metaphors are dynamic constructs that depend on linguistic, cognitive, and cultural elements. Similarly, Siman and Sampaio (2023) consider metaphor as a multidimensional phenomenon that has emotional and persuasive power and that is always adapted according to the communicative goals and expectations of the audience.

As described above, metaphors are complex linguistic and cognitive phenomena that can also be interpreted according to various cultural contexts. The next section covers the functional roles that metaphors play in political and diplomatic discourse.

#### ***Function of Metaphor in Political and Diplomatic Discourse***

In political and diplomatic discourse, metaphors serve as tools for various strategic and critical purposes. Such topics may relate to national security, political reforms and transformations, economic and social issues, and international relations. Therefore, metaphors play a key role in political and diplomatic discourse.

The fairly widespread use of metaphors in this field can most certainly be attributed to their ability to conceptualize complex abstract ideas and topics, conveying them clearly to the audience and influencing their perception. Of course the fundamental explanation for this function was provided by Lakoff and Johnson (1980), who argue that conceptual metaphors structure our perception and understanding of abstract concepts. According to Charteris-Black (2011), metaphors are used to pose complex questions and serve to influence and

control public perception in the context of social and political aspects. Boeynaems et al. (2017) in their study found that metaphors have an impact on people's perceptions, political opinion and beliefs, but it is also worth considering the context and type of metaphor, as two different approaches were taken to study metaphors. These findings suggest that metaphors do influence audience perceptions, but that factors such as context, type of metaphor and possibly cultural differences should be taken into account.

Liu and Wang (2020) state that metaphors can be used as powerful tools to express judgment and express critical stance in diplomatic discourse. In their study, they found that Chinese diplomats using offensive metaphors related to animal or personality characteristics can express strong judgment and reflect geopolitical realities and seek to influence international attitudes and public perceptions. This means that metaphors play an important role in conveying ideology and are not always used to form a positive context. Metaphors can be aggressively used to criticize and condemn in a diplomatic context, which can demonstrate assertiveness and challenge.

In addition, metaphors can be strategically used to express national unity and influence society by justifying political action. Vestermark (2007), states that American presidents, in opening addresses, using metaphorical personification, sought to make abstract political concepts more understandable and emotionally resonant to increase public engagement. Considering the Russian context, metaphors function as means of persuasion and often reflect ideological and political positions. According to the studied data, Russian political and diplomatic discourse includes metaphors used to build and strengthen social identity, seek to justify a political position, and legitimize policy choices in matters of diplomatic confrontations (Almass & Hussain, 2021; Anderson, 2001; Balashova, 2022; Mammadov, 2010).

In fact, metaphors are not just a decorative phenomenon but serve to shape the perception and persuasion of the audience, express political positions, and manage and regulate international relations in diplomatic and political discourse.

### **Metaphor Translation**

Considering the versatile function of metaphors, the translation of metaphors is a serious process, as simply replacing a word in the source language with an equivalent in the TL cannot convey the full semantic and pragmatic essence of the metaphor in the original. According to Schäffner (2004), since metaphors in political texts often convey complex ideas, their translation in this discourse is a complex process that requires a cognitive approach. Schäffner (2004) also points out that diplomatic communication is significantly dependent on effective translation. Metaphors in such texts serve to convey complex ideas and messages, express national identity, and influence the audience. That is, metaphors shape perceptions of policy and ideology; hence, accurately translating metaphors and preserving their meaning is of key importance, and improper translation can lead to undesirable consequences.

Some studies note that many metaphors do not have a direct equivalent in the TL, which may lead to difficulties in translating the metaphor, due to which meaning and expressiveness may be lost (Aizhan et al., 2021; Musaad, 2022; Zou'bi & Kanakri, 2020). In addition, these studies note that political texts often use innovative or customized metaphors that are difficult to interpret accurately, thus careful selection of metaphor translation strategies is necessary.

As far as strategies for translating metaphors are concerned, it is worth paying special attention to this vast topic. Van den Broeck (1981) was one of the first to propose systematic strategies for translating metaphors, such as reproduction of the same image in the TL, replacement by a TL metaphor with a similar meaning, conversion of the metaphor into a

non-metaphorical expression, deletion of the metaphor if it is untranslatable or redundant. This model presents a pragmatic approach and also emphasizes the importance of cultural compatibility and expectations of the target audience. According to Aizhan et al. (2021), some metaphors are untranslatable when there is no semantic equivalent in the TL or when there is no conceptual weight in the literal translation. Aizhan et al. (2021), in their study, relied on Newmark's (1988) seven metaphor translation strategies and demonstrated their practical application. In addition, according to their findings, cultural competence and contextual understanding are more crucial to the choice of strategies, although Newmark strategies carry a useful framework. Turning in detail to strategies, Newmark (1988) proposed one of the most commonly used classifications of translating metaphors, such as 1) reproducing the same image in the TL, 2) replacing the image with a culturally appropriate equivalent, 3) translating metaphor by simile, retaining the image, 4) simile plus sense, 5) converting the metaphor to sense, 6) deletion, and 7) reproducing the metaphor along with its sense. Moreover, Newmark (1988) argues that by using these metaphor translation strategies, translators have flexible options for preserving meaning. This is a significant aspect of these strategies because in diplomatic discourse, metaphorical meaning is often ideologically charged, where it is important to navigate within cultural and cognitive nuances.

Newmark (1988) focused more on practical, text-linguistically oriented strategies, while Schäffner (2004) offers a more cognitive and functional perspective. Schäffner (2004) proposes only three main strategies for translating metaphors, such as 1) metaphor to metaphor (same or adapted metaphor in the TL), 2) metaphor to sense, and 3) metaphor to simile or other rhetorical transformation. It is worth noting that these strategies relate to earlier strategies as exemplified by Newmark (1988) but are also complemented by cultural and pragmatic analysis within a critical perspective.

Based on traditional taxonomies, Prandi (2017) presents a cognitive-pragmatic model,

emphasizing the need for contextual analysis. He categorizes metaphors into traditional and conflict metaphors that are relevant to political texts. This approach complements the above strategies and emphasizes pragmatic sensitivity and adds cognitive depth.

Different studies build on the above strategies and adapt them to their topics. The strategies proposed by Newmark (1988) and Schäffner (2004) are mostly applied, as seen in the studies of Aizhan et al. (2021), Zou'bi and Kanakri (2020), and Musaad (2022).

### **Conceptual and Contextual Shifts in Translation**

Conceptual and contextual shifts are the types of inconsistencies that can be observed in metaphor translation. They arise from differences in metaphorical comparisons between languages and cultures and are also the result of political, pragmatic, or situational requirements for communication, respectively. Numerous studies agree that different linguistic and cultural communities may perceive and interpret abstract concepts differently (Bakhodirova, 2024; Haif Si Haif & Touati, 2022; Lakoff & Johnson, 1980; Schäffner, 2004). As discussed earlier, Lakoff and Johnson's (1980) Conceptual Metaphor Theory (CMT) argues that various abstract concepts are often understood through concrete experience via metaphorical comparisons. However, it is worth considering that these conceptual juxtapositions may differ from culture to culture. According to the idea of Lakoff and Johnson (1980), abstract concepts are usually understood through concrete domains such as “argument is war” or “nation is a body”.

