THE ENTRY AND TRANSLATION OF ENGLISH LITERATURE INTO UZBEKISTAN: HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVES AND MODERN TENDENCIES

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Abstract: The integration of English literature into the cultural landscape of Uzbekistan has undergone a significant transformation over the decades. Initially introduced through secondary translations (primarily via Russian), English literary works have now established a direct presence in the Uzbek language. This paper examines the historical stages of English literature's entry into Uzbekistan, the challenges of literary translation, and the role of prominent Uzbek translators in bringing world classics to the local audience. By analyzing the transition from indirect to direct translation, the research highlights how English literature has influenced Uzbek literary thought and contributed to intercultural communication.

Keywords: English literature, translation studies, Uzbekistan, literary influence, direct translation, cultural exchange, secondary translation.

Introduction

In today’s globalized world, literary translation serves as a vital bridge between cultures. For Uzbekistan, the journey of English literature began in the early 20th century and has evolved alongside the country's political and social changes. The transition from the "bridge-language" method (Russian-mediated) to direct translation (English-to-Uzbek) represents not just a linguistic shift, but a profound cultural awakening. This article explores the historical trajectory of this process and the contemporary trends shaping the field today.

Historical Stages of English Literature in Uzbekistan

The entry of English literature into the Uzbek literary environment can be divided into three distinct phases:

The Early Period (Pre-Soviet and Early 20th Century): Initial interest was driven by the Jadid movement, aimed at educating the nation through world masterpieces.

The Soviet Period (1924–1991): Masterpieces by Shakespeare, Byron, and Dickens were introduced through Russian translations. While these "bridge translations" were essential, they often filtered the original English stylistic nuances through Russian linguistic structures.

The Independence Period (1991–Present): Uzbekistan's sovereignty opened the doors to direct cultural exchange. English became a primary foreign language, leading to a surge in direct translations of both classical and modern Western literature.

The Shift from Indirect to Direct Translation

The most significant modern tendency is the professionalization of direct translation. Scholars like Ghafur Gulom and Erkin Vohidov paved the way by adapting world classics into the Uzbek spirit. Modern translators now focus on preserving the "national color" and idiomatic integrity of the source text. For instance, translating Shakespeare’s sonnets directly from English allows for a more authentic rhythmic and metaphorical representation in the Uzbek language compared to earlier versions based on Russian texts.

Challenges in Literary Translation

Translating between English and Uzbek poses unique challenges due to:

Syntactic Differences: English (SVO) and Uzbek (SOV) have fundamentally different structures.

Cultural Equivalency: Idioms like "let the cat out of the bag" have no literal equivalent and require creative adaptation to resonate with Uzbek readers.

Lexical Gaps: Terms related to Western social traditions or modern technology often require descriptive translation or neologisms.

Modern Tendencies and Future Prospects

Today, the field is characterized by the translation of contemporary genres, including fantasy (e.g., J.K. Rowling) and psychological realism (e.g., Ernest Hemingway). The role of institutions like the Uzbekistan State World Languages University (UzSWLU) is crucial in training a new generation of direct-translation specialists.

Furthermore, digital tools and international collaborations are accelerating the pace at which new English works reach the Uzbek public.

Conclusion

The entry of English literature into Uzbekistan has evolved from a restricted, indirect path to a vibrant, direct exchange. This evolution reflects Uzbekistan’s growing integration into the global community. Direct translation does more than just replicate words; it enriches the Uzbek literary treasury with new perspectives and fosters a deeper understanding of universal human values.

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