



THE PRESERVATION OF INDIVIDUAL AUTHORIAL STYLE IN ENGLISH TRANSLATIONS OF MODERN UZBEK PROSE

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Abstract. This thesis investigates the challenges of preserving individual authorial style when translating modern Uzbek prose into English. Literary translation extends beyond moving semantic meaning across borders; it requires capturing the writer's unique artistic voice. However, profound linguistic asymmetries between Uzbek, an agglutinative language, and English, an Indo-European language, create significant structural barriers. Through a comparative analysis of key translations, such as Mark Reese's version of Abdulla Qodiriy's *Bygone Days* and Andrew Bromfield's translation of Hamid Ismailov's *The Dead Lake*, this study evaluates how translators balance domesticating and foreignizing strategies. The findings show that while text simplification improves readability, preserving the author's original syntactic rhythm and cultural idiolect is essential for maintaining the authentic psychological depth of Uzbek literature on the global stage.

Keywords: Authorial style, uzbek prose, literary translation, linguistic asymmetry, *realia*, syntactic rhythm, domestication, foreignization, cultural identity.

Introduction. In recent years, modern Uzbek literature has gradually gained global visibility through an increasing number of contemporary English translations. This literary movement allows international readers to discover the rich cultural traditions and unique historical experiences embedded in Central Asian prose. However, bringing these creative works into the English-speaking world presents significant academic and practical challenges [2]. Translating Uzbek prose involves navigating deep linguistic asymmetries. Because Uzbek is an agglutinative language with a Subject-Object-Verb structural order, its sentence flow is fundamentally different from the Subject-Verb-Object pattern of Indo-European languages. Additionally, translators frequently struggle with culture-specific words, known as *realia*, which lack direct equivalents in Western languages [5]. The main problem is that standard translation methods often fail to preserve the author's individual voice, stylistic rhythm, and personal idiolect. When a text is translated too literally, the narrative voice loses its emotional color, making the prose feel unnatural to the target audience. Therefore, this thesis argues that preserving individual authorial style in English translations of modern Uzbek prose requires moving far beyond basic literal equivalence. Instead, translators must successfully combine domesticating and foreignizing strategies. This balanced approach is necessary to honor the author's original syntactic pacing, emotional depth, and unique



cultural atmosphere. By doing so, the translated text can maintain its authentic literary identity while remaining fully accessible to global readers [2].

Main body. To evaluate how an author's unique voice survives in another language, one must first clarify what constitutes authorial style. Style is not a decorative layer added to a text; rather, it is the very identity of the prose. It represents a unique combination of lexical choices, syntactic structures, figurative language, and narrative pacing that reflects the writer's worldview. When studying translation, style becomes a dynamic problem. As Myriam Salama-Carr (2014) highlights in her work on translating style, literary translation must go beyond simply transferring facts or semantic meaning [8]. A truly stylistic translation shifts the focus from *what* is written to *how* it is written. If a translator only focuses on textual equivalence—matching words mechanically—the artistic spirit of the original text is often lost [1]. Therefore, stylistic loyalty requires the translator to capture the expressive and emotional energy that makes an author's voice recognizable. This task creates a major dilemma in narrative translation. In his influential study, Theo Hermans (2014) discusses “the translator's voice,” explaining that a translation is never a transparent mirror [3]. The translator's own presence and choices inevitably join the narrative. The real challenge is to ensure that this secondary voice does not overshadow or flatten the original author's idiolect. In the context of Uzbek literature, this theoretical dilemma becomes even more complex due to radical structural differences between the languages. Uzbek is a Turkic language with an agglutinative morphology and a strict Subject-Object-Verb (SOV) sentence order. In contrast, English is an Indo-European language relying on a Subject-Verb-Object (SVO) framework. Modern Uzbek writers often build long, complex sentences using multiple gerunds (*ravishdosh*), which allow them to stack thoughts, actions, and background descriptions into a single, fluid breath. When translating this prose into English, a major linguistic asymmetry occurs. Forcing these expansive Uzbek structures into short, traditional English SVO units can destroy the natural cadence, rhythm, and artistic flow that the author intended. If a translator prioritizes grammatical comfort in English over the author's syntactic habits, the text loses its national color and distinct personality. Consequently, a solid theoretical framework for this study must analyze how translators restructure these sentences. It observes whether they use foreignizing techniques to keep the original rhythm alive, or domesticate the text so much that the author's individual style disappears completely.

