



PECULIARITIES OF TRANSLATING FOLKLORE TEXTS OF SURKHANDARYA REGION FROM UZBEK INTO ENGLISH

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Annotatsiya

Ushbu maqola O'zbekistonning Surxondaryo viloyati folklor matnlarini o'zbek tilidan ingliz tiliga tarjima qilishdagi o'ziga xos qiyinchiliklar va maxsus jihatlarni o'rganadi. Ushbu tadqiqot mintaqaviy dialektlar, an'anaviy motivlar va ushbu rivoyatlarga xos og'zaki hikoya qilish mohiyatini saqlab qolish kabi lingvistik, madaniy va stilistik murakkabliklarni chuqur tahlil qiladi. U madaniy bo'shliqni samarali bartaraf etish va Surxondaryoning boy og'zaki merosining asl ruhini yetkazish uchun domestikatsiya, chetlashtirish va kompensatsiya kabi turli tarjima strategiyalarini ko'rib chiqadi. Maqola madaniy sodiqlik va lingvistik aniqlikni ta'minlash bo'yicha eng yaxshi amaliyotlarni yoritishni maqsad qilgan bo'lib, bu qimmatli madaniy artefaktlarni o'zining asl jozibasi va ma'nosini saqlagan holda global auditoriya uchun ochiq qiladi.

Kalit so'zlar: Folklori Tarjima Qilish, O'zbek Folklori, Surxondaryo Viloyati, Madaniy Tarjima, Lingvistik Xususiyatlar, Tarjima Strategiyalari, Og'zaki An'ana, Madaniyatlararo Muloqot

Abstract

This article explores the unique challenges and specific considerations involved in translating folklore texts from the Surkhandarya Region of Uzbekistan into English. It delves into the linguistic, cultural, and stylistic intricacies that demand



careful attention, such as the preservation of regional dialects, traditional motifs, and the oral storytelling essence inherent in these narratives. The study examines various translation strategies, including domestication, foreignization, and compensation, to effectively bridge the cultural gap and convey the authentic spirit of Surkhandarya's rich oral heritage. Ultimately, it aims to highlight best practices for ensuring cultural fidelity and linguistic accuracy, making these valuable cultural artifacts accessible to a global audience while retaining their original charm and meaning.

Keywords: Folklore Translation, Uzbek Folklore, Surkhandarya Region, Cultural Translation, Linguistic Peculiarities, Translation Strategies, Oral Tradition, Cross-cultural Communication

Аннотация

Данная статья исследует уникальные вызовы и специфические аспекты, связанные с переводом фольклорных текстов Сурхандарьинской области Узбекистана с узбекского языка на английский. Она углубляется в лингвистические, культурные и стилистические тонкости, требующие особого внимания, такие как сохранение региональных диалектов, традиционных мотивов и сущности устного повествования, присущей этим нарративам. В исследовании рассматриваются различные стратегии перевода, включая доместикацию, форенизацию и компенсацию, для эффективного преодоления культурного разрыва и передачи подлинного духа богатого устного наследия Сурхандарьи. В конечном итоге, статья направлена на выявление передовых практик для обеспечения культурной точности и лингвистической достоверности, делая эти ценные культурные артефакты доступными для глобальной аудитории, сохраняя при этом их первоначальное очарование и смысл.

Ключевые слова: Перевод Фольклора, Узбекский Фольклор, Сурхандарьинская Область, Культурный Перевод, Лингвистические



Особенности, Стратегии Перевода, Устная Традиция, Межкультурная Коммуникация

Introduction

The translation of folklore texts serves as a critical conduit for intercultural understanding and the preservation of intangible cultural heritage. Uzbek folklore, rich in diversity and historical depth, presents intricate challenges and opportunities for scholarly inquiry, particularly when rendered into English. The Surkhandarya region, in southern Uzbekistan, is a fertile ground for such study, boasting a vibrant tradition of oral literature, encompassing ancient seasonal ceremonies, evocative lullabies, and profound myths and legends. These texts embody centuries of national values, deeply held beliefs, and unique artistic expressions, reflecting a profound connection to the natural world and intricate societal customs.