Cultural variations affect the conceptualization of metaphors. Haif Si Haif and Touati (2022), based on English-Arabic translation, encountered cases where the conceptual metaphor of the source text could not be directly transferred due to the absence of an equivalent in TL. Thus, they concluded that decisions about translating metaphors are made depending on cultural and contextual factors. Bakhodirova (2024) states that in order to correctly interpret specific metaphors, translators need to overcome cognitive and cultural

gaps.

Liu and Wang (2020) note that when Chinese diplomatic discourse is translated into English, aggressive and offensive metaphors are often softened to support the international image. That is, contextual shifts can serve as a tool to establish geopolitical clarity. Musolff (2016) states that in political discourse, metaphor is persuasive because it has a connection to audience expectations, and contextual acceptability is necessary. Therefore, deviations from literal translation may occur to maintain pragmatic relevance. Such changes can reveal both the linguistic and strategic goals of translators, acting as political spokespersons, so to speak, who can manage the diplomatic tone and international perception.

In some cases, metaphors can be intentionally modified for different purposes, such as crisis mitigation, image control, and expression of solidarity. According to Semino (2008), in order to achieve communicative goals in a socio-political context, metaphors may undergo re-contextualization. Chilton (2004) warns that shifts can distort the ideological structure of diplomatic discourse. These conceptual and contextual mismatches are central to my study.

### **Metaphor Use in Kazakhstani and Russian Political and Cultural Contexts**

In the post-Soviet space, Kazakhstan and Russia share historical and international ties but have different national and cultural communication styles in the political arena. Studying the use of metaphor in these contexts, as well as the identification of predominant topics, will allow further to distinguish strategies for translating metaphors in presidential addresses. According to Aizhan et al. (2021), the Kazakh political discourse most often uses neutral, universal metaphors related to modernization, development, and international cooperation. For instance, "building a community", "building the future", "the way of development", and "flourishing society". As for translation strategies, they most often included reproduction of the same image and retention, and sometimes cultural adaptation.

In comparison with the Kazakh context, Russian political and diplomatic discourse is

most often revealed as ideologically charged. Junhui (2018) and Liu and Huang (2022) claim the existence of militaristic and conflictual metaphors in Russian political discourse.

Translation of these metaphors requires a careful strategy, since misunderstandings and distortions might occur in the global arena. In such a context about strengthening state power and demonstrating ideology and cultural and historical framework, translators choose strategies such as substitution, omission, explicitation depending on the cultural and political resonance (Schäffner, 2004; Van den Broeck, 1981; Newmark, 1988).

In addition, the difference between the use of metaphor in Kazakhstani and Russian political discourse is consistent with the theories proposed by Lakoff and Johnson (1980), who argued that cultural cognition and social values have a relationship with metaphorical framing.

This part of the literature review touches on the importance of communication and translation in the field of diplomacy, because metaphors are often used there. Diplomatic language is formed from several aspects like culture, strategy and ever changing norms, so it is not a neutral language and makes translation not easy. I did a study where metaphors and not only stylistic metaphors can shape not only thinking but also political reasoning, which makes translation even more difficult. According to scholars Lakoff, Scheiffner, and Newmark there is almost always a chance of losing meaning or cultural depth in translation, even with the helpful strategies they suggested. Despite the closeness of the countries between Kazakhstan and Russia, their political metaphors can be very different from each other, which is why translators should be extremely attentive to cultural context when translating. However, when it comes to translating presidential speeches from Russian into English presidential speeches, there are clearly imperfections.

### **Methodology**

This research chapter provides explanation and justification of the research approach and instruments. The purpose of this research is to analyze the linguistic peculiarities of translating metaphors in the diplomatic discourse of presidential addresses from Russian into English. Specifically, the study aims to identify the translation strategies, examine conceptual and contextual inconsistencies, and compare metaphor translation strategies in Kazakhstani and Russian presidential addresses. The study seeks to answer these research questions:

1. What translation strategies are employed in rendering metaphors in the diplomatic discourse of presidential addresses from Russian into English?
2. What conceptual and contextual inconsistencies emerge in the translation of metaphors in the diplomatic discourse of presidential addresses?
3. How do metaphor translation strategies in Kazakhstani presidential addresses differ from those in Russian presidential addresses?

In addition, this chapter includes significant research aspects such as the explanation of data collection and its analysis and the description of ethical considerations. Additionally, this chapter provides a detailed discussion of data collection methods, analytical procedures, and ethical considerations, ensuring a comprehensive and structured approach to the study.

### **Research Design**

To identify the translation strategies in addresses of the presidents of Kazakhstan and Russian, the study employs a qualitative research methodology. A qualitative research approach provides in-depth investigation of the context and complexities in metaphor translation within diplomatic discourse. According to Merriam and Tisdell (2015), this method is characterized by an inductive process, which includes the study of information in the form of documents and the construction of a concept on an intuitive understanding. Since the study focuses on uncovering patterns and strategies of metaphors' translation rather than

testing a hypothesis, an inductive nature of the research allows to study texts and build interpretations based on patterns of information by close reading and comparative analysis. Therefore, this approach is relevant for analyzing the translation of metaphors. This method enables to identify the strategies, changes in meaning, and contextual influences that shape the translation process. Moreover, this method allows to understand how metaphors function within diplomatic discourse. Therefore, this research method is suitable for studying the translation strategies of metaphors. It will provide an in-depth analysis of how metaphors function in diplomatic texts.

As Cresswell (2017) emphasizes, qualitative research is flexible, allowing the phases of the process to change during data collection, and at the same time it creates a complex picture of the issue under study. The adaptability of the study will allow to capture the complexities of translation in political discourse, as the strategies of translating metaphors require in-depth study. In addition, a comprehensive picture of the issue under study in the context of political discourse can encompass ideological influences and cultural connotations. Therefore, this research method will allow for analyzing translation patterns beyond cause-and-effect relationships.

Additionally, this study utilizes a comparative analysis to investigate the differences and similarities in metaphor translation strategies between Kazakhstani and Russian presidential addresses. A comparison of the original texts and their translations is one of the most effective tools that enables to identify shifts in the ideological and cultural foundations of political discourse (Schäffner, 2004). Since comparative analysis could provide a systematic framework for identifying patterns in various contexts, it is an essential tool for the current study to analyze the translated documents. Comparative analysis will reveal diplomatic, linguistic, and strategic differences, shedding light on how Kazakhstan and Russia approach the translation of metaphor within their political discourse.

### **Data Collection**

The data for this research consists of a corpus of presidential addresses from Kazakhstan and Russia, obtained from official government sources from 2021 to 2024 in the Russian and English languages. The corpus includes Presidential Addresses to the Nation by the President of Kazakhstan and Presidential Addresses to the Federal Assembly by the President of Russia from 2021 to 2024. These texts were chosen because they carry a significant political and diplomatic function and also include figurative devices such as metaphors.

