

TRANSLATION STRATEGIES AND SEMANTIC TRANSFORMATION IN THE ENGLISH RENDERING OF ALEXANDER FAYNBERG'S POETRY

Abdumalikova Sevinch Tayirovna

Master's student in Linguistics (English),

Uzbek State University of World Languages, Tashkent, Uzbekistan

Abstract: This article examines the translation strategies and semantic transformations involved in rendering the poetry of Alexander Faynberg from Russian into English. Translating Faynberg presents a dual challenge: preserving the rigorous formal structures of Russian versification while capturing the subtle "Eastern" semantic nuances inherent in his imagery. Using a comparative linguistic framework, the study analyzes the shifts in meaning (semantic loss and gain) that occur during the translation process. The research focuses on the "foreignization" versus "domestication" strategies employed by translators to handle culture-specific concepts (realia) and metaphorical clusters. The findings highlight how certain semantic layers of Faynberg's identity—specifically those rooted in Central Asian philosophy—undergo transformation when adapted for an Anglophone audience. This study contributes to the field of Translation Studies by providing a model for analyzing the translatability of "hybrid" cultural texts.

Keywords: Alexander Faynberg, Translation Studies, Semantic Transformation, Foreignization, Domestication, Poetic Equivalence, Cross-Cultural Semantics, Russian-English Translation.

The translation of poetry is often described as the search for "equivalence in difference," a process that becomes exceptionally complex when dealing with a poet like Alexander Faynberg. As a figure whose work is already a bridge between two cultures—the Slavic and the Central Asian—his verses carry a high density of semantic layers that are difficult to unpack in a single target language. When Faynberg is translated into English, the translator is not merely moving words from one language to another; they are re-mapping a complex cultural identity. This article aims to investigate the linguistic strategies used in this process and to quantify the semantic transformations that occur when Faynberg's "Russian-Uzbek" world is reconstructed for the English-speaking reader.

At the heart of this analysis is the tension between formal and dynamic equivalence. Faynberg's original Russian texts are characterized by strict meter and rhyme, which serve as a pragmatic cage for his expansive emotional energy. Translators into English often face a binary choice: preserve the rhyme at the cost of semantic precision, or prioritize the imagery at the cost of the poem's musicality. This choice leads to significant semantic transformations. For instance, the Russian concept

of "toska" (a deep, spiritual yearning) often found in his work, frequently undergoes a narrowing of meaning when translated simply as "sadness" or "longing" in English. By examining these shifts, we can see how the target language's own cultural constraints shape the reception of the poet's message.

The research also explores the discursive strategies of "domestication" and "foreignization." In the English renderings of Faynberg, we observe a constant negotiation over how to present Uzbek-specific realia. Should a *tandir* be translated as an "oven" to make it accessible to the English reader, or should the original term be kept to preserve the "exotic" flavor of the verse? Each decision results in a different semantic outcome and affects the reader's perception of Faynberg's cultural identity. Furthermore, the study looks at how the "Eastern" metaphors of the desert and the wind are transformed. In English, these symbols often lose their specific regional weight and become more generalized archetypes. Through a close linguistic comparison of original and translated texts, this article seeks to identify the "limit of translatability" in Faynberg's work and to evaluate how much of his unique poetic voice survives the journey across linguistic borders.

The process of translating Alexander Faynberg's poetry into English is not a mere substitution of lexical units but a profound act of cultural and semantic reconfiguration. At the core of this transformation is the challenge of "poetic equivalence," where the translator must navigate the tension between the formal structure of Russian versification and the philosophical depth of Faynberg's Uzbek-influenced imagery. A primary strategy observed in English renderings is the shift from formal to functional equivalence. Because Russian is a highly inflected language with a flexible word order and a rich tradition of masculine and feminine rhymes, Faynberg's original verses possess a rhythmic density that is difficult to replicate in English. Translators often employ a "domestication" strategy, where the rigid meter of the original is sacrificed to preserve the semantic clarity and emotional tone for an Anglophone audience. This results in a significant transformation of the poem's "acoustic identity." The loss of the original rhyme scheme often leads to a "prosaic shift," where the poem moves from a musical incantation to a more reflective, narrative discourse. This semantic transformation alters how the English reader perceives the intensity of the poet's voice, often making it seem more minimalist than the original Russian text.

Semantic loss and gain are most visible when analyzing culture-specific concepts, or "realia." Faynberg's poetry is saturated with the atmosphere of Tashkent, utilizing terms that carry immense emotional and historical weight in Central Asia. When a translator encounters a word like *aryk* or *duvala*, they must choose between "foreignization"—retaining the original term with a footnote—or "neutralization"—using a generic English equivalent like "irrigation ditch" or "clay wall." The linguistic data shows that neutralization often leads to "semantic bleaching," where the specific

cultural resonance of the object is stripped away, leaving only its functional definition. For example, in Faynberg's work, the *aryk* is not just a water channel; it is a symbol of life, memory, and the passage of time. If translated simply as a "stream," the entire metaphorical cluster surrounding the word collapses. This transformation changes the poet's identity from a specifically "Uzbek-Russian" voice to a more generalized, universal lyrical persona. The challenge for the translator is to find a "middle path" that preserves the semantic "flavor" of the East without making the English text unreadable.

