

DIFFICULTIES IN TRANSLATING ABDULLA QAHHOR'S SHORT STORIES INTO ENGLISH

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Abstract. *Abdulla Qahhor is one of the most prominent representatives of Uzbek realistic prose, whose short stories are distinguished by their national spirit, concise style, sharp satire, and deep psychological insight. Translating his works into English presents numerous challenges that go beyond mere linguistic equivalence. This article analyzes the main difficulties encountered in translating Abdulla Qahhor's short stories into English, focusing on cultural realia, national mentality, colloquial language, humor and satire, stylistic conciseness, and pragmatic meaning. The study argues that successful translation of Qahhor's prose requires not only advanced linguistic competence but also deep cultural awareness and literary sensitivity.*

Key words: *Abdulla Qahhor, literary translation, Uzbek literature, cultural realia, satire, stylistic challenges, English translation*

Introduction. Literary translation plays a crucial role in introducing national literatures to the global cultural space. Through translation, literary works transcend linguistic and geographical boundaries, enabling intercultural dialogue and mutual understanding. Uzbek literature, rich in historical experience and cultural values, has increasingly attracted scholarly attention in the field of translation studies. Among Uzbek writers, Abdulla Qahhor occupies a special place due to his unique narrative style and profound depiction of social reality.

Abdulla Qahhor's short stories reflect the everyday life, moral dilemmas, and psychological states of ordinary people. His works are deeply rooted in Uzbek national culture, traditions, and mentality. This rootedness, while being a strength of his prose, becomes a major challenge in translation, particularly into English, which belongs to a different linguistic and cultural system. The purpose of this article is to examine the main difficulties involved in translating Abdulla Qahhor's short stories into English and to analyze the factors that complicate the preservation of meaning, style, and aesthetic value.

The study highlights linguistic, cultural, and stylistic challenges and suggests that translation should be viewed as a creative and interpretative process rather than a mechanical transfer of words.

One of the most significant challenges in translating Abdulla Qahhor’s short stories into English is the presence of cultural realia—culture-specific concepts that have no direct equivalents in the target language. These include references to traditional Uzbek social structures, customs, values, and everyday practices. For example, concepts such as mahalla, to‘y (traditional wedding ceremonies), kinship relations, and social hierarchy are deeply embedded in Uzbek culture. When translated literally, these terms often fail to convey their full semantic and emotional significance to English-speaking readers. As a result, translators must choose between several strategies, such as transliteration with explanation, descriptive translation, or cultural substitution. However, each strategy has its limitations. Excessive explanations may disrupt the narrative flow, while cultural substitution may distort the original meaning. Therefore, translators must carefully balance fidelity to the source culture with accessibility for the target audience. Moreover, Abdulla Qahhor’s characters often embody the Uzbek national mentality, including attitudes toward family, honor, patience, and social responsibility. These values may not always align with those commonly associated with Western cultures, making it difficult to preserve the psychological depth of characters without additional contextualization.

Another major difficulty lies in Qahhor’s use of colloquial language and spoken dialogue. His short stories frequently employ everyday speech, idiomatic expressions, and conversational structures that reflect the natural rhythm of Uzbek oral communication. This linguistic feature enhances realism but poses serious challenges for translators. Colloquial Uzbek expressions often lack direct English equivalents. Literal translation may sound unnatural or overly formal, while free translation risks losing the original tone and authenticity. Translators may attempt to use colloquial English or informal registers; however, inappropriate use of slang or dialect can misrepresent the social and historical context of the story. Additionally, Qahhor’s dialogue is often concise and loaded with implicit meaning. English, as an analytic language, sometimes requires more explicit structures, which can lead to expansion of the text and alteration of stylistic balance. Preserving the simplicity and naturalness of dialogue while maintaining clarity is one of the most delicate aspects of translating his works. Abdulla Qahhor is widely recognized for his mastery of humor, irony, and satire. His stories frequently expose social injustice, hypocrisy, and ignorance through subtle irony rather than overt criticism. This type of humor is highly context-dependent and culturally bound.

In translation, irony is particularly difficult to convey because it often relies on shared cultural knowledge and linguistic nuance. A sentence that appears neutral on the surface may carry a strong ironic undertone in Uzbek. When translated literally into English, this undertone may disappear entirely. Furthermore, humor rooted in wordplay, intonation, or cultural stereotypes may not be transferable to English without significant adaptation. Translators face the challenge of either recreating an equivalent humorous effect or preserving the original meaning at the expense of humor. Both options involve compromise. Effective translation of Qahhor's satire requires deep familiarity with both source and target cultures, as well as creative problem-solving skills. The translator must function as an interpreter of social and cultural meaning, not merely a linguistic mediator. A defining characteristic of Abdulla Qahhor's prose is its conciseness. His short stories are compact, with every sentence serving a specific narrative or psychological function. This economy of language enhances the emotional impact and aesthetic quality of his works.

English translations, however, often tend to be longer due to differences in syntactic structure and grammatical requirements. As a result, translators may unintentionally dilute the intensity and sharpness of Qahhor's style. Maintaining brevity while ensuring grammatical correctness and readability in English is a persistent challenge. Additionally, Qahhor frequently employs understatement and implication, leaving certain meanings unspoken. English readers, who may be accustomed to more explicit narration, could misinterpret or overlook these subtleties. Translators must decide whether to preserve ambiguity or clarify meaning, each choice affecting the reader's interpretation. Beyond lexical and syntactic difficulties, translating Qahhor's stories involves preserving pragmatic and emotional meaning. His narratives often rely on silence, pauses, and implied emotions. These elements are closely tied to cultural norms of communication and emotional expression.

In Uzbek culture, restraint and indirectness are often valued, whereas English narratives may favor explicit emotional articulation. Translators must navigate these differences carefully to avoid misrepresenting characters' emotional states or altering the story's tone. Failure to convey pragmatic meaning can result in translations that are technically accurate but emotionally flat. Therefore, sensitivity to discourse context and emotional nuance is essential for producing high-quality translations.

Conclusion. Translating Abdulla Qahhor's short stories into English is a complex and multifaceted task that extends far beyond linguistic equivalence. Cultural realia, national mentality, colloquial language, humor, stylistic conciseness, and pragmatic meaning all contribute to the difficulty of preserving the original essence of his works. This study demonstrates that successful translation of Qahhor's prose requires a holistic approach that

integrates linguistic competence, cultural knowledge, and literary sensitivity. Translators must act as cultural mediators, striving to maintain the national spirit and artistic value of the original text while making it accessible to English-speaking readers. High-quality translations of Abdulla Qahhor's short stories can play a significant role in promoting Uzbek literature on the global stage and fostering intercultural understanding. Therefore, continued research and practice in this field remain both necessary and valuable.

References:

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ⁱ „Hozirgi o'zbek tili“ R. Sayfullayeva

ⁱⁱ „O'zbek tilining izohli lug'ati“