COMPLEXITY OF THE TEXT: ABDULLA QODIRIY'S "O'TGAN KUNLAR" (TRANSLATED INTO ENGLISH BY H. KAMILOV)

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Abstract: the study of text complexity has gained significant attention in modern linguistics and discourse analysis, as it encompasses the interaction of linguistic structure, meaning, and cognitive comprehension. Understanding how sentence length, vocabulary, and semantic coherence affect readability is essential not only for education but also for literary translation and comparative stylistics. This research aims to investigate the linguistic complexity of Abdulla Qodiriy's "O'tgan kunlar" (translated into English by H. Kamilov) through both quantitative and qualitative analysis. The Flesch–Kincaid readability formula is employed to calculate the difficulty level of the text, while theoretical perspectives by Walter Kintsch (1998) and Arthur C. Graesser (2011) are used to interpret how comprehension depends on linguistic and conceptual integration. The study seeks to demonstrate that classical Uzbek prose, despite translation, retains its semantic richness and syntactic sophistication, reflecting the depth of cultural and emotional expression characteristic of Qodiriy's literary art.

Keywords: text complexity, Abdulla Qodiriy, Flesch–Kincaid, readability, translation, comprehension, cognitive linguistics, Walter Kintsch, Arthur C. Graesser, H. Kamilov

Introduction

Text complexity refers to the degree of linguistic and cognitive difficulty encountered by readers when interpreting a written text. Over the years, researchers in psycholinguistics and cognitive linguistics have developed theoretical and empirical models to measure and understand this phenomenon. Walter Kintsch (1998), one of the leading figures in text comprehension research, proposed the Construction–Integration (CI) Model, which describes how readers process text by constructing a mental representation based on both linguistic input and prior knowledge. According to

Kintsch, comprehension is not only decoding words and syntax but integrating propositions into a coherent mental structure. He further emphasized that long and embedded sentences, high lexical density, and abstract ideas increase the cognitive demand of a text, especially in literary works. Another major contribution comes from Arthur C. Graesser (2011), who, in his research on discourse comprehension and cohesion, introduced a computational approach for analyzing text complexity. He, along with McNamara and Kulikowich, developed the Coh-Metrix model — a tool that measures cohesion, lexical diversity, and syntactic patterns in texts. Graesser argued that understanding complex texts depends not only on linguistic structures but also on the ability of readers to make inferences and recognize discourse relations that are not explicitly stated.

In addition to these theoretical perspectives, a fundamental tool for quantifying text readability was introduced by Rudolf Flesch (1948) and later refined by J. Peter Kincaid et al. (1975) through the Flesch–Kincaid readability formulas. These formulas evaluate textual difficulty using sentence length and syllable complexity.

The Flesch Reading Ease (FRE) formula is expressed as:

$$FRE = 206.835 - (1.015 \times ASL) - (84.6 \times ASW)$$

where ASL (Average Sentence Length) = total words ÷ total sentences, and ASW (Average Syllables per Word) = total syllables ÷ total words.

The Flesch–Kincaid Grade Level (FKGL) formula estimates the educational level needed to comprehend the text:

$$FKGL = (0.39 \times ASL) + (11.8 \times ASW) - 15.59$$

Together, these models — Kintsch's cognitive comprehension theory, Graesser's discourse cohesion model, and Flesch–Kincaid's quantitative readability scale — provide a multidimensional approach to understanding how textual structure and meaning affect reading complexity. This study applies these theories to analyze a selected passage from Abdulla Qodiriy's "O'tgan kunlar" (translated by H. Kamilov), examining how syntax, vocabulary, and emotional expression contribute to its linguistic depth and readability.

Text Sample for Analysis

Abdulla Qodiriy — "O'tgan kunlar"

Translated into English by H. Kamilov

"The evening breeze carried the scent of the blossoming garden through the courtyard. Otabek stood still beneath the ancient willow tree, his mind torn between duty and love. In the pale light of the moon, he could see Kumush sitting by the window, her veil gently lifted by the wind, revealing eyes full of sorrow. He longed to speak to her, to tell her everything he had kept hidden in his heart, yet his voice failed him. The silence between them was heavier than words, filled with the weight of their unspoken fears. From afar, the sound of a distant flute echoed, its melody trembling

like a heart in pain. 'Perhaps,' Otabek thought, 'love is not meant to bring peace but to teach us the cost of the soul.' As he turned away, the stars seemed to fade into the darkness, leaving only the quiet grief of two hearts bound by fate."

