CULTURE SHOCK IN TRANSLATION THROUGH THE PRISM OF THE ICEBERG CONCEPT

Muxammadiyeva Umida Faxriddin kizi
Doctoral student of Tashkent State University of Uzbek language and Literature
umidamukhammadieva1@gmail.com
+998930013363

Abstract: This article examines culture shock in translation through the prism of Edward T. Hall's Iceberg Model of Culture, focusing on Uzbek-English translation. The study argues that translation difficulties often arise not from linguistic form but from implicit cultural meanings embedded beneath the surface of language. Drawing on a qualitative comparative analysis of literary, journalistic, and public discourse texts, the research demonstrates how culture-bound expressions, social titles, metaphors, and descriptive characterizations may be distorted or neutralized when translated without cultural adjustment. The findings show that literal translation frequently fails to convey culturally grounded values and evaluative meanings, resulting in semantic loss and reader disorientation. The article emphasizes the role of the translator as a cultural mediator and highlights the importance of strategies such as explicitation, cultural adaptation, and mediation for achieving intercultural equivalence. The study concludes that developing cognitive-cultural competence is essential for reducing culture shock in translation and ensuring meaningful intercultural communication.

Keywords: culture shock; translation studies; Iceberg model of culture; intercultural communication; cultural equivalence; Uzbek-English translation.

Аннотация: В статье рассматривается феномен культурного шока в переводе через призму «айсберговой» модели культуры Эдварда Т. Холла на материале узбекско-английского перевода. Обосновывается положение о том, что трудности перевода возникают преимущественно не на уровне языковой формы, а вследствие наличия скрытых культурных смыслов, заложенных под поверхностью текста. На основе качественного сопоставительного анализа художественных, публицистических и общественно-дискурсивных текстов показано, что культурно маркированные выражения, социальные титулы, метафоры и описательные характеристики нередко искажаются или нейтрализуются при отсутствии культурной адаптации. Результаты исследования свидетельствуют о том, что буквальный перевод часто не передаёт культурно обусловленные ценности и оценочные значения, что приводит к семантическим потерям и дезориентации читателя. В статье подчёркивается роль переводчика как культурного посредника и обосновывается необходимость применения стратегий экспликации, культурной адаптации и медиации для достижения межкультурной эквивалентности. Делается вывод о том, что развитие когнитивно-культурной компетентности является ключевым условием снижения эффекта культурного шока в переводе и обеспечения полноценной межкультурной коммуникации.

Ключевые слова: культурный шок; теория перевода; айсберговая модель культуры; межкультурная коммуникация; культурная эквивалентность; узбекско-английский перевод.

Annotatsiya. Mazkur maqolada tarjimada madaniy shok hodisasi Edvard T. Hall tomonidan taklif etilgan "madaniyat aysbergi" modeli prizmasida, o'zbek-ingliz tarjimasi misolida tahlil qilinadi. Tadqiqotda tarjima jarayonidagi qiyinchiliklar asosan lingvistik shakldan emas, balki matn yuzasidan pastda joylashgan yashirin madaniy ma'nolar bilan bog'liqligi asoslab beriladi. Badiiy, publitsistik va ijtimoiy diskursga oid matnlarning sifatli qiyosiy tahlili asosida madaniy

jihatdan belgilangan iboralar, ijtimoiy unvonlar, metaforalar va tavsiflovchi birliklar madaniy moslashtirish mavjud bo'lmaganda qanday qilib buzilishi yoki neytrallashishi ko'rsatib beriladi. Tadqiqot natijalari shuni ko'rsatadiki, so'zma-so'z tarjima ko'pincha madaniy jihatdan asoslangan qadriyatlar va baholovchi ma'nolarni yetarli darajada aks ettira olmaydi, bu esa semantik yo'qotishlar va o'quvchi idrokida begonalashuvga olib keladi. Maqolada tarjimonning madaniy vositachi sifatidagi roli alohida ta'kidlanib, madaniyatlararo ekvivalentlikka erishishda izohlash, madaniy moslashtirish va meditatsiya strategiyalarining ahamiyati asoslanadi. Xulosa qilib aytganda, kognitiv-madaniy kompetensiyani rivojlantirish tarjimada madaniy shok ta'sirini kamaytirish va samarali madaniyatlararo muloqotni ta'minlashning muhim sharti hisoblanadi.

Kalit so'zlar: madaniy shok; tarjima nazariyasi; madaniyat aysbergi modeli; madaniyatlararo muloqot; madaniy ekvivalentlik; o'zbek-ingliz tarjimasi.

