

TRANSLATION OF NATIONAL RITUAL VOCABULARY IN THE ABSENCE OF DIRECT EQUIVALENTS (UZBEK–ENGLISH PERSPECTIVE)**Dildora Shukhratovna Khasanova**Assistant teacher
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National ritual vocabulary represents a culturally marked layer of language that poses serious challenges in translation, especially when direct equivalents are absent in the target language. This article examines the translation of Uzbek national ritual vocabulary into English, focusing on culturally specific realia related to customs, ceremonies, and social practices. The study aims to identify the main linguistic and cultural difficulties encountered in translation and to analyze effective strategies for rendering ritual terms without direct equivalents. The research is based on descriptive and comparative methods, drawing on examples from literary texts, ethnographic descriptions, and translation practice. The findings demonstrate that descriptive translation, transliteration with commentary, cultural substitution, and combined strategies are the most productive methods for preserving both semantic content and cultural meaning. The article highlights the importance of linguistic and cultural competence in translating national ritual vocabulary and contributes to the broader discussion of cultural realia in translation studies.

Keywords

national ritual vocabulary, cultural realia, nonequivalence, Uzbek–English translation, translation strategies.

Introduction

In the context of globalization and intercultural communication, translation plays a crucial role in transmitting national and cultural identity. One of the most challenging areas of translation is national ritual vocabulary, which reflects the traditions, customs, and worldview of a particular people. Such vocabulary often lacks direct equivalents in other languages due to differences in cultural experience, social structure, and historical development.

Uzbek ritual vocabulary includes terms connected with weddings, funerals, hospitality, religious ceremonies, and family traditions. When translating these terms into English, translators frequently face the problem of nonequivalence, as the target culture may not possess identical or even similar concepts. This makes the accurate and adequate rendering of meaning particularly complex.

The purpose of this article is to analyze the translation of Uzbek national ritual vocabulary into English in cases where direct equivalents are absent, and to identify the most effective translation strategies used to convey both linguistic meaning and cultural significance.

Materials and Methods

The study is based on lexical units related to Uzbek national rituals extracted from literary works, ethnographic sources, and translated texts. The research employs descriptive, comparative, and contextual analysis methods. Particular attention is paid to translation strategies used to overcome lexical and cultural gaps between the source and target languages.

The theoretical framework of the study relies on concepts of cultural realia, nonequivalence, and translation strategies developed in modern translation studies. The analysis focuses on how translators balance semantic accuracy with cultural representation when dealing with ritual vocabulary.

Results

The analysis shows that Uzbek national ritual vocabulary can be divided into several thematic groups, including wedding rituals (e.g., *nikoh*, *kelin salom*), funeral customs (e.g., *janoza*, *ehson*), and hospitality traditions (e.g., *dasturxon*, *mehmonnavozlik*). In most cases, these terms do not have direct lexical equivalents in English.

The most frequently used translation strategies include:

1. **Descriptive translation**, where the meaning of the ritual term is explained through a phrase or sentence.
Example: kelin salom → “a traditional bride’s greeting ritual performed after the wedding”.
2. **Transliteration with commentary**, preserving the original term while providing an explanation.
Example: nikoh → *nikoh* (Islamic marriage ceremony).
3. **Cultural substitution**, replacing the source term with a culturally approximate concept in English, though this strategy risks partial loss of meaning.
4. **Combined strategies**, which integrate transliteration and description to ensure both authenticity and comprehension.

The results indicate that descriptive and combined strategies are the most effective for conveying the cultural essence of ritual vocabulary.

Discussion

The absence of direct equivalents in the translation of national ritual vocabulary is primarily обусловлено cultural specificity. Ritual terms function not only as linguistic units but also as carriers of cultural memory and social norms. Therefore, literal translation often leads to semantic loss or misunderstanding.

From a linguocultural perspective, the translator acts as a mediator between cultures. The choice of translation strategy depends on the target audience, text genre, and communicative purpose. For academic or literary texts, preserving cultural authenticity through transliteration and explanation is preferable, while for popular or informative texts, descriptive translation may be more effective.

The findings align with existing research on cultural realia, which emphasizes the importance of explanatory and adaptive strategies in nonequivalent translation.

Conclusion

The translation of Uzbek national ritual vocabulary into English in the absence of direct equivalents requires a flexible and culturally sensitive approach. Descriptive translation, transliteration with commentary, and combined strategies prove to be the most productive methods for preserving both meaning and cultural value. The study confirms that successful translation of ritual vocabulary depends not only on linguistic competence but also on deep knowledge of cultural traditions.

The results of this research may be useful for translators, linguists, and scholars engaged in translation studies, intercultural communication, and Central Asian linguistics.

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