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## THE VALUE OF TRANSLATING ARCHAIC AND HISTORICAL WORDS OF UZBEK NOVELS INTO FOREIGN LANGUAGES

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### Abstract

This article analyzes the degree of scientific accuracy in the translation of archaic and historical words found in Uzbek novels. Historical vocabulary serves as an important means of expressing national identity, the spirit of the era, and the cultural memory of a people. Therefore, when translating such words into foreign languages—especially English, Russian, and other European languages—it is crucial to convey their semantic precision, connotative meaning, period color, and national spirit. The article discusses the place of archaic and historical lexical units in Uzbek literature, the level of scientific accuracy in their translation, and the challenges of rendering them adequately in another language.

**Keywords:** Archaic words, historical vocabulary, translation, semantic equivalence, adequacy, national spirit, historical color, lexical transformation

### Introduction

Language is the most significant reflection of a nation’s mentality, historical memory, and cultural identity. Every people, throughout its historical development, creates a rich layer of vocabulary, including words specific to certain periods, as well as religious and political terminology. Some of these lexical units may disappear from everyday use but retain their artistic and aesthetic value in literature, particularly in novels. Archaic and historical words found in Uzbek novels are precisely such lexical elements. They immerse readers in the psychological, spiritual, and social atmosphere of the past and contribute to the realistic depiction of historical periods.



In literary studies, archaic words and historical words are not synonymous. Archaic words (archaisms) are those that have been replaced by newer equivalents in modern language (for example, sipoh → askar, meaning “soldier”), whereas historical words denote concepts specific to a bygone era and are no longer in use in modern society (for example, khan, beg, mirshab). Thus, translating them requires more than conveying their dictionary meaning—it demands rendering their cultural, historical, and social connotations accurately.

In Uzbek novels, such lexical units not only represent historical reality but also express national spirit and collective consciousness. For instance, in Abdulla Qodiriy’s *O’tkan Kunlar* (Bygone Days), words like bek, amir, mirshab, dorboz, and arbob symbolize the social structure of their time. Similarly, in the works of Oybek, Cho’lpon, Said Ahmad, O’tkir Hoshimov, and Tog’ay Murod, archaic vocabulary serves as a stylistic device to reveal the inner spiritual world of the people. Hence, translating these lexical layers adequately into foreign languages is vital for representing the scientific and aesthetic value of Uzbek literature internationally. Translation is not merely a linguistic process but an act of cross-cultural communication, where each word carries national associations that rarely align fully with their foreign counterparts.

For example, the Uzbek word xon may be translated into English as king or ruler, but these equivalents fail to convey the full political and cultural nuances of the Central Asian khanate system. Therefore, translators must adopt a scientifically grounded semantic approach, consulting historical sources, folklore, ethnographic data, and modern translation theory.

### **Literature Review**

The translation of archaic and historical vocabulary is a complex but essential area of linguistics and translation studies. Scholars worldwide have explored the adequacy of rendering historical lexicon, cultural equivalence, and the preservation of national color.

E. Nida, in *Language, Culture, and Translating*, describes translation as a process of “intercultural communication,” emphasizing the importance of dynamic equivalence when dealing with archaic or historical units. According to Nida, the translator should reproduce not only the semantic range of a word but also its



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cultural associations in the target reader's mind. Thus, translating bek, mirshab, or xon literally is less effective than providing a culturally adjusted equivalent.

P. Newmark, in *A Textbook of Translation*, differentiates between semantic and communicative translation. He recommends using the semantic approach when translating historical terms, preserving their inner meaning and connotation as in the original text. For example, while amir can be translated as ruler, its full religious-political meaning is best conveyed as Amir — a traditional Muslim ruler.

L. Venuti, in *The Translator's Invisibility*, argues that the translator acts as a cultural mediator and must retain the "foreignness" of the source text. Excessive domestication, he notes, distances the reader from the authentic spirit of the original. Therefore, rendering Uzbek terms such as madrasah, duo, sajda, taqdir, and arbob through transliteration or explanatory translation ensures a more accurate and culturally rich result.

