



TRANSLATING UZBEK CULTURE INTO ENGLISH

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Abstract: This article explores the process of translating Uzbek cultural elements into English. It discusses the main difficulties translators face when dealing with culture-specific concepts that have no direct equivalents in the target language. The study highlights key translation strategies such as transliteration, explanation, adaptation, and cultural substitution. It also emphasizes the importance of preserving cultural identity while ensuring the text is understandable for international readers. The article concludes that successful translation requires both linguistic competence and deep cultural awareness.

Keywords: Uzbek culture, translation, intercultural communication, cultural equivalence.

Introduction:

In the twenty-first century, the rapid development of globalization, digital communication, international education, tourism, and cultural exchange has significantly increased the importance of translation in modern society. Translation is no longer regarded as a simple linguistic activity; today, it serves as a powerful instrument of intercultural communication that connects nations, preserves cultural heritage, and promotes mutual understanding among people from different cultural backgrounds. In this context, translating Uzbek culture into English has become one of the most relevant and widely discussed issues in contemporary translation studies and linguocultural research.

English currently functions as the global language of science, technology, diplomacy, media, education, and international cooperation. As a result, the demand for high-quality translation from Uzbek into English is steadily growing around the world. Through translation, foreign readers gain access to Uzbekistan's rich cultural heritage, centuries-old traditions, national customs, folklore, literature, cuisine, historical values, and worldview. Consequently,



translation plays a crucial role in introducing Uzbek national identity to the international community and strengthening Uzbekistan's cultural presence on the global stage.

The relevance of this topic is especially noticeable in modern Uzbekistan. In recent years, large-scale educational reforms, international partnerships, tourism development, and increasing attention to foreign language learning have created new opportunities and responsibilities for translators, linguists, and researchers. Today, Uzbekistan actively promotes its cultural and spiritual heritage internationally through literature, cinema, academic research, tourism projects, and media resources. This process requires translators who are capable not only of transferring words from one language into another, but also of preserving cultural meaning, emotional color, and national identity.

However, translating cultural elements remains one of the most complex and challenging areas of translation. Every nation possesses unique traditions, beliefs, customs, mentality, and linguistic features that reflect its historical development and cultural experience. Because of these differences, many Uzbek cultural concepts have no direct equivalents in English. Such challenges appear at different linguistic levels, including grammatical structures, lexical units, phraseological expressions, stylistic devices, and punctuation norms. These distinctions clearly demonstrate that language is not static; it is dynamic, flexible, and deeply connected with culture and human perception.

For example, Uzbek cultural words such as mahalla, sumalak, navruz, doppi, and kelin salom carry not only lexical meanings but also historical, social, emotional, and spiritual significance. Direct translation often fails to fully convey these meanings to foreign readers. Therefore, translators must apply various strategies such as transliteration, descriptive translation, adaptation, explanation, and cultural substitution in order to preserve both meaning and cultural authenticity.

Many well-known scholars and linguists have emphasized the close relationship between language and culture. Edward Sapir stated that "language and culture cannot be separated from one another," highlighting that language reflects the way people think and live. Likewise, Nelson Mandela famously noted: "If you talk to a man in a language he understands, that goes to his head. If you talk to him in his language, that goes to his heart." These ideas clearly show that translation is not only about linguistic accuracy but also about preserving cultural emotion and identity.

Furthermore, the growing popularity of English among young people, teachers, researchers, translators, and students has increased academic interest in translation studies. In the process of globalization, English attracts modern learners with its international status, communicative possibilities, and access to



global knowledge. Consequently, studying the translation of Uzbek culture into English contributes not only to theoretical linguistics and translation studies but also to intercultural dialogue, cultural diplomacy, and international understanding.

This article aims to analyze the major problems and opportunities involved in translating Uzbek cultural elements into English. It provides a broader interpretation of translation methods and strategies used in rendering culture-specific terms and expressions. The study also explores how translators can overcome linguistic and cultural barriers while maintaining semantic accuracy, readability, and cultural richness. In addition, the article highlights the importance of cultural sensitivity and linguocultural competence in achieving effective translation.

Ultimately, successful cultural translation requires more than grammatical knowledge or vocabulary equivalence. It demands deep cultural awareness, analytical thinking, linguistic flexibility, and the ability to transfer not only words but also the spirit of a nation. Accurate and culturally sensitive translation allows Uzbek culture to be represented authentically in the international arena and helps preserve its unique identity in the globalized world.

Methods:

This study used quantitative and qualitative research methods to investigate the challenges, opportunities, and translation strategies related to translating Uzbek cultural elements into English. The use of mixed research methods helped to collect both statistical information and detailed personal opinions, allowing the topic to be analyzed from different perspectives.

