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RASHIDOVNING “BO‘RONDAN KUCHLI” VA CH. DIKKENSNING “HARD TIMES” ASARLARI ASOSIDA.....	
Tursunaliyeva M., Egamberdieva Sh. // LINGUOCULTURAL FEATURES OF REALIA IN ENGLISH AND UZBEK LANGUAGES.....	169
To‘xliyeva Zahro, Isakova Nodira. // EXAMINATION OF THE TRANSLATION OF PSYCHOLINGUISTIC ATTRIBUTES IN “PRIDE AND PREJUDICE” BY JANE AUSTEN.....	173
Urmanova Nodira, Rasulova Munajat. // AFSONALARNING KELIB CHIQISHI VA ULARNING MIFOLOGIYA BILAN BOG‘LIQLIGI.....	177
Usmonov Ibrohim, Nizamova Salomat. // INGLIZ VA KOREYS TILLARIDA SAVOL SHAKLIDAGI GAPLARNING QIYOSIY TAHLILI.....	182
Uzakova Nazira, Tashpulatova Shirina. // INGLIZ VA O‘ZBEK TILLARIDA O‘ZLASHGAN SO‘ZLARNING NAZARIY ASOSLARI.....	186
Uzakova Nazira, Tashpulatova Shirina. // O INGLIZ VA O‘ZBEK TILLARIDAGI O‘ZLASHGAN SO‘ZLARNING TARJIMA XUSUSIYATLARI.....	190
Xakimov Dilshodbek, Radjabov Nasir. // INGLIZ TILI FRAZEOLOGIK TIZIMINING SHAKLLANISHIDA UILYAM SHEKSPIRNING ROLI: ILMIY TADQIQOT VA TAHLIL.....	193
Xakimova Umida, Tashpulatova Shirina. // PHONETICS AS A FUNDAMENTAL BRANCH OF LINGUISTICS: ASPECTS, DIVISIONS, AND PEDAGOGICAL APPLICATIONS.....	198
Xanaliyeva Gulhumor, Muratxodjayeva Feruzaxon. // INGLIZ VA O‘ZBEK TILLARIDA EMOTSIYALARNI IFODALOVCHI OBRAZLI BIRLIKLARNING KOGNITIV TALQINIDA TIL VA MADANIYAT UYG‘UNLIGI.....	206
Fayzullayevna Y., Boboeva M. // THEORETICAL APPROACHES TO LINGUISTIC CORPORA.....	211
Xolboyeva Odina, Nizamova Salomat. // INGLIZ VA KOREYS TILLARIDA SO‘Z TARTIBI.....	216
Xudoyberdiyeva Zebo, Muratxodjayeva Feruzaxon. // INGLIZ VA O‘ZBEK TILLARIDA AYOLLAR OBRAZINI IFODALOVCHI IBORALAR	219
Yo‘ldosheva F., Muratxodjayeva Feruzaxon. // PRAGMATIC FEATURES OF DIGITAL COMMUNICATION.....	227
Yo‘ldosheva F., Muratxodjayeva Feruzaxon. // KOGNITIV MOSLASHUV VA PSIXOLINGVISTIK JARAYONLARNING INTEGRATIV TAHLILI.....	232
Yo‘ldashova Go‘zal, Tashpulatova Shirina. // LINGUACULTURAL ASPECTS OF ADDRESSING FORMS IN BRITISH VS. AMERICAN ENGLISH.....	236
Yunusxanova Moxira, Boboyeva Madina. // KOGNITIV LINGVISTIKADA SUN‘IY INTELLEKTNING TUTGAN O‘RNI VA AHAMIYATI.....	240
Yusupova Dilnoza, Turdiyev Jahongir. // THE ROLE OF PARALINGUISTIC FEATURES IN SOCIAL MEDIA.....	243
Yusupova Mohigul, Raxmatova Bahora. // ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE-BASED TRANSLATION AND TRANSLATION TECHNOLOGIES	246
Azizabonu Karimjonova, Xudayberdiyeva Svetlana. // O‘ZBEK VA KOREYS MAQOLLARIDA GENDER ROLLARI.....	249



LINGUOCULTURAL FEATURES OF REALIA IN ENGLISH AND UZBEK LANGUAGES



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Abstract. This article explores the concept, types, and cultural significance of realia in English and Uzbek languages. Realia are culturally specific elements that reflect both tangible and intangible aspects of a society, such as traditions, foods, festivals, social institutions, and geographical landmarks. The article categorizes realia into four main groups: geographical, ethnographic, socio-political, and everyday life. It also discusses the challenges in translating realia, including lack of equivalence, cultural misunderstanding, and potential loss of cultural meaning. Various translation strategies, such as transliteration, expansion, cultural substitution, and generalization, are examined.

