USING DESCRIPTIVE TRANSLATION WHILE TRANSLATING HISTORICAL REALIAS FROM UZBEK INTO ENGLISH

Panjiyeva Ro'zixol Beknazar qizi
Termiz davlat universiteti tayanch doktoranti
E-mail: panjiyevarozixol@gmail.com

Abstract: this thesis examines descriptive translation as a strategy for translating Uzbek historical realias into English without losing of cultural specificity. The study applies comparative analysis and functional-pragmatic interpretation of selected realia. Scientific novelty lies in proposing context-sensitive criteria for choosing descriptive translation alternatives that preserve denotation, connotation, and historical markedness in English reception.

Keywords: descriptive translation, historical realia, Uzbek-English translation, cultural specificity, pragmatic adaptation, national colour, explanatory translation

Annotatsiya: ushbu dissertatsiya tavsifli tarjimani o'zbek tarixiy realiyalarini ingliz tiliga madaniy o'ziga xoslikni yo'qotmasdan tarjima qilish strategiyasi sifatida ko'rib chiqadi. Tadqiqotda qiyosiy matn tahlili va tanlangan realiyalarning funktsional-pragmatik talqini qo'llaniladi. Ilmiy yangilik ingliz tilida qabul qilishda denotatsiya, konnotatsiya va tarixiy belgini saqlab qoladigan tavsifli tarjima variantlarini tanlash uchun kontekstga sezgir mezonlarni taklif qilishdan iborat.

Kalit so'zlar: tavsifli tarjima, tarixiy realiya, o'zbekcha-inglizcha tarjima, madaniy o'ziga xoslik, pragmatik moslashuv, milliy rang, izohli tarjima.

The translation of historical realias have a sensitive area of intercultural mediation because such units simultaneously name exact objects of a bygone social order and index a wider cultural memory that is occasionally shared by the target reader. In Uzbek texts, historical realias appear not only as lexical items but as references to institutions, ranks, artefacts, administrative practices, and everyday material culture formed under specific historical conditions. When translated into English, these units often resist direct equivalence because the target language community either lacks the referent or associates it with different historical frames. For this reason, descriptive translation becomes a central resource: it aims to reconstruct meaning through an explicative paraphrase that allows comprehension while retaining a sense of "otherness" and temporal distance. However, descriptive translation is not merely an additive explanation; it is a disciplined decision about what semantic components are indispensable for a given context and what can remain implicit without distorting the text's historical semantics.

Within translation studies, realia are usually understood as culturally bound words and expressions that denote objects, concepts, or phenomena unique to a particular community, especially those connected with history and ethnography. The methodological difficulty arises from the fact that the translator must decide whether the priority is referential accuracy, stylistic economy, narrative rhythm, or cultural preservation, and these priorities frequently conflict. If a translator uses pure borrowing or transliteration for an Uzbek term, the historical flavour may be preserved, but comprehension may collapse, forcing the reader to rely on external notes. If the translator replaces the unit with a rough functional analogue, comprehension may improve, yet the text's historical specificity risks being flattened, with Uzbek social structures appearing falsely familiar. Descriptive translation offers an intermediate path: it can deliver comprehension and preserve specificity, but only if it is applied selectively and systematically rather than mechanically. In this thesis, descriptive translation is treated as an explanatory rendering integrated into the running text, where the translator reconstructs key semantic components of the realia in a compact form suitable for English narrative conventions.

The theoretical premise of the study is that historical realias contain a layered meaning structure that includes denotation, cultural connotation, and historical markedness. Denotation is the immediate referent, such as an administrative unit, a garment, or a rank. Cultural connotation covers associations, evaluative оттенок, and typical contextual collocations in Uzbek discourse. Historical markedness signals that the unit belongs to a particular period and may imply pre-modern governance, customary law, or traditional economy. A descriptive translation that conveys only denotation but ignores markedness can mislead the reader by making an archaic institution appear contemporary. Conversely, a translation that overemphasizes exoticism through heavy explanation may disrupt narration and produce an ethnographic tone alien to the source text. Therefore, the central research question is how to calibrate descriptive translation so that it transmits the minimum sufficient information required for correct interpretation in English while keeping the narrative texture and stylistic register of the Uzbek original.