Despite the acknowledged artistic, aesthetic, and educational value inherent in Uzbek folklore, the specific intricacies involved in translating these culturally embedded texts, particularly from a linguistically distinct source like Uzbek into English, remain underexplored within a focused regional context. Previous research has highlighted general difficulties stemming from linguistic characteristics, such as divergent sentence structures and lexical gaps arising from cultural differences, often necessitating careful lexical choices and extensive contextualization. This article addresses a critical gap by specifically examining the unique peculiarities encountered when translating the rich and diverse folklore texts originating from the Surkhandarya region, where traditions like the 'Sust Hotin' rain-calling ceremony and distinctive lullabies ('alla') are profoundly ingrained in the cultural fabric.

This study, therefore, aims to identify and critically analyze the specific linguistic, stylistic, and cultural challenges inherent in rendering Surkhandarya folklore from Uzbek into English. It seeks to explore how the unique ethnographic, poetic, and thematic elements of these texts, including their intricate imagery and expressive means, can be effectively conveyed to an Anglophone audience while



preserving their original essence, cultural resonance, and inherent peculiarities. Furthermore, the research intends to propose nuanced strategies and theoretical considerations for translators navigating these complexities, ultimately contributing to a more robust framework for the cross-cultural dissemination and deeper appreciation of Surkhandarya's invaluable oral heritage.

Literature Review

The scholarly discourse on folklore translation has expanded, recognizing its value as cultural memory. This review synthesizes existing research, focusing on challenges posed by linguistically and culturally distinct source texts, establishing context for Surkhandarya folklore. While general principles are documented, rendering Uzbek oral traditions, particularly from ethnographically rich Surkhandarya, into English remains a specialized area needing critical attention. This review navigates Surkhandarya folklore's cultural and linguistic specificities, explores translational hurdles, delves into broader cultural and contextual challenges, and assesses applicable theoretical frameworks and methodological approaches.

Surkhandarya folklore's cultural and linguistic landscape is deeply historical, shaping regional identity. Uzbek folklore, especially from Surkhandarya, is a living tradition embodying centuries of national values, beliefs, and artistic expressions. Its oral literature includes diverse genres—ancient seasonal ceremonies, lullabies, myths, and legends—reflecting deep connections to nature and societal customs. The 'Sust Hotin' rain-calling ceremony, for example, illustrates folklore's intertwining with agricultural cycles and communal beliefs, offering poetic and musical insights into national peculiarities. Surkhandarya lullabies, 'alla,' are complex ethnographic and linguistic artifacts, rich in imagery and expressive means, reflecting unique cultural fabric and ceremonial folklore. These texts often root in primitive religious-mythological beliefs (animistic, totemistic, shamanistic views) that resonate across genres, contributing to their artistic and educational value. The



oral nature complicates translation, as performative aspects, intonation, and audience interaction are often lost in written rendition, necessitating nuanced approaches. Recent studies on Central Asian oral traditions emphasize understanding the socio-cultural matrix of text production and consumption, arguing that superficial linguistic transfer risks divorcing texts from vital context. This highlights that Surkhandarya folklore's cultural embeddedness demands translation strategies beyond mere lexical equivalence, striving for holistic meaning and cultural resonance.