Keywords: *realia, cultural elements, translation, English, Uzbek, intercultural communication, language and culture.*

Annotatsiya. Ushbu maqola ingliz va o‘zbek tillaridagi realiyalar tushunchasi, turlari va madaniy ahamiyatini yoritadi. Realialar – jamiyatning moddiy va nomoddiy jihatlarini, masalan, an’ana, taomlar, bayramlar, ijtimoiy institutlar va geografik ob’ektlarni aks ettiruvchi madaniyatga xos elementlardir. Maqola realialarni to‘rtta asosiy guruhga ajratadi: geografik, etnografik, ijtimoiy-siyosiy va kundalik hayotga oid. Shuningdek, realialarni tarjima qilishdagi qiyinchiliklar, masalan, ekvivalent yetishmasligi, madaniy tushunmovchilik va madaniy ma’noni yo‘qotish masalalari muhokama qilinadi. Tarjima strategiyalari sifatida transkriptsiya, tushuntirish, madaniy substitutsiya va umumlashtirish keltiriladi.

Kalit so‘zlar: *realiyalar, madaniy elementlar, tarjima, ingliz tili, o‘zbek tili, madaniyatlararo muloqot, til va madaniyat.*

Аннотация. Данная статья посвящена понятию, типам и культурной значимости реалий в английском и узбекском языках. Реалии – это элементы языка, специфичные для культуры, отражающие материальные и нематериальные аспекты общества, такие как традиции, блюда, праздники, социальные институты и географические объекты. Статья классифицирует реалии на четыре группы: географические, этнографические, социально-политические и из повседневной жизни. Также рассматриваются трудности перевода реалий, включая отсутствие эквивалентов, культурные недопонимания и возможную потерю культурного смысла. Обсуждаются стратегии перевода, такие как транслитерация, расширение, культурная замена и обобщение.



Ключевые слова: *реалии, культурные элементы, перевод, английский язык, узбекский язык, межкультурная коммуникация, язык и культура.*

INTRODUCTION. Language is not only a means of communication but also a vessel that carries the cultural identity and heritage of a community. One of the most intriguing aspects of studying language is its ability to encode the distinct cultural realities of a society. These culture-bound elements, known as realia, include a variety of tangible and intangible cultural features such as traditional customs, local cuisine, social organizations, festivals, and notable geographical landmarks. Realia are closely woven into the daily routines and historical experiences of a community, making them an essential tool for understanding the cultural framework of a language-speaking group [1]. Unlike general vocabulary, realia often do not have precise equivalents in other languages, which presents significant challenges for translators, language learners, and those engaged in intercultural communication. To study and translate realia effectively, a multidisciplinary approach that integrates linguistics, cultural studies, and translation theory is necessary.

The English and Uzbek languages, belonging to different linguistic families and shaped by distinct cultural backgrounds, provide a rich area for comparative analysis of realia. English, a global lingua franca rooted in Western European culture, reflects the values, social structures, and historical experiences of Anglo-American societies [2]. On the other hand, Uzbek, a Turkic language spoken in Central Asia, carries centuries-old traditions influenced by Islamic heritage, nomadic lifestyles, and regional customs. This study focuses on identifying and categorizing realia in both languages into domains such as geographical, ethnographic, socio-political, and everyday life. By examining specific examples and the challenges involved in translating them, the research demonstrates how language serves as a mirror of culture and how understanding realia can improve cross-cultural communication [3]. As the modern world becomes increasingly interconnected, effective translation strategies are crucial to bridge cultural gaps. This research contributes to comparative linguistics and translation studies while providing practical insights for translators, educators, and cultural mediators working between English and Uzbek.

Concept of realia and its importance. Realia are elements of language that are specific to a particular culture and reflect both tangible and intangible aspects of that culture, such as customs, traditional foods, social structures, festivals, and notable landmarks. They connect words with the cultural context in which they are used and can be understood as “real-world objects or concepts” unique to a given society. Because many realia do not have direct equivalents in other languages, they often create challenges for translators, language learners, and those involved in cross-cultural communication [4]. For example, in Japanese, the term “*tatami*” refers to traditional straw mats used for flooring in homes. There is no exact equivalent in English that conveys both the material, cultural, and functional aspects of *tatami*, making it a clear case of realia. Understanding such terms requires knowledge of the cultural and social practices surrounding them, not just the literal translation.

