

TRANSLATION FEATURES OF LINGUISTIC UNITS USED IN PORTRAIT DESCRIPTION

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Abstract: This article focuses on the translation of linguistic units used in the depiction of character portraits in literary texts. Specifically, it investigates how authors use physical descriptions to reveal the psychological and emotional states of characters. In literary fiction, a person's inner world—reflected through appearance, gestures, and behavior—often conveys key traits and thematic messages. These portrayals are not merely visual but are deeply intertwined with the character's psychological state, social context, and emotional journey. The study examines the stylistic and linguistic characteristics involved in translating such portrayals from Uzbek into English. The primary source for analysis is A. Qadiri's novel *Bygone Days*, along with its English translations. The article explores how stylistic nuances and cultural elements are preserved, adapted, or lost in translation, highlighting the challenges and strategies used by translators to retain the original artistic intent.

Keywords: portrait, translation, linguistic features, artistic expression, stylistics

Introduction

The translation of literary texts involves not only the linguistic transfer of meaning but also the recreation of aesthetic, cultural, and emotional effects. One of the most intricate challenges in literary translation lies in rendering character portraits—descriptions that subtly reveal a hero's psychological depth, social role, and internal

conflict. In fiction, a character's appearance is often a mirror of their inner world, used by the author as a tool for deeper storytelling. Translating these layered depictions demands a nuanced understanding of both the source and target languages, along with their cultural and stylistic frameworks.

This study focuses on identifying and analyzing the internal linguistic features that describe character portraits and examining how these are rendered in English translations. Particular emphasis is placed on the stylistic devices used in the original Uzbek text and how these are reinterpreted in English.

Purpose and Objectives of the Study

The key aim of this article is to analyze the translation-specific challenges of rendering portrait descriptions from Uzbek into English. The objectives are:

- ✓ To explore the stylistic and semantic functions of portrait descriptions in A. Qadiri's novel.
- ✓ To identify translation techniques used to convey the original author's intent in English.
- ✓ To assess how linguistic, cultural, and psychological elements are maintained or transformed in translation.

Methods

Literature Review

The translation of literary texts, particularly character portraits, has long been a subject of extensive scholarly inquiry. Linguistic units used to describe a character's appearance in literature are not merely descriptive but are deeply intertwined with the emotional and psychological portrayal of the individual. This section reviews existing theoretical and practical approaches to the translation of such nuanced linguistic elements, with a focus on stylistic and cultural considerations.

Vinay and Darbelnet's foundational work on translation theory provides one of the earliest systematic frameworks for understanding the relationship between source and target languages. They emphasize the importance of both literal and oblique translation techniques, particularly when dealing with idiomatic or culturally loaded expressions that do not have direct equivalents in the target language [1]. This framework is especially relevant in translating artistic portrait descriptions, which often rely on metaphor and subtle cultural references.

Peter Newmark further expands this view by introducing the concept of communicative and semantic translation. According to Newmark, the translator must strike a balance between preserving the original author's intent and ensuring that the translated text remains intelligible and emotionally impactful to the target audience [2]. In the context of Uzbek literature, and specifically in the translation of A. Qadiri's *Bygone Days*, this balance becomes crucial. The novel contains rich characterizations filled with culturally specific language, which poses challenges for maintaining authenticity in English translation.

Mona Baker contributes to the discussion by focusing on the role of equivalence at different levels of translation—ranging from the word and phrase level to textual and pragmatic equivalence [3]. Her insights are particularly useful when analyzing how portrait-related linguistic units are interpreted in translation. For instance, where the source language uses a phrase that links physical traits with moral characteristics, the translator must decide whether to preserve the original metaphor or adapt it to fit the target culture's conventions.

In the case of A. Qadiri's *Bygone Days*, both the original Uzbek text and its English translations illustrate the complex interplay between language, culture, and literary style. The author's depiction of characters through detailed external features—such as facial expressions, clothing, and gestures—often carries symbolic meaning, revealing

psychological depth or societal roles. English translations, as observed in recent editions of the novel [4][5], tend to simplify or neutralize some of these elements to accommodate cultural differences, which can result in a partial loss of stylistic richness.

While the translations do manage to preserve the general narrative and thematic essence, they sometimes fall short in replicating the expressive and emotional tone of the original. This supports Newmark's assertion that literary translation is as much an art as it is a linguistic task [2].

In general, the translation of linguistic units describing character portraits is a multifaceted endeavor that demands more than linguistic competence. It requires a deep understanding of the source culture, literary style, and emotional subtext. Theoretical models by Vinay and Darbelnet, Newmark, and Baker provide valuable frameworks for navigating these complexities, while the case of *Bygone Days* offers a concrete example of both the challenges and possibilities involved in such translations [6].

Results and Discussion

The study is grounded in translation theory, stylistics, and discourse analysis. It considers the portrait not just as a visual element but as a complex linguistic construction involving metaphor, metonymy, epithets, and cultural references. According to translation theorists such as Vinay and Darbelnet, and later Newmark and Baker, the fidelity of a translation relies not only on word-for-word correspondence but on functional equivalence—especially in literary contexts where style, tone, and nuance are paramount.

The source material is drawn from A. Qadiri's *Bygone Days* and its available English translations. The analysis reveals that physical descriptions in the original often use culturally loaded expressions, idioms, and metaphorical language to imply a character's psychological traits. For instance, phrases that associate physical features with moral

qualities are common in Uzbek literature but may require rephrasing in English to avoid culturally insensitive or confusing interpretations.

In several instances, the English translations opt for simplification, omitting metaphors or replacing them with more neutral descriptions. While this can enhance clarity, it may diminish the emotional or symbolic depth of the original. Translators also face the challenge of maintaining rhythm, tone, and stylistic richness—features critical to preserving the author's voice.

Findings

- ✓ Loss and Gain in Translation – Some metaphorical expressions were softened or omitted in translation, affecting the richness of character portrayal.
- ✓ Cultural Adaptation – Certain culturally specific references were adapted to be more accessible to English-speaking readers, but at times this led to a loss of authenticity.
- ✓ Stylistic Challenges – The translation process often struggled with retaining original stylistic features such as irony, poetic rhythm, or emotionally loaded epithets.

Conclusion

Translating portrait descriptions is a complex process that involves more than transferring literal meaning—it requires sensitivity to artistic form, cultural context, and character development. The findings show that while translations can successfully convey the general content of character portrayals, they often face difficulty in preserving stylistic intricacies. Translators must strike a balance between clarity and fidelity, creativity and faithfulness, especially when handling emotionally and culturally nuanced texts.

Future studies may expand this research by comparing multiple English translations of the same Uzbek text or by examining how gender, social status, and historical context influence portrait translation strategies.

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