

## TRANSLATION OF FANTASTIC TOPONYMS AND NAMES: AN ANALYSIS IN “GAME OF THRONES”

*Jonibekova Muxlisa*

*muxlisajonibekova01@gmail.com*

*Bachelor Student*

*Uzbekistan State World Languages University*

**Annotation:** *This article explores the challenges and strategies in translating fantastic toponyms and names in the fantasy world of Game of Thrones, originally created by George R.R. Martin. The translation of fictional place names and character names poses unique difficulties due to their invented nature, rich cultural connotations, and symbolic meanings. This study aims to analyze selected examples of toponyms and names in the original English text and their equivalents in Uzbek and Russian translations, identifying the techniques used by translators. The research applies a comparative and descriptive method, focusing on whether translators prioritized semantic transparency, phonetic fidelity, or cultural adaptation. The findings reveal that most translators tend to preserve the original forms of names to maintain authenticity, while some adapt them for easier comprehension or cultural relevance. This paper concludes that translating fantasy names requires not only linguistic skill but also a deep understanding of the fictional world’s internal logic and cultural depth.*

**Keywords:** *fantasy, toponyms, Game of Thrones, translation, cultural adaptation*

### Перевод фантастических топонимов и имен: анализ в контексте «Игры престолов»

**Аннотация:** *В данной статье рассматриваются трудности и стратегии перевода фантастических топонимов и имён в мире «Игры престолов», созданном Джорджем Р.Р. Мартином. Перевод вымышленных географических названий и имён персонажей представляет собой уникальные*

трудности из-за их искусственного происхождения, богатых культурных коннотаций и символического значения. Цель исследования -проанализировать отобранные примеры топонимов и имён в оригинальном английском тексте и их эквиваленты в узбекском и русском переводах, выявляя использованные переводческие приёмы. Методология основана на сравнительном и описательном подходе, с акцентом на приоритеты переводчиков - семантическая прозрачность, фонетическая точность или культурная адаптация. Результаты показывают, что большинство переводчиков стремятся сохранить оригинальные формы имён для поддержания аутентичности, в то время как некоторые адаптируют их для лучшего понимания или культурной релевантности. В заключение делается вывод, что перевод фантастических имён требует не только лингвистических навыков, но и глубокого понимания внутренней логики и культурной глубины вымышленного мира.

**Ключевые слова:** фантастика, топонимы, Игра престолов, перевод, культурная адаптация

### **Fantastik toponimlar va ismlar tarjimasi “Taxtlar o‘yini” asari tahlili**

**Annotatsiya:** Mazkur maqolada George R.R. Martin tomonidan yaratilgan “Game of Thrones” fantastik asaridagi toponimlar va ismlarni tarjima qilishdagi qiyinchiliklar hamda strategiyalar tahlil qilinadi. Bunday to‘qima joy nomlari va to‘qima qahramon ismlarining o‘ziga xosligi, boy madaniy ma’nolari va ramziy mazmuni ularni tarjima qilishni murakkablashtiradi. Ushbu tadqiqotda ingliz tilidagi original matndan tanlangan toponim va ism misollari hamda ularning o‘zbek va rus tilidagi tarjimalari o‘rganilib, tarjimonlar qo‘llagan usullar aniqlanadi. Solishtirma va tavsifiy usulga asoslangan holda, tarjimonlar semantik aniqlik, fonetik o‘xshashlik yoki madaniy moslashuvga qancha e’tibor qaratgani aniqlanadi. Tahlil natijalari shuni ko‘rsatadiki, ko‘pchilik tarjimonlar asl shaklni saqlab qolishga harakat qilgan, ba’zilar esa tushunarliroq va madaniy jihatdan yaqin bo‘lishi uchun o‘zgartirgan.

*Xulosa shuki, fantastik nomlarni tarjima qilish til bilimidan tashqari, uydirma dunyoning ichki mantiqi va madaniyatini chuqur tushunishni ham talab qiladi.*

***Kalit soʻzlar:** fantastika, toponimlar, Taxtlar oʻyini, tarjima, madaniy moslashuv*

## **Introduction**

Fantasy literature, especially works such as George R.R. Martin's *Game of Thrones*, presents unique challenges for translators due to the presence of invented names, places, and cultural references. These toponyms and character names are often embedded with rich meaning and narrative function, making their translation a complex task. The names do not only serve as identifiers but also convey the atmosphere, history, and symbolic weight of the imaginary world. In this context, translators must decide whether to retain original forms, translate meanings, or adapt names to the target culture.

This study aims to explore how selected fantastic names and places in *Game of Thrones* are translated into Uzbek and Russian, examining the strategies used and their implications for meaning and reader experience. By analyzing a range of examples from the series, this study aims to provide insight into the methods and principles that guide the translation of fantasy literature. This research also highlights the broader implications of name translation for the reception of fantasy texts in non-English-speaking cultures.

## **Methods**

This study uses a qualitative, comparative approach to examine the translation of fantastic toponyms and names in *Game of Thrones*. The source material includes the original English versions of selected place names and character names from the *Game of Thrones* series, both from the books by George R.R. Martin and the HBO television adaptation. These names are then compared with their equivalents in Uzbek and Russian translations, where available.

