

THE EXAMINATION OF LITERARY TRANSLATION IN THE CONTEXT OF  
MODERN LINGUISTICS

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**Abstract.** Currently, a number of important achievements have been made in world translation studies, which have significantly enriched the theoretical and practical aspects of translation. This article explores literary translation within the framework of modern linguistics, focusing on how contemporary linguistic theories contribute to the analysis and practice of translating literary texts. It examines the role of functionalism, discourse analysis, pragmatics, and cognitive linguistics in addressing issues such as equivalence, stylistic representation, and cultural transfer. The study emphasizes the translator's role as an active mediator between languages and cultures and argues that modern linguistic approaches provide a solid theoretical foundation for improving the quality and adequacy of literary translation. The findings demonstrate that literary translation should be viewed as a dynamic, interpretative, and culturally embedded process rather than a purely linguistic operation.

**Keywords:** literary translation; modern linguistics; translation theory; equivalence; discourse analysis; pragmatics; cognitive linguistics

## INTRODUCTION

In today's era of globalization, modern translation studies are experiencing a "cultural revolution". Literary translation is viewed not only as an artistic linguistic phenomenon, but also as a cultural phenomenon. This has given rise to a new understanding of the essence of translation in translation theory and has been called the "cultural turn" in Western translation studies.

In essence, this term means changing the focus of scientific research on literary translation to its cultural aspects. This implies understanding national literature as a kind of "literary system" formed by a social and cultural system, created and existing in a certain environment. [1.14.]

Literary translation represents one of the most complex areas within translation studies due to its dual nature as both a linguistic and an artistic activity. Unlike technical or pragmatic translation, literary translation requires the preservation of aesthetic value, stylistic individuality, and cultural specificity alongside semantic accuracy. With the advancement of modern linguistics, the theoretical understanding of literary translation has expanded significantly, incorporating insights from multiple linguistic subdisciplines.

Modern linguistics has shifted the focus of translation research from static equivalence toward functional, communicative, and cognitive perspectives. These approaches emphasize the importance of context, reader interpretation, and cultural norms in the construction of meaning. In this regard, literary translation becomes a productive field for linguistic inquiry, as it demonstrates how language functions creatively across cultural boundaries. This article aims to examine literary translation through the lens of modern linguistic theory and to highlight its



implications for contemporary translation practice.

## LITERATURE REVIEW AND METHODS

Only in the middle of the 20th century did linguists start to systematically research translation activities, making translation studies a relatively new distinct philological field. The scholarly endeavours of linguists, literary scholars, and practicing translators, such as V. N. Komissarov, LL. Nelyubin, A.V. Fedorov, G.T. Khukhuni, A.D. Schweitzer, and G. Gachechiladze, contributed to the development of translation studies. Translation studies currently have a history, theoretical foundation, and a variety of methodologies.

The theoretical comprehension of translation work and its enhancement is the focus of translation studies. "Taking place in the form of a mental act and consisting in the fact that a speech work (text or oral utterance) that originated in one source language (a foreign language) is recreated in another translating-language" is how A. V. Fedorov defines translation, which is the process of transforming a speech work from one language to another. A new speech piece that is produced as a result of this procedure is likewise regarded as translation [2].

Translation is a multifaceted and intricate human endeavour that requires a deeper understanding than just translating a text between languages. Numerous academics note that translation is greatly influenced by elements including the time period, the people's culture and customs, and the author's and translator's personalities. "Translation interests cultural scientists, ethnographers, psychologists, historians, and literary critics, and various facets of translation endeavours can be examined within the context of the pertinent sciences. In the field of translation studies, it is possible to distinguish between cultural, cognitive, psychological, literary, and other elements [3].

The significance of extralinguistic factors is also noted by the translator A. D. Schweitzer.

