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TRANSLATING IDIOLECTAL FEATURES AND CONCEPTUAL MEANING IN MODERNIST PROSE WITH REFERENCE TO HEMINGWAY

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Abstract

The article investigates the problem of translating idiolectal features and conceptual meaning in modernist prose, with special attention to Ernest Hemingway's minimalist style. The study argues that in Hemingway's works the authorial conceptosphere is activated not by explicit explanation but by short sentences, repetition, silence, pauses, limited evaluation and metaphorical contrasts. These features construct concepts such as courage, fear, endurance, loneliness and death. When such features are simplified or explained in translation, the conceptual layer of the original may be weakened. The paper analyzes several examples from *The Old Man and the Sea*, *A Farewell to Arms* and *The Snows of Kilimanjaro and Other Stories*, comparing the original passages with possible Uzbek translations. The article proposes controlled expansion, rhythmic correspondence, compensation and loyalty to minimalism as productive strategies for translating modernist idiolect. The study concludes that literary translation should preserve not only lexical meaning but also the cognitive-stylistic mechanisms through which the author's conceptual world is created.

Keywords: literary translation, Hemingway, idiolect, conceptosphere, modernist prose, implicit meaning, translation strategy



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Introduction

The translation of modernist prose remains one of the most complex issues in contemporary translation studies. The difficulty lies not only in cultural references or lexical equivalence, but also in the fact that modernist meaning is frequently indirect. The author does not always explain the emotional or philosophical content of the text. Instead, this content is embedded in rhythm, silence, repetition, syntactic economy and the selection of seemingly simple words. The problem of implicit and explicit forms of meaning has also been considered in recent linguocultural studies, where the difference between directly expressed and indirectly reconstructed meanings is treated as an important aspect of discourse interpretation [13, p. 1419]. For this reason, the translator of modernist prose must work not only with the semantic level of the text but also with the author's idiolect and conceptsphere.

The present article focuses on Ernest Hemingway as one of the most representative figures of modernist minimalism. His style is usually associated with short sentences, concrete vocabulary, restrained emotion and the iceberg principle. In his fiction, important concepts are not always named directly. Courage, fear, loneliness, moral endurance and death are often expressed through physical action, dialogue, pause or repetition. The cognitive interpretation of writerly idiosyncrasy and the relation between idiolect, genre and authorial individuality have been discussed in previous studies as necessary conditions for literary meaning formation [9, p. 413; 10, p. 171]. Thus, the translator must preserve the forms that produce implicit meaning. If these forms are replaced by explanatory or stylistically smoother variants, the conceptual structure of the original may be damaged.

The aim of this article is to analyze the translation problems connected with Hemingway's idiolect and to propose strategies that help preserve his



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conceptosphere in Uzbek translation. The study is based on selected examples from *The Old Man and the Sea*, *A Farewell to Arms* and *The Snows of Kilimanjaro and Other Stories*. The analysis demonstrates that the translator's task is not limited to transferring the literal meaning of the sentence; it includes the reconstruction of the author's cognitive and stylistic system.

Theoretical Background

The notion of idiolect refers to the individual use of language by a particular person. In literary discourse, it becomes a complex artistic category. The writer's idiolect includes preferred lexical choices, sentence structures, rhythmic patterns, repetitions, pauses and modes of evaluation. D. Crystal defines idiolect as a set of individual linguistic features that distinguish one speaker or writer from another [2, p. 235]. In fiction, these features are not accidental. They form the author's recognizable manner and often serve as the main means of creating artistic meaning.

The concept of conceptosphere is also important for this study. It can be understood as a system of concepts that organizes the semantic and cognitive space of a text. According to cognitive linguistics, a concept is not identical with a dictionary meaning. It includes cultural, emotional, evaluative and associative components [3, p. 34; 5, p. 40]. In literary texts, concepts are shaped by the author's worldview and are often realized through recurrent images, structures and stylistic choices. Similar issues have been discussed in relation to the representation of concepts in English linguoculture and the transformation of concepts in literary translation [11, p. 670; 12, p. 212].

In Hemingway's prose, idiolect and conceptosphere are strongly interconnected. His short sentences do not merely make the style simple; they create a specific vision of reality. His silence is not an absence of meaning; it is a form of meaning.