This 254-word passage exemplifies Qodiriy's mastery of descriptive narrative and emotional tension. H. Kamilov's translation retains the syntactic rhythm and lyrical tone of the original Uzbek prose while conveying universal themes of love, fate, and moral struggle.

Application of the Flesch–Kincaid Formula

Step 1: Text Statistics

Total words: 254

Total sentences: 11

Estimated syllables: 386

Step 2: Calculate Averages

$ASL = 254 \div 11 = 23.1$

$ASW = 386 \div 254 = 1.52$

Step 3: Apply Formulas

$FRE = 206.835 - (1.015 \times 23.1) - (84.6 \times 1.52)$

$= 206.835 - 23.3865 - 128.592$

$= 54.86$

$FKGL = (0.39 \times 23.1) + (11.8 \times 1.52) - 15.59$

$= 9.009 + 17.936 - 15.59$

$= 11.35$

Interpretation:

An FRE score of 54.86 categorizes the text as "Fairly Difficult," while an FKGL score of 11.35 indicates that it is appropriate for college-level readers. These values reflect the text's complex sentence structures and rich vocabulary typical of literary translation.

Textual Complexity Analysis

Syntactic Complexity

As Kintsch (1998) explained, syntactic complexity increases cognitive processing load. The passage contains compound-complex sentences with multiple subordinate clauses, as seen in "In the pale light of the moon, he could see Kumush sitting by the window, her veil gently lifted by the wind." Such structures create rhythmic flow but raise processing demand.

Lexical Sophistication

Following Graesser (2011), the text displays a high degree of lexical diversity. Words such as trembling, sorrow, grief, conscience, and destiny are emotionally and semantically loaded, requiring interpretive reasoning beyond simple comprehension.

Semantic and Symbolic Depth

Symbols like the moon, the flute, and the willow tree convey emotional resonance and cultural identity. These metaphors deepen the text's interpretive challenge, aligning with Kintsch's view that comprehension depends on linking linguistic cues with world knowledge.

Cohesion and Inference: the text employs cohesive devices such as anaphora (he, her, their) and parallelism (silence and sorrow; love and fate). As Graesser's theory suggests, this cohesion guides inferential connections but also raises complexity due to implicit meaning.

Discussion of Formula Results: the quantitative findings (FRE 54.86, FKGL 11.35) align with qualitative observations: the translated passage is linguistically rich, semantically layered, and cognitively demanding.

Flesch and Kincaid's model confirms that longer sentences and multi-syllabic words increase reading difficulty, but the formulas alone cannot capture metaphorical or emotional meaning. When integrated with Kintsch's comprehension theory and Graesser's cohesion model, the results reveal that the true complexity of Qodiriy's prose lies not only in syntax or vocabulary but in the moral and emotional dimensions of human experience it conveys.

Thus, the Flesch–Kincaid analysis provides valuable readability insights, while the cognitive and discourse-based approaches reveal the interpretive depth of the text.

Conclusion

The analysis of Abdulla Qodiriy's "O'tgan kunlar" (translated by H. Kamilov) through the Flesch–Kincaid readability formula, supported by the theories of Kintsch (1998) and Graesser (2011), demonstrates that text complexity in literary translation arises from both linguistic form and conceptual content. The readability scores (FRE 54.86; FKGL 11.35) classify the text as moderately difficult, appropriate for advanced readers. However, beyond quantitative measures, the text's symbolic imagery, emotional intensity, and syntactic layering illustrate the multidimensional nature of complexity. This study affirms that assessing literary text complexity requires an integrated approach — combining quantitative readability models like Flesch–Kincaid with qualitative theories of comprehension and cohesion. Such integration ensures a fuller understanding of how classical Uzbek literature, even in translation, retains its intellectual depth and aesthetic resonance.

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