The research was mainly conducted among first-year students of the Department of Translation Theory and Practice at the Faculty of English Philology and Translation of Samarkand State Institute of Foreign Languages. The participants were selected because they are directly involved in studying English, translation theory, intercultural communication, and linguistic analysis. Their academic background made it possible to gather relevant and reliable information connected with cultural translation.

In the quantitative part of the research, survey methodology was applied. A number of survey questions were prepared in advance and distributed among students in order to identify their understanding of Uzbek cultural translation and the problems they face while translating culture-specific concepts into English. During the survey process, students were asked about their experiences, translation preferences, and opinions regarding cultural equivalence and translation difficulties.

The survey included questions such as:



Which Uzbek cultural words or expressions are the most difficult to translate into English?

Why do some national concepts lose their original meaning during translation?

Which translation methods are more effective in preserving cultural identity?

How important is cultural knowledge in the translation process?

What problems occur when translating Uzbek traditions, customs, and national values into English?

The collected survey data helped identify common tendencies, similarities, and major translation problems experienced by students. It also provided useful statistical information about the most frequently used translation strategies and students' awareness of intercultural communication.

In addition to surveys, qualitative research methods were also widely used in this study. Interviews and face-to-face discussions were conducted with students in order to obtain deeper and more detailed information about their experiences and opinions. During the interview process, participants openly shared their personal thoughts about translating Uzbek culture into English and explained the difficulties they encounter while working with culture-specific terms and expressions.

The interview questions mainly focused on:

- lexical and semantic difficulties in translation;
 - problems related to grammatical and stylistic differences between Uzbek and English;
 - the role of context in understanding national expressions;
 - the importance of preserving cultural meaning during translation;
- and the effectiveness of translation strategies such as transliteration, explanation, adaptation, and cultural substitution.

Furthermore, observational and analytical methods were used throughout the research process. Different Uzbek cultural words, traditions, idiomatic expressions, and national concepts were analyzed and compared with their English translations in order to identify grammatical, lexical, semantic, and stylistic differences between the two languages. Special attention was given to words that reflect Uzbek national identity and cultural worldview, including concepts related to hospitality, family traditions, national celebrations, clothing, and food.

The study also employed comparative analysis in order to evaluate how meaning changes during translation and how translators attempt to preserve the cultural essence of the original text. Several examples from Uzbek culture were examined to determine which translation methods help maintain both



readability and authenticity in English.

Moreover, the research process demonstrated that language and culture are deeply interconnected and cannot be separated from one another. The findings revealed that many translation difficulties arise not only because of linguistic differences, but also because of differences in mentality, worldview, traditions, and cultural perception between Uzbek and English-speaking societies.

Results:

The survey and interview methods were used in this study, and the obtained results revealed several important aspects related to translating Uzbek cultural elements into English.

A total of 40 first-year students from the Faculty of English Philology and Translation at Samarkand State Institute of Foreign Languages participated in the survey, while 12 students took part in interviews and face-to-face discussions. The collected data demonstrated that the majority of students consider cultural translation one of the most difficult areas of translation studies.

According to the survey results, 78% of participants stated that Uzbek cultural words and national concepts are difficult to translate because many of them do not have direct English equivalents. Around 69% of students mentioned that cultural background knowledge is essential for achieving accurate and meaningful translation. In addition, 74% of respondents believed that transliteration and descriptive explanation are the most effective strategies for preserving cultural meaning.

The interview results also showed that students often experience difficulties when translating culture-specific expressions related to traditions, hospitality, customs, national food, and social values. Many participants emphasized that literal translation frequently leads to the loss of emotional and cultural meaning.

Discussion:

The results of this study show that translating Uzbek cultural elements into English is a challenging process that requires both linguistic knowledge and cultural awareness. Many students reported difficulties because most culture-specific words and expressions do not have direct equivalents in English, which often leads to meaning loss during translation.

Among the research methods used, the interview method was the most effective and helpful. Compared to surveys, interviews provided deeper and more detailed information. They allowed participants to explain their personal experiences and specific problems in translating Uzbek cultural terms into English.



The interview results showed that students often struggle with translating traditions, customs, and national concepts, and they prefer strategies such as explanation, transliteration, and adaptation instead of literal translation. This method also helped to better understand the real difficulties faced during the translation process.

Conclusion:

In conclusion, this study shows that translating Uzbek cultural elements into English is a challenging but highly significant area of translation studies. The research clearly demonstrates that many culture-specific terms, traditions, and expressions in Uzbek have no direct equivalents in English, which often creates difficulties in maintaining both meaning and cultural identity during translation.

The findings of the study reveal that effective translation requires the use of various strategies such as transliteration, descriptive translation (explanation), adaptation, and cultural substitution. These methods help translators preserve the original meaning while making the text understandable for international readers. It was also found that relying only on literal translation often leads to loss of cultural and emotional meaning.

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