### **Data Analysis**

In order to conduct the research, a bilingual corpus was created. Official government sources provide the presidential addresses in both languages. The corpus-based analysis will allow to study actual models of language use and to discover detailed information about language structures, which are usually not seen only intuitively (Bennet, 2010; Biber, 2006). To systematically identify metaphors in the corpus, this study applies the Metaphor Identification Procedure (MIP) developed by the Pragglejaz Group (2007). According to Steen et al. (2010), this method provides a structured approach to metaphor identification by distinguishing lexical units that contrast with their basic meanings in context. The MIP procedure in this study involves reading the text to determine the overall meaning, after which the text will be segmented into individual lexical units, and their meaning in context will be identified. The next step in the analysis is to determine whether there is a meaning of the lexical unit in context and to check the contrast with the main meaning. The contextual meaning should be more comprehensible compared to the main meaning. If these points are met, the lexical unit will be labeled as metaphorical.

### **Comparative Framework**

This study uses a comparative framework to analyze metaphor translation strategies in the diplomatic discourse of Kazakh and Russian presidential addresses from 2021 to 2024. The analysis focuses on two corpuses: the Address to the Nation of the President of Kazakhstan and the Address to the Federal Assembly of the President of Russia, using both the original Russian texts and their official English translations.

The purpose of the comparison is to determine how national diplomatic styles and ideological orientations influence the use of metaphors and the choice of translation. In order to ensure consistency across both corpuses, the Metaphor Identification Procedure (MIP), which was developed by Pragglejaz Group (2007) is applied. Then the selected metaphors are analyzed using established typologies of translation strategies (e.g., Newmark, 1988; Schäffner, 2004). This allows the study to explore the metaphorical expressions that recur and differ, the strategies that are employed in translation (e.g., literal transfer, substitution, paraphrase, omission), and the conceptual, ideological shifts that result from translation.

By comparing the translation of metaphors in these two political contexts, this study identifies patterns formed by linguistic, cultural and strategic factors in diplomatic discourse.

### **Limitations & Ethical Considerations**

This study is limited by the narrow genre and time frame of the data - official speeches from 2021 to 2024. The focus on official and pre-translated texts means that the study cannot take into account the translators' intentions, choices or limitations. As a result, some nuances in metaphorical transitions may remain unclear. In addition, the Metaphor Identification Procedure (MIP), although systematic, involves subjective judgment in some cases, which may affect consistency.

There are no ethical concerns with the study, because it relies on publicly available government text. The public availability of the texts eliminates concerns about confidentiality

or informed consent. All English translations analyzed in this study are taken from official government websites in Kazakhstan and Russia, which guarantees accuracy and authenticity.

### **Findings**

This study focuses on identifying the strategies used in translating the metaphor into the diplomatic discourse of presidential speeches, with a special focus on the Russian-English language pair in the Kazakh and Russian contexts. The study aimed to identify strategies for translating the metaphor used in official translations of Kazakh and Russian presidential speeches, as well as to analyze the conceptual and contextual shifts occurring in the translation process. This chapter presents the main results obtained by identifying the metaphor and comparative analysis of individual speeches of presidents from 2021 to 2024. The study used a metaphor identification procedure (MIP) to extract metaphorical expressions from original Russian texts, which were then compared with their English translations. Each case was analyzed and classified according to the translation strategies proposed by Newmark (1988) and Schaffner (2004): Retention, Explication, Substitution and Omission.

Since the study is aimed at investigating specific features and strategies of translation of the metaphor in the Russian-English language couple, a corpus from the Kazakhstani presidential and Russian addresses was created for analysis. The corpus is divided into two main categories, respectively. The first category includes Kazakhstani presidential addresses for the period from 2021 to 2024. The second category is Russian addresses for the period from 2021 to 2024. The first category includes five texts in the original language of the speech, that is, in Russian, and five texts in official translation in English. The second category contains four texts in Russian and four documents in official English translation. The key selection criterion was the availability of the texts of these messages in the original text of the speech and with an official translation into English on the official websites of Akorda and the Kremlin. Overall, the corpus includes a total of 16 texts.

It is important to mention that the corpus was created to cover the main metaphors and features in translating metaphors from Russian into English. With this corpus, it was not the aim to identify all the metaphors in the selected texts, but only the majority of those that are explicit and show specific features in order to analyze patterns and find strategies for translating metaphors. Moreover, the compilation of two different categories in the context of Kazakhstan and Russia allowed for a comparative study. By analyzing the key main metaphors and their translation strategies in political discourse, the study aims to identify the differences in approach between Kazakh and Russian political discourses. This comparative analysis will help to identify and understand national trends and peculiarities in the use of metaphors and their translation strategies.

The sections in the chapter are organized as follows: first, the chapter contains two sections related to translating the metaphor into presidential speeches from Kazakhstan and Russia, respectively. Each section includes a total number of identified metaphors and their examples, as well as the applied translation strategies. The third section contains a general analysis of metaphorical strategies for translation. The fourth section is devoted to conceptual and contextual shifts, while the fifth section considers the metaphorical models identified in the source texts.

Finally, the sixth section presents a comparative analysis of Kazakhstani and Russian discourse with emphasis on national trends in the use of metaphor and strategic preferences in translation.

### **Kazakhstani and Russian Addresses**

This first section is devoted to the analysis of the addresses of the President of Kazakhstan from 2021 to 2024. The analyzed Kazakhstani subcorpus includes five original texts in Russian. In total, there are 244,714 characters without spaces and 277,823 characters with spaces. The Russian texts include 36,290 words in general.

There are also five texts of Kazakhstani presidential addresses in official English translation. There are 244,249 characters without spaces and 285,512 with spaces in total. Moreover, the English documents consist of 44,470 words.

The analyzed Russian subcorpus contains four original texts in Russian, corresponding to addresses from 2021 to 2024. There are a total of 215,652 characters without spaces and 249,478 characters with spaces in the Russian texts. The Russian texts include 34,385 words overall.

There are also four texts of the Russian presidential addresses in official translation into English. There are 216,433 characters without spaces and 258,214 with spaces in total. Also, documents in English consist of 42,355 words. It's worth noting that each piece of data from the texts was counted without the title and date of the presidential addresses.

**Table 1**

*Statistical Information about Corpus*

Corpus	Language	Number of texts	Number of words	Number of characters without spaces	Number of characters with spaces
Kazakhstan	Russian	5	36,290	244,714	277,823
Kazakhstan	English	5	44,470	244,249	285,512
Russia	Russian	4	34,385	215,652	249,478
Russian	English	4	42,355	216,433	258,214

In comparison to the broader taxonomies including all seven metaphor translation strategies proposed by Newmark (1988), this study used a more simplified and focused

framework. Specifically, I applied a combination of the strategies identified by Newmark (1988) and modified by Schaffner (2004). Applied strategies are Retention, Substitution, Explication, and Omission. These four strategies are relevant and frequently occurred in the corpus of diplomatic discourse. Therefore, they were chosen and provided a more focused and applicable analysis of the translation of metaphors in political texts.

