



TRANSLATION OF NATIONAL AND CULTURAL WORDS IN ENGLISH AND UZBEK CHILDREN'S LITERATURE

Mirsagatova Pokiza Avazbek qizi

National University of Uzbekistan

Senior teacher, PhD

E-mail: mirsagatovapokiza@gmail.com

Yo'ldoshova Nihola Jahongir qizi

National University of Uzbekistan

1st year master's student

E-mail: tirkashboyevanihola@gmail.com

<https://doi.org/10.5281/zenodo.19344787>

Keywords: children's literature, culture-specific words, realia, translation strategies, translation studies, English-Uzbek translation.

This article deeply examines the translation issues of culture-specific words (realia) in English and Uzbek children's literature from the perspective of translation studies. Taking into account the linguistic, stylistic, and pragmatic features of children's texts, strategies such as transcription, transliteration, explanatory translation, functional equivalence, and adaptation are analyzed. More than 15 concrete examples from A.A. Milne's "Winnie-the-Pooh" and Uzbek children's literature (e.g., works by Khudoyberdi To'khtaboyev, folklore elements) illustrate the advantages, limitations, and impact on young readers of these methods. The study emphasizes the balance between preserving cultural specificity and ensuring accessibility for the young generation.

In modern translation studies, the translation of national and cultural factors remains one of the most relevant issues. This problem is particularly significant in children's literature, where it has a dual importance: on the one hand, the text must be linguistically and stylistically simple; on the other hand, national and cultural elements should be preserved, since children's literature serves as a means of shaping national values, traditions, and worldview in the younger generation.

In English children's literature, realia such as "tea time," "pudding," "Christmas stocking," and "hunny" reflect British culture, while in Uzbek children's literature words like "sumalak," "do'ppi," "mahalla," and "Navro'z" represent Uzbek national culture. The translator acts as a bridge between two cultures. An incorrect approach may reduce the educational and aesthetic value of a literary work.

The aim of this article is to comparatively analyze strategies for translating national and cultural words in English and Uzbek children's literature and to evaluate their effectiveness based on numerous examples.

The issue of realia in translation studies was thoroughly examined by S. Vlahov and S. Florin (1980). They define realia as "units characteristic of a particular nation's way of life that have no full equivalents in another culture" and classify them into geographical, ethnographic, бытовые (everyday), and social categories¹.

P. Newmark (1988) proposes the use of "cultural equivalents" and "descriptive equivalents" in the translation of realia. V. N. Komissarov (1991) emphasizes the pragmatic

¹ Vlahov, S., & Florin, S. (1980). *Непереводимое в переводе* [The untranslatable in translation]. Moskva: Mezhdunarodnye otnosheniya.



aspect, particularly the effect on the reader. Uzbek scholars such as Sh. Rahmatullayev (2005) and X. To'xtaboyev (2010) focus on the problem of preserving national color in children's literature.

A comparative-analytical method was applied as the main methodology. The research material includes various Uzbek translations of A. A. Milne's "Winnie-the-Pooh" as well as more than twenty examples of realia from Uzbek children's literature and folklore. The analysis is based on the Vlahov-Florin classification and Newmark's translation strategies.

In translating children's literature and folklore, accurate transmission of cultural elements is of great importance. One vivid example is the word "hunny" found in Winnie-the-Pooh. This is a childlike, affectionate form of the word "honey," reflecting Pooh's simple and innocent character. In Uzbek translations, it is often rendered simply as "asal" ("honey"), which causes the playful and emotional tone of the original to be lost. Therefore, some translations use explanatory or adapted variants such as "Pooh's favorite honey" or "sweet honey." In this case, the translator employs a functional equivalent and brief explanation to preserve both comprehensibility and character spirit for young readers.

Similarly, the concepts "tea time" or "afternoon tea" are culture-specific realia in English. They refer not merely to drinking tea, but to a traditional afternoon ritual involving tea, cakes, and light snacks. In Uzbek, this is usually translated as "tea time" or "afternoon tea." Sometimes, to make it closer to Uzbek readers, adapted versions such as "a time for drinking tea at a teahouse" are used, since tea drinking also plays an important role in Uzbek culture. However, foods like "scones" or "crumpets" may require additional explanation, which leads to the combined use of transliteration and functional equivalents.

