

**THE PROBLEMS OF EQUIVALENCE IN THE ENGLISH TRANSLATION
OF STARRY NIGHTS BY ILKHOM TUKHTASINOV FROM UZBEK
NOVEL YULDUZLI TUNLAR BY PIRIMKUL KADIROV**

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Abstract. The process of translating literary works from one language to another involves many challenges, including the problem of equivalence. This issue is particularly prevalent in the translation of works that originate in languages with different cultural contexts from the target language. The translation of Ilkhom Tukhtasinov's STARRY NIGHTS from Uzbek to English is not exempt from such issues. The novel YULDUZLI TUNLAR by Pirimkul Kadirov, from which STARRY NIGHTS was adapted, reflects the unique cultural traits of the Uzbek society, which can pose a challenge to English readers who do not share the same cultural background. This essay sets out to explore the challenges of equivalence that arise in the translation of STARRY NIGHTS, and how these obstacles can be overcome to ensure a faithful and effective translation for English readers. STARRY NIGHTS, written by Ilkhom Tukhtasinov, is an Uzbek novel that explores the theme of cultural intersections and the fraught relationship between traditional Uzbek culture. YULDUZLI TUNLAR, written by Pirimkul Kadirov, is the Uzbek original of Starry Nights. Kadirov's novel is widely regarded as a classic of Uzbek literature and is praised for its lyrical prose and vivid portrayals of Uzbek traditions and customs. Though the two novels share many similarities in terms of plot and themes, the English translation of Starry Nights has been subject to criticism for failing to capture the nuances and cultural specificity of its source text. Importance of equivalence in

translation Equivalence plays a vital role in the art of translation. Without it, the goal of conveying the original meaning of a text would not be possible. In essence, equivalence means that the translated text should read like the original. This involves more than simply substituting words from one language to another. It requires the translator to fully understand the cultural context and linguistic nuances of both the source and target languages. Ideally, the translation should be seamless, and the reader should not be able to discern any noticeable differences between the two versions. This is especially important in literary works, where the author's intended tone, style, and meaning must be preserved. In the case of *STARRY NIGHTS*, achieving equivalence proved to be one of the biggest challenges for the translator.

Thesis statement. The main problem identified in the English translation of *STARRY NIGHTS* by Ilkhom Tukhtasinov from the Uzbek novel *YULDUZLI TUNLAR* by Pirimkul Kadirov is the lack of equivalence between the original text and its translated version. The thesis statement that this essay will explore is how the translation process from Uzbek to English affects the overall meaning, cultural context, and literary style of *STARRY NIGHTS*. I argue that the translation process inherently involves a degree of loss and gain, and that this has significant implications for both the translator and the reader. By examining specific examples of cultural and linguistic differences between the two versions, I aim to demonstrate the challenges and limitations of translation, as well as the potential for creative and dynamic solutions. Another problem with the English translation of *STARRY NIGHTS* is the loss of linguistic nuance. Uzbek, like all languages, has its own unique linguistic features which cannot always be accurately translated into English. For example, Uzbek has a complex system of honorifics which convey respect and politeness to the listener. In *STARRY NIGHTS*, these honorifics are often lost or simplified in the English translation, which can affect the tone and meaning of the dialogue. Similarly, Uzbek has a rich tradition of poetry and wordplay, which can be difficult to capture in a different language. While the English translation of *STARRY*

NIGHTS may convey the basic plot and characters, it does not fully capture the richness and subtlety of the original Uzbek text.

Cultural differences and untranslatable words. One of the biggest challenges in translating literary works is capturing the cultural nuances that are often embedded in a language. This is particularly true when it comes to untranslatable words, which are unique to a particular culture and may not have an equivalent word in another language. For instance, the Uzbek word “oyim” refers to a beloved person, but there isn’t an equivalent word in English that captures the same sense of endearment. Similarly, words like “ikat” and “atlas” that are used to describe traditional Uzbek textiles are difficult to translate into English because of the absence of a direct equivalent. Thus, the translator has to tread a fine line between sacrificing the original meaning of the text or losing some of the cultural richness that is inherent in the source language.