Translating modern Uzbek prose into English introduces several deep linguistic barriers that can easily alter a writer's unique voice. A major challenge involves culture-specific words and social traditions, known as *realia*. Peter Newmark (1988) emphasizes that transferring cultural context without destroying the text's natural flow is one of the hardest tasks in translation [5]. In Uzbek literature, terms like *chopon*, *mahalla*, or actions like *kissing the hands of elders* carry heavy emotional weight. If a translator uses heavy, style-disrupting footnotes, the literary pacing stops completely; however, omitting them entirely flattens the author's cultural idiolect. Furthermore, the morpho-syntactic differences between the two languages create a structural conflict. Uzbek prose often relies on long, fluid sentences built



with multiple gerunds (*ravishdosh*). Forcing these expansive clauses into short, crisp English sentences breaks the lyrical, epic breath of classical and modern authors alike. For instance, in *Bygone Days (O'tkan Kunlar)*, translated by Mark Edward Reese (2018), the translator had to carefully manage Abdulla Qodiriy's archaic language styles and regional dialects. Reese's work serves as a practical example of how a translator must balance preserving the rhythm and historical atmosphere of the original Uzbek voice while keeping the text accessible to a modern English reader [7]. Without this balance, regional color and the author's worldview simply disappear.

To understand how authorial style survives across linguistic boundaries, we must analyze specific practical examples. A prime case study is Mark Reese's (2019) translation of Abdulla Qodiriy's masterpiece, *Bygone Days (O'tkan Kunlar)*. Qodiriy's original text is famous for its lyrical, ornate, and historical style. Reese successfully captures this classical atmosphere by refusing to over-simplify the text. Instead of removing cultural complexities for the sake of Western comfort, his translation analysis shows a clear effort to retain the respectful, traditional tone of nineteenth-century Uzbek society [7]. In contrast, looking at contemporary prose like Hamid Ismailov's *The Dead Lake*, translated by Andrew Bromfield (2014), reveals a different stylistic challenge: national cadence and rhythm [4]. Ismailov's writing heavily reflects an oral-tradition rhythm with repetitive structures that give the story a folk-like, musical quality. A micro-level textual analysis shows that while Bromfield sometimes had to sacrifice exact syntax to make the book readable for English audiences, he managed to preserve the psychological weight of the prose. These two examples prove that a successful translation does not require perfect literal matching; rather, it depends on whether the translator can reconstruct the author's true artistic energy in a new language.

Conclusion. Preserving the individual authorial style of modern Uzbek prose in English translation is a complex task that requires more than simple linguistic equivalence. As this study has shown, style is not just an artistic ornament; it is the core identity of a writer's work, built through unique lexical choices, cultural *realia*, and specific narrative rhythms. The deep structural differences between the agglutinative, Subject-Object-Verb pattern of the Uzbek language and the Subject-Verb-Object framework of English create natural barriers that translators must navigate carefully. The comparative case studies analyzed in this paper demonstrate that a successful translation does not rely on a mechanical word-for-word substitution. Instead, it depends on a strategic balance between domestication and foreignization. While making a text readable for Western audiences is important, over-domesticating the prose can flatten the author's voice and erase the cultural atmosphere. Translators like Mark Reese and Andrew Bromfield show that preserving the epic breath, emotional register, and historical tone of Uzbek prose is entirely possible when syntactic patterns are treated creatively. Ultimately, keeping the author's original idiolect alive ensures that translated Uzbek literature does not just tell a story, but successfully shares its authentic soul, unique worldview, and cultural heritage with global readers.





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