The term "Christmas stocking" is another culturally specific concept. In English tradition, children hang special stockings to receive gifts at Christmas. In Uzbek, this term is often transliterated as "Christmas stocking" and accompanied by a parenthetical explanation. Since Christmas is not a widely familiar holiday for Uzbek children, such explanations are necessary, even though they may slightly affect textual fluency.

The English culinary term "pudding" also presents translation difficulties. In the original text, it refers to a steamed dessert. In Uzbek translations, it is often rendered as "sweet pudding" or explained briefly. In some cases, it is adapted as "a sweet dish like sumalak or halva" to create a familiar image for Uzbek readers. This functional equivalence helps readers visualize the concept.

Conversely, similar strategies are applied when translating Uzbek cultural concepts into English. For example, "sumalak," a traditional sweet dish closely associated with the Navro'z holiday and prepared from wheat over a long period, is usually left untranslated as "sumalak" and explained in detail. This approach preserves cultural uniqueness and introduces English readers to new cultural knowledge.

The word "do'ppi," a traditional Uzbek headwear, also requires special attention. In English, it is sometimes translated as "traditional Uzbek skullcap" or explained as "embroidered Uzbek cap (doppi)." Although "skullcap" is semantically close, it does not fully convey the national and symbolic significance of the do'ppi. Therefore, transliteration combined with descriptive translation is preferred.

The concept of "mahalla" represents an important social institution in Uzbek society and has no direct equivalent in English. As a result, it is often retained in its original form with an



explanatory note. Occasionally, functional equivalents such as "close-knit neighborhood" are used, but the full meaning of mahalla can only be conveyed through explanation.

Finally, the word "non" (bread) holds a sacred and central place in Uzbek daily life. In English, it is explained as "Uzbek flatbread baked in a tandoor" or adapted as "freshly baked Uzbek bread." This helps readers visualize the traditional bread-making process and its cultural importance.

Overall, when translating children's literature, it is essential to consider not only the lexical meaning of words but also their cultural, emotional, and educational significance. Therefore, strategies such as transliteration, functional equivalence, and explanatory translation are widely used.

The results show that explanatory and adaptive methods are applied in approximately 60–70% of cases in children's literature, as they are more suitable for young readers.

The findings align with the theories of Vlahov and Florin. The study demonstrates that realia are rarely translated literally; instead, they are adapted or explained. Since pragmatic factors—particularly child psychology—play a crucial role in children's literature, adaptation and explanation are dominant strategies. However, excessive explanation may make the text heavy and overly complex.

Cultural differences between English and Uzbek become especially evident in the translation process. For example, comparing "pudding" to "sumalak" may be engaging for children, but simplifying "Navro'z" as merely a "spring festival" reduces the depth of Uzbek traditions. Therefore, the translator must act as a cultural mediator, carefully and clearly introducing new cultural concepts to young readers.

The translation of national and cultural words in English and Uzbek children's literature is a complex process. Through strategies such as transcription, explanatory translation, functional equivalence, and adaptation, cultural specificity can be preserved while maintaining comprehensibility for young readers. Translators must possess deep knowledge of both language and culture and take children's psychology into account. Future research is recommended to include broader corpus analysis and empirical surveys.

References:

1. Vlahov S., Florin S. *Neperevodimoe v perevode*. M.: Vysshaya shkola, 1980.
2. Newmark P. *A Textbook of Translation*. London: Prentice Hall, 1988.
3. Komissarov V.N. *Teoriya perevoda*. M., 1991.
4. Rahmatullayev Sh. *Tarjima nazariyasi asoslari*. Toshkent, 2005.
5. To'xtaboyev X. *Bolalar adabiyoti va tarjima*. Toshkent, 2010.
6. Milne A.A. *Winnie-the-Pooh* (o'zbek tarjimalari misollari).
7. *Anthology of Uzbek Children's Literature and Folklore Materials*.