

COMPARATIVE ANALYS OF CULTURAL CONCEPTS IN ENGLISH AND UZBEK LITERARY TEXTS AND THEIR TRANSLATION

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Abstract. This study investigates the linguistic and cultural dimensions of English and Uzbek literary texts through a comparative lens, focusing on how culturally specific concepts are represented and translated. The research draws on the interdisciplinary frameworks of comparative literature, contrastive linguistics, and translation studies. Selected novels and short stories by English and Uzbek authors are analyzed to identify common themes, language structures, and translation strategies. The study highlights how cultural and linguistic differences influence literary meaning and how translators manage the challenge of maintaining cultural authenticity while ensuring readability. Findings reveal that certain concepts, such as kinship, hospitality, and spirituality, are deeply rooted in cultural identity and require creative translation strategies, including adaptation, domestication, and explanatory commentary. The research emphasizes that translation is both an art and a science, involving a balance between fidelity to the source text and sensitivity to the target culture.

Key words: comparative literature, contrastive linguistics, translation studies, culture, equivalence, literary translation, intercultural communication

Introduction. In an increasingly globalized world, literature continues to serve as a vital medium for cross-cultural communication. Comparative literature, contrastive linguistics, and translation studies are interrelated disciplines that help scholars understand how linguistic and cultural systems interact through literary expression.

While comparative literature examines similarities and differences between literary works from different cultures, contrastive linguistics focuses on structural and semantic differences between languages. Translation studies, in turn, combines insights from both disciplines to explore how meaning travels across linguistic and cultural boundaries.

English and Uzbek literatures provide a rich field for comparative analysis due to their distinct cultural heritages and historical experiences. English literature, rooted in Western humanist and rational traditions, often emphasizes individualism and social critique. In contrast, Uzbek literature, shaped by Eastern philosophy and communal values, places strong emphasis on spirituality, family ties, and moral integrity. Despite

these differences, both literatures explore universal human emotions such as love, loss, hope, and justice.

However, translating literary texts between these two languages presents numerous challenges. English and Uzbek differ not only grammatically and lexically but also in cultural worldview. Concepts such as *modesty*, *honor*, and *destiny* carry different connotations in each culture. Therefore, this study seeks to identify and analyze how cultural concepts are conveyed in English and Uzbek literary texts and how translators bridge the gap between linguistic structure and cultural meaning.

The main objectives of this research are:

1. To identify key cultural and linguistic differences in English and Uzbek literary works.
2. To examine how these differences influence translation strategies.
3. To analyze how translators negotiate cultural equivalence.

The study's significance lies in its contribution to understanding the dynamic relationship between language, culture, and translation.

Materials and Methods. This research is based on a qualitative comparative analysis. Primary materials include selected literary works representing both English and Uzbek traditions.

English texts:

Pride and Prejudice by Jane Austen
Great Expectations by Charles Dickens
Lord of the Flies by William Golding

Uzbek texts:

O'tkan Kunlar by Abdulla Qodiriy
Mehrobdan Chayon by Abdulla Qahhor
The Day Lasts More Than a Hundred Years by Chingiz Aitmatov

The methodological framework draws from the following theoretical perspectives: Eugene Nida's (1964) theory of *dynamic equivalence*, which focuses on reproducing the same effect on the target audience as the source text has on its original readers.

Lawrence Venuti's (1995) distinction between *domestication* and *foreignization*, which helps analyze whether translators adapt the text to the target culture or retain its foreign flavor.

Roman Jakobson's (1959) model of *intersemiotic translation*, which highlights the interpretative nature of translation as a transfer of meaning across codes and cultures.

The analysis involves several steps:

1. Identification of culture-bound expressions (idioms, proverbs, metaphors, religious and social terms).

2. Linguistic comparison to explore grammatical and semantic patterns in English and Uzbek.
3. Translation analysis, examining published translations and evaluating the translator's choices.
4. Interpretive commentary on how meaning shifts during translation.