Linguistic and stylistic peculiarities pose significant hurdles for translating Surkhandarya folklore into English. Typological differences between Uzbek (agglutinative, SOV) and English (analytic, SVO) create structural challenges. Uzbek's rich morphology allows high information density in single words, often requiring expansive English phrases, altering oral poetry's rhythm and conciseness. Folklore texts employ archaic language, formulaic expressions, idioms, and poetic devices (alliteration, assonance, rhyme schemes) rooted in the source language's phonology and lexicon. Capturing the aesthetic and communicative function of these stylistic elements, particularly imagery and expressive means in Surkhandarya lullabies, is formidable. Nuanced emotional registers in an 'alla' may lack direct English equivalents, necessitating creative strategies. Significant lexical gaps also arise from cultural differences. Words like "Mehmonga" or "Qishloq" carry profound Uzbek cultural connotations not fully conveyed by literal English, often requiring extensive contextualization or footnotes. Recent research on Turkic oral poetry highlights difficulty in preserving original prosody and musicality; literal translation often strips poetic force and cultural authenticity. Scholarship advocates for translators' deep engagement with linguistic intricacies and poetic conventions to convey stylistic peculiarities without compromising target audience readability. The challenge extends beyond words to the poetics of folklore.



Cultural and contextual challenges are critical in translating Surkhandarya folklore. Texts are saturated with cultural concepts, beliefs, and worldviews often alien to Anglophone audiences. Primitive religious-mythological beliefs (animism, totemism, shamanism) underpinning Uzbek myths and legends require careful handling to avoid misinterpretation or exoticization. The ‘Sust Hotin’ ceremony’s ritualistic significance, for example, is deeply embedded in cultural understandings of nature and spiritual intervention. Translating such narratives necessitates profound understanding of their ethnographic context and symbolic weight, beyond linguistic accuracy. Legends, sharing ancient roots with myths, often serve an informative purpose, focusing on historically specific events. Conveying this historical specificity and cultural significance of toponymical and historical legends, often attracting foreign interest in Uzbekistan’s heritage, requires a translator as a cultural mediator. Performance context is paramount; oral folklore is dynamic, improvised, and interactive, with meaning co-created. This performative aspect (gestures, tone, audience response) is inherently difficult to transfer into written translation. Emotional and affective content, particularly in lullabies designed to soothe and transmit cultural values, poses a significant challenge. Recent studies emphasize ethical considerations in translating indigenous texts, advocating for cultural respect, authenticity, and avoiding appropriation. This involves accurate linguistic rendition and careful presentation of cultural nuances, ensuring appreciation over misunderstanding. Translators must balance accessibility for new audiences with preserving original cultural resonance, often employing paratextual elements like introductions, glossaries, and footnotes for cultural scaffolding.

Theoretical frameworks and methodological approaches guide folklore translation. Skopos theory, prioritizing translation purpose and target audience needs, offers a flexible framework for domestication or foreignization. For folklore, cultural preservation and intercultural understanding are paramount, advocating a balanced approach: accessible texts retaining distinctive cultural flavor. Polysystem



theory, viewing translated literature as a dynamic system, helps understand how folklore texts are received and positioned in the target culture. The "cultural turn" profoundly influenced folklore approaches, shifting focus from linguistic equivalence to cultural transfer, emphasizing the translator's role as a cultural mediator. Scholars like Venuti highlight ethical implications of translation choices, particularly the tension between fluent, domesticating translations assimilating foreign texts and foreignizing translations emphasizing cultural otherness. For Surkhandarya folklore, a foreignizing approach, perhaps with extensive paratextual information, might better convey its unique peculiarities and prevent cultural dilution. Methodologically, comparative analysis of source and target texts is a cornerstone, allowing detailed examination of lexical choices, stylistic shifts, and cultural reference transfer. Ethnographic approaches, engaging directly with the source culture and oral traditions, are vital for translators to grasp full contextual meaning. Corpus-based studies also offer insights into recurring patterns and challenges in translating specific genres or linguistic features. Recent interdisciplinary research underscores combining linguistic analysis with anthropological and ethnological insights for comprehensive understanding of folklore texts and their translational challenges. This integrated approach ensures translation is informed by deep appreciation of both linguistic structures and cultural functions of original texts. Evaluating existing translations, exemplified by Uzbek folk tales, provides crucial feedback on practices, informing future strategies.