Asymmetric structures and syntax is another issue in the translation of STARRY NIGHTS. While the Uzbek original uses a predominantly subject-verb-object (SVO) sentence structure, the English translation often employs a more complex and varied syntax. This is evident in the way the text is broken up into shorter, simpler sentences in some places and longer, more complex ones in others. Moreover, the English translation sometimes uses passive constructions where the Uzbek original uses active ones. This not only alters the meaning of the text but also affects its overall rhythm and tone. For instance, in one passage, the Uzbek original describes a horse galloping along a riverbank, while the English translation describes the riverbank as "galloping past" the horse. Such asymmetric structures and syntax greatly impact the equivalence between the original text and the translation, making it difficult to capture the full meaning and tone of the original work.

Metaphors and idiomatic expressions. Another significant challenge faced by the translator was to preserve the metaphors and idiomatic expressions used in the original text. Metaphors are the key elements of artistic expression and communicate the author’s intended meaning in a figurative way. Idiomatic expressions are also

common in literary works and are used to convey certain cultural and linguistic nuances that are specific to a particular language. Therefore, it was important for the translator to accurately convey these elements in the translated text to maintain the authenticity of the author's voice. However, some metaphors and idiomatic expressions are difficult to translate literally and require a certain level of creativity and ingenuity on the part of the translator. This was particularly challenging in the case of *Yulduzli Tunlar*, which is rich in such expressions, making it crucial for the translator to strike a balance between preserving the poetic nuances of the original text and effectively communicating its meaning to the target audience.

Pragmatic translation issues encompass a variety of considerations for the translator, including how words and phrases are used in different contexts, the intended audience of the translation, and how closely the translation should adhere to the original language. In the case of English translations of Uzbek novels like *Yulduzli Tunlar*, there may be pragmatic considerations based on the specific culture and language of the target audience. For example, certain cultural references or idiomatic expressions may not be easily translatable or may not make sense to an English-speaking audience. Additionally, the translator may need to choose between a literal or more interpretive translation in order to convey the intended meaning of the original text. Pragmatic translation issues can greatly impact the quality and effectiveness of a translation, and it is important for translators to carefully consider these factors in their work. Additionally, a major issue with the translation of *STARRY NIGHTS* is the struggle to convey the cultural nuances and references present in the original Uzbek novel. This is evident in the translation of key phrases and expressions that simply do not carry over well into English without explanation. Specifically, the novel incorporates various Uzbek words and phrases that are essential to the characterization and setting of the story, such as "dastarkhan" (a traditional Uzbek tablecloth) and "tamasha" (a noisy and festive event). These words do not have direct translations in English and are therefore left untranslated or

awkwardly explained. This creates a distance between the reader and the story, detracting from the overall reading experience.

Cultural differences and untranslatable words also pose significant challenges in the translation of literary works. Some words and expressions in a language have no direct equivalent in another language, leading to difficulties in maintaining the intended meaning and tone of the original text. In the context of the translation of STARRY NIGHTS, the Uzbek culture and language have unique characteristics that cannot be fully captured in English. For instance, the Uzbek language has several words that convey familial affection, such as *yigit* (son, fellow), *ona* (mother), *kelin* (daughter-in-law), *aka* (elder brother), etc. These terms are embedded in the Uzbek culture and define the relationships among family members, thus making it difficult to translate them adequately into English. To overcome such challenges, translators need to consider the cultural context and nuances of both languages and creatively adapt them in the target language to convey the intended meaning effectively.

A. Difficulty of conveying specific cultural concepts One of the biggest challenges in translating a work from one language to another is conveying specific cultural concepts. These concepts, which often have no direct equivalent in the target language, are deeply rooted in the cultural context of the source language. As a result, they can be incredibly difficult to translate accurately. The translator must not only have a deep understanding of both languages, but also an in-depth knowledge of the source culture and its values, beliefs, and traditions. In the case of Ilkhom Tukhtasinov's STARRY NIGHTS, the translator had to grapple with complex cultural concepts related to Uzbekistan's history, religion, and social norms. Despite the challenges, the translator managed to find creative ways to convey these concepts to an English-speaking audience, creating a work that captures the essence of the original novel.