Types of realia. Realia can be grouped into several categories, reflecting different cultural, social, and environmental aspects of a society:



Geographical Realia: These are words related to the natural environment, regions, landscapes, and climate conditions. They provide insight into how people interact with their surroundings [5]. English examples: Everest (the highest mountain), Bayou (marshy region in the southern USA). Uzbek examples: *suv havzasi* (water basin), *tog' yonbag'ri* (mountain slope), *o'rmonzor* (forest area). **Ethnographic Realia:** This category includes cultural traditions, attire, cuisine, festivals, and handmade crafts. They reflect the values, lifestyle, and identity of a community. English examples: *Easter*, *kimono* (Japanese traditional garment), *pumpkin pie*. Uzbek examples: *sumalak* (traditional sweet dish for Navruz), *chapan* (traditional coat), *kurash* (folk wrestling sport). **Socio-Political Realia:** These words describe social structures, political systems, and traditional governance practices. They highlight how societies are organized and governed. English examples: *Senate*, *mayor*, *town hall*. Uzbek examples: *mahalla raisi* (head of a neighborhood council), *shahar kengashi* (city council), *oqsoqollar kengashi* (council of elders). **Everyday Life Realia:** These are terms used in daily routines, tools, household items, and customs. They show the practical and routine aspects of cultural life. English examples: laundry basket, fireplace, coffee shop. Uzbek examples: *tanob* (traditional water wheel), *g'o'za yostiq* (cotton pillow), *tandir* (clay oven for baking bread) [6].

English realia mostly reflect urbanized, industrial, and modern aspects of society. Many English cultural terms are connected to contemporary social practices, media, and political life rather than traditional rural customs. For instance, expressions like “*Boxing Day*” or “*Prime Minister's Question Time*” illustrate cultural events and political traditions unique to English-speaking societies. In contrast, Uzbek realia are strongly tied to rural life, family-centered social structures, and traditional customs shaped by Islamic heritage and Central Asian history [7]. For example, “*g'o'za yostig'i*” (cotton pillow used in traditional households) and “*kurash*” (traditional folk wrestling) reflect daily life, physical culture, and long-standing customs in Uzbek society.

Translating realia presents several difficulties like lack of equivalence: many realia have no precise counterpart in the target language. For instance, translating “*Boxing Day*” into Uzbek requires explanation rather than a single word. Cultural misunderstanding: Audiences may not understand the social or historical context of the realia. Loss of cultural meaning: The original cultural significance can be diminished or lost during translation, making it harder to convey the intended concept fully.

Transliteration – writing the original word in the target language using a similar pronunciation. Example: “*do'ppi*” into “*doppi*”. Expansion – providing additional explanation to make the cultural meaning clear. Example: “*mahalla*” into “*a traditional Uzbek neighborhood community*”. Cultural substitution – replacing a culturally specific term with a similar one from the target culture. Example: “*Thanksgiving*” into “*Navruz*” or “*Hosil bayrami*”. Generalization – using a broader, more general term to represent the realia. Example: “*mahalla*” into “*neighborhood*”.

The Importance of Studying English and Uzbek Realia Learning about realia in English and Uzbek is valuable because: It allows learners to understand the cultural context behind words and expressions. It supports translators in conveying culturally specific ideas accurately. It promotes effective intercultural communication by raising awareness of cultural differences. It helps illustrate



the relationship between language and culture, showing how words reflect social and traditional practices [8].

CONCLUSION. In conclusion, realia represent a vital link between language and culture, revealing how deeply linguistic expressions are embedded in the social, historical, and cultural realities of a community. As culture-bound elements, realia go beyond simple vocabulary and embody the values, traditions, and lived experiences of a society. The comparative analysis of English and Uzbek realia clearly demonstrates that language functions not merely as a communication tool but as a cultural mirror reflecting different worldviews, lifestyles, and social structures. The study shows that English realia largely reflect modern, urbanized, and institutional aspects of life, while Uzbek realia preserve strong connections to traditional customs, communal values, and historical heritage. These differences highlight the influence of cultural background on linguistic development and emphasize the importance of cultural awareness in language study and translation. The challenges associated with translating realia – such as lack of equivalence, cultural misunderstanding, and loss of meaning – further underline the need for careful and informed translation strategies. By applying appropriate translation techniques such as transliteration, expansion, cultural substitution, and generalization, translators can reduce cultural gaps and ensure more accurate and meaningful communication. Ultimately, the study of English and Uzbek realia contributes significantly to comparative linguistics, translation studies, and intercultural communication. It equips language learners, translators, and educators with deeper cultural insight and fosters mutual understanding in an increasingly globalized world.

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