The study employs comparative textual analysis of Uzbek source contexts and their English renderings, focusing on typical groups of historical realias. The analysis is guided by functionalist insights that translation choices should be justified by communicative purpose and target readership, and by the idea that a translator negotiates between domestication and foreignization in each micro-context rather than choosing one global ideology. Uzbek scholarship on translation has emphasized

adequacy and national colouring, insisting that culturally marked units should not be erased in pursuit of fluency [1]. Russian translation theory has developed detailed typologies of realia and strategies for their rendering, highlighting that descriptive translation is especially relevant when a direct equivalent is absent and when footnotes are undesirable in художественный текст [2]. International approaches, including equivalence-based and functional theories, similarly stress that explanation can be embedded in the text but must be controlled so that it does not become an authorial commentary [3; 4]. Building on these foundations, the thesis proposes that descriptive translation should be evaluated by three operational criteria: semantic sufficiency, stylistic compatibility, and informational proportionality. Semantic sufficiency means the description enables the target reader to identify the referent category and its role in the situation. Stylistic compatibility means the description matches the register of the surrounding narrative and avoids encyclopedic tone unless the source itself is explanatory. Informational proportionality means the description includes only those features that matter for the current passage, postponing or omitting secondary details.
A first group of historical realias includes administrative and social titles connected with governance and community organization. Uzbek historical texts may use terms that indicate roles within traditional structures, including local authority figures, judicial roles, or community leaders. In English, a direct equivalent may exist only at a very abstract level, such as "official" or "judge," which is insufficient because the source term may also encode the relationship to customary law, religious-legal tradition, or kinship-based governance. Here descriptive translation is effective when it names the functional domain and hints at the historical setting without overloading detail, for example by rendering a title as "a local community headman in the traditional administration" rather than merely "chief." The descriptive phrase "in the traditional administration" serves as a compact marker of historical distance. Yet this approach requires caution: inserting "traditional" everywhere can become stylistically monotonous and may introduce an evaluative nuance not present in Uzbek. Thus, variation and contextual sensitivity are required: sometimes "under the old system" or "in the pre-modern local administration" may better reflect the temporal frame implied by the narrative. In addition, when a title is repeated, the first occurrence may be translated descriptively, while subsequent occurrences may be shortened to a semi-borrowed form or a reduced description, maintaining cohesion and avoiding redundancy.

A second group comprises material culture realias, such as clothing items, household objects, tools, and architectural elements that are historically and regionally

specific. These units often carry national colouring and contribute to visual imagery. If translated by a generic hypernym, imagery becomes vague, and the text loses ethnographic precision. Descriptive translation can preserve imagery by indicating category, material, and social function, for instance "a quilted robe worn over everyday clothes" or "a low dining platform covered with carpets." The key is to decide which features are essential for the current scene: if the object is used to signal wealth, then materials and ornamentation become relevant; if it is used for action, then shape and function matter more. An important observation is that descriptive translation may also transmit implicit cultural scripts. For example, certain household items imply collective eating practices or guest reception etiquette. The translator should avoid turning these implications into explicit cultural lessons unless the source text itself foregrounds them. Instead, subtle functional cues in the description can guide the reader's inference, keeping narrative naturalness.

A third group includes monetary units, measures, and time-reckoning terms associated with historical economies. Such realias are particularly prone to distortion because the target reader instinctively maps them onto modern systems. Pure transliteration leaves the reader lost, while conversion into modern units can be misleading by implying equivalence in purchasing power and institutional framework. Descriptive translation can mitigate this by presenting the unit as a historical measure and, where needed, providing an approximate functional sense rather than a false precision, for example "a small silver coin used in local trade" or "a traditional measure of grain." The translator may add "roughly" or "approximately" only when numerical comprehension is necessary for plot logic; otherwise, marking the term as a historical unit can be sufficient. This illustrates informational proportionality: the translator's task is not to reconstruct an economic history but to ensure the reader interprets the narrative correctly.

A fourth group concerns realias connected with customary law, social rituals, and institutional practices. These are conceptually dense because they integrate actions, norms, and values. In Uzbek historical discourse, a single term can denote a complex practice known to the source readership. In English, a descriptive translation must clarify the action and its social function, for example "a customary reconciliation payment between families" or "a formal gathering to settle disputes according to local norms." Here the risk is over-interpretation: the translator must avoid imposing an external theoretical label that reframes the practice through foreign categories. The description should remain close to observable function in the given text. If the narrative depicts negotiation and settlement, a functional description is justified; if it merely

mentions the practice in passing, a shorter description may suffice. The thesis argues that descriptive translation works best when anchored to textual evidence: the description should reflect what the text shows, not what the translator knows from external ethnography, unless the genre is scholarly and expects such elaboration.