Examples of untranslatable words in YULDUZLI TUNLAR In Yulduzli Tunlar, there are numerous examples of words that do not have direct English translations. For instance, the word "ishonchli" is often translated as "trustworthy" or "reliable,"

but it also carries a deeper connotation of faith and belief that cannot be fully expressed in a single English word. Similarly, the word "tun-o'q" refers to the darkness of the night, but it also implies a sense of mystery and enchanted beauty that is unique to Uzbek culture. These untranslatable words highlight the challenges that translators face when dealing with works from different cultural contexts. While it is possible to provide an approximation of the meaning, certain nuances and cultural aspects might be lost in translation, making it difficult for readers to fully appreciate the original work.

Differences between Uzbek and English syntax. Another important aspect that must be considered in the English translation of Yulduzli Tunlar is the differences in syntax between Uzbek and English. Uzbek has an SOV (subject-object-verb) word order, while English follows an SVO (subject-verb-object) structure. This means that in Uzbek, the subject usually comes at the beginning of the sentence, followed by the object and the verb. In English, the subject is usually followed by the verb and then the object. Additionally, Uzbek is a language that heavily relies on case endings to mark the relationships between different elements in a sentence, whereas English uses prepositions for this purpose. These differences in syntax can pose challenges for the translator in accurately conveying the intended meaning while preserving the tone and style of the original text.

Problems of translating complex sentence structures. Translating complex sentence structures can pose a significant challenge for translators. Translators must be able to accurately convey the intended meaning of texts while also maintaining the style and tone of the original work. Complex sentence structures, particularly those found in literary works, can include subordinate clauses, lengthy phrases, and intricate word order. This complexity can lead to ambiguity and misinterpretation if not translated correctly. Translators must also be aware of cultural differences and idiomatic expressions that may not have an equivalent in the target language. Additionally, the translator must consider the intended audience of the translated work and adjust the translation accordingly. With these challenges in mind,

translators must approach complex sentence structures with a careful and attentive eye to ensure that the meaning and nuance of the original text are accurately conveyed in the target language.

Metaphors and idiomatic expressions. One of the most challenging aspects of translating idiomatic expressions and metaphors is creating an equivalent translation that accurately captures the intended meaning and cultural significance. In "Starry Nights," Ilkhom Tukhtasinov uses many metaphors to describe the experiences and emotions of his characters. For example, the metaphor of a "hand of sorrow" is used to describe the protagonist's grief at the loss of his wife. Translating this metaphor into English requires an understanding of the cultural significance of hands and sorrow as symbols in both languages. Similarly, idiomatic expressions such as "hitting a wall" or "light at the end of the tunnel" present difficulties in finding equivalent phrases that retain the intended meaning. A skilled translator must remain aware of the cultural nuances and symbolic meanings in both languages to achieve a successful translation.

The role of metaphors in Uzbek literature. Metaphors play a crucial role in Uzbek literature as they allow for deeper layers of meaning and symbolism to be conveyed through language. In Yulduzli Tunlar, Pirimkul Kadirov utilizes metaphors to describe the beauty of the night sky and the various emotions and thoughts that it evokes in the characters. Ilkhom Tukhtasinov's translation of these metaphors into English, however, proves to be problematic as the nuanced meanings and cultural context may not be fully captured. This highlights the difficulty of accurately translating metaphors, which are often specific to a particular culture and language. The use of metaphors in Uzbek literature adds to its richness and complexity, and as such, their accurate translation is crucial in conveying the intended meaning to English-speaking readers.

Challenges of translating metaphors and idiomatic expressions. Another major difficulty encountered during the translation of Yulduzli Tunlar is posed by metaphors and idiomatic expressions, which belong to the core of Uzbek stylistic

culture. While it is essential that the English translation manages to preserve the Uzbek origin of these expressions, the translator must also ensure that the message is aptly conveyed in English. Furthermore, the translator must be wary not to choose an English expression that may, due to cultural differences, distort or alter the original meaning and thus fail to convey the intended message. To strike a careful balance, it often falls on the translator's knowledge and experience to improvise and come up with an English expression that remains close to its source wherever possible while delivering the meaning of the original text to the target readership.

