

THE PROBLEMS OF EQUIVALENCE IN ENGLISH TRANSLATION OF "NIGHT AND DAY" BY CHRISTOPHER FORT FROM CHULPON'S UZBEK NOVEL "KECHA VA KUNDUZ"

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Abstract. *This study examines the translation equivalence problems encountered in Christopher Fort's 2019 English translation of Abdulhamid Sulaymon o'g'li Chulpon's seminal Uzbek novel "Kecha va kunduz" (Night and Day, 1934). The analysis reveals that Fort's translation strategies navigate between foreignization and domestication approaches, employing various compensation techniques to address non-equivalence issues.*

Keywords: *translation equivalence, Uzbek literature, cultural translation, post-colonial translation, literary translation, Central Asian studies*

Аннотация. *Данное исследование рассматривает проблемы переводческой эквивалентности, возникшие при переводе Кристофером Фортом в 2019 году знаменитого узбекского романа Абдулхамида Сулаймона угли Чулпана «Кеча ва кундуз» (Ночь и день, 1934) на английский язык. Анализ показывает, что переводческие стратегии Форта балансируют между подходами форенизации и доместикации, используя различные компенсационные техники для решения проблем неэквивалентности.*

Ключевые слова: *переводческая эквивалентность, узбекская литература, культурный перевод, постколониальный перевод, художественный перевод, центральноазиатские исследования*

Annotatsiya. *Ushbu tadqiqot Kristofer Fortning 2019-yilda Abdulhamid Sulaymon o'g'li Cho'lponning mashhur "Kecha va kunduz" (1934) romani ingliz tiliga tarjimasida yuzaga kelgan tarjima ekvivalentligi muammolarini o'rganadi. Tahlil shuni ko'rsatadiki, Fortning tarjima strategiyalari chetlashtirish va mahalliyashtirish yondashuvlari o'rtasida muvozanat saqlaydi, noekvivalentlik muammolarini hal qilish uchun turli kompensatsiya usullarini qo'llaydi.*

Kalit so'zlar: *tarjima ekvivalentligi, o'zbek adabiyoti, madaniy tarjima, postkolonial tarjima, badiiy tarjima, Markaziy Osiyo tadqiqotlari*

Introduction. Christopher Fort's English translation of Abdulhamid Sulaymon o'g'li Chulpon's "Kecha va kunduz" is a step towards making Central Asian literature accessible to global readers. Academic Studies Press released it in 2019 and represented the first complete English translation of Chulpon's premature dilogy, published in 1936 and subsequently banned under Stalin's purges [1]. The novel, set in

late Russian imperial Turkestan, is comprised of complex layers of political, cultural, and linguistic considerations that present serious challenges to translation equivalence.

Chulpon (1897-1938), regarded as a pillar of contemporary Uzbek literature and culture, drew upon sophisticated literary techniques combining traditional Islamic narrative structures with modernist European ones to produce a work that subtly satirizes both early Soviet policy and Russian colonialism [2]. Fort's work translation equivalence problems are prototypical of broader translation studies theoretical conflicts, namely that conflict between source text authenticity preservation and target text accessibility. Based on Uzbek scholarly discourse, Chulpon's work represents national sensibility awakening by literature and, as such, is particularly prone to problems of cultural mediation [3].

Methodology and Literature Review. This research employs a qualitative comparative analysis methodology, examining Fort's translation against the original Uzbek text while applying established translation theory frameworks to identify and categorize equivalence problems. The theoretical foundation draws primarily from Mona Baker's taxonomy of equivalence types (lexical, grammatical, textual, and pragmatic) and her classification of non-equivalence problems, which provides a systematic framework for analyzing translation challenges [4].