Introduction
Globalization has intensified cross-cultural communication, making translation a pivotal bridge between languages and cultures. However, translators often encounter culture shock - a sense of disorientation arising from unfamiliar cultural elements - that impedes clear communication. In translation studies, Kalervo Oberg's classic model describes culture shock as the emotional and cognitive stress of adapting to a new culture. Edward T. Hall's Iceberg Model of Culture illustrates why this happens: only about 10% of culture is visible (language, customs, artifacts) while ~90% (values, beliefs, norms) lies hidden beneath the surface [3; p. 476-480]. In this view, a phrase or custom is merely the "tip of the iceberg," whereas its deeper meaning and cultural resonance are submerged. In translation between Uzbek and English, surface glosses often miss these hidden layers, leading to mismatches. This study uses the Iceberg framework to analyze "culture shock" in Uzbek-English translation, drawing examples from literary and technical texts. By comparing original and translated passages, we identify how invisible cultural concepts cause misunderstandings and propose strategies for achieving intercultural equivalence [1; p. 39-41].

Materials and Methods
This study employs a qualitative analytical approach grounded in intercultural communication theory and translation studies. The research material consists of selected Uzbek literary, journalistic, and public discourse texts and their English translations, chosen for the presence of culture-specific expressions that encode implicit values, social norms, and evaluative meanings. The selection of examples is informed by both international and Uzbek scholarship on intercultural communication and translation.

The theoretical basis integrates classical models of cultural difference and adaptation. P.S. Adler's interpretation of culture shock as a transitional experience provides a dynamic perspective on cultural dissonance in translation [2; p. 13-15]. G.H. Hofstede's analysis of culturally determined value systems is used to account for systematic differences that influence interpretation across cultures [6; p. 56-58]. J.M. Bennett's model of intercultural sensitivity further frames translation as a process requiring awareness of cultural difference rather than its elimination [3; 45-48]. These perspectives are supported by O.A. Kulikova's research on communicative competence in cultural adaptation [11; p. 32-34].

The study also draws on Uzbek research that emphasizes the role of cultural context in translation, including works by M.X. Xolbekov on comparative literary analysis [8; p. 12-14], F.R. Yuldasheva on politeness strategies in intercultural communication [9; p. 25-27], I.A. Fathuddinova on linguistic divergence in translation [5; p. 32-32], M.O'. Yusupova on cultural context in translation practice [10; p. 18-20], and F.M. Mamatova on the impact of cultural differences on translation outcomes [7; p. 12-14].

Methodologically, the analysis follows a comparative case-study design. Culture-specific expressions in Uzbek source texts are examined in terms of semantic meaning, pragmatic function, and cultural connotations, and then compared with their English translations.

Translation strategies such as literal rendering, adaptation, and explicitation are identified and evaluated with respect to their ability to preserve the source text's deeper cultural meaning. The translator is treated as a cultural mediator, and translation quality is assessed in terms of functional and conceptual adequacy rather than formal equivalence.

Results

The comparative analysis reveals a recurring pattern in which formally adequate translations convey surface meaning while obscuring culturally embedded content. In such cases, the target text appears linguistically correct but fails to transmit the implicit cultural knowledge that structures meaning in the source language. This phenomenon becomes especially visible in the translation of polysemous terms, social markers, figurative language, and descriptive characterizations.

One frequent source of distortion is context-dependent lexical polysemy. The Uzbek word zaryad exemplifies this issue. In scientific discourse it denotes "electric charge," whereas in everyday communication it commonly refers to a "price" or "fee." A mechanically literal translation into English as charge without contextual analysis may mislead the reader by activating an unintended technical meaning. Only contextual interpretation allows the translator to resolve this ambiguity correctly, as illustrated by the rendering of "Bunga qancha zaryad belgilaysiz?" as "How much do you charge for this?". This case demonstrates that semantic disambiguation is not merely a lexical task but a culturally informed interpretive act, requiring awareness of pragmatic usage norms in the source language.

A similar loss of cultural depth occurs in the translation of social titles and honorifics. In G'afur G'ulom's Shum bola, the term to'ra refers not simply to a polite form of address, but to a historically and socially marked status associated with wealth, authority, and traditional respect. When translators reduce to'ra to neutral English equivalents such as Mr. or sir, the sociocultural specificity of the term is erased. As a result, characters embedded in a distinct local hierarchy become indistinguishable from generic figures in the target culture. This shift illustrates how surface equivalence can suppress historically grounded social meaning, flattening the narrative's cultural texture.