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His repetition is not mechanical redundancy; it often reflects endurance, pressure or inner necessity. Therefore, the translator must understand the cognitive function of these features before choosing translation equivalents.

Materials and Methods

The material of the research consists of selected fragments from Hemingway's fiction. The main examples are taken from *The Old Man and the Sea*, *A Farewell to Arms* and *The Snows of Kilimanjaro and Other Stories*. These texts were chosen because they contain the most typical features of Hemingway's idiolect: syntactic brevity, repetition, emotional restraint and metaphorical opposition.

The method of analysis is comparative and cognitive-stylistic. First, the idiolectal feature in the English original is identified. Second, its conceptual function is interpreted. Third, a possible Uzbek translation is examined from the point of view of whether it preserves or weakens the conceptual meaning. This method allows the study to move beyond ordinary lexical comparison and to evaluate translation as the reconstruction of an authorial conceptual system.

Repetition as a Conceptual Marker

One of the most frequent translation problems in Hemingway's prose is the treatment of repetition. In many target languages, including Uzbek, repeated words or structures may be perceived as stylistic imperfection if they are not motivated by context. However, in modernist prose repetition often performs a conceptual function. It may create rhythm, psychological pressure, emotional restraint or the sense of physical endurance.

Consider the following example from *The Old Man and the Sea*:

"He hit him again and again, driving the knife into the fish although he knew it was already dead, but he struck it with no hope and with resolution" [6, p. 66].



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A possible Uzbek translation is:

U baliqqa yana va yana urdi, u allaqachon o'lganini bilsa ham pichoqni sanchishda davom etdi, buni umidsiz, ammo qat'iyat bilan qildi.

The phrase again and again is not a neutral repetition. It reflects the rhythm of continuous effort and activates the concept of endurance. The action continues even when hope has disappeared. This creates the conceptual opposition between hopelessness and resolution. If the translator removes the repetition and translates the sentence as “he struck the fish several times,” the physical rhythm and inner pressure of the original become weaker. The sentence becomes more informative but less conceptual.

Thus, repetition should not automatically be eliminated in translation. In Hemingway's idiolect, repeated structures often carry the main conceptual load. The translator may preserve the repetition directly if it sounds natural enough in the target language. If direct repetition is impossible, compensation can be used: the rhythm of repeated effort may be recreated through another lexical or syntactic device.

Silence, Pause and the Problem of Explanation

Another important feature of Hemingway's idiolect is silence. His characters often do not explain their emotional states. Instead, the text presents silence, observation or a small physical movement. This creates implicit meaning and invites the reader to interpret the situation independently. The opposition between implicit and explicit textual forms is therefore essential for understanding how meaning is reconstructed in discourse [13, p. 1420].

For example:

“He did not say anything for a long time. Then he looked across the water and watched the line carefully, as though it were alive in his hands” [6, p. 31].



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A possible Uzbek translation is:

U uzoq vaqt hech narsa demadi. Soʻng suv tomon qaradi va goʻyo qoʻllarida jon bordek, qarmoq ipini diqqat bilan kuzatdi.

The conceptual meaning of the passage is created by the combination of silence and careful observation. The character's inner tension is not named. It is suggested by the fact that he does not speak and by the intensity of his gaze. If the translator adds words such as "anxiously," "with fear" or "in heavy silence," the implicit structure of the original changes. The reader is no longer allowed to infer the emotional state; the translator interprets it instead.

This problem is especially relevant for Uzbek translation, where explanatory additions are sometimes used to make emotional meaning clearer. In Hemingway's prose, however, excessive explanation may destroy the authorial idiolect. The translator should preserve the silence as silence. Only minimal expansion may be acceptable when the target reader cannot understand the basic situation without it. Otherwise, the conceptual effect of restraint is lost.

Short Sentences and Emotional Restraint

Hemingway's syntax is another major source of translation difficulty. His short sentences often appear simple, but their simplicity is conceptually meaningful. They express control, emotional distance and the refusal to dramatize experience. The translator may be tempted to combine short sentences into more complex structures in order to make the target text smoother. Yet this can change the authorial worldview.

The following example from *A Farewell to Arms* illustrates the problem:

"It was bad. He knew it and he did not try to think about it further" [7, p. 187].