Additionally, Lawrence Venuti's concepts of domestication versus foreignization inform the analysis of Fort's strategic choices, particularly relevant given the translator's acknowledged goal of making Uzbek literature accessible while preserving its cultural distinctiveness [5]. Eugene Nida's distinction between formal and functional equivalence offers another analytical lens, especially pertinent to Fort's treatment of Islamic terminology and Central Asian cultural references. Russian translation theory contributions, particularly Fedorov's concepts of adequacy and Komissarov's equivalence models, provide additional theoretical grounding for analyzing cross-linguistic transfer processes [6].

The literature review encompasses scholarly work on Central Asian literary translation, including Shawn Lyons' analysis of Chulpon's novel as anti-colonial critique and Fort's own scholarly contributions to Uzbek literary studies. Contemporary Uzbek literary scholarship emphasizes the novel's role in depicting social inequalities and women's rights issues within colonial Turkestan context [7]. Contemporary translation studies scholarship emphasizes the impossibility of achieving perfect equivalence, with theorists like Anthony Pym proposing directional equivalence models that acknowledge the inherent asymmetry in translation processes. The methodology also incorporates paratextual analysis, examining Fort's extensive introduction, glossary, and annotations as compensatory strategies for addressing cultural non-equivalence. Russian scholarship on literary translation theory,

particularly Barkhudarov's linguistic approach, informs the analysis of translation techniques employed in cross-cultural literary mediation [8].

Results and Discussion. The analysis reveals multiple categories of equivalence problems in Fort's translation, ranging from lexical gaps to complex cultural and ideological challenges. At the lexical level, Fort encounters significant difficulties with Islamic terminology and Central Asian cultural concepts that lack direct English equivalents. Terms like "jadid" (Muslim reformist), "mahalla" (traditional neighborhood community), and various Islamic legal and theological concepts require extensive explanation through glossaries and footnotes, demonstrating what Baker identifies as concept-specific non-equivalence.

Fort's strategy involves maintaining the original terms while providing contextual explanations, following a foreignization approach that preserves cultural authenticity while ensuring reader comprehension. As noted in Uzbek critical discourse, the novel's treatment of women characters like Zebi reflects broader social critiques that require careful cultural translation to maintain their revolutionary impact [9]. The translator's treatment of food terminology, architectural descriptions, and social hierarchies reveals similar challenges, where literal translation would obscure meaning while complete domestication would erase cultural specificity. At the pragmatic level, Fort faces the complex challenge of conveying Chulpon's subtle critique of Russian colonialism and Islamic traditionalism simultaneously, requiring careful navigation of politically sensitive material for contemporary English-speaking audiences.

The novel's sophisticated irony and satirical elements, deeply rooted in Uzbek cultural understanding and historical context, present particular translation challenges where direct equivalence proves impossible. Fort employs compensation strategies, including expanded character descriptions and additional contextual information, to bridge cultural gaps that threaten comprehension. The temporal setting of the novel in pre-revolutionary Turkestan requires extensive cultural translation, as English readers lack familiarity with Russian colonial administrative structures, Islamic educational systems, and the complex social dynamics of early twentieth-century Central Asia.

Conclusion. This study demonstrates that translation equivalence in Fort's "Night and Day" operates as a complex negotiation between preservation and accessibility rather than a straightforward linguistic transfer. The analysis reveals that complete equivalence remains theoretically and practically impossible when translating culturally embedded literary texts like Chulpon's novel, confirming contemporary translation theory's rejection of equivalence as an absolute standard. Fort's strategic employment of functional equivalence, supported by extensive paratextual apparatus, creates a successful cultural bridge that maintains the novel's essential critique of colonialism while making it comprehensible to English-speaking audiences.

The translator's visible presence through annotations and explanatory materials represents a conscious choice to prioritize cultural mediation over translation invisibility, aligning with Venuti's advocacy for translator visibility in cross-cultural literary communication. The equivalence problems identified in this translation illuminate broader challenges facing translators of post-colonial and culturally specific literature, highlighting the necessity of creative compensation strategies and collaborative approaches between translators, publishers, and cultural institutions.

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