The analysis focuses on a purposive sample of names that are rich in meaning or cultural context. These include names of key locations (e.g., "Winterfell," "The

Eyrie,” “Dragonstone”) and main characters (e.g., “Jon Snow,” “Tyrion Lannister,” “Cersei”). The study also considers how these names are adapted or retained in the subtitles and dubbed versions of the television series.

To identify translation strategies, the research draws on existing frameworks in translation studies, particularly the categorization of proper name translation methods proposed by scholars such as Fernandes (2006), which include:

- Transliteration – copying the sound of the original name in the target language,
- Literal translation – translating the meaning of the name,
- Cultural adaptation – replacing the name with a culturally equivalent one,
- Omission or substitution – simplifying or replacing the name altogether.

Each selected example is analyzed in terms of which strategy is used and why that strategy might have been chosen. This method allows for a detailed exploration of how the translators balance fidelity, readability, and cultural resonance in a fantasy context.

## **Results and discussions**

The analysis of selected toponyms and names from Game of Thrones reveals a variety of translation strategies used across the Uzbek and Russian versions. While some names were transliterated to preserve phonetic resemblance, others were translated literally or adapted to fit the linguistic and cultural norms of the target language. Below are several representative examples and the strategies applied:

### **1. Winterfell**

- Russian: Винтерфелл (Vinterfell) – Transliteration
- Uzbek: Vinterfell – Transliteration

### **2. King’s Landing**

- Russian: Королевская Гавань (Korolevskaya Gavan’) – Literal translation
- Uzbek: Qirol Qo’nalg’asi – Literal translation

### **3. Dragonstone**

- Russian: Драконий Камень (Drakoniyy Kamen’) – Literal translation



- Uzbek: Ajdahotosh – Cultural adaptation and literal translation

#### 4. Arya Stark

- Russian: Арья Старк (Arya Stark) – Transliteration

- Uzbek: Arya Stark – Transliteration

#### 5. The Eyrie

- Russian: Орлиное Гнездо (Orlinoe Gneздо) – Literal translation

- Uzbek: Qirg'iy inasi – Cultural adaptation

Overall, the results show a tendency toward transliteration for character names and literal translation or cultural adaptation for place names. The choice of strategy appears to depend on the nature of the name, its symbolic content, and its importance within the narrative.

The findings of this study highlight the complexity and creativity required in translating fantastic toponyms and personal names. Translators are often caught between two competing priorities: preserving the integrity of the fictional world and making the names meaningful or pronounceable to the target audience.

The use of transliteration for character names like Arya Stark or Daenerys Targaryen is consistent with common practices in fantasy translation. This strategy ensures that the unique identity and exotic feel of the names are maintained, allowing readers or viewers to remain immersed in the fictional universe. However, for audiences unfamiliar with English phonology, such names may be difficult to pronounce or remember, posing a challenge to comprehension.

In contrast, the literal translation of names like King's Landing or Dragonstone provides immediate semantic access. This approach helps the audience grasp the symbolic or functional meaning of a location, reinforcing narrative elements.

The Uzbek version occasionally goes a step further by applying cultural adaptation, as seen in The Eyrie being translated as Qirg'iy inasi. This strategy may enhance the local reader's connection with the story but also introduces a cultural filter that was not present in the source text.

The variation between Russian and Uzbek strategies also suggests differences in translation philosophy and target audience expectations. Russian translations tend to follow more standardized literary conventions, whereas Uzbek translations show more flexibility and creativity.

Ultimately, translating names in fantasy literature is not a mechanical task but a creative and interpretive act. The translator becomes a co-creator, making choices that can subtly shift the reader's experience of the world and its characters.

### **Conclusion**

The translation of fantastic toponyms and names in *Game of Thrones* demonstrates the delicate balance translators must strike between preserving the original's creative world and adapting it for the target audience. Transliteration is often used for character names to maintain identity and continuity, while literal translation and cultural adaptation are applied more flexibly to place names.

This study reveals that while Russian translations tend to be more conservative and semantically faithful, Uzbek translations show a greater willingness to adapt culturally. Translators must consider narrative context, cultural background, and genre expectations when making decisions. In fantasy literature, where names often carry deep narrative and symbolic meaning, the translator's role extends beyond linguistic conversion they become cultural mediators and world-builders in their own right.

### **REFERENCES**

1. Fernandes, L. (2006). Translation of Names in Children's Fantasy Literature: Bringing the Young Reader into Play. *Meta: Journal des traducteurs*, 51(1), 60–78.
2. Martin, G. R. R. (1996). *A Game of Thrones*. Bantam Books.
3. HBO (2011–2019). *Game of Thrones* [TV series]. David Benioff & D. B. Weiss (Producers).
4. Newmark, P. (1988). *A Textbook of Translation*. Prentice Hall.
5. Baker, M. (1992). In *Other Words: A Coursebook on Translation*. Routledge.
6. Nord, C. (1997). *Translating as a Purposeful Activity: Functionalist Approaches Explained*. St. Jerome Publishing.