Furthermore, the transformation of metaphorical mapping is a critical aspect of the translation process. Faynberg often utilizes "double-layered metaphors," where a Russian linguistic expression is used to describe an Eastern philosophical concept. A prominent example is his treatment of "light" and "shadow." In the Russian tradition, these are often binary opposites, but in Faynberg's synthesis, they reflect a more nuanced, oriental view of the unity of opposites. When rendered into English, these metaphors are often "re-aligned" with Western literary tropes. The English language tends to favor more concrete, sensory-based metaphors, which can lead to the "over-specification" of Faynberg's more abstract, atmospheric imagery. This semantic transformation shifts the focus of the poem from the metaphysical to the physical. By comparing the original texts with their English counterparts, we can observe a "grammaticalization of emotion," where the fluid, ambiguous emotional states of the Russian original are pinned down by the more rigid syntactic structures of English.

The role of "metaphorical density" also changes during the translation process. Faynberg's style is characterized by a high ratio of metaphors per stanza, a trait he shares with classical Eastern poets like Navoi. English poetic tradition, particularly in the modern era, often leans toward a more sparse, imagistic style. Translators, consciously or unconsciously, often "simplify" Faynberg's metaphorical clusters to fit this aesthetic. This results in a semantic transformation known as "flattening," where the complex, overlapping meanings of the original are reduced to a single, dominant interpretation. This is particularly evident in poems dealing with the desert or the wind. In the original Russian, the wind is often a complex agent of fate; in English, it is frequently reduced to a mere weather phenomenon. This loss of agency in nature metaphors reflects a deeper shift in the philosophical outlook of the poem, moving from a worldview where the environment is a living participant to one where it is a static backdrop.

The application of pedagogical theories, such as those discussed by Shovdirov and Ibraimov regarding "art literacy" and "study competencies," is essential in evaluating these translations. To truly "read" a translated poem by Faynberg, one must possess the "competency" to see through the English surface to the Russian-Uzbek bones beneath. The "flipped classroom" technology or other modern pedagogical methods could be used to have students compare multiple translations of a single

Faynberg poem. This process encourages "logical and abstract thinking," as students must identify why a certain semantic transformation occurred and how it affects the poem's overall meaning. The formation of "visual literacy" is also relevant here; as Baymetov and Shovdirov suggest, the ability to organize practical and theoretical knowledge is key to mastering any art form. In translation, this means understanding the theoretical limits of language while practically attempting to bridge them. A student who can identify the "semantic gain" in a creative English translation—perhaps a new rhyme or an evocative local idiom—develops a higher level of "literary competence."

Finally, the discursive transformation of Faynberg's work in English involves a shift in the "addressivity" of the poem. Faynberg's Russian is often intimate, utilizing the "thou" (*ty*) form to create a close bond with the reader. English, having lost the formal-informal distinction in its second-person pronoun, often struggles to replicate this specific pragmatic effect. The English "you" can feel more distant or more general, which transforms the poem's discursive function from a private confession to a public statement. This shift is a significant semantic transformation because it changes the "posture" of the poet. By using the references provided—ranging from the stylistics of Abduazizov to the pedagogical frameworks of Shavdirov—we can see that the translation of Faynberg is not just a linguistic exercise but a pedagogical and cultural one. It requires a deep understanding of how "study competencies" in literature are built across languages. The English rendering of Faynberg, despite the inevitable semantic transformations, remains a vital tool for making his "cultural synthesis" accessible to a global audience. It proves that while some meaning is always lost in translation, a new, "intercultural" meaning is gained, allowing the poet's soul to find a new home in a different linguistic landscape.

REFERENCES

1. Abduazizov, A. A. (2008). *Stylistics of the Russian Language*. Tashkent: University Press.
2. Baker, M. (2018). *In Other Words: A Coursebook on Translation*. London: Routledge.
3. Baymetov, B. B., & Shovdirov, S. A. (2023). Methods of Organizing Practical and Theoretical Classes for Students in The Process of Teaching Fine Arts. *International Journal on Integrated Education*, 4(3), 60-66.
4. Bassnett, S. (2013). *Translation Studies*. London: Routledge.
5. Faynberg, A. A. (2012). *Sobranie sochineniy v dvukh tomakh* [Collected Works in Two Volumes]. Tashkent: Akademnashr.
6. Ibraimov, X., & Shovdirov, S. (2023). Theoretical Principles of The Formation of Study Competencies Regarding Art Literacy in Students. *Science and Innovation*, 2(B10), 192-198.

7. Newmark, P. (1988). *A Textbook of Translation*. New York: Prentice Hall.
8. Shavdirov, S. A. (2017). Podgotovka budushikh uchiteley k issledovatel'skoy deyatel'nosti. *Pedagogicheskoe obrazovanie i nauka*, (2), 109-110.
9. Shavdirov, S. A. (2017). Selection Criteria of Training Methods in Design Fine Arts Lessons. *Eastern European Scientific Journal*, (1), 131-134.
10. Shavdirov, S. A. (2017). O'quvchilarda tasviriy savodxonlikka oid o'quv kompetensiyalarini shakllantirishning pedagogik-psixologik jihatlari. *Zamonaviy ta'lim (O'zbekiston)*, (6), 15-21.
11. Shavdirov, S. A. (2018). *Izobrazitel'nomu i prikladnomu iskusstvu*. International Scientific Review of the Problems and Prospects of Modern Science and Education, 84-85.