

# EXPRESSING CULTURAL IDENTITY THROUGH TRANSLATION

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***Abstract.** This article examines the expression and preservation of cultural identity in the process of translation. Translation is not only the transfer of linguistic units from one language to another but also a means of conveying cultural values, national mentality, and historical experience. The research analyzes the problems of translating cultural elements, realia, national color, and cultural context based on theoretical sources. Particular attention is paid to the role of the translator as a mediator in intercultural communication. The findings contribute to the development of translation studies, intercultural communication, and literary studies.*

***Keywords:** translation, cultural identity, intercultural communication, realia, national color, translation strategies.*

***Аннотация.** В данной статье рассматриваются вопросы выражения и сохранения культурной идентичности в процессе перевода. Перевод выступает не только как передача языковых единиц с одного языка на другой, но и как средство передачи культурных ценностей, национального менталитета и исторического опыта народа. В исследовании анализируются проблемы передачи культурных реалий, национального колорита и культурного контекста на основе научных источников. Особое внимание уделяется роли переводчика как посредника в межкультурной коммуникации. Результаты исследования имеют важное значение для теории перевода, межкультурной коммуникации и литературоведения.*

***Ключевые слова:** перевод, культурная идентичность, межкультурная коммуникация, реалии, национальный колорит, стратегии перевода.*

## **Introduction**

In the 21st century, the acceleration of globalization is further strengthening cultural ties between different peoples. In the context of global communication, translation emerges as an essential tool for dialogue between diverse cultures. Through the translation process, the literature, culture, traditions, and historical experiences of one nation are transmitted to others.

Language and culture are inherently interconnected concepts; every language reflects the worldview, mentality, and values of a specific nation. Consequently, it is crucial to accurately convey not only linguistic units but also cultural meanings during translation. The concept of cultural identity is a widely used category in modern humanities. It is a complex socio-cultural phenomenon related to an individual's or society's sense of belonging to a specific culture. Literature and language serve as primary means of expressing this identity.

In translation theory, the problem of preserving cultural identity has been studied by many researchers. Scholars such as Eugene Nida, Peter Newmark, Susan Bassnett, and Lawrence Venuti have developed strategies for conveying cultural equivalence and cultural units in translation. The purpose of this article is to study the theoretical foundations of expressing cultural identity in the translation process and to analyze methods for translating cultural units.

**Theoretical Foundations of Translation and Cultural Identity.** Translation is the process of re-expressing a text belonging to one language through the means of another language. However, in modern translation theory, translation is viewed not merely as a linguistic operation, but as a form of intercultural communication. The concept of cultural identity is extensively studied in sociology, anthropology, and cultural studies. It is formed based on a people's historical experience, customs, traditions, religious beliefs, and social values.

Language is an important carrier of this cultural identity. Through language units, a nation's mentality, worldview, and cultural values are expressed. For example, words expressing kinship relations can differ across various peoples, reflecting the social structure and cultural traditions of that nation. Therefore, preserving cultural

identity is a vital task in the translation process. If the cultural context is not correctly conveyed, the original meaning of the text will not be fully revealed.

**Cultural Units and Realia in Translation.** Cultural units are among the most complex elements in translation. Such units are often linked to a nation's lifestyle, customs, or historical experience. In translation theory, these units are called realia. Realia are words or concepts specific to a particular culture that do not have a full equivalent in other cultures.

Examples include:

- \* National dishes: palov, somsa
- \* National clothing: atlas, do'ppi
- \* Social institutions: mahalla
- \* Traditional ceremonies: weddings, circumcision feasts

Various methods are used to translate these units: transliteration, explanatory translation, cultural equivalent, and descriptive translation. For instance, if the concept of "mahalla" is simply translated into English as "neighborhood," its social and cultural essence is not fully captured. Therefore, an explanatory translation like "mahalla – traditional neighborhood community institution in Uzbekistan" is often employed.

**The Role of the Translator as an Intercultural Mediator.** The translator plays a crucial role in the translation process, acting as a mediator between two languages and two cultures. A translator must possess deep knowledge not only of the language but also of the culture associated with it. One of the primary tasks of a translator is to preserve the cultural characteristics of the text; failure to consider the cultural context can distort the original meaning.

Lawrence Venuti divides translation strategies into two main types:

- \* Domestication: The text is adapted to the target culture.
- \* Foreignization: Elements of the original culture are preserved as much as possible.

Many scholars emphasize that the foreignization strategy is more important for preserving cultural identity.

#### Preserving National Color in Literary Translation

Preserving national color is of particular importance in the translation of literary works. This is because literary texts reflect the culture, customs, and mentality of a people. For example, when translating certain works in Uzbek literature, it is essential to maintain elements of national culture. Cultural concepts found in the works of Abdulla Qodiriy or O'tkir Hoshimov can be conveyed through commentary or transliteration.

This preservation is achieved through:

- \* Retaining cultural realia
- \* Using footnotes or explanations
- \* Contextual translation
- \* Cultural adaptation

**Translation and Intercultural Communication.** Translation plays a vital role in developing cultural dialogue between different peoples. Through translation, diverse cultures become acquainted with and enrich one another. The translation of literary works serves to strengthen international cultural ties. For instance, translating Uzbek literature into English and Russian promotes national culture on a global scale. Similarly, translating the literature of other nations into Uzbek positively impacts the development of national culture.

**Conclusion.** The translation process is an essential tool for expressing and preserving cultural identity. Translation is not just a transfer of linguistic units, but a process of transmitting cultural values, national mentality, and historical experience. Research findings show that cultural units and realia require a specific approach in translation. The translator plays a key role as an intercultural mediator in this process. Translation performed while preserving cultural identity serves to strengthen cultural ties between different nations.

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