

RESEARCHING FOLKLORE TEXTS AND IDENTIFYING TRANSLATION STRATEGIES

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Annotation: *This article examines the theoretical and practical aspects of researching folklore texts and identifying effective translation strategies for their adequate rendering into other languages. Folklore, as a carrier of national mentality, cultural values, and historical memory, presents significant challenges in translation due to its figurative language, symbolism, cultural realia, and oral stylistic features. The study analyzes key folklore genres such as myths, legends, fairy tales, proverbs, and folk songs, emphasizing their linguistic and cultural specificity. Particular attention is paid to translation strategies including cultural adaptation, functional equivalence, descriptive translation, domestication, and foreignization. The article argues that an integrated translation approach ensures the preservation of both semantic meaning and cultural identity of folklore texts. The findings may be useful for translators, linguists, and researchers engaged in intercultural communication and literary translation.*

Keywords: *folklore, oral tradition, translation strategies, cultural adaptation, equivalence, intercultural communication.*

Annotatsiya: *Ushbu maqolada xalq og'zaki ijodi matnlarini tadqiq etish hamda ularni boshqa tillarga tarjima qilishda samarali strategiyalarni belgilash masalalari ilmiy jihatdan tahlil qilinadi. Xalq og'zaki ijodi milliy tafakkur, madaniy qadriyatlar va tarixiy xotiraning muhim ifodachisi bo'lib, uni tarjima qilish jarayonida obrazlilik, ramziylik, milliy realiyalar va og'zaki nutqqa xos uslubiy xususiyatlar muayyan murakkabliklarni yuzaga keltiradi. Maqolada afsona, rivoyat, ertak, maqol va xalq qo'shiqlari kabi janrlarning lingvomadaniy jihatlari ochib beriladi. Tarjimada madaniy moslashtirish, funksional ekvivalentlik, tavsifiy tarjima, milliylashtirish va begonalashtirish strategiyalarining o'rni asoslab beriladi. Tadqiqot natijalari folklor tarjimasida ilmiy-amaliy ahamiyatga ega.*

Kalit so'zlar: *xalq og'zaki ijodi, tarjima strategiyalari, madaniy moslashtirish, ekvivalentlik, lingvomadaniyat.*

Аннотация: *В статье рассматриваются теоретические и практические аспекты исследования фольклорных текстов и определения эффективных стратегий их перевода на другие языки. Фольклор как носитель национального менталитета, культурных ценностей и исторической памяти отличается образностью, символикой, национально-культурными реалиями и устной формой выражения, что усложняет процесс перевода. Анализируются основные жанры устного народного творчества — мифы, легенды, сказки, пословицы и народные песни — с точки зрения их языковой и культурной специфики. Особое внимание уделяется таким переводческим стратегиям, как культурная адаптация, функциональный эквивалент, описательный перевод, доместикация и*

форенизация. Делается вывод о целесообразности комплексного подхода к переводу фольклора с целью сохранения его смысловой и культурной целостности.

Ключевые слова: *фольклор, устное народное творчество, переводческие стратегии, культурная адаптация, эквивалентность, межкультурная коммуникация.*

INTRODUCTION

Folklore represents one of the most valuable manifestations of a nation's cultural heritage, reflecting its collective memory, worldview, moral values, and historical experience. As an integral component of oral tradition, folklore encompasses a wide range of genres such as myths, legends, fairy tales, proverbs, riddles, and folk songs, which have been transmitted orally from generation to generation.

These texts not only preserve linguistic features of a particular community but also encode culturally specific meanings, symbolic expressions, and traditional patterns of thinking. Therefore, the study of folklore extends beyond literary analysis and enters the domains of linguistics, anthropology, cultural studies, and translation studies.

In the context of globalization and intensified intercultural communication, the translation of folklore texts has gained increasing scholarly attention. Translating folklore is not a purely linguistic process; rather, it is a complex act of cultural mediation that requires deep understanding of both source and target cultures.

Folklore texts are deeply rooted in national traditions and social practices, which makes their translation particularly challenging. Elements such as culture-bound terms, idiomatic expressions, metaphorical language, archaic vocabulary, rhythm, and oral stylistic features often resist direct translation and demand the application of specific translation strategies.