Literary metaphors and idiomatic expressions present an even greater challenge, as they often encode worldview-specific imagery. In Alisher Navoi's poetry, metaphors frequently draw on Sufi symbolism and culturally salient images. The phrase "aql sarkash tavsanin" ("the rebellious mind's steed") functions not merely as poetic ornamentation but as a conceptual metaphor expressing the futility of rational control in matters of divine love. Literal renderings such as "mind's steed", while formally accurate, fail to convey the emotional intensity and spiritual resonance of the original image. More interpretive translations that contextualize the metaphor within a supplicatory or devotional framework more successfully preserve the underlying cultural and philosophical meaning. This example highlights the limitations of word-for-word strategies in translating culturally saturated figurative language.

Descriptive characterizations further illustrate how hidden cultural traits may be neutralized in translation. In O'tkan kunlar, the adjective og'ir tabiatlik denotes a complex set of qualities including dignity, restraint, moral seriousness, and social responsibility. Translating it simply as quiet strips the term of its evaluative and ethical dimensions. Likewise, the Uzbek adjective serchaqchaq, used to describe a lively and sociable personality, has been mistranslated as tiresome, reversing the intended characterization. Such cases represent semantic loss at the cultural level, where the target text preserves grammatical meaning but distorts or nullifies culturally encoded evaluation. More nuanced equivalents, such as "reserved and dignified" or "lively and talkative", would better approximate the author's intent and the reader's expected interpretation.

Taken together, these examples demonstrate that reliance on lexical equivalence alone is insufficient for achieving culturally adequate translation. The primary source of distortion lies not in linguistic incompetence but in the failure to recognize the implicit cultural subtext that

governs meaning production. These hidden layers, corresponding to the submerged portion of Hall's cultural iceberg, include shared values, social hierarchies, metaphorical schemas, and evaluative norms that are rarely explicit in the text itself. When such elements are overlooked, translations may appear fluent yet leave the target reader with a sense of cultural dissonance or interpretive gap, often perceived as "culture shock." Effective translation therefore requires systematic attention to these implicit dimensions in order to preserve not only what is said, but how and why it is said within its cultural framework.

Discussion

The analyzed cases show that translation difficulties often stem from implicit cultural elements rather than from lexical or grammatical problems. In accordance with Hall's iceberg model, linguistic forms represent only the visible layer of meaning, while deeper cultural components such as values, social norms, and worldviews determine interpretation. Culture-bound expressions like og'ir tabiatlik and to'ra rely on Uzbek models of social behavior and hierarchy; when these models are overlooked, semantic dissonance arises in the target text.

This dissonance resembles the "crisis" stage of culture shock described by Oberg, in which partial comprehension leads to confusion rather than understanding. From a cognitive perspective, culturally marked items activate source-specific conceptual schemas. If these schemas are not accessed, translations are reduced to neutral labels that lack evaluative force, supporting Nida's claim that cultural differences pose greater challenges than linguistic ones. In the examples examined, unsuccessful translations resulted from the failure to perform conceptual adjustment between source and target cultures.

To achieve intercultural equivalence, translators must address invisible cultural layers through appropriate strategies. Cultural adaptation allows functional equivalence by replacing source-specific elements with culturally analogous target forms, while explicitation clarifies meanings that lack direct equivalents. Cultural mediation, including brief explanations or notes, can compensate for non-equivalent concepts, particularly in socially or historically marked terms. Alternatively, foreignization may be used to preserve cultural specificity when exposing the reader to the source culture is the primary aim.

Overall, the findings emphasize the necessity of cultural competence in translation. Effective translation depends on the translator's ability to interpret and mediate underlying cultural meanings, ensuring conceptual and functional adequacy rather than surface-level equivalence alone.

Conclusion

This study demonstrates that culture shock in translation arises when implicit cultural meanings embedded in language are overlooked. The analysis of Uzbek-English examples shows that literal translation, even when linguistically accurate, often fails to convey culturally grounded values and evaluations, leading to semantic distortion and reader alienation. These findings confirm that translation is not merely a linguistic transfer but an act of intercultural mediation.

To achieve intercultural equivalence, translators must move beyond word-for-word solutions and apply strategies such as cultural adaptation, explicitation, and mediation. Such strategies allow hidden cultural layers to be rendered accessible to the target audience while preserving the functional and conceptual intent of the source text. Ultimately, the development of cognitive-cultural competence is essential for reducing culture shock in translation and ensuring meaningful intercultural communication.

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