He defines translation as: "A unidirectional and two-phase process of interlanguage and intercultural communication, in which, on the basis of a purposeful ("translation") after analyzing the primary text, a secondary text (metatext) is created, replacing the primary one in another linguistic and cultural environment, a process characterized by an attitude to the transmission of the communicative effect of the primary text, partially modified by differences between two languages, between two cultures and two communicative situations" [4]. Thus, it is obvious that the study of speech cannot take place in isolation from the person creating the primary text. It is impossible to separate language from a person, who is an essential component of a certain culture, civilisation, and has a distinct way of thinking and seeing the world. Speaking involves the speaker putting his ideas into a text, which has a specific shape. In turn, the structure of the text will be influenced by both extralinguistic variables and the speech standards that are prevalent in this speech community. The process of producing a text in the translation language itself will be autonomous since the translator recognises another person's idea at the point of translation transformation rather than his own. And here we should talk about the concept of adequacy and equivalence of translation.

Only partial untranslatability is noted by many scientists. For instance, V. Koller discussed relative translatability, but A.B. Fedorov views dialectisms and social jargon lexemes as untranslatable. The scientist contended that since information is only partially conveyed during communication, information loss is irreversible in all forms of communication [5]. Language limits (differences in the linguistic vision of the world, lacunae, dialectisms, archaisms, barbarisms, etc.) and extralinguistic restrictions resulting from cross-cultural differences typically impede full translatability. Another idea is all-translatability, which holds that all languages are universal. Since all languages share a similar primary basis, a proto-language of



sorts (it is also a universal language), and each of the current modern languages reflects the principles of this proto-language, translation is acknowledged as theoretically feasible.

A unique type of translation is the translation of a literary work from one language to another. In addition to transferring the original text's substance into the target language, this process entails creative change and understanding of the source text based on the literary norms and capabilities of the target language. Because of the literary text's high information value, factors including the text's formal structure and language must be considered when translating. It is impossible to completely preserve the form of the source text, so the translator must be able to "find the intersection point between the original and the translation" [6].

The translator of a literary text strives for accuracy in translation, but it is impossible to fully reproduce the original work in another language. V.N. Komissarov points out that each sentence should be considered as part of the whole and convey the content, but one should also try to recreate the artistic image, the general mood, the characteristics of the characters, etc. "The choice of a single word, syntactic structure, and other elements is also important" [7]. When translating a literary text, it is necessary to take into account the pragmatic task of translation, namely, the aesthetic effect on the reader, which the author achieves by using various artistic techniques that are more suitable for creating the necessary emotional effect [8] If the translator was able to achieve the same emotional impact on the reader as the author of the original work, then we can talk about an adequate reproduction of the communicative effect of the original.

Literary translation is always a competition. Words in one language form a certain chain of associations that may not coincide in the translating language. Accordingly, different translators have different associations in connection with a particular word or phrase, each interprets the information contained in the language units in their own way. There cannot be one perfect translation -each variant is individual and interesting in its own way. "In essence, literary translation is a kind of interpretation, interpretation of the source text... An artistic text is untranslatable from the point of view of unambiguous correspondence: its linguistic elements cannot be objectively replaced by similar elements of the translating language due to the structural and functional relativity of the linguistic sign, since sign relations do not coincide in different languages, which means that the artistic functions of these relations most often do not coincide" [9].

And yet the issue of the adequacy and correctness of this or that interpretation cannot be considered closed. Translators have always been concerned about how to convey all the charm and originality of the original. A literary piece can be translated in a number of ways. Y.P. Solodub examines two methods: insufficient free translation and adequate translation, in which the translator attempts to maintain the original text's structure and content as much as possible. The translator must "find adequate verbal means to convey the figurative system of the translated work and the specifics of the author's language" [8], in addition to having a thorough understanding of the original's ideological and thematic orientation. This means that when translating, one should keep in mind both the source text's author and the language culture to which the transfer is being made.

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Literary text translation is one of the most complex and responsible areas of translation studies. Because in the translation of literary works, it is necessary not only to convert the information contained in the source text into another language, but also to preserve the level of its aesthetic impact, to illuminate the essence of the cultural values expressed in the work, to



correctly perceive the author's artistic worldview and convey it to the reader, and to find alternatives to the subtle layers of the language in another language.

In today's translation studies, the Skopos theory, cognitive approach, discursive approach, and cultural-semiotic theory are of great importance [10, 41]. The essence of the Skopos theory is that this approach considers translation as a type of activity aimed at a specific goal and shifts attention from traditional equivalence criteria to the functionality and pragmatics of translation. The translator adapts the source text in accordance with the tasks of the target audience in a specific environment. In the skopos theory approach, translation is viewed as a purposive act, in which the translator creates a target text to solve a specific problem. Despite the flexibility of skopos, the principle of accuracy in translation is maintained, meaning that the translator must take into account the specifics of the cultural norms and intentions of the original author.