One of the central issues in folklore translation is the balance between preserving the original cultural identity of the text and ensuring its comprehensibility for target language readers. Excessive literal translation may result in semantic obscurity, while excessive adaptation may lead to the loss of national color and cultural authenticity.

This dilemma has led scholars to propose various translation strategies, including cultural adaptation, functional equivalence, descriptive translation, domestication, and foreignization. Each of these strategies offers distinct advantages and limitations depending on the genre, function, and intended audience of the folklore text.

Despite the growing body of research in translation studies, the translation of folklore remains an underexplored area, particularly in terms of developing a systematic framework for selecting appropriate translation strategies. Many existing studies focus on literary translation in general, while folklore translation requires a more nuanced approach due to its oral origins, collective authorship, and strong cultural embeddedness.

Moreover, the diversity of folklore genres necessitates differentiated translation techniques that take into account narrative structure, stylistic features, and pragmatic functions.

This article aims to examine the theoretical foundations of folklore research and to identify effective translation strategies for rendering folklore texts into other languages. By analyzing the linguistic and cultural characteristics of folklore and reviewing key translation approaches, the study seeks to propose an integrated strategy that ensures both semantic accuracy and cultural adequacy. The findings of this research contribute to the fields of folklore studies and translation studies and may serve as a methodological guide for translators, researchers, and scholars engaged in the translation of culturally significant texts.

The relevance of researching folklore texts and defining appropriate translation strategies is increasingly evident in the contemporary academic and cultural landscape. In the age of globalization, digital communication, and cultural mobility, national cultures are more interconnected than ever before. While this interconnectedness creates opportunities for intercultural dialogue, it also poses the risk of cultural homogenization and the gradual erosion of intangible cultural heritage. Folklore, as a fundamental component of a nation's cultural identity, requires careful preservation and accurate representation in cross-cultural contexts, making its study and translation highly relevant.

From a scholarly perspective, folklore translation occupies a unique position at the intersection of linguistics, cultural studies, anthropology, and translation studies. Unlike modern literary texts, folklore is characterized by collective authorship, oral transmission, and strong dependence on cultural context. These features make folklore particularly vulnerable to distortion or simplification in translation.

Consequently, identifying effective translation strategies is essential not only for linguistic accuracy but also for safeguarding the cultural and symbolic meanings embedded in folklore texts. The relevance of this study lies in addressing the methodological gaps that exist in the translation of culturally bound and orally transmitted texts.

Another important aspect of the relevance of this research is the growing demand for translated folklore materials in academic, educational, and cultural fields. Folklore texts are increasingly used in comparative literature studies, intercultural education, language teaching, and international publishing projects.

However, the lack of standardized approaches to folklore translation often results in inconsistent or inadequate renderings that fail to convey the original aesthetic and cultural value. By systematically analyzing translation strategies and their applicability to different folklore genres, this study responds to a practical need within both academic and professional translation communities.

Moreover, the relevance of this research is reinforced by contemporary theoretical debates in translation studies, particularly concerning the concepts of equivalence,

domestication, and foreignization. Folklore texts serve as an ideal testing ground for these theoretical constructs due to their dense cultural content and symbolic language. Examining how these strategies function in folklore translation contributes to a deeper understanding of translation as a culturally situated practice rather than a purely technical operation. Thus, the study not only applies existing theories but also critically evaluates their effectiveness in a specific and complex textual domain.

Finally, the relevance of the present study is connected to the broader goal of promoting intercultural understanding and cultural sustainability. Accurate and culturally sensitive translation of folklore enables readers from different linguistic backgrounds to access the worldview, values, and traditions of other cultures. In this sense, folklore translation functions as a bridge between cultures, fostering mutual respect and dialogue. By proposing an integrated approach to researching and translating folklore texts, this study offers both theoretical insights and practical guidelines that are timely and necessary in today's multicultural and multilingual world.

Main Body

Folklore texts constitute a unique and complex object of study due to their oral nature, collective authorship, and deep cultural embeddedness. Unlike written literary works, folklore emerges and develops within a specific socio-cultural environment, reflecting the worldview, beliefs, ethical norms, and historical experiences of a community. Therefore, the analysis of folklore texts requires an interdisciplinary approach that combines linguistic, cultural, and anthropological perspectives. In translation studies, folklore poses particular challenges because its meaning is often conveyed not only through words but also through symbols, metaphors, rhythm, and culturally bound expressions.