Although Newmark originally proposed seven different strategies for translating metaphors, not all of them proved to be applicable or observable within this corpus. Instead, the selected strategies were sufficient to capture the main patterns and specificities of translating political metaphors from Russian into English in the context of political discourse in Kazakhstan and Russia.

### **Kazakhstani Presidential Addresses**

Analysis of the Kazakhstani presidential addresses from 2021 to 2024 revealed a variety of metaphors and the application of several translation strategies. There is a significant number of metaphors that were identified. The total data about the number of metaphors and their translation is provided in Table 2:

**Table 2**

*Metaphor Translation Strategies in Kazakhstani Corpus*

Strategy	Number	Percentage (%)
Retention	97	89%
Substitution	11	10.1%
Explication	1	0.9%
Omission	0	0%
Total	109	100%

According to the analysis and the information from Table 2, the predominant translation strategy found in the Kazakhstani corpus is Retention. This strategy includes 97

metaphors. This is evident in numerous examples where the original Russian metaphor is directly translated into English, preserving the metaphorical image. Below are several examples of Retention in Kazakhstani addresses:

1. “Принятые меры дают свои плоды – резко вырос средний балл поступающих...” translated as “*measures are bearing fruit*” (Official website of the President of the Republic of Kazakhstan, 2021).
2. “[Непотизм, в какой бы стране он ни был, неизбежно приводит к отрицательной кадровой селекции], становится благодатной почвой для расцвета коррупции” translated as “...becomes fertile ground for corruption to flourish” (Official website of the President of the Republic of Kazakhstan, 2022).
3. “Эту опасную тенденцию нужно пресечь на корню – ужесточить наказание и исключить условно-досрочное освобождение за подобные преступления” translated as “*dangerous trend must be stopped at the root*” (Official website of the President of the Republic of Kazakhstan, 2022).
4. “В то же время промышленники и предприниматели не должны выступать в качестве “кредитного пылесоса”” translated as “*credit Hoover*” (Official website of the President of the Republic of Kazakhstan, 2023).
5. “А ведь во многих странах... бушует настоящая эпидемия преступности и беспорядков. Но почивать на лаврах нам никак нельзя” was translated as “*experiencing a veritable epidemic of crime*” and “*cannot afford to rest on our laurels*” (Official website of the President of the Republic of Kazakhstan, 2024).

Substitution is also a common strategy, though less frequently than Retention, only 11 examples of Substitution. This strategy involves replacing the original metaphor with a different metaphorical or non-metaphorical expression in the target language. Some examples of Substitution in Kazakhstani presidential addresses include:

1. “30-летие Независимости – это наша самая высшая ценность” translated as “*most cherished treasure*” (Official website of the President of the Republic of Kazakhstan, 2021). In this example, value is interpreted as a *treasure*.
2. “Оно дало существенный импульс развитию предпринимательства...” (Official website of the President of the Republic of Kazakhstan, 2024) translated as “*significantly boosted entrepreneurship*”. Impulse was substituted with the verb *boost*.
3. “Важно не сбавлять набранных темпов” is translated as “*maintain this momentum*” (Official website of the President of the Republic of Kazakhstan, 2024). In this case, the metaphor “*набранные темпы*” (gained pace or tempo) is not literally translated but replaced with another metaphor in English, ‘momentum’.

Moreover, one instance of what appears to be Sense or Explication is also present in the president’s speech, where the implicit meaning of the metaphor becomes more explicit in the target language, and it can be conveyed without a direct metaphorical equivalent in English. This is an example of Sense or Explication in the Kazakhstani address: “*Решения о доступе к ним путем кулуарных обсуждений в тиши кабинетов должны быть поставлены вне закона*” translated as “*in the quiet of offices*” (Official website of the President of the Republic of Kazakhstan, 2021). This metaphor probably relies on cultural nuances, meaning not just quiet rooms. It implies secrecy and separation from public

discourse. In this case, “*in the quiet of offices*” in English specifies the setting but lacks the metaphorical richness of the original version.

Finally, omission is not explicitly detailed as a frequently used strategy in the provided Kazakhstani State of the Nation Addresses.

### **Russian Presidential Addresses**

The analysis of Russian presidential addresses from 2021 to 2024 also revealed a considerable number of metaphors and the application of various translation strategies such as Retention, Substitution, Explication, and Omission..

**Table 3**

*Metaphor Translation Strategies in Russian Corpus*

Strategy	Number	Percentage (%)
Retention	68	66.02%
Substitution	31	30.10%
Explication	3	2.9%
Omission	1	0.97%
Total	103	100%

Similar to the Kazakhstani corpus, Retention appears to be the most common strategy. 68 metaphorical expressions translated with the Retention strategy were identified. Some examples of Retention in Russian addresses include:

1. “*эпидемия наступала*” translated as “*epidemic was on the offensive*” (President of Russia, 2021).
2. “*стали основой, стержнем тех проектов*” translated as “*became the foundation, served as the main pillar of the projects*” (President of Russia, 2021).

3. “шаг за шагом грубо и бесцеремонно создаются ... угрозы” translated as “threats which ... politicians created consistently, rudely and unceremoniously from year to year” (President of Russia, 2022).
4. “Откуда эта наглая манера разговаривать с позиции исключительности...” translated as “insolent manner of talking down from the height of their exceptionalism” (President of Russia, 2022).
5. “остаются кровавые, незаживающие раны терроризма” translated as “this created bloody, non-healing wounds and the curse of terrorism” (President of Russia, 2022).
6. “Начну с одной из самых острых проблем” translated as “poverty remains an acute problem” (President of Russia, 2024).

Furthermore, the strategy of substitution is also utilized in the Russian subcorpus, involving the replacement of the original metaphor with a different expression. In this subcorpus, 31 examples of metaphors translated with the strategy of substitution were found. Several examples of Substitution in Russian addresses include:

1. “преодолеем все испытания” translated as “pull through” (President of Russia, 2021), which means physical overcoming of difficulties.
2. “вышли на передовую” translated as “found themselves in the thick of events” (President of Russia, 2021). In this sentence, the front line is used as a battle image.
3. “Несогласных ломают через колено” translated as “Those who refuse to comply are subjected to strong-arm tactics” (President of Russia, 2022).
4. “ситуация начала развиваться по другому сценарию” translated as “situation took a different turn” (President of Russia, 2022). The word *scenario* is translated as a *turn*.

5. “*образ Запада ... оказался призраком, фальшивкой*” translated as “*the image of the West was a mirage*” (President of Russia, 2023). Here the metaphor *mirage* replaces “*призрак, фальшивка*”, but conveys the same concept of illusion, deception, and unreality.

The provided data also includes one example of Omission, where a metaphor present in the Russian text is not translated in the English version. An example of Omission in Russian address is: “*вступает в борьбу за жизнь людей,*” which has a corresponding English translation “*arrive first to save lives,*” which does not retain the metaphorical meaning of “*вступает в борьбу,*” meaning entering the fight. This could be interpreted as an omission of the metaphorical element.

