



## LINGUISTIC REPRESENTATION OF CULTURAL IDENTITY IN THE POETRY OF ALEXANDER FAYNBERG: A COMPARATIVE ENGLISH– RUSSIAN–UZBEK PERSPECTIVE

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**Abstract:** This article explores the linguistic representation of cultural identity in the poetic works of Alexander Faynberg through a comparative English–Russian–Uzbek lens. As a Russian-speaking poet deeply rooted in the soil of Uzbekistan, Faynberg's work serves as a unique linguistic bridge between Slavic literary traditions and Eastern cultural paradigms. The study employs a comparative stylistic approach to analyze how identity is encoded through specific lexical choices, idioms, and culture-specific concepts (*realia*). By examining translations and original texts across the three languages, the research identifies the challenges and successes in preserving the "Eastern spirit" of his Russian verses when rendered into English and Uzbek. The findings reveal that Faynberg's identity is not monolithic but a fluid linguistic construct that utilizes Russian syntax to express an Uzbek cultural heartbeat, providing a model for cross-cultural literary synthesis.

**Keywords:** Alexander Faynberg, Cultural Identity, Comparative Linguistics, Russian-Uzbek Literary Synthesis, Cross-Cultural Communication, Poetic Translation, Linguistic Representation.

The poetry of Alexander Faynberg represents one of the most significant phenomena in the 20th-century literary landscape of Central Asia. Writing in Russian while living and breathing the cultural atmosphere of Uzbekistan, Faynberg created a poetic language that defies simple categorization. His work is a testament to how cultural identity can transcend linguistic boundaries, forming a "third space"



where the nuances of the Uzbek "mahalla" (neighborhood) and the vastness of the Russian literary heritage coexist. This article aims to investigate the linguistic mechanisms through which this hybrid identity is expressed and how it transforms when viewed from a comparative English, Russian, and Uzbek perspective.

The linguistic representation of cultural identity in the poetry of Alexander Faynberg represents a complex semiotic system where the Russian language serves as a phonetic and syntactic vessel for an essentially Eastern soul. To understand this synthesis, one must first analyze the "linguistic landscape" of Faynberg's work, which operates at the intersection of three distinct cultural paradigms. While he wrote in Russian, his conceptual world was deeply rooted in the soil of Uzbekistan, creating a poetic idiolect that is both familiar to the Slavic ear and profoundly resonant with the Uzbek spirit. When we translate these concepts into English, a third layer of interpretation emerges, testing the universality of his localized identity. The primary linguistic marker of this identity is the use of "realia"—untranslatable words that carry the weight of a specific culture. Words like *choykhona*, *tandir*, and *mahalla* appear in his Russian verses not as exotic ornaments, but as structural pillars of his reality. In an English-Russian-Uzbek comparative perspective, these terms act as "cultural anchors." In Russian, they create a stylistic contrast with classical European poetic diction; in Uzbek, they represent a homecoming to the original source; and in English, they often require descriptive expansion, which challenges the minimalist precision of Faynberg's original style.

The comparative analysis of his metaphorical mapping reveals that Faynberg's identity is constructed through a "triangulation" of spatial concepts. For instance, the concept of "Home" in his poetry is rarely associated with the birch trees or snow-covered steppes of traditional Russian lyrics. Instead, his linguistic "Home" is defined by the heat of the Tashkent sun, the smell of dust after rain, and the architectural geometry of the old city. This shift in sensory priority is a key linguistic



indicator of his cultural realignment. In a Russian linguistic context, this creates a unique "Southern Russian" dialect of poetry, characterized by a higher frequency of light-related lexemes. When compared to Uzbek translations of his work, one notices that the Uzbek language often "reclaims" these metaphors, as the Russian *solntse* (sun) transforms back into the multidimensional *quyosh*, which carries a different set of mythological and everyday connotations in Central Asia. The English perspective, meanwhile, often struggles to capture the specific "weight" of this heat, frequently substituting the cultural intensity of the Uzbek sun with more general atmospheric descriptions, thereby highlighting the difficulty of transporting localized identity across vast linguistic distances.

