

PROBLEMS AND OPPORTUNITIES IN TRANSLATING CLASSICAL TEXTS INTO MODERN UZBEK

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Abstract: *This article examines the linguistic and equivalence-related challenges in translating examples of classical Eastern literature into modern Uzbek. It analyzes methods of conveying classical texts to readers while preserving their artistic features. In addition, the study highlights issues related to the shared history and language of Turkic-speaking countries in the context of the current era of globalization.*

Keywords: *classical text, translation, interpretation, archaisms, classical literature, linguistic analysis.*

As the President of the Republic of Uzbekistan Shavkat Mirziyoyev has emphasized: “We must not only preserve the rich spiritual and literary heritage left by our ancestors, but also convey it to the younger generation in an understandable language.” [1] This statement reflects not only the importance of preserving cultural heritage, but also the necessity of reinterpreting and transmitting it in a form that meets the needs of modern society.

Indeed, translating examples of classical Eastern literature into modern Uzbek that is accessible to contemporary readers is a complex and multifaceted linguistic process. In this process, it is essential not only to replace linguistic units, but also to preserve the artistic and aesthetic value of the text, the author’s style, and its historical and cultural context. Therefore, issues of equivalence, transformation, and interpretation in the translation of classical texts are of significant scholarly importance.

In the era of globalization, when intercultural communication is rapidly expanding, the promotion of national and regional literary heritage within the international academic environment has become one of the urgent tasks. In particular, the shared history, culture, and linguistic unity of Turkic-speaking countries make this process even more significant. From this perspective, the translation of classical texts serves not only as a linguistic activity but also as a means of cultural and spiritual integration.

The main aim of the conference is to discuss the effective use of innovative technologies, as well as to analyze the challenges of their implementation in educational and research practices. At the same time, modern information technologies and digital platforms are

creating new opportunities for translating, preserving, and disseminating classical texts to a wider audience.

Furthermore, today it is an important task to widely promote scientific research that highlights the shared history, cultural heritage, and linguistic features of Turkic-speaking nations. This, in turn, not only strengthens academic cooperation but also helps to foster a sense of national identity and respect for historical memory among the younger generation.

One of the major obstacles in translating classical texts is the transformation of **semantic layers of meaning**. As the linguist Sh. Rahmatullayev notes, “Every word carries a specific semantic load within its historical context.” [7] This statement clearly demonstrates that lexical units in classical texts cannot be fully understood without considering their historical and cultural background. For instance, many words used in the works of Alisher Navoiy have either changed their meanings or acquired completely new semantic values in modern usage. Therefore, the translator faces the complex task of preserving both the original meaning and the cultural depth of the text.

In the process of translating classical literature into modern Uzbek, several lexical transformations can be observed. These transformations are primarily related to semantic shift, narrowing or broadening of meaning, and contextual reinterpretation. The following table illustrates some examples of classical lexical items and their modern equivalents, along with semantic analysis:

Table 1. Modern equivalents of classical lexical units and semantic analysis

Classical term	Modern equivalent	Semantic change analysis
Ulus	people, nation, community	In classical usage, it referred more to a tribe or territorial unit, while in modern usage it denotes a broader national concept.
Chaman	garden, flower garden	Although the aesthetic meaning is preserved, today it is mostly used in poetic or stylistic contexts.
Raqib	enemy, competitor	In classical love poetry, it often referred to a rival in love or an obstacle in a romantic relationship.
Gado	beggar, poor person	In mystical (Sufi) texts, it was often used positively to mean “a servant of God.”
Xayr	goodness, farewell	In modern usage, it is mostly associated with parting expressions or farewell contexts.

As the table shows, lexical units in classical texts undergo significant semantic transformation when adapted into modern language. This requires not only linguistic competence but also deep knowledge of cultural, historical, and literary contexts.

Another important issue in translating Eastern classical literature into foreign languages is the problem of cultural adaptation. Many concepts, symbols, and metaphorical expressions are deeply rooted in the cultural worldview of the original text and may not have direct equivalents in the target language. In such cases, translators are required to

apply various strategies such as explanation, substitution, or contextual adaptation in order to preserve the original meaning and aesthetic value.

International scholars also emphasize that translation is not merely a linguistic process but a cultural bridge between civilizations. As noted by Smith “Translation is not only a transfer of language, but also a bridge between cultures.” [9, p.156,] This perspective highlights the importance of translation as a means of intercultural communication and mutual understanding.