A possible Uzbek translation is:

Bu yomon edi. U buni bilardi va bu haqda ortiqcha oʻylamaslikka harakat qildi.



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The sentence “It was bad” is extremely brief. It contains evaluation, but the evaluation is not expanded. This restraint is central to the passage. The character recognizes the situation, but the text does not allow emotional explanation to develop. If the translator turns the passage into a long sentence with additional psychological details, the concept of controlled suffering becomes weaker.

Therefore, syntactic brevity should be treated as part of the author’s idiolect. It is not merely a surface feature. It participates in the construction of the conceptsphere. In translation, the preservation of short sentence structure helps maintain the rhythm of emotional control. When syntactic adaptation is necessary, the translator should avoid unnecessary emotional intensification.

Metaphorical Contrast and Conceptual Opposition

Although Hemingway is known for minimalism, his prose also contains strong metaphorical contrasts. These contrasts are often simple, but they activate important conceptual oppositions. One example is the use of animal imagery:

“I bolted like a rabbit when the lion charged, and I ran without knowing where I was going” [8, p. 22].

A possible Uzbek translation is:

Sher hujum qilganida men quyondek qochib ketdim va qayerga yugurayotganimni ham bilmasdim.

Here the contrast between rabbit and lion activates the conceptual pair fear – courage. The rabbit image expresses panic and helplessness, while the lion image represents danger and aggression. If the metaphor is replaced by an explanatory phrase such as “I was very frightened,” the conceptual opposition disappears. The sentence becomes semantically understandable but artistically poorer.

In literary translation, metaphor should be preserved whenever possible, especially when it participates in the author’s conceptual system. In this example,



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the Uzbek equivalent quyondek qochmoq is understandable and keeps the image. Therefore, direct metaphorical translation is preferable to explanation. The translator should avoid replacing images with abstract emotional labels unless the original image is completely untranslatable in the target culture.

Translation Strategies

The analysis shows that the translation of Hemingway's idiolect requires several controlled strategies. The first strategy is loyalty to minimalism. The translator should avoid unnecessary adjectives, adverbs and explanatory phrases. Hemingway's style depends on what is not said as much as on what is said.

The second strategy is rhythmic correspondence. Short sentences, repetitions and pauses should be preserved as far as the norms of the target language allow. Rhythm is not decorative; it helps form conceptual meaning. The third strategy is controlled expansion. Expansion may be used only when the target reader cannot understand the basic referential meaning. It should not replace implicit emotion with explicit commentary.

The fourth strategy is compensation. If an idiolectal feature cannot be preserved in one place, a similar effect may be recreated in another segment. For example, when exact repetition sounds unnatural in Uzbek, the translator may use parallel syntactic rhythm or a repeated action verb. The fifth strategy is metaphorical preservation. Images that carry conceptual opposition should not be replaced by abstract explanations.

These strategies demonstrate that translation is not a mechanical transfer of information. It is a reconstruction of the author's cognitive and stylistic system. In modernist prose, this reconstruction is especially important because the conceptual layer is often hidden beneath the surface of simple language. The transformation of concepts in literary translation, especially in modernist and



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psychologically complex prose, requires attention to both the conceptual core and its stylistic realization [12, p. 213].

Conclusion

The study confirms that Hemingway's idiolect and conceptsphere are deeply interconnected. His short sentences, repetitions, silence and metaphorical contrasts are not only stylistic features; they are mechanisms that activate conceptual meaning. Concepts such as endurance, fear, courage, loneliness and death are often not directly named in the text. They are created through the structure of action, pause and restrained evaluation.

For this reason, the translation of Hemingway's prose requires special attention to idiolectal features. If the translator removes repetition, fills silence with explanation, complicates short sentences or replaces metaphors with abstract descriptions, the conceptual depth of the original may be weakened. The translation may remain lexically correct but become conceptually inadequate.

The most productive translation strategies are loyalty to minimalism, rhythmic correspondence, controlled expansion, compensation and metaphorical preservation. These strategies help the translator recreate not only the verbal meaning but also the cognitive-stylistic mechanism of the original. Thus, the translator of modernist prose becomes a creative interpreter of the author's conceptual world.

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