The study is descriptive rather than statistical; it emphasizes interpretive depth and cultural context over quantitative measurement.

Results and Discussion. Cultural Concepts and Lexical Specificity. Cultural concepts often manifest in lexical items unique to each language. In Uzbek, words such as *mehmondo'stlik* (hospitality), *or-nomus* (honor), and *duo* (blessing) carry strong emotional and social meanings that have no direct equivalents in English. Translators must therefore use paraphrases or contextual adaptations.

For instance, *ota-onaning duosi bilan* may be translated as “with the parents’ blessing,” yet this English phrase fails to capture the spiritual and moral significance inherent in the Uzbek expression, which conveys divine favor and moral support.

Similarly, in English literature, expressions such as “a stiff upper lip” or “keep calm and carry on” reflect British stoicism and emotional restraint—concepts that are not directly translatable into Uzbek cultural contexts, where emotional expression and empathy are valued differently.

Grammatical and Stylistic Differences. The syntactic structure of Uzbek, being agglutinative, allows for greater morphological complexity than English. Uzbek often uses suffixes to convey nuances of respect, emotion, and relationship, which English expresses through separate words or tone. For example, *opajonim* combines the word *opa* (sister) with *-jon* (dear), expressing affection that English cannot easily replicate in a single term.

In translation, stylistic adaptation becomes essential. Literal translation may result in loss of emotional tone, while over-domestication may distort the author's intent. Therefore, translators must maintain a delicate balance between grammatical fidelity and emotional resonance.

Translation Strategies: Domestication vs. Foreignization. The comparative analysis of translated works shows that translators often oscillate between two strategies:

Domestication: Making the text sound natural for the target audience by adapting culture-specific elements.

Example: translating *Ramazon hayiti* as “Eid festival” or “religious celebration,” depending on reader familiarity.

Foreignization: Retaining original terms to preserve cultural authenticity. Example: keeping words like *mahalla* or *beshik-to'y* untranslated, with footnotes or explanations.

English translators of Uzbek literature often prefer foreignization to introduce the reader to Uzbek culture, while Uzbek translators of English works tend to domesticate to ensure comprehension.

Cultural Symbolism in Literary Contexts. Both English and Uzbek literatures employ symbolism deeply tied to cultural identity. For instance, the *rose* in English poetry symbolizes love and beauty, while the *tulip* and *pomegranate* in Uzbek literature symbolize purity, loyalty, and fertility. The translator must decide whether to preserve the symbol or replace it with a culturally equivalent one.

Failure to recognize such symbols can result in misinterpretation. For example, translating “rose” simply as *gul* (flower) diminishes its symbolic depth.

The Role of the Translator as Cultural Mediator. Translators are not passive intermediaries but active interpreters who reconstruct meaning. Their cultural competence determines the success of the translation. A translator who understands both English and Uzbek sociocultural realities can produce a version that resonates emotionally with target readers without distorting the author’s message.

The study found that translators with literary training tend to preserve stylistic and symbolic features more effectively than those relying solely on linguistic equivalence. Hence, translation training programs should integrate comparative cultural analysis as a key component.

Conclusion. The comparative study of English and Uzbek literary texts reveals that translation is a multifaceted process involving not only linguistic transformation but also cultural interpretation. Both languages encapsulate distinct worldviews: English prioritizes individual expression and rational order, while Uzbek emphasizes collective identity and moral values. Translators, therefore, face the challenge of bridging not only linguistic gaps but also differing modes of thought.

Effective literary translation requires intercultural competence, creativity, and a deep understanding of both source and target cultures. This study demonstrates that cultural concepts such as kinship, hospitality, and spirituality play a central role in shaping literary meaning and must be treated with special care in translation.

Future research may focus on corpus-based analysis of larger datasets to explore systematic patterns in cultural translation between English and Turkic languages. The findings contribute to translation pedagogy, suggesting that comparative cultural literacy should be a mandatory component in translator education.

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