### **General Results of Metaphor Translation Strategies**

Retention is the most frequently employed translation strategy for metaphors from Russian into English across both the Kazakhstani and Russian presidential addresses. The indications are 97 and 68 examples, respectively. This tendency suggests a possible purpose to preserve the original metaphorical imagery in translation, aiming to elicit a similar conceptual understanding in the target audience.

Substitution is the second most common strategy. However, this strategy is noticeably prevalent only in the Russian message texts, as among 103 metaphors, 31 metaphors are translated in the strategy of Substitution. In comparison with Kazakhstani message texts, Substitution is noticeably less prevalent. There are only 10 metaphors among 109 examples. This strategy was possibly used in cases where a direct translation may not be culturally appropriate, be incomprehensible, or lose its impact in English. The pragmatic use of Substitution probably reflects a strategic choice to prioritize clarity and cultural alignment over strict linguistic equivalence.

Explicitation and Omission are less frequently used strategies in both presidential addresses based on the provided examples. Important to mention that both strategies are literally absent in the Kazakhstani subcorpus. Explication is applied to clarify the meaning of a metaphor that may not be immediately clear to the target audience. Omission, although not widely exemplified in the data presented, is used when a metaphor is deemed unnecessary, potentially confusing, or culturally inappropriate in the target text.

### **Conceptual and Contextual Shifts**

The comparative analysis of the translation of metaphors from Russian into English in presidential addresses revealed distinct conceptual and contextual shifts. These shifts are primarily due to differences in language structures, cultural context, and expectations of the target audience.

First, in the selected texts, the conceptual shifts are related to a change in the cognitive pattern underlying the metaphor in translation. For instance, metaphors originally based on physical or spatial concepts in Russian often shifted towards abstract or generalized concepts in English. There are such examples as “*эпидемия наступала*” (*epidemic was on the offensive*), where the source concept is related to the epidemic, personified as actively attacking. The target concept of this example maintains a similar idea but abstractly frames it in terms of aggressive progression rather than literal physical attack. The Retention strategy was applied, and the metaphor was retained to evoke urgency while remaining universally understandable for all political cultures. The next example is “*вышли на передовую*” (*found themselves in the thick of events*), which source concept represents physical positioning in the battlefield. The target concept involves abstract metaphor emphasizing involvement rather than physical location. Substitution was implemented and original metaphor was replaced by culturally neutral equivalent that maintains rhetorical intensity without militarism. One more example is “*преодолеем все испытания*” (*pull through*). Here the source concept means to

physically overcome obstacles, and the target concept shows an abstract metaphor of survival and endurance. With the help of Substitution, the metaphor is changed into a familiar expression in English to make it comprehensible for international audiences.

Regarding the contextual changes, they also occurred. There were several modifications that were driven by cultural, pragmatic, or strategic considerations in order to enhance the relevance and understanding for the target audience. I have noticed these examples, like *“тень на плетень наводит и всех пугать”* (*muddy the waters and scare people*), where the source context refers to local idiomatic expression implying unnecessary fear. The target context was adapted into a culturally familiar expression with similar conceptual implications. Substitution was chosen to ensure that the figurative intent is maintained and to avoid culturally opaque images. In the phrase *“несогласных ломают через колено”* (*those who refuse to comply are subjected to strong-arm tactics*), the source context demonstrates physical violence, but the target context is translated into abstract political coercion, reducing explicit physical imagery. Using the tone management, here the substitution strategy transformed a vivid physical image into a diplomatic euphemism. In *“ход происходивших тогда событий – это хороший урок”* (*that experience should serve as a good lesson for us*) the source is related to educational metaphor emphasizing historical learning. The target context was generalized to emphasize experiential learning rather than direct educational terminology.

These results show that the dual role of the translator is to convey the original intent and simultaneously adapt the language to the sensitivities and communicative norms of the target culture and political context.

### **Comparative Analysis of Kazakhstani and Russian Discourse**

A comparison of the translation strategies of metaphors used in the addresses of the presidents of Kazakhstan and Russia reveals intriguing similarities and notable differences.

The most striking similarity is the shared preference for the preservation strategy. This shows that in both cases, the aim is to preserve the original metaphor in order to convey the rhetorical force and precise meaning of the original, which is important for official diplomatic discourse.

However, a significant difference is in the frequency of substitution. The Russian corpus has a higher rate of this strategy compared to the Kazakh corpus (30.10% versus 10.1%). This discrepancy indicates a tendency in the translation of Russian addresses to replace metaphors with more neutral or descriptive expressions. This may be done to adapt the speech to an international audience - to soften the directness, cultural specificity, or to make the message more understandable and accessible.

Conversely, the lower level of substitution and the virtual absence of explicitation and omission in the Kazakh corpus indicate a desire to preserve the metaphorical structure of the original in translation. This may reflect differences in the rhetorical style of the originals, which are oriented toward more universally perceived metaphors, or indicate a translation strategy that prioritizes accuracy over cultural adaptation.

Another interesting finding is that despite the common metaphorical patterns in both corpora, such as Conflict, Space, and Construction, differences may be seen in the choice of specific metaphors and in the emphasis on certain conceptual domains. As noted in the literature, Russian political discourse often relies on militaristic metaphors, which was confirmed in the analysis of the corpus. Conflict metaphors are also found in Kazakh speeches, but a more accurate picture of national differences could be provided by a quantitative assessment of the frequency of domains.

In essence, while both translations demonstrate a common desire to preserve metaphors in diplomatic discourse, the Russian approach appears more flexible, with frequent use of substitution, which may reflect a strategy of adaptation to an international audience.

The Kazakh approach is more often focused on the direct transmission of metaphorical meaning. These differences reflect the peculiarities of rhetorical and translation norms in political communication of the two countries.

### Discussion

This section presents an interpretation of the results obtained when analyzing metaphor translation strategies in Kazakhstani and Russian presidential addresses. To move smoothly from the above-mentioned findings, in this part I deal with what these findings actually mean, connecting the dots between the words used by the presidents and the choice of interpreters, especially when moving from Russian to English in such a delicate space as diplomacy and politics. The main research questions that guided this study were as follows: (1) What translation strategies are used in translating metaphors in presidential discourse from Russian to English? (2) What conceptual and contextual shifts occur when translating metaphors? (3) How do the strategies of translating metaphors in Kazakh and Russian presidential discourse differ?

The main findings of this study confirmed that Retention is the most frequent translation strategy in both Kazakhstani and Russian diplomatic discourse. This aligns with what Schäffner (2004) suggested about diplomatic translation, that it is crucial to preserve the metaphorical image to maintain rhetorical and cognitive effectiveness. It is interesting, though, that Russian texts used strategies like Substitution and Explicitation far more often than Kazakhstani texts. Initially, I hypothesized that translators would prefer keeping metaphors as close to the original meaning as possible. The findings definitely support this, reinforcing insights from scholars like Newmark (1988) and Schäffner (2004), who argue that metaphors are not just stylistic but also cognitive tools vital in political and diplomatic contexts. Lakoff and Johnson's (1980) and Charteris-Black's (2011) earlier studies also back up this point, emphasizing the power of metaphors in shaping audience perceptions.