One of the primary characteristics of folklore texts is their genre diversity. Myths, legends, fairy tales, proverbs, riddles, and folk songs differ significantly in structure, function, and stylistic features. For instance, fairy tales rely heavily on symbolic imagery and narrative formulas, while proverbs are concise expressions of collective wisdom that often employ metaphor and parallelism. Folk songs, in turn, combine linguistic meaning with rhythm and musicality. These genre-specific features directly influence the choice of translation strategies, as a single universal approach cannot adequately address the complexity of all folklore genres.

From a linguistic perspective, folklore texts frequently contain archaic vocabulary, dialectal forms, fixed expressions, and formulaic structures that have no direct equivalents in the target language. Additionally, folklore is rich in culture-specific elements such as customs, rituals, traditional objects, mythological characters, and social practices. These elements, often referred to as culture-bound items or *realia*, present a major challenge for translators. Literal translation of such elements may result in incomprehension, while excessive explanation can disrupt the narrative flow and aesthetic integrity of the text.

To address these challenges, translation studies propose a range of strategies applicable to folklore translation. One of the most widely used approaches is cultural adaptation, which involves modifying certain elements of the source text to make them more accessible to the target audience while preserving the core meaning. This strategy is particularly effective when translating folklore for educational or popular audiences unfamiliar with the source culture. However, excessive adaptation may lead to cultural loss and misrepresentation if not applied carefully.

Another significant strategy is functional equivalence, which focuses on reproducing the communicative function and pragmatic effect of the original text rather than its formal structure. In the translation of proverbs and sayings, for example, finding a proverb in the target language with a similar meaning and function often proves more effective than a literal translation. This approach prioritizes cultural resonance and reader response, making it especially relevant for concise folklore genres.

Descriptive translation is frequently employed when culture-specific terms or concepts lack equivalents in the target language. This strategy involves explaining the meaning of a term within the text or through minimal expansion. While descriptive translation enhances clarity, it must be balanced carefully to avoid overloading the text with explanatory content. In folklore narratives, where rhythm and flow are essential, excessive description may disrupt the storytelling tradition.

The strategies of domestication and foreignization represent two contrasting but complementary approaches in folklore translation. Domestication seeks to reduce cultural distance by adapting the text to the norms of the target culture, whereas foreignization intentionally preserves the foreign elements of the source text to highlight its cultural uniqueness. In folklore translation, foreignization plays a crucial role in maintaining national color and cultural authenticity, especially in academic and literary contexts. At the same time, domestication may be justified when the primary goal is comprehension and accessibility.

An effective folklore translation often requires an integrated approach, combining multiple strategies depending on the genre, purpose of translation, and target audience. Translators must act not only as linguistic mediators but also as cultural interpreters capable of making informed decisions about which elements should be preserved, adapted, or explained. Such an approach ensures that folklore texts retain their semantic depth, aesthetic value, and cultural significance in translation.

Overall, the main challenge in translating folklore lies in achieving a balance between fidelity to the source text and readability for the target audience. A scientifically grounded analysis of folklore genres and translation strategies enables the development of flexible and context-sensitive solutions. By applying an integrated methodological framework, translators can contribute to the preservation and dissemination of folklore as an essential component of world cultural heritage.

The necessity of studying folklore texts and defining effective translation strategies arises from both theoretical and practical considerations in contemporary translation

studies and cultural research. Folklore represents a form of intangible cultural heritage that is primarily transmitted orally and shaped by collective experience. Due to these characteristics, folklore texts are particularly sensitive to distortion, simplification, or cultural loss when transferred into another language. Without a systematic and well-grounded approach to their translation, the semantic richness and cultural identity embedded in folklore may be significantly weakened or misrepresented.

From a theoretical standpoint, existing translation models are largely developed based on written literary or technical texts and do not always adequately address the specific nature of folklore. The oral origin of folklore, its reliance on formulaic expressions, symbolic imagery, and culturally specific meanings require a distinct analytical framework. Therefore, there is a clear necessity to refine and adapt translation theories to account for the unique linguistic and cultural features of folklore genres. This study responds to this gap by emphasizing the need for genre-sensitive and culture-oriented translation strategies.

