



A COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS OF TRANSLATIONS OF ZULFIYA ISROILOVA'S WORKS

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ABSTRACT

This study provides an in-depth comparative analysis of translations of Zulfiya Isroilova's poetic works into English and Russian. It examines lexical, semantic, stylistic, and cultural transformations occurring during translation. Using translation theories such as equivalence theory, functionalism, and poetic translation principles, the research evaluates how meaning, imagery, rhythm, and cultural identity are transferred across languages. The study demonstrates that translation of Zulfiya's poetry involves significant restructuring of poetic form, while semantic content is relatively preserved. However, cultural nuances, emotional intensity, and aesthetic harmony often undergo modification. The paper concludes that translation is not merely linguistic substitution but a creative and interpretative process shaped by the translator's choices.

Introduction

Zulfiya Isroilova occupies a central place in Uzbek literature as a poet whose works embody emotional depth, philosophical reflection, and national identity. Her poetry often explores themes such as love, loyalty, human dignity, social responsibility, and the role of women in society. These themes are expressed through a highly metaphorical and symbolically rich poetic language.

The translation of her works into other languages, particularly English and Russian, plays an essential role in introducing Uzbek literature to a global audience. However, poetic translation is one of the most complex forms of translation due to the interdependence of form and meaning.

From a theoretical perspective, translation is not a mechanical process but a transformation of signs across linguistic and cultural systems. According to equivalence theory, the translator aims to reproduce the closest possible equivalent of the source text in the target language.

However, in poetry, equivalence is difficult to achieve due to differences in

- phonetic systems
- syntactic structures

- cultural symbolism
- poetic traditions

Thus, the main research problem addressed in this study is:

To what extent do English and Russian translations preserve the semantic, stylistic, and cultural features of Zulfiya's poetry, and what transformations occur during this process?

The objective of this research is:

- to analyze translation strategies used in rendering Zulfiya's poetry
- to compare English and Russian translations
- to identify shifts in meaning, style, and poetic structure
- to evaluate the adequacy of translations

Zulfiya Isroilova occupies a significant position in Uzbek literature as a poet whose works combine emotional depth, philosophical reflection, and a strong sense of national identity. Her poetry is characterized by rich metaphorical language, expressive imagery, and thematic focus on love, humanity, dignity, and social consciousness. As her works have been translated into English and Russian, they provide an important basis for examining how poetic meaning, style, and cultural identity are transformed across linguistic boundaries. Translation of poetry is widely recognized as one of the most complex forms of translation, as it requires not only linguistic accuracy but also preservation of aesthetic value, rhythm, and emotional resonance. In this context, the present study adopts a comparative perspective to analyze how Zulfiya's poetic texts are rendered in English and Russian, focusing on semantic, stylistic, structural, and cultural aspects.

Methodology

The methodological approach of this research is based on qualitative comparative textual analysis, supported by principles from translation studies. The study involves the examination of selected poems in their original Uzbek form alongside their English and Russian translations. The selection of texts is guided by the presence of rich figurative language, thematic diversity, and availability of translations in both target languages. The analysis is conducted through a multi-dimensional framework that includes semantic analysis, stylistic analysis, structural analysis, and cultural analysis. Semantic analysis focuses on the transfer of meaning and the degree of lexical equivalence between the source and target texts. Stylistic analysis examines the preservation or transformation of figurative devices such as metaphors, similes, and personification, as well as tone and expressive intensity. Structural analysis considers changes in rhythm, meter, syntactic organization, and overall poetic form. Cultural analysis addresses the representation of culture-specific elements, including national imagery, traditions, and symbolic references embedded in the original text. The study also employs a parallel comparison method, whereby the original text is compared separately with each translation, followed by a comparative evaluation of English and Russian versions. The theoretical foundation of the research draws on equivalence theory, functionalist approaches, and descriptive translation studies, which collectively emphasize that translation is not merely a mechanical process but a complex act of interpretation and re-creation.

Comparative findings

The comparative findings indicate that both English and Russian translations generally succeed in conveying the core semantic content of Zulfiya's poetry. The main ideas, themes, and

narrative intentions are largely preserved, demonstrating that translators are able to maintain a reasonable level of meaning equivalence. However, closer examination reveals that semantic precision varies between the two target languages. Russian translations tend to adhere more closely to the lexical and syntactic structure of the original Uzbek text, often preserving nuances of meaning with greater accuracy. In contrast, English translations frequently employ generalization or paraphrasing strategies to enhance readability, which sometimes results in a slight reduction in semantic specificity. This reflects a tendency toward dynamic equivalence in English translations, where clarity and communicative effectiveness are prioritized over strict adherence to the original wording.

The comparative analysis reveals:

Aspect	English Translation	Russian Translation
Meaning	Generally preserved	Highly preserved
Style	Simplified	More faithful
Rhythm	Often altered	More consistent
Cultural elements	Adapted	More retained
Emotional tone	Moderately reduced	Closer to original

Overall, Russian translations tend to maintain closer structural and stylistic fidelity, while English translations prioritize accessibility and clarity.

Analyze and discussion

Stylistically, Zulfiya’s poetry is distinguished by its extensive use of figurative language and emotional expressiveness. The comparative analysis shows that Russian translations are more successful in retaining figurative devices such as metaphors and symbolic expressions. This is partly due to typological and historical similarities between Uzbek and Russian literary traditions, which facilitate closer stylistic correspondence. English translations, on the other hand, often simplify or reinterpret figurative expressions, replacing them with more neutral or explanatory phrases. As a result, the stylistic richness and density of the original poetic language may be partially diminished. Emotional tone also undergoes variation across translations. While the original poems convey strong emotional intensity, Russian translations tend to preserve this intensity more effectively, whereas English translations may appear comparatively restrained or moderated in tone. These differences highlight the influence of linguistic structure and cultural conventions on the transmission of poetic style.