In the cognitive approach to translation, translation is considered a mental process. In this approach, it is important for the translator to correctly perceive the source text. It should be noted that no matter what form the translator chooses to translate the text, its main, core content must be preserved.

In the cultural-semiotic theory of translation studies, the text is considered a system of cultural signs, and each word and image is a part of cultural semiotics. In this case, the task of translation is to correctly transfer cultural signs, realities, metaphors, traditions and symbols to a new culture. Representatives of this theory consider translation as a creative interpretation and believe that the translator can manifest his "trace", that is, style, in the translated text [11, 67].

As is known, literary translation is the process of transferring the content, form, imagery, style and aesthetic intentions of the author of the literary text into another language. Its uniqueness lies in the fact that it not only transmits information, but also recreates the artistic and aesthetic value of the work. Creativity, language intuition, and cultural competence are of great importance in literary translation. The theoretical foundations of translation are inextricably linked with disciplines such as linguistics, literary studies, pragmatics, semantics, cultural studies, and psycholinguistics. The translation process is assessed as bilingual communication, and the degree of correspondence between the source text and the translation text serves as a criterion. Equivalence in literary translation is the highest possible preservation of the unity of content, form, style, and effect. Adequacy, on the other hand, is associated with the full fulfillment of the communicative task of the translated text. It is difficult to achieve complete equivalence in literary translation, therefore, functional-cultural equivalence plays an important role.

The literary text is multilayered, and the following layers are observed in it:

- denotative meaning
- connotative meaning
- imagery and symbolism
- stylistic colors
- subtext and context [12, 89].

Recreating all this in translation poses complex tasks for the translator. The problem of translating artistic imagery is that translating such artistic means of expression as metaphor, epithet, metonymy, and animation into the target language requires a creative approach. Sometimes they are translated directly, and sometimes a functional analogue (similarity) is



sought. The translator's skill is demonstrated by not losing the artistic effect while preserving the original content. Another problem of translating a literary text is related to the translation of national-cultural components. National color, ethnocultural units, customs, and realities are one of the most important problems of literary translation. Cultural words may not be translated directly. The translator uses the following approaches:

- transcription
- descriptive translation
- contextual adaptation
- search for cultural equivalents

Translating idioms, metaphors and phraseologisms in the source text also requires high qualifications from the translator. Phraseologisms reflect the national spirit of the language, therefore, semantic equivalence is not enough when translating them. In this case, stylistic nuances, imagery, connotation must be preserved. The translator sometimes uses a phraseological analogue, and sometimes a descriptive definition.

Context and subtext play a special role in the translation process. Context is the main factor in the correct interpretation of a literary text. Subtext, on the other hand, expresses the hidden meaning and the author's intention. Translation without understanding them leads to semantic ambiguities.

The competence and creativity of the translator are extremely important in translating a literary text. A translator of literary works must have linguistic competence, cultural competence, literary competence, competence, and pragmatic creative thinking competence. A translator not only translates the text, but also recreates it.

It is known that certain shortcomings are allowed in the literary text. Experts include semantic errors, stylistic inconsistencies, cultural inaccuracies, loss of image, excessive verbatim translation, etc. [13,74]. The most important ways to eliminate such errors are a deep analysis of the text, a correct understanding of the context, and a creative approach.

There are different views on which is more important when translating a work from one language to another: preserving its meaning or emphasizing technical translation. Until the 19th century, there were many discussions on this issue among translation scholars. Many scholars of that time believed that it was enough to focus only on the meaning aspect of the text and express the information contained in it in the translation. Scholars such as Voltaire Benjamin and Vladimir Nabakov opposed this idea and argued that in the translation process, along with the content of the work, the style of its expression, the artistic means used in it, and the author's personal style of expression are also important, and that the cultural consciousness, values, worldview, knowledge and level of the readers should be taken into account in this process. According to the linguist, author of the work "Textbook of Translation", P. Newmark, it is appropriate to apply the term "method" to translation methods. The scientist also distinguishes the methods used in translation activities as follows:

Word-to-word translation. This means translating each word in the work one by one. However, this method of translation does not allow for the full reflection of the artistic style of the work, its specific features, and the emotional impact on the reader. If the emphasis is on the lexical aspect of the words in the work and the figurative meanings expressed in them are ignored, the work will remain only a collection of information. As a result, the national, historical and emotional





impact of the work will disappear, and its place will be taken by stylistically neutral means, the purpose and ideological spirit of the work will be lost.