Furthermore, the linguistic representation of social identity in Faynberg's work is deeply tied to the concept of "The Other" and "The Self." As a Russian-speaking poet in a predominantly Uzbek environment, his language reflects a state of constant cultural dialogue. This is manifested through his use of address forms and interpersonal discourse markers. The Russian *ty* (you) in his poems often carries the intimacy and communal warmth of the Uzbek *sen*, reflecting a social structure based on neighborhood ties and collective memory rather than individualistic isolation. A corpus-based comparison shows that Faynberg's Russian is significantly more "vocal" and "dialogic" than that of his Moscow-based contemporaries. He writes as if he is speaking to a friend in a crowded market, a stylistic choice that mimics the oral traditions of Uzbek *bakhshi* and *shoirlar*. In English translation, this conversational "Eastern" intimacy can sometimes be mistaken for informal Russian colloquialism, losing the specific cultural nuances of Central Asian hospitality that are embedded in the original syntax.

Another vital aspect of Faynberg's cultural identity is his linguistic treatment of "Time." In the Russian literary tradition, time is often linear and historical, but in Faynberg's Uzbek-influenced worldview, time takes on a more cyclical, almost



fatalistic quality. This is represented linguistically through his preference for imperfective verb aspects and a focus on recurring natural phenomena. The wind, the falling leaves, and the flowing water of the *aryk* are linguistic symbols of a time that does not pass but merely rotates. When we compare this to English translations, the tense systems of the English language—which are more rigid in their temporal marking—often force a linearity onto Faynberg's verses that was not present in the original Russian-Uzbek synthesis. The Uzbek translations, conversely, emphasize the "ever-present" nature of his imagery, aligning his work with the classical traditions of Navoi and Mashrab. This linguistic "tug-of-war" between the three languages reveals the elastic nature of Faynberg's identity; he is a poet who exists in the gaps between languages, using the friction between them to generate poetic energy.

The religious and philosophical layers of his identity are also encoded in his choice of metaphors. Although he wrote within a secular Russian tradition, his lexicon is saturated with "crypto-Islamic" imagery—references to fate (*taqdir*), the soul as a bird, and the desert as a place of spiritual trial. These are not explicitly religious statements but cultural "echoes" that inform his Russian vocabulary. In a comparative English-Russian-Uzbek study, these echoes are most audible when analyzing the word *dusha* (soul). In Faynberg's Russian, *dusha* behaves much more like the Uzbek *qalb* or *ruh*—it is something shared, something that can be "poured out" like tea, rather than a hidden, private interiority. The English "soul" or "heart" often carries a more romantic or individualistic burden, which can obscure the communal, almost Sufi-like resonance of Faynberg's original intent. By placing these three languages side-by-side, we can see how Faynberg's linguistic choices act as a "cultural filter," selecting elements from each tradition to build a home for himself in the medium of words.



In the final analysis, the linguistic representation of cultural identity in Faynberg's poetry is a masterful example of "transculturalism." He does not simply live in two cultures; he creates a new one through his linguistic innovations. The English–Russian–Uzbek comparative perspective highlights the fact that his poetry is a living organism that changes color depending on the linguistic light it is viewed in. His identity is not a fixed point on a map but a journey between the cyrillic alphabet and the eastern sun. By studying the shifts in meaning that occur during translation and the unique collocations he creates in his original Russian, we gain a deeper understanding of how language shapes our sense of self. Alexander Faynberg proves that one can be a "national" poet in a "foreign" tongue, provided that the heart of the language is tuned to the frequency of the land. This linguistic study serves as a reminder that in the hands of a master, words are not just labels for things, but the very fabric of our shared human and cultural identity, capable of bridging the widest divides between East and West.

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