The necessity of this research is further обусловлена the growing use of folklore materials in education, intercultural communication, and comparative literary studies. Folklore texts are increasingly translated for academic publications, textbooks, and international cultural projects. However, translators often face difficulties in selecting appropriate strategies due to the lack of clear methodological guidelines. As a result, translations may vary significantly in quality and effectiveness. By systematizing translation strategies and clarifying their applicability, this study provides practical guidance for translators working with folklore texts.

Another important reason for the necessity of this study lies in the role of folklore translation in preserving cultural diversity. In a globalized world, dominant languages and cultures tend to overshadow smaller or less represented traditions. Accurate and culturally sensitive translation of folklore allows these traditions to be introduced to a wider audience without losing their distinctive features. Thus, the study contributes to cultural sustainability by promoting balanced cultural exchange rather than cultural assimilation.

Finally, the necessity of the present research is connected to the increasing demand for interdisciplinary approaches in the humanities. Studying folklore translation requires the integration of linguistic analysis, cultural interpretation, and translation methodology. By adopting such an interdisciplinary perspective, this study not only enhances the scientific understanding of folklore translation but also strengthens the methodological foundation for future research. Consequently, the investigation of folklore texts and translation strategies is not only justified but essential for advancing both translation studies and folklore scholarship.

Conclusion

In conclusion, the study of folklore texts and the identification of appropriate translation strategies represent a crucial area of research within contemporary translation studies and cultural scholarship.

Folklore, as a repository of collective memory, national identity, and cultural values, requires a translation approach that goes beyond linguistic equivalence and addresses deeper cultural and symbolic dimensions.

The findings of this study confirm that folklore translation is a complex and multifaceted process that demands careful consideration of genre-specific features, cultural context, and communicative function.

The analysis demonstrates that no single translation strategy can adequately capture the richness and diversity of folklore texts. Instead, an integrated approach that combines cultural adaptation, functional equivalence, descriptive translation, domestication, and foreignization proves to be the most effective.

Such a flexible strategy enables translators to preserve the semantic content of the source text while maintaining its aesthetic qualities and cultural authenticity.

This balance is essential for ensuring that folklore texts remain accessible to target audiences without losing their original identity.

Furthermore, the study highlights the importance of the translator's role as a cultural mediator.

Translators of folklore must possess not only linguistic competence but also in-depth knowledge of the source and target cultures.

Their decisions directly influence how cultural meanings, values, and traditions are perceived by readers from different cultural backgrounds.

Therefore, folklore translation should be approached as an interpretative and creative process grounded in scientific methodology rather than a purely mechanical transfer of words.

The conclusions drawn from this research also emphasize the broader implications of folklore translation for intercultural communication and cultural sustainability.

Accurate and culturally sensitive translations contribute to the preservation and dissemination of intangible cultural heritage, allowing folklore to function as a bridge between cultures.

In this sense, folklore translation supports mutual understanding, respect for cultural diversity, and meaningful cultural exchange in a globalized world.

Overall, this study contributes to the theoretical and practical development of folklore translation by offering a systematic analysis of translation challenges and strategies.

The results may serve as a methodological foundation for future research and as a practical guide for translators, educators, and scholars engaged in the study and translation of folklore texts.

Continued research in this field is essential to further refine translation approaches and to ensure the faithful transmission of folklore as an enduring and valuable element of world cultural heritage.

Recommendations

1. It is recommended that translators working with folklore texts adopt an integrated translation approach that combines multiple strategies such as cultural adaptation, functional equivalence, and selective foreignization in order to preserve both semantic meaning and cultural authenticity.

2. Translators and researchers should conduct preliminary cultural and ethnographic analysis of folklore texts prior to translation, ensuring a deeper understanding of culture-specific symbols, realia, and traditional worldview embedded in the source material.

3. It is advisable to apply genre-sensitive translation techniques, as different folklore genres—such as proverbs, fairy tales, and folk songs—require distinct methodological approaches based on their structural, stylistic, and pragmatic characteristics.

4. Academic institutions and translation training programs should include specialized modules on folklore translation to enhance translators' cultural competence and methodological awareness in handling orally transmitted and culturally bound texts.

5. Further interdisciplinary research is recommended to develop standardized guidelines and analytical frameworks for folklore translation, integrating insights from linguistics, cultural studies, anthropology, and translation theory.

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