Thus, the translation of classical texts into modern languages involves a complex interaction of linguistic, semantic, and cultural factors. It requires a balanced approach that ensures both fidelity to the original text and accessibility for contemporary readers.

The role of modern technologies in studying language and literary heritage is invaluable. In particular, corpus linguistics provides significant opportunities for analyzing Persian-Tajik and Uzbek classical texts in a systematic and data-driven manner. By using corpus-based approaches, it becomes possible to identify lexical patterns, contextual meanings, and semantic shifts more accurately, thereby reducing errors in the process of translation.

Furthermore, artificial intelligence (AI) technologies are increasingly expanding the possibilities of classical text analysis. AI-based algorithms allow researchers to compile frequency dictionaries of words used in classical literature and to interpret their usage within different historical and stylistic contexts. Such tools not only enhance the accuracy of linguistic analysis but also support translators in making more informed decisions when dealing with ambiguous or archaic expressions.

Digital humanities tools, including text mining, concordance analysis, and computational lexicography, are also playing a crucial role in modern philological research. These technologies make it possible to process large volumes of classical texts efficiently and to reveal hidden linguistic and stylistic patterns that may not be easily detectable through traditional methods.

The analysis conducted in this study indicates that successful translation of classical texts requires achieving the following key outcomes:

- Maintaining a balance between the artistic and linguistic integrity of the original text and its translation.
- Enriching archaic expressions through explanatory dictionaries and annotations for modern readers.
- Applying digital technologies in the study of the historical development of Turkic languages and written sources.

These findings demonstrate that translation is not merely a linguistic transformation but also a complex cultural and intellectual process that demands interdisciplinary approaches. The integration of traditional philological methods with modern computational tools significantly improves the quality and reliability of translation studies.

In conclusion, the translation of classical texts into modern Uzbek represents not only a linguistic activity but also a complex interdisciplinary process that integrates philology, cultural studies, history, and modern information technologies. The research shows that

classical Eastern literary works contain multilayered semantic structures, and their adequate translation requires a deep understanding of both the source language and its historical-cultural context.

One of the key findings of this study is that semantic shifts in classical lexical units significantly affect the interpretation of texts. Many archaic words carry cultural, philosophical, and religious connotations that cannot be fully rendered through direct lexical equivalents. Therefore, translators must rely on contextual interpretation, explanatory strategies, and cultural adaptation techniques to preserve both meaning and aesthetic value.

The study also confirms that modern technologies – particularly corpus linguistics and artificial intelligence – play an increasingly important role in overcoming translation challenges. Corpus-based analysis enables researchers to systematically examine large volumes of classical texts, identify frequency patterns, and track semantic evolution across different historical periods. Similarly, AI-assisted tools contribute to the development of lexical databases, semantic modeling, and automated interpretation systems, which significantly enhance the accuracy and efficiency of translation processes.

Another important conclusion is that the use of digital humanities approaches creates new opportunities for preserving and popularizing classical heritage. By digitizing manuscripts, developing annotated corpora, and creating interactive lexical resources, it becomes possible to make classical literature more accessible to both researchers and general readers. This, in turn, strengthens the continuity between past and present linguistic and cultural traditions.

Moreover, the study highlights that successful translation is achieved only when a balance is maintained between fidelity to the original text and comprehensibility for modern readers. Overemphasis on literal translation may distort the artistic essence, while excessive adaptation may lead to the loss of cultural authenticity. Therefore, the translator's role should be viewed as that of a mediator between historical tradition and contemporary linguistic reality.

In a broader perspective, translating classical texts into modern Uzbek contributes significantly to the development of national identity and cultural consciousness. It fosters respect for ancestral heritage, strengthens linguistic awareness among younger generations, and promotes intercultural dialogue within the global academic community. In particular, for Turkic-speaking nations, such efforts support the revival of shared historical and literary values, reinforcing cultural unity and mutual understanding.

Ultimately, the integration of traditional philological knowledge with modern technological tools opens new horizons for translation studies. It ensures that classical heritage is not only preserved but also reinterpreted in a way that remains meaningful for contemporary society. Thus, the translation of classical texts should be seen as an ongoing cultural mission aimed at bridging generations, languages, and civilizations.

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