However, the frequent use of Substitution, particularly in the Russian subcorpus, caught my attention. I think that translators deliberately adjusted metaphors to better suit

international audiences who might perceive Russian metaphors as overly aggressive, culturally unclear or politically inappropriate. This corresponds with what Liu and Wang (2020) and Chilton (2004) mentioned about translators adjusting metaphors and content in the political and diplomatic texts to fit geopolitical sensitivities. For instance, militaristic metaphors prevalent in Russian texts sometimes were toned down, confirming translators' strategic choices in managing diplomatic nuance (Junhui, 2018; Liu & Huang, 2022).

Conversely, the Kazakhstani translations rarely deviated significantly from the original imagery, consistent with previous observations by Aizhan et al. (2021), who noticed a tendency toward neutral and universally understood metaphors in Kazakhstani political speeches. This may explain why I observed fewer strategies of substitutions or explicitations in Kazakhstani subcorpus.

The conceptual shifts I observed mainly occurred with Substitution, where translators chose metaphors that resonated better culturally or contextually in English. Haif Si Haif and Touati (2022) previously noted this approach, underscoring the importance of adapting metaphors for cultural and diplomatic appropriateness. For instance, “*тень на плетень наводит и всех пугать*” (muddy the waters and scare people) involves idiomatic image, and the translation of this example is visually strong. However, the Russian phrase contains a culturally specific metaphorical structure that could conceal meaning for non-native audience. Therefore, translators employed Substitution, opting for a more familiar English expression that conveys the same rhetorical purpose and ensures communicative clarity.

Furthermore, contextual shifts, particularly in Russian translations, highlight an awareness of geopolitical dynamics and sensitivities. Again, it highlights Liu and Wang's (2020) insights into how diplomatic language is strategically softened for broader acceptance. In addition, I noticed differences in metaphorical models between the two countries. While

both utilized conflict, construction, and movement metaphors, Russian speeches leaned heavily on military and defensive imagery. This information is consistent with insights from Junhui (2018) and Anderson (2001), emphasizing ideological framing in Russian political language, which is distinct from the more neutral, development-focused metaphors widely used in Kazakhstani discourse.

Overall, while Retention was the most preferred and widely applied strategy across both discourses, subtle variations in translation choices reveal distinctive rhetorical styles and cultural contexts. It is significant to highlight that Russian translations were notably more adaptable and pragmatic, indicating deeper ideological considerations, consistent with arguments made by Musolff (2016) and Chilton (2004). Finally, these differences emphasize the important role of translators in diplomatic discourse, identifying how countries represent themselves on the international stage through nuanced linguistic choices. Further research has the potential to examine the influence of these metaphorical adjustments on global perception and diplomatic effectiveness.

### **Conclusion**

This thesis explored how metaphors are translated in diplomatic discourse, focusing on Kazakhstan's and Russia's presidential speeches. The aim was to identify metaphorical expressions, analyze their English translations, and examine the strategies that were used, outlined on Newmark's typology models and the Metaphor Identification Procedure (MIP). The goal was to evaluate how consistent, effective, and culturally relevant these translations are, and to understand the challenges that translators can face in political contexts.

The analysis revealed a wide variety of metaphors tied to national and cultural values, ideology, and rhetorical goals. Common translation strategies included retaining, substituting, or simplifying metaphors, and, less frequently omission and explanation. Translators often tried to keep the tone and style of the original while making the message understandable for international audiences. This sometimes led to neutralizing cultural idioms or simplifying abstract metaphors for clarity.

Though both Kazakhstani and Russian speeches often discourse on such themes like unity, strength, and stability, their metaphorical language reflected different historical and cultural influences, and these differences created translation choices, as shown through the text analysis and feedback from translators.

The findings highlight the important role of metaphors in political communication - not just as stylistic tricks, but as powerful tools of persuasion and identity. Translating them well requires more than just language skills, because it demands cultural understanding and strategic awareness. The study offers useful information, although it was limited to speeches from only 2021–2024 and involved a relatively small group of translators. Future research could expand this topic and include interviews with professionals in this area.

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### Appendix A

#### Metaphors in Kazakhstani Presidential Addresses

1	самая высшая ценность	most cherished treasure	Substitution
2	укрепили дух нации	strengthened the spirit of the nation	Retention
3	заложив прочный фундамент	laying a solid foundation	Retention
4	ощущал плоды Независимости	feel the fruits of independence	Retention
5	на пороге четвертого десятилетия	on the verge of the fourth decade	Retention
6	двигаться вперед	move forward	Retention
7	экономика переживает последствия	economy... is currently experiencing the effects	Retention
8	преодолеваем все трудности	overcome all difficulties	Retention
9	укрепить свои позиции	strengthen our position	Retention
10	идти по такому «легкому» пути	follow such an “easy” path	Retention
11	в тиши кабинетов	in the quiet of offices	Explicitation
12	оказались бессильными перед ней	turned out to be powerless in the face of	Retention

13	отговорки высвечивают уязвимость	Excuses like these highlight the vulnerability	Retention
14	скачка цен	jump in prices	Retention
15	начинают «кивать друг на друга»	begin to “point fingers at each other”	Retention
16	устроившим неприступные крепости	built impregnable fortresses	Retention
17	поставивший точку	put an end	Retention
18	точек роста	points of growth	Retention
19	залог здоровья	key to health	Retention
20	меры дают свои плоды	measures are bearing fruit	Retention
21	У нас всегда был иммунитет к разобщенности	We have always been immune to disunity	Retention
22	остаются в андерграунде	remain “underground”	Retention
23	культура приобретает глобальное звучание	culture is gaining global traction	Retention
24	лежат в основе нашего национального кода	are at the heart of our national code	Retention
25	поток негативной информации отравляет сознание	flow of negative information poisons the consciousness	Retention
26	культивировать прогрессивные ценности	cultivate progressive values	Retention
27	«вывести из тени» тысячи сотрудников	bring thousands of employees out of the shadows	Retention

28	подтолкнула людей требовать	pushed people to demand	Retention
29	содержание и масштабы выходят за рамки одного года	content and scope go beyond one year	Retention
30	события всколыхнули общество	events shook the society	Retention
31	ходят различные слухи и домыслы	there are all kinds of rumours and speculations	Retention
32	формируют ложную картину событий	create a false picture of events	Retention
33	хотели превратить Казахстан в горячую точку	wanted to turn Kazakhstan into a conflict zone	Retention
34	стояли на самом краю пропасти	standing on the edge of a precipice	Retention
35	стояла задача посеять хаос	task was to spread chaos	Retention
36	укрепить ростки новой политической культуры	strengthened the roots of a new political culture	Retention
37	нацелена на формирование «правил игры»	aimed at forming "rules of the game"	Retention
38	делать ставку на серые закулисные схемы	relying on behind- the-scenes schemes	Retention
39	подорвать устои нашей государственности	undermine the foundations of our statehood	Retention
40	произойдет откат	there would be a rollback	Retention
41	начнет «закручивать гайки»	start to "tighten the screws"	Retention