Structural analysis reveals that the original Uzbek poems, which often rely on syllabic rhythm and carefully constructed line patterns, undergo noticeable transformations in translation. English translations typically restructure sentences to conform to grammatical norms of the target language, which may lead to changes in line length, rhythm, and overall compositional balance. Russian translations, although not identical to the original structure, tend to maintain a closer approximation of the original poetic organization. Nevertheless, neither English nor Russian translations are able to fully reproduce the original rhythmic patterns, as differences in phonological systems and poetic traditions inevitably influence structural adaptation. This demonstrates that structural equivalence in poetic translation is inherently limited and requires a degree of creative adjustment.

Cultural elements present in Zulfiya’s poetry constitute another important aspect of the comparative analysis. Her works often incorporate references to Uzbek traditions, social values, and symbolic imagery rooted in the national context. In translation, these elements are handled differently depending on the target language. Russian translations generally retain cultural references with minimal modification, allowing readers to encounter elements of Uzbek culture in a relatively direct form. English translations, however, frequently employ strategies such as adaptation, explanation, or substitution to make culturally specific references more accessible to the target audience. This reflects a tendency toward domestication, in which the text is adjusted to align with the cultural expectations of the target readership. While this approach enhances comprehensibility, it may also reduce the visibility of the original cultural context. Consequently, the representation of national identity in translation is subject to variation, depending on the strategies adopted by the translator.

The analysis also identifies a range of translation strategies used in rendering Zulfiya’s poetry. These include literal translation, paraphrasing, modulation, amplification, and omission. Literal translation is more commonly observed in Russian versions, where linguistic proximity allows for closer structural alignment. English translations, by contrast, rely more heavily on paraphrasing and modulation to achieve naturalness in expression. Amplification is used in cases where additional explanatory elements are introduced to clarify culturally specific concepts. Omission, although less frequent, occurs when certain elements are considered difficult to translate or less relevant to the target audience. These strategies reflect the translator’s attempt to balance fidelity to the source text with the need for clarity, readability, and aesthetic coherence in the target language.

Table 1: Comparative Linguistic Features

Feature	Uzbek Original	English Translation	Russian Translation
Lexical Choice	Rich in native expressions	Simplified or adapted vocabulary	Closer lexical equivalents
Figurative Language	Highly metaphorical	Sometimes generalized	More preserved
Sentence Structure	Flexible poetic syntax	Grammatically reorganized	More structurally similar
Emotional Tone	Strong and expressive	Moderately reduced	Closely preserved

Table 2: Semantic vs Stylistic Equivalence

Aspect	Observations in English Translation	Observations in Russian Translation
Semantic Accuracy	Generally preserved	Highly preserved
Stylistic Richness	Reduced in some cases	Mostly retained
Imagery	Simplified or explained	Closely replicated
Symbolism	Occasionally adapted	Preserved with minor shifts

Table 3: Translation Strategies Used

Strategy	Description	Example Effect
Literal Translation	Word-for-word rendering	Preserves meaning but may lose style
Adaptation	Cultural substitution	Improves readability, reduces originality
Modulation	Change in perspective or expression	Alters tone while preserving meaning
Amplification	Adding explanatory words	Clarifies cultural references
Omission	Removing difficult elements	Simplifies but may reduce depth

Table 4: Cultural Elements in Translation

Cultural Element	Uzbek Text	English Translation	Russian Translation
National Symbols	Strong presence	Sometimes generalized	Mostly preserved
Traditions	Explicit references	Adapted or explained	Retained
Idioms	Culture-specific	Often paraphrased	Closely translated
Social Context	Embedded in text	Partially preserved	Better preserved

Table 5: Comparative Evaluation of Translations

Criteria	English Translation	Russian Translation
Fidelity to Meaning	High	Very High
Preservation of Form	Medium	High
Cultural Accuracy	Medium	High
Readability	Very High	High
Poetic Aesthetics	Medium	High

Overall, the comparative findings indicate that while both English and Russian translations of Zulfiya Isroilova’s poetry successfully convey the fundamental meaning of the original texts, they differ significantly in terms of stylistic fidelity, structural preservation, and cultural representation. Russian translations generally demonstrate a higher degree of closeness to the original in these aspects, whereas English translations prioritize accessibility and communicative clarity. This divergence can be attributed to differences in linguistic systems, cultural proximity, and translation norms associated with each language.

The study confirms that poetic translation is inherently a process of transformation rather than replication. Complete equivalence between source and target texts is unattainable due to structural, semantic, and cultural differences between languages. Instead, translation should be understood as an interpretative act in which the translator reconstructs the meaning and aesthetic effect of the original text within the constraints of the target language. This perspective aligns with functionalist and descriptive approaches in translation studies, which emphasize the role of purpose, context, and reader reception in shaping translation outcomes.

Conclusion

In conclusion, the translation of Zulfiya Isroilova's poetry into English and Russian illustrates the complex interplay between language, culture, and literary form. While translations enable the dissemination of her works to a wider audience, they also involve inevitable modifications that affect stylistic, structural, and cultural dimensions. Russian translations tend to preserve these elements more closely, whereas English translations adapt them to ensure accessibility and readability. Ultimately, translated versions of her poetry should be regarded not as exact reproductions but as independent literary interpretations that reflect both the original author's intent and the translator's creative choices.

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