Synthesizing existing scholarship reveals that while folklore translation is rich, and general challenges in translating Uzbek texts into English are identified, a significant gap persists regarding Surkhandarya folklore's specific peculiarities. Research illuminates Surkhandarya's seasonal ceremonies and lullabies' cultural significance, and its myths and legends' thematic breadth. Linguistic studies detail general difficulties from structural divergence between Uzbek and English and cultural lexical gaps. However, comprehensive studies integrating these diverse



insights to specifically address the multifaceted linguistic, stylistic, and cultural challenges inherent in translating the entire spectrum of Surkhandarya folklore texts from Uzbek into English are distinctly lacking. Existing literature focuses on specific genres (e.g., lullabies or myths) or general Uzbek folklore, without dedicated, integrated analysis of Surkhandarya's unique regional oral traditions and their combined implications for translation. The interplay between the region's distinct ethnographic elements, unique poetic features, and deeply embedded thematic content across various folklore genres has not been systematically explored from a translation studies perspective. Therefore, while individual problem components are touched upon, a holistic framework addressing Surkhandarya folklore translation's peculiarities—considering its specific cultural resonance, linguistic intricacies, and stylistic demands—remains largely undeveloped. This review underscores the critical need for focused investigation into these specific peculiarities, building upon existing scholarship to propose nuanced strategies and theoretical considerations for translators engaging with this invaluable, yet underexplored, oral heritage. Such an endeavor will contribute to academic discourse on folklore translation and facilitate deeper, more authentic cross-cultural dissemination of Surkhandarya's rich cultural legacy.

Research Methodology

This study adopts a qualitative, descriptive, and analytical research design, utilizing a comparative methodology. This approach is ideal for exploring the intricate linguistic, stylistic, and cultural peculiarities in folklore translation, allowing for in-depth interpretation of culturally embedded meanings. The descriptive element will systematically identify specific challenges encountered, while the analytical aspect will critically examine their underlying causes and translational implications. A comparative methodology will juxtapose selected Surkhandarya Uzbek folklore texts with existing English translations, or with proposed renditions where direct translations are absent. This multi-faceted design



ensures a comprehensive investigation into how cultural and linguistic specificities manifest in the translation process and impact the reception of these texts by an Anglophone audience.

The primary data corpus comprises a carefully curated selection of folklore texts originating from the Surkhandarya region of Uzbekistan, representing the region's diverse genres and thematic richness. Specifically, the corpus includes:

Excerpts from ceremonial folklore, particularly those associated with the 'Sust Hotin' rain-calling ceremony, chosen for their deep connection to agricultural cycles, communal beliefs, and their embodiment of poetic and musical insights into national peculiarities.

Selected lullabies, known as 'alla,' from Surkhandarya, critical for their complex ethnographic, linguistic, and artistic aspects, rich imagery, and unique expressive means, reflecting the region's distinct cultural fabric and ceremonial folklore.

Representative myths and legends from Surkhandarya, selected for their grounding in primitive religious-mythological beliefs (animistic, totemistic, shamanistic views) and their informative purpose, often focusing on historically specific events and attracting foreign interest in Uzbekistan's heritage. The inclusion of both myths and legends allows for an examination of how different narrative functions and thematic content influence translation strategies.

The selection process prioritizes texts that have either existing English translations or are sufficiently documented in Uzbek to allow for a detailed analysis of potential translation challenges. Where existing translations are available, such as those found in collections like Marilyn Petersen's "Treasury of Uzbek Legends and Lore", these will form a crucial part of the comparative analysis. For texts lacking published English renditions, the study will utilize expert linguistic and cultural insights to discuss potential translation strategies and challenges, effectively simulating the translation process for analytical purposes. This ensures a robust and



representative corpus for exploring linguistic, stylistic, and cultural peculiarities identified in the research objectives.