The analysis also addresses how descriptive translation interacts with other strategies. In practice, descriptive translation rarely appears in isolation; it often combines with borrowing, calque, or generalization. A productive model for Uzbek-to-English translation is the hybrid "borrowed core plus brief descriptor," where the Uzbek term is transliterated and immediately glossed, such as "X, a traditional Y," after which the term can be used alone. This approach keeps national colouring while ensuring comprehension and is especially useful for key culture-bound items that recur. Another interaction is between descriptive translation and contextual amplification: sometimes the translator can avoid explicit description by slightly adjusting adjacent words so that the context explains the realia naturally. This method preserves fluency but demands careful control to avoid shifting emphasis. The thesis maintains that strategy choice should be driven by the realia's textual prominence: central realias deserve either descriptive translation or hybrid rendering; peripheral realias may be handled by a general term if the loss does not affect interpretation of historical setting.

A further problem concerns stylistic register and genre. In historical fiction or memoir-like narratives, excessive descriptive translation may create an academic tone. In scholarly historical writing, by contrast, descriptive translation is expected and may be more expansive. Therefore, the translator must model an implicit target reader. For an English reader without background knowledge, the first encounter with a realia may require more explicitness; for a specialized readership, brief transliteration may be acceptable. Uzbek-to-English translation often targets international audiences, and the translator must balance readability with authenticity. The thesis proposes that translators develop a micro-glossary during work, selecting stable descriptive equivalents for recurrent realias and ensuring terminological consistency. Consistency is not mechanical repetition but controlled variation within a defined semantic frame. When the same realia appears in different narrative functions, the description can be modulated, but the core meaning should remain stable to avoid confusing the reader.

The scientific novelty of the present thesis consists in articulating a set of context-sensitive criteria and demonstrating that descriptive translation is an optimization problem under constraints of narrative economy, cultural specificity, and historical markedness. The study shows that descriptive translation should be treated as a graded strategy with adjustable depth rather than a binary choice between

"explain" and "do not explain." The findings indicate that the most successful descriptive translations are those that (a) identify the referent category in English, (b) include one historically relevant qualifier, and (c) avoid encyclopedic expansions unless demanded by the communicative goal. This triadic pattern enables the translator to preserve the historical chronotope of the Uzbek text while ensuring that the English reader constructs a coherent mental model of institutions and material culture.

In conclusion, descriptive translation is a crucial and methodologically demanding tool for translating Uzbek historical realias into English because it mediates between cultural uniqueness and target-reader comprehension. Its effectiveness depends on semantic sufficiency, stylistic compatibility, and informational proportionality, all of which must be decided in relation to immediate context and genre expectations. When applied as a graded, criterion-guided strategy and combined carefully with borrowing and contextual cues, descriptive translation preserves denotation, national colouring, and historical markedness without turning the translation into commentary. The thesis thus supports an approach in which the translator acts as a disciplined interpreter of cultural meaning, ensuring that the English text remains readable while retaining the historically specific worldview encoded in Uzbek realias.

REFERENCES

1. Salomov G'. Tarjima nazariyasi va amaliyoti. Toshkent, O'qituvchi, 1983. 240 b.
2. Vlakhov S., Florin S. Neperevodimoye v perevode. Moskva, Mezhdunarodnye otnosheniya, 1980. 352 s.
3. Nida E. A., Taber C. R. The Theory and Practice of Translation. Leiden, Brill, 1969. 220 p.
4. Newmark P. A Textbook of Translation. London, Prentice Hall, 1988. 292 p.
5. Baker M. In Other Words: A Coursebook on Translation. London, Routledge, 2018. 360 p.
6. Reiss K., Vermeer H. J. Grundlegung einer allgemeinen Translationstheorie. Tübingen, Max Niemeyer Verlag, 1984. 245 S.
7. Norqobilov Sanjar Rahmat o'g'li, & Shomuratova Fotima Abdivaitovna. (2024). STUDY OF LEXICAL-GRAMMATICAL TRANSFORMATIONS IN ARTISTIC TRANSLATION BASED ON JOHN GREEN'S NOVEL "THE GIRL IN OUR STARS". *European International Journal of Multidisciplinary Research and Management Studies*, *4*(01), 48–55. https://doi.org/10.55640/eijmrms-04-01-10