

THE ROLE OF CULTURAL CONTEXT IN TRANSLATING SHAKESPEARE’S DRAMAS INTO UZBEK

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Abstract. Shakespeare’s works, deeply rooted in the sociocultural and historical context of the English Renaissance, present unique challenges for translation into other languages, including Uzbek. This article examines how cultural context influences the translation of Shakespeare’s dramas into Uzbek, focusing on linguistic adaptation, stylistic preservation, and the cultural transference of meaning. The study highlights the difficulties in rendering Elizabethan-era idioms, metaphors, and historical references in a way that resonates with Uzbek audiences. Through comparative analysis, this paper explores different strategies used by translators to maintain the artistic and thematic integrity of Shakespeare’s texts while ensuring their cultural relevance for Uzbek readers. The analysis includes key examples from Hamlet, Macbeth, Othello, and Romeo and Juliet with their respective Uzbek translations, demonstrating the role of cultural adaptation in preserving meaning.

Key words: Shakespeare, translation, cultural context, Uzbek language, drama, linguistic adaptation, idioms, metaphors, poetic structure

Research Objectives. To examine how cultural context influences the translation of Shakespeare’s plays into Uzbek. To analyze challenges in translating Elizabethan idioms, metaphors, and historical references. To explore strategies that maintain the thematic and artistic integrity of Shakespeare’s works in Uzbek translations.

Methods. This study employs a comparative analysis of Shakespeare’s original texts and their Uzbek translations. The methodology includes:

Textual Analysis: Examining selected passages from Shakespeare’s plays to identify cultural and linguistic challenges in translation.

Comparative Translation Study: Analyzing various Uzbek translations to evaluate strategies for overcoming translation difficulties.

Cultural and Linguistic Adaptation Assessment: Assessing how metaphors, idioms, and historical references are adapted for Uzbek audiences.

Results. *The Cultural Dimension of Shakespeare’s Language. Historical and Social References.* Shakespeare’s dramas reflect the Elizabethan worldview, incorporating historical events, social norms, and classical allusions. Many of these references may be unfamiliar to Uzbek audiences, requiring translators to either explain them through footnotes or find culturally equivalent expressions. For example, in Julius Caesar, the phrase:

"Beware the Ides of March" is a reference to the Roman calendar, which may not be immediately recognizable to Uzbek audiences. A translation such as:

"Mart oyining o'rtalarida ehtiyot bo'ling!" preserves the literal meaning, but to ensure cultural clarity, a footnote explaining the historical significance may be necessary.

Idioms and Metaphors. Shakespeare’s language is heavily metaphorical, often drawing on nature, mythology, and religious imagery. Translators face the challenge of preserving the poetic and symbolic essence of these expressions while making them comprehensible in Uzbek.

Consider Othello, where Iago refers to jealousy as: *"O! beware, my lord, of jealousy; It is the green-eyed monster which doth mock The meat it feeds on"*. A direct translation would be: *"Ey, janobim, rashkdan ehtiyot bo'ling; U o'z yegani ustidan kuladigan yashilko 'z yirtqichdir"*.

However, since the concept of a “green-eyed monster” is not a common metaphor in Uzbek, translators might use a more culturally resonant phrase like: *"Ey, janobim, rashkdan ehtiyot bo'ling; u odamni o'z ichidan yemiradigan g'amdir"* which conveys the same destructive nature of jealousy without the unfamiliar imagery.

Wordplay and Double Meanings. Shakespeare often uses puns and double meanings that are difficult to render into Uzbek without losing their wit. In Romeo and Juliet, Mercutio’s dying words play on the word “grave”: *"Ask for me tomorrow, and you shall find me a grave man"*.

Here, “grave” means both “serious” and “dead.” A possible Uzbek translation could be: *"Ertaga mendan so 'rasangiz, meni jiddiy (yoki qabrdagi) odam sifatida topasiz"*.

Since Uzbek does not use the same word for “serious” and “grave,” the pun is lost. A translator may instead add an explanation or rephrase the sentence creatively to retain the humor and irony.

Discussion. *Strategies for Translating Shakespeare into Uzbek. Literal vs. Adaptive Translation.* Literal translation, while maintaining linguistic accuracy, often fails to convey the depth of Shakespeare’s meaning due to cultural and historical disparities.

Adaptive translation allows greater flexibility by modifying phrases, metaphors, and references to align with Uzbek cultural realities. For example, in *Macbeth*: *"Out, damned spot! Out, I say!"* Lady Macbeth is referring to imaginary bloodstains, symbolizing guilt. A literal translation: *"Yo 'qol, la 'nati dog'! Yo 'qol, deyman!"* is accurate, but an adaptive version could be: *"Yo 'qol, gunoh dog' i' Tozalan, deyman!"* which emphasizes the moral weight of her guilt.

Maintaining Rhythm and Poetic Structure. Shakespeare’s plays are written in iambic pentameter, which has no direct equivalent in Uzbek. Instead of trying to mimic the meter exactly, translators often use traditional Uzbek poetic styles. Consider Hamlet’s famous soliloquy: *"To be, or not to be: that is the question"*.

A literal Uzbek translation: *"Bo 'lish yoki bo 'lmaslik – mana savol!"* An alternative poetic adaptation could be: *"Borlikmi yoki yo 'qlik – shudir masala!"* which maintains a rhythmic flow while preserving the philosophical essence.

Cultural Substitution. Where direct translation is impossible, cultural substitution provides an alternative. For example, in *King Lear*, the phrase: *"I am a man more sinned against than sinning"* could be translated as: *"Men gunoh qilganimdan ko 'ra ko 'proq zulm ko 'rgan odamman"* or adapted using Uzbek idioms: *"Men qilgan gunohimdan ko 'ra ko 'proq yomonlikka duch keldim"* which aligns with Uzbek expressions about injustice.

Conclusion. The translation of Shakespeare’s dramas into Uzbek is a complex process requiring cultural sensitivity and linguistic creativity. By using adaptive translation, cultural substitution, and poetic restructuring, translators ensure Shakespeare’s works remain accessible and impactful for Uzbek audiences while preserving their artistic depth.



Future Research. Further studies should explore the effectiveness of different poetic strategies in Uzbek translations of Shakespeare’s works and how modern audiences engage with these adaptations.

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