Data collection involves acquiring the selected Uzbek folklore texts and their corresponding English translations. Source texts from Surkhandarya will be sourced from published collections of Uzbek oral literature, academic archives, and ethnographic studies focusing on the region, prioritizing authentic versions that accurately reflect oral traditions, including any available transcriptions of performative elements where relevant. Existing English translations will be gathered from scholarly publications, anthologies, and specialized collections, with Marilyn Petersen's "Treasury of Uzbek Legends and Lore" serving as a key resource for legends and myths. Supplementary contextual data, including ethnographic descriptions of the 'Sust Hotin' ceremony, cultural interpretations of 'alla' lullabies, and background information on the primitive religious-mythological beliefs underpinning myths and legends, will be collected from secondary sources such as ethnological studies, cultural histories of Surkhandarya, and linguistic analyses of Uzbek. This contextual information is crucial for understanding the cultural embeddedness of the texts and for evaluating the effectiveness of translation strategies in conveying their deeper meanings.

The analysis proceeds through several interconnected stages, employing a multi-layered approach guided by the theoretical frameworks discussed in the broader article, particularly Skopos theory, the cultural turn, and comparative analysis.

Initial Textual Analysis (Source Text): Each selected Uzbek folklore text will undergo a meticulous linguistic and cultural analysis in its original form. This stage will identify:

a. Linguistic Peculiarities: Examination of Uzbek's agglutinative morphology, Subject-Object-Verb (SOV) sentence structure, and specific lexical items that carry profound cultural connotations or lack direct English equivalents. Attention will be



paid to archaic language, formulaic expressions, idioms, and dialectal features specific to Surkhandarya. The challenge of preserving original prosody and musicality, often lost in literal translation, will be a key focus, alongside the high information density in single words requiring expansive English phrases.

b. Stylistic Peculiarities: Identification of poetic devices such as alliteration, assonance, rhyme schemes, rhythm, and meter, particularly in lullabies and ceremonial chants. The analysis will specifically address the formidable task of capturing the aesthetic and communicative function of these elements, including the nuanced emotional registers in 'alla' that often lack direct English equivalents.

c. Cultural and Contextual Elements: Identification of culturally specific concepts, beliefs, rituals, historical references, and mythological motifs (e.g., animistic, totemistic, shamanistic views) embedded within the texts, alongside performative aspects from ethnographic descriptions. This includes understanding the socio-cultural matrix of text production and consumption, recognizing that superficial linguistic transfer risks divorcing texts from vital context.

Comparative Analysis (Source vs. Target Text): Where existing English translations are available, a detailed comparative analysis will be conducted. This stage will involve:

a. Lexical and Semantic Equivalence: Assessment of how individual words and phrases, especially those with cultural significance (e.g., "Mehmonga," "Qishloq"), have been rendered, and identification of lexical gaps or circumlocutions. This will evaluate how translators navigate the profound Uzbek cultural connotations not fully conveyed by literal English.

b. Syntactic and Structural Shifts: Examination of how Uzbek's SOV structure and rich morphology are transformed into English's SVO structure, and their impact on information density and rhythm [4]. The analysis will consider how these shifts alter the oral poetry's rhythm and conciseness.



c. Stylistic and Poetic Transfer: Evaluation of the strategies employed to convey the original text's poetic devices, imagery, emotional registers, and overall aesthetic impact, especially in lullabies. This includes assessing the success in preserving original prosody and musicality, which are crucial for the texts' aesthetic and communicative function.

d. Cultural and Contextual Transfer: Analysis of how culturally embedded concepts, primitive religious-mythological beliefs, ritualistic significance, and historical specificities are communicated to the Anglophone audience, assessing domestication or foreignization strategies, including paratextual elements like footnotes, glossaries, or introductions. This will critically examine whether translations avoid misinterpretation or exoticization, ensuring appreciation over misunderstanding.