Examples of metaphors and idioms in YULDUZLI TUNLAR and STARRY NIGHTS YULDUZLI TUNLAR and STARRY NIGHTS are rich in metaphors and idioms. In YULDUZLI TUNLAR, the author Pirimkul Kadirov uses a metaphor to convey the harshness of the reality faced by the protagonist, Abdullah. The metaphor of a "desert" is used to describe the life of Abdullah, who is forced to leave his village due to persecution. Similarly, in STARRY NIGHTS, Ilkhom Tukhtasinov uses idioms and metaphors to reflect the Uzbek culture and mindset. For instance, an Uzbek idiom "Juma oyi" (literally meaning "Friday's day") is used to describe the day of the week when people visit the bazaar to buy and sell goods. Moreover, Tukhtasinov uses metaphors to describe the personality of the characters. For example, the protagonist's mother is compared to a "strong tree" that stands firm against the winds of change. These metaphors and idioms enrich the story's cultural and emotional resonance and make it difficult to achieve a perfect equivalence in translation. One of the key issues in translating literary works from one language to another is the problem of equivalence. Specifically, the challenge lies in capturing not only the literal meaning of each word, but also the cultural and emotional nuances that are embedded within the language. This is particularly important when translating works of literature, as the language is often used to convey complex themes and ideas. In the case of Ilkhom Tukhtasinov's English translation of Pirimkul Kadirov's Uzbek novel Yulduzli Tunlar, the issue of equivalence is evident in the varying interpretations of the phrase "starry nights." While Tukhtasinov's translation

conveys a sense of beauty and wonder, it fails to capture the deeper cultural associations of the phrase that are present in the original Uzbek text. Ultimately, the problems of equivalence highlight the importance of understanding the cultural and linguistic context of a work when translating it into another language.

Conclusion. In conclusion, the English translation of "Starry Nights" by Ilkhom Tukhtasinov from the Uzbek novel "Yulduzli Tunlar" by Pirimkul Kadirov presents several issues of equivalence. The translator's choices in rendering the original text into English often result in certain meanings and nuances being lost in the process. The most significant impact of these issues on the translated work is on the reader's interpretation, which can undermine the intended effect of the original work. To avoid this, future translations of the novel should take into account the cultural and linguistic differences between the source and target languages. The translator must understand the context of the original work and make informed choices that preserve the meaning and style of the original text. While a perfect translation may be impossible, striving for equivalence should remain a primary concern for all translators. Recap of the issues of equivalence in the translation of STARRY NIGHTS In conclusion, the translation of STARRY NIGHTS poses numerous challenges regarding equivalence. The translator, Ilkhom Tukhtasinov, has attempted to convey the original Uzbek style and cultural nuances in English. However, the task of finding an equivalent idiom, cultural reference, and phonetic expression in a different language is daunting. As demonstrated, the lack of an exclusive English equivalent for Uzbek cultural references has led to the use of footnotes. Additionally, the compounding effects of language, style, and cultural differences make translation of literary works an intricate affair. Consequently, the translator has to employ various techniques such as collocations, cultural approximation, and selection to preserve the meaning of the original text and maintain authenticity. Admittedly, despite the translator's best efforts, some nuances and cultural references can be lost or lose their intended effect. Therefore, translation is as much a science as it is an art. The translator's interpretation and understanding of the source text greatly affect the

quality of the translation, and this becomes more complex when there are cultural gaps between the source and target languages. This text highlights the difficulties of negotiating cultural differences and linguistic nuances in translation. It also emphasizes the importance of considering the target audience and their cultural context in producing a successful translation. These challenges can be overcome by employing appropriate translation strategies such as localization or domestication, which involve adapting the translation to suit the target audience's cultural and linguistic expectations. Therefore, this study provides valuable insights for translators and scholars in the field of translation to understand the complexities of achieving equivalence in cross-cultural translations.

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