42	четкий образ будущего и контуры Нового Казахстана	clear vision of the future and the contours of a New Kazakhstan	Retention
43	воспринимают государство как личную вотчину	perceive the state as a personal fiefdom	Retention
44	становится благодатной почвой для расцвета коррупции	becomes fertile ground for corruption to flourish	Retention
45	голос имеет значение	their vote matters	Retention
46	сформирует более широкую палитру взглядов	form a wider palette of views	Retention
47	на заре Независимости	at the dawn of Independence	Retention
48	распоряжаться своим влиянием на умы и сердца людей	exercise your influence on the minds and hearts of the people	Retention
49	распоряжаться своим влиянием на умы и сердца людей	exercise your influence on the minds and hearts of the people	Retention
50	пробудить гражданскую активность	awaken civic activity	Retention
51	открываем дорогу развитию региона	opening the way for the development of the region	Retention
52	возродить сакральный край	revive this sacred land	Retention
53	возрождая память о деятелях	reviving the memory of figures	Retention

54	Нарастает неопределенность и турбулентность	Uncertainty and turbulence are growing	Retention
55	рушатся производственные и торговые цепочки	production and trade chains are collapsing	Retention
56	неоправданного «сжигания» наших резервов	unjustified "burning" of our reserves	Retention
57	запустить полноценное «регулирование с чистого листа»	launch full-fledged "regulation from scratch"	Retention
58	стали «кормушкой» для предпринимателей	become a "trough" for entrepreneurs	Retention
59	проблема не сходит с повестки дня	problem is still on the agenda	Retention
60	не будет разбрасывать деньги направо и налево	no longer throw money away right and left	Retention
61	твердо стоять на обеих ногах	stand firmly on both feet	Retention
62	взять лучшие компании мира за ориентир	should be taken as a reference point the best companies	Retention
63	сознательно нагнетали обстановку	deliberately inflamed the situation	Retention
64	опасную тенденцию нужно пресечь на корню	dangerous trend must be stopped at the root	Retention
65	безнаказанность дебоширов развязывает им руки	impunity for troublemakers unties their hands	Retention
66	сеять взаимное недоверие	sowing mutual distrust	Retention

67	не откладывая их в долгий ящик	without putting them off indefinitely	Retention
68	светлое будущее Родины в наших руках	bright future of our homeland is in our hands	Retention
69	новый импульс	breathes new life	Substitution
70	укоренилась формула	formula ... has become more deeply entrenched	Retention
71	«слышащего государства»	listening state	Retention
72	Опора стабильности	bedrock of ... stability	Substitution
73	вступило в ... эпоху	entered a new era	Retention
74	«замкнуть» производственный цикл	close the production cycle	Retention
75	двигателем отрасли	drivers of the industry	Retention
76	раскрыть потенциал	unlocking the sector's potential	Retention
77	тормозит развитие	hampers the development	Retention
78	Череда аварий	series of failures	Retention
79	в «ручном режиме»	hands-on attention	Retention
80	кредитного пылесоса	credit Hoover	Retention
81	«политическим штабом»	“political headquarters”	Retention
82	«скамейку запасных»	"bench" of talent	Retention
83	идти в ногу со временем	keep up with the times	Retention
84	функционирует на пределе возможностей	operating to the limit of its capacity	Retention

85	острого кадрового дефицита	severe shortage of qualified personnel	Retention
86	разгораются вооруженные конфликты	armed conflicts are flaring up	Retention
87	Перезагрузить существующую систему призван новый ... Кодекс	new Tax Code is intended to overhaul the existing system	Substitution
88	идет строительство Справедливого Казахстана	building of a Just Kazakhstan is underway	Retention
89	не сбавлять набранных темпов	maintain this momentum	Substitution
90	эффективно используя созданный задел	effectively utilising the existing foundation	Substitution
91	дало существенный импульс развитию	significantly boosted entrepreneurship	Substitution
92	остаться в «золотом списке» благотворителей	recognised on a “golden list” of benefactors	Retention
93	строительство собственного будущего	shaping their own futures	Substitution
94	формируем новую культуру, закладываем новые стандарты	shaping a new culture and establishing new standards	Retention
95	усилить достигнутые результаты в сфере цифровизации	build on its achievements in digitalisation	Substitution
96	стали серьезным испытанием для страны	were a severe test for the country	Retention
97	формируется новое качество нашей нации	new quality of our nation is being formed	Retention

98	Труд является залогом богатства	Work is the gateway to wealth	Substitution
99	построение конкурентоспособной экономики	build a competitive economy	Retention
100	даст обществу правдивую картину средств	give the public a clear picture of the funds	Retention
101	интеллектуальный авангард страны	intellectual vanguard of the country	Retention
102	Перекосы между обязательствами породили волну фальсификаций	imbalances between the obligations have led to widespread falsifications	Substitution
103	бушует настоящая эпидемия преступности	experiencing a veritable epidemic of crime	Retention
104	почивать на лаврах нам никак нельзя	cannot afford to rest on our laurels	Retention
105	сохранение генофонда нации	preserving the nation's gene pool	Retention
106	пять социальных зол	five social diseases	Retention
107	сиюминутного результата никто не обещает	immediate results cannot be guaranteed	Retention
108	найти свое призвание	find their calling	Retention
109	претворить мечты в реальность	realise their dreams	Retention

### Appendix B

#### Metaphors in Russian Presidential Addresses

1	столкнулись с новой инфекцией	faced a new infection	Substitution
2	эпидемия наступала	epidemic was on the offensive	Retention
3	преодолеем все испытания	pull through	Substitution
4	вышли на передовую	found themselves in the thick of events	Substitution
5	поставили мощный заслон эпидемии	put up an effective barrier to the pandemic	Retention
6	выстраивали маршруты помощи	building person-to-person help routes	Retention
7	духовной опорой общества стало служение религий	religions stepped up to provide spiritual support	Substitution
8	народ побеждал благодаря единству	people have come out victorious thanks to unity	Retention
9	семья, дружба вышли на первый план	family, friendship have come to the fore	Retention

10	сложнейшая задача	no small feat	Substitution
11	коронавирус не побежден	coronavirus has not yet been defeated	Retention
12	вступает в борьбу за жизнь людей	arrive first to save lives	Substitution
13	отразить вызовы эпидемии	deal with the challenges of the pandemic	Substitution
14	мировое здравоохранение стоит на пороге революции	global healthcare is on the cusp of a genuine revolution	Substitution
15	не ослабляя внимания к острым проблемам	keep an eye on pressing problems	Substitution
16	накопился бэклог задач (немало нерешённых вопросов)	backlog to deal with challenges	Substitution
17	не должна обивать пороги инстанций	should not have to camp on the doorstep of authorities	Retention
18	удар нанесла пандемия по благосостоянию людей	heavy toll that the pandemic has taken on people's welfare	Substitution
19	столкнулись с ростом цен, который съедает доходы граждан	facing price hikes that are undercutting people's incomes	Substitution
20	тень на плетень наводить и всех пугать	muddy the waters and scare people	Substitution
21	двигаться именно по этому пути	continue to pursue it	Substitution
22	последовательно идём в этой сфере шаг за шагом	making consistent progress in this area, step by step	Retention
23	сохранила ребёнка и была уверена, что ей помогут поставить его на ноги	help in raising and bringing up their child	Retention