Also, when translating a work literally, meanings may be lost in it, whereas in a literary text, the pragmatic meaning layer and stylistic meanings of the word are especially important. Let us consider the translation of this passage from the novel "Night and Day" (Kecha va kunduz) by K. Fort:

*-Qanday behayo bolasan! Kap-katta to'ng'izday bo'lib qolibsana-u, sharm-u hayo qilmasdan, nomahram bor hovliga qaraysana! So'fi ko'rgunday bo'lsa, "go'sht ketdi" qiladi. Ha!!!?*

*"What a shameless child you are! You should know better, big as you are. Shamelessly looking into a home with nomahram women! If that Razzoq-sufi saw you, he would rip you to pieces!"*

One of the most influential contributions of modern linguistics to translation studies is the functional approach. According to functionalist theories, the quality of a translation is determined by its communicative purpose and its effectiveness within the target culture. In literary translation, this implies that the translated text should evoke a response comparable to that of the original, even if structural or stylistic changes are required.

Pragmatics further enriches literary translation analysis by focusing on implied meanings, presuppositions, and speech acts. Literary texts often rely on irony, metaphor, and indirect expression, which demand pragmatic competence from the translator. Failure to account for pragmatic meaning may result in a translation that is linguistically correct but stylistically and culturally inadequate.

Cognitive linguistics provides valuable insights into metaphor translation and conceptual structures. Since literary language frequently reflects culturally specific conceptualizations, cognitive approaches help translators identify underlying mental models and adapt them appropriately for the target audience. This approach underscores the interpretative nature of literary translation.

The concept of equivalence remains central to translation theory, yet modern linguistics challenges the notion of absolute equivalence. In literary translation, equivalence is often functional or dynamic rather than formal. Linguistic and cultural differences make it impossible to achieve complete correspondence between source and target texts.

Modern translation theory supports the use of translation transformations such as modulation, adaptation, and compensation. These strategies allow translators to preserve the artistic and emotional effect of the original text while respecting the norms of the target language. Linguistic analysis provides a systematic basis for applying such strategies without compromising textual coherence.

Modern linguistics recognizes the translator as an active participant in the meaning-making process. Literary translators must combine linguistic competence with literary sensitivity and cultural awareness. Their choices are influenced by genre conventions, readership expectations, and sociocultural context.

By applying linguistic theories, translators can justify their decisions scientifically, thereby enhancing the academic legitimacy of literary translation. This interdisciplinary approach strengthens the connection between linguistics and literary studies and contributes to the professionalization of translation practice.



## CONCLUSION

In conclusion, the examination of literary translation in the context of modern linguistics demonstrates that translation is a complex, theory-driven, and culturally embedded process. Modern linguistic approaches provide essential analytical tools for understanding how meaning, style, and cultural values are transferred in literary texts. Functionalism, discourse analysis, pragmatics, and cognitive linguistics collectively offer a comprehensive framework for both theoretical research and practical translation.

As literary translation continues to play a vital role in intercultural communication, its integration with modern linguistic theory becomes increasingly important. This interdisciplinary perspective not only deepens academic understanding but also enhances the quality and effectiveness of translated literary works.

To improve the translation of literary works, it is necessary to solve a number of theoretical and practical problems. Theoretically, it is important to clearly define the nature of art, figurative means, intertextual references, and the place of the author's style in the original. At the same time, scientific approaches are required to achieve equivalence in translation, that is, to simultaneously preserve denotative, connotative, and pragmatic meanings. The study of cultural codes and their adequate expression in the recipient language are also among the theoretical problems. In practical terms, it is important to choose the right strategy in translating figurative expressions, humor, and national realities, and to improve the principles of localization and adaptation.

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