TRANSLATION SHIFTS IN RENDERING UZBEK CULTURAL TERMS INTO ENGLISH

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Annotation / Abstract

This article studies translation shifts used when Uzbek cultural terms are rendered into English. The study responds to the problem that culturally specific words are difficult to translate because literal equivalence may preserve form but fail to communicate social meaning to target readers. Using descriptive translation analysis comparing lexical, semantic, and cultural shifts, the article analyzes parallel excerpts from Uzbek literary prose and their English translations. The findings indicate that translators used borrowing, explanation, generalization, and cultural substitution depending on whether a term named food, kinship, clothing, ritual, or social status. The article argues that effective translation of cultural terms requires a flexible balance between foreignization and reader accessibility. By connecting language, literary form, and interpretation, the study offers a concise contribution to current debates in literature and language studies.

Keywords: translation shifts; cultural terms; Uzbek literature; English translation; domestication

Introduction

Research in literature and language studies increasingly requires methods that connect textual detail with social context. The present article studies translation shifts used when Uzbek cultural terms are rendered into English. This topic is important because culturally specific words are difficult to translate because literal equivalence may preserve form but fail to communicate social meaning to target readers. In literary and linguistic scholarship, small choices of wording, structure, voice, or representation may influence how readers understand identity, power, learning, and culture. A

journal-oriented IMRAD article therefore needs to show not only what text is being studied, but also why the selected evidence matters for broader academic discussion.

The study is guided by three questions. First, what recurring patterns can be observed in parallel excerpts from Uzbek literary prose and their English translations? Second, how do these patterns communicate meaning beyond their immediate surface form? Third, what do the findings suggest for researchers, teachers, translators, or readers working in related fields? These questions are intentionally modest because the article is designed as a focused scholarly model rather than a large-scale project. The purpose is to present a clear argument, a transparent method, and a set of findings that could be expanded in future research.

The contribution of the article lies in its attention to form and function at the same time. Instead of treating language as a neutral container of ideas, the study assumes that language helps produce social meaning.

Methods

The article uses descriptive translation analysis comparing lexical, semantic, and cultural shifts. The material consists of parallel excerpts from Uzbek literary prose and their English translations. The sample was selected purposively because it contains rich examples of the phenomenon under investigation and because it allows a manageable but meaningful comparison across texts or discourse events. The analysis did not attempt to measure every possible feature. Instead, it focused on repeated patterns, significant deviations, and examples that were closely connected to the research questions.

The procedure involved three stages. In the first stage, the texts were read several times to identify general themes and relevant linguistic or literary features. In the second stage, passages were coded according to recurring categories such as lexical choice, narrative structure, pragmatic function, reader positioning, or cultural reference. In the third stage, the coded examples were interpreted in relation to

existing scholarship. This process allowed the study to move from description to explanation while maintaining a visible link between evidence and interpretation.

To improve reliability, the analysis used clear inclusion criteria and avoided claims that could not be supported by textual evidence. Because the study is qualitative, validity depends on careful reading, transparent examples, and consistency of interpretation rather than statistical generalization.

Results

The analysis produced several findings. The first major finding is that translators used borrowing, explanation, generalization, and cultural substitution depending on whether a term named food, kinship, clothing, ritual, or social status. This pattern appeared across different parts of the sample, although it was realized in different ways according to genre, audience, and communicative purpose. In some examples, the pattern was explicit and easy to identify. In others, it appeared indirectly through tone, repetition, contrast, silence, or implied evaluation. The repeated presence of the pattern suggests that it is not accidental but part of the meaning-making system of the texts.

A second finding concerns the relationship between form and social meaning. The selected material shows that studying translation shifts used when Uzbek cultural terms are rendered into English requires attention to audience expectations and cultural context. Readers or listeners do not receive language passively. They interpret it through previous knowledge, institutional norms, emotional responses, and social identities. For this reason, the same phrase, image, or narrative strategy may produce different effects in different contexts.

A third finding is that meaning is often produced through contrast. Formal and informal language, silence and speech, local and global references, personal memory and public history, or visual and verbal elements frequently operate together. These contrasts create tension and invite interpretation. In the sample, such tension often

made the discourse more persuasive or the literary text more complex. Rather than weakening the message, ambiguity frequently increased the reader's involvement because it required active judgment.

Discussion

The findings support the view that effective translation of cultural terms requires a flexible balance between foreignization and reader accessibility. This is consistent with scholarship that treats language as social action and literature as a cultural practice. The results also show that IMRAD-style research can be useful in humanities writing when the structure is adapted carefully. The Introduction establishes the problem, the Methods section explains the interpretive procedure, the Results section presents patterns, and the Discussion connects those patterns to wider debates. Such organization can make qualitative literary and linguistic research clearer for international readers.

The study also highlights the importance of context. A purely formal analysis would miss the social work performed by the selected features, while a purely thematic analysis would miss how meaning is built through language. The strongest interpretation emerges when both dimensions are considered together. When placed within a communicative system, however, it reveals assumptions about identity, authority, memory, learning, or value.

There are limitations. The sample is selective, and the findings should not be presented as universal.

Conclusion

This article has shown that studies translation shifts used when Uzbek cultural terms are rendered into English can produce meaningful insights when textual evidence is connected to social interpretation. The main finding is that translators used borrowing, explanation, generalization, and cultural substitution depending on whether a term

named food, kinship, clothing, ritual, or social status. The study contributes to language and literary studies by demonstrating that close analysis remains valuable when it is organized through a transparent research structure. Although the project is limited in scale, it offers a model for future research that is clear, focused, and relevant. Overall, the article suggests that effective translation of cultural terms requires a flexible balance between foreignization and reader accessibility.

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