In Uzbek translation studies, A. Madrahimov's *Tarixiy leksikaning o'zbek adabiyotidagi o'rni* ("The Role of Historical Lexicon in Uzbek Literature") emphasizes the aesthetic and cultural weight of historical words and stresses the need for contextual consistency to preserve their meaning in translation.

### Analysis and Results

Translating archaic and historical words in Uzbek novels is both a linguistic and a cultural challenge. These lexical items not only define a historical period but also embody the cultural traditions and worldview of the Uzbek people. They play a key artistic role in depicting authentic settings in historical novels.

Finding full equivalents for such terms in foreign languages is often difficult because they are deeply rooted in the Uzbek historical and social context. Words such as bek, khan, elchi, mashvarat, mirob, and otaliq reflect political and social structures unique to Central Asian society. If their historical connotation is lost, the artistic value of the translation diminishes. Hence, translators commonly use transliteration, explanatory notes, or contextual adaptation to preserve both form and meaning.

For example, in Qodiriy's *O'tkan Kunlar*, archaic and historical words like paranji, qoshg'ar tun, mirob, biy, mingboshi, and bekларbegi portray the social hierarchy of the time. While mirob could be literally translated as water master,



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this fails to convey its cultural significance. A more accurate rendering would be: mirob (a person responsible for water distribution in traditional irrigation systems).

The connotative meaning of historical words must also be preserved. Translating xon simply as king or ruler strips the term of its philosophical and sociopolitical nuances specific to Eastern culture. Therefore, the principle of semantic fidelity—translating meaning rather than form—should guide such cases.

Furthermore, the translator's linguocultural competence is crucial. Without deep knowledge of Uzbek culture, history, and society, one cannot accurately interpret archaic words like saroy, davlatdor, mirzaboshi, navkar, or eshikog'asi, each of which reflects the hierarchical and administrative structure of its era.

In historical novels, where linguistic authenticity shapes the reader's perception of the past, maintaining the original terminology is especially important. For instance, in the works of Pirmat Shermuhamedov, Pirimqul Qodirov, and Xudoyberdi To'xtaboyev, archaic terms bring historical figures and events to life. If such words are replaced by modern equivalents, the historical realism of the narrative is lost. Translating archaic vocabulary also reveals sociocultural differences. Words like otaliq, avlod, zamon, saltanat, navkar, yorqin, and ko'hna embody cultural and philosophical meanings beyond mere linguistic function. Their literal translation risks oversimplification; hence, semantic adaptation or contextual equivalence is preferable. For instance, ko'hna Buxoro may be rendered as ancient Bukhara, but the ancient and noble city of Bukhara better conveys its stylistic richness.

Ultimately, the scientific accuracy of translating archaic and historical words depends on the translator's ability to preserve their semantic, stylistic, and cultural essence.

## **Conclusion**

In conclusion, translating archaic and historical words found in Uzbek novels into foreign languages is a complex yet essential process. These lexical units shape the artistic spirit, historical atmosphere, and national color of literary works. Therefore, their translation requires careful analysis of semantic, stylistic, and cultural aspects.



Translation should not focus solely on grammatical accuracy but must also maintain the cultural and historical substance of the source text. The scientific translation of archaic and historical vocabulary is not merely a linguistic endeavor—it represents a form of intercultural dialogue. Such words encapsulate the Uzbek nation's history, traditions, governance, social relations, and moral values.

To achieve accuracy, translators often use three main strategies:

1. Transliteration – preserving the original form;
2. Explanatory translation – adding clarifying notes;
3. Contextual adaptation – finding culturally equivalent expressions.

Each method must be chosen according to the genre, purpose, and target audience. In academic translation, precision and explanation are prioritized, while in literary translation, preserving emotional and aesthetic impact is paramount.

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