24	стала подспорьем для семей	become a great help for families	Retention
25	смело пошли в "красные зоны"	worked courageously in the "red zones"	Retention
26	ответить на вызовы изменений климата	find answers to the climate change challenges	Retention
27	не хотим "сжигать мосты"	do not want to "burn bridges"	Retention
28	перейти "красную черту"	crossing the "red line"	Retention
29	шаг за шагом грубо и бесцеремонно создаются ... угрозы	threats which ... politicians created consistently, rudely and unceremoniously from year to year	Retention
30	наглая манера разговаривать с позиции исключительности	insolent manner of talking down from the height of their exceptionalism	Retention
31	ход происходивших тогда событий – это хороший урок	That experience should serve as a good lesson for us	Substitution
32	паралич власти, воли – это первый шаг к полной деградации	paralysis of power and will is the first step towards complete degradation	Retention
33	преподносится как истина в последней инстанции	presented as the ultimate truth	Retention
34	Несогласных ломают через колено	Those who refuse to comply are subjected to strong-arm tactics	Substitution
35	ситуация начала развиваться по другому сценарию	situation took a different turn	Substitution

36	возник огромный очаг международного терроризма	created a huge seat of international terrorism	Substitution
37	остаются кровавые, незаживающие раны терроризма	this created bloody, non-healing wounds and the curse of terrorism	Retention
38	политика – грязное дело	politics is a dirty business	Retention
39	сателлиты ... поддакивают, подпевают ей	satellites ... say yes to and parrot it at the slightest pretext	Retention
40	сломали хребет международному терроризму на Кавказе	broke the back of international terrorism in the Caucasus	Retention
41	которые разъедали бы нас изнутри	that would erode us from within	Retention
42	попытка ублажить агрессора оказалась ошибкой	attempt to appease the aggressor ... proved to be a mistake	Retention
43	вопрос жизни и смерти	matter of life and death	Retention
44	вопрос нашего исторического будущего как народа	matter of our historical future as a nation	Retention
45	красная черта, о которой ... говорили. Они её перешли	red line which we have spoken about ... They have crossed it	Retention
46	поставили надёжный заслон проникновению террористов	created a reliable shield against terrorist infiltration	Retention
47	перевернуть эту трагическую страницу	turn this tragic page	Retention

48	благополучие и существование берут начало в мощной корневой системе своей культуры	wellbeing and the very existence of ... states ... provided a powerful underpinning for the ... culture	Substitution
49	настоящая сила – в справедливости и правде	having justice and truth on our side is what makes us truly strong	Retention
50	сила и готовность к борьбе лежат в основе независимости	strength and our readiness to fight are the bedrock of independence	Substitution
51	фундамент для построения будущего	foundation for building a reliable future	Retention
52	судьба России в надёжных руках народа	future of Russia is in the hands of its people	Substitution
53	обернулись подлогом, жестокой ложью	turned out to be a sham and outright lies	Explicitation
54	потуги заполучить ядерное оружие	vain attempts to obtain nuclear weapons	Explicitation
55	театр будущих военных действий	future theatre of war	Retention
56	играли краплёнными картами	playing with marked cards	Retention
57	превратились в символ тотальной беспринципной лжи	become a symbol of total, unprincipled lies	Retention
58	зонтиком прикрыться от нас	take cover from us under an 'umbrella'	Retention

59	выпустили джинна из бутылки	let the genie out of the bottle	Retention
60	руки по локоть в крови	hands are also stained with blood	Substitution
61	заложником киевского режима	hostages of the Kiev regime	Retention
62	расходный материал	expendables	Substitution
63	использует Украину как таран	using Ukraine as a battering ram	Retention
64	духовная катастрофа	spiritual disaster	Retention
65	яд презрения	poison of contempt	Retention
66	путь предательства	road of outright betrayal	Retention
67	охота на ведьм	witch hunts	Retention
68	тяготы фронта	frontline hardships	Substitution
69	непосредственно выезжают на линию боевого соприкосновения	visiting the line of contact	Retention
70	санкционная агрессия	efforts to attack us with sanctions	Explicitation
71	разорвать хозяйственные связи	disrupting economic ties	Substitution
72	замучаетесь пыль глотать	make themselves sick running from courtroom to courtroom	Substitution
73	образ Запада как тихой гавани	image of the West as a safe haven	Retention
74	образ Запада ..... оказался призраком, фальшивкой	the image of the West was a mirage	Substitution
75	демонстративная роскошь	flaunted their lavish lifestyle	Substitution

76	плечом к плечу сражаются	fighting shoulder to shoulder	Retention
77	ратный труд	military labour	Substitution
78	подарим миру праздник спорта	present the world with a grand sporting celebration	Retention
79	в основе будет лежать принцип справедливости	based on the principle of fairness	Retention
80	содержательные поручения	substantive instructions	Retention
81	за горизонтом 2030 года откроются новые горизонты	beyond 2030, new horizons will open	Retention
82	идут в атаку, идут вперёд под огнём	going on the offensive, moving forward under fire	Retention
83	стали основой, стержнем тех проектов	became the foundation, served as the main pillar of the projects	Retention
84	поднялись на борьбу за право жить	rose up to fight for the right to live	Retention
85	выступили за воссоединение с Родиной	voted to reunite with their Motherland	Retention
86	сражаются за жизнь, за свободу	fighting for their lives, for freedom	Retention
87	не предали свою Родину даже под ... огнём	have not betrayed their homeland even when facing ... shelling	Substitution
88	сегодня сражаются плечом к плечу за Отечество	today are fighting shoulder to shoulder for their Fatherland	Retention
89	вступает в борьбу за жизнь людей	arrive first to save lives	Omission

90	отправная точка для укрепления здоровья	starting point for strengthening health	Retention
91	заложить основы экологического воспитания	lay the groundwork for environmental education	Retention
92	проект о будущем и для будущего нашей страны	project about the future and for the future of our country	Retention
93	острая проблема	pressing issue	Retention
94	Жизнь не стоит на месте	Life doesn't stand still	Retention
95	поток желающих не иссякает	demand continues to grow	Substitution
96	раскрыть потенциал интеллекта	unlock the potential of artificial intelligence	Retention
97	нарастить совокупные мощности хранилищ	increase the aggregate capacity of storage facilities	Retention
98	опережающий рост инвестиций	accelerated growth of investment	Retention
99	поставить барьер для действий	create a barrier against actions	Retention
100	придаст импульс развитию перевозок	give impetus to the development of transportation	Retention
101	ключ к развитию всей страны	key to the development of the entire country	Retention
102	остро стоит проблема бедности	problem of poverty is acute	Retention

103	жертвуют собой ради нас	sacrificing themselves for the sake of us	Retention
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