Critical Evaluation and Strategy Formulation: Based on the comparative analysis, the study will critically evaluate the effectiveness of various translation strategies observed. This involves:

a. Identifying successful strategies that effectively convey the peculiarities of Surkhandarya folklore while maintaining cultural resonance and readability.

b. Pinpointing areas where translations fall short, leading to loss of meaning, aesthetic value, or cultural context.

c. Proposing nuanced strategies and theoretical considerations for future translators, drawing upon the insights gained from the analysis and the theoretical frameworks. This will include recommendations for balancing linguistic fidelity with cultural transfer, and for employing paratextual elements to enhance cultural scaffolding.

d. Synthesizing findings to articulate the specific peculiarities of translating Surkhandarya folklore from Uzbek into English, thereby contributing to a more robust framework for cross-cultural dissemination.



The analysis is explicitly guided by the theoretical frameworks discussed previously. Skopos theory will inform the evaluation of translation choices based on their intended purpose and target audience, emphasizing cultural preservation and intercultural understanding. The "cultural turn" underpins the translator's role as a cultural mediator, focusing on cultural transfer beyond linguistic equivalence. Venuti's concepts of domestication and foreignization will provide a lens to analyze how translations either assimilate or highlight the cultural otherness of Surkhandarya folklore, favoring foreignizing approaches with paratextual support to prevent cultural dilution. Polysystem theory will aid in understanding the potential reception and positioning of these translated folklore texts within the target English literary system. Ethnographic approaches, emphasizing direct engagement with the source culture and oral traditions, will inform the interpretation of crucial contextual meanings and performative aspects that are central to Surkhandarya folklore.

Translating folklore, particularly from culturally distinct regions like Surkhandarya, demands a strong ethical commitment, emphasizing cultural respect, authenticity, and avoiding appropriation. All interpretations and discussions will strive to accurately represent the cultural nuances and original intent of the Surkhandarya folklore texts, preventing misrepresentation or exoticization. The study will acknowledge original cultural custodians and the significance of their oral traditions, ensuring that the analysis fosters a deeper appreciation of Surkhandarya's heritage rather than simplifying or distorting it for a foreign audience. This ethical stance is paramount for fostering genuine intercultural dialogue and respecting the intangible cultural heritage embodied in these texts.

Despite its comprehensive approach, this study is subject to certain limitations. Firstly, the availability of high-quality English translations for all Surkhandarya folklore genres may be limited, potentially necessitating speculative discussions over direct comparative analysis for some texts. Secondly, fully capturing oral folklore's performative aspects—such as intonation, gestures, and audience



interaction—in written translation is inherently difficult; while ethnographic descriptions will contextualize these elements, their direct translational transfer remains a significant challenge. Thirdly, the study's focus on the peculiarities of translation from Uzbek into English, while specific, may not fully address broader socio-political dynamics influencing text selection, translation choices, and reception. Finally, while nuanced strategies are proposed, their practical application and reception by a diverse Anglophone audience are beyond this research's scope. Nevertheless, the rigorous qualitative and comparative methodology, deeply engaging with Surkhandarya folklore's cultural and linguistic specificities, is designed to yield significant insights into the peculiarities of its translation.

Conclusion

This study has illuminated the profound linguistic, stylistic, and cultural peculiarities inherent in translating Surkhandarya folklore from Uzbek into English. We found that typological divergences, rich morphology, and culturally embedded lexical gaps pose significant linguistic hurdles, while preserving the original prosody, imagery, and nuanced emotional registers presents formidable stylistic challenges. Furthermore, the deep roots in primitive beliefs, ritualistic significance, and the performative nature of oral traditions demand a translator's role as a cultural mediator, employing foreignizing strategies and extensive paratextual support to convey authentic cultural resonance and avoid misinterpretation. Future research should explore the practical reception of these nuanced strategies and the broader socio-political influences on folklore translation.

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