



A COMPARATIVE STUDY OF AI-MEDIATED AND HUMAN LITERARY TRANSLATION BETWEEN ENGLISH AND UZBEK FROM A TRANSCULTURAL PERSPECTIVE

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Abstract

Artificial intelligence (AI) has rapidly transformed translation practices by introducing neural machine translation systems capable of producing increasingly fluent multilingual texts. While AI-assisted translation demonstrates remarkable efficiency in technical and informational texts, its application to literary translation remains controversial due to the complexity of linguistic creativity, stylistic expression, and cultural specificity. This study investigates the performance of AI-assisted translation systems in comparison with human translatorial practice within the context of English–Uzbek literary translation. Employing a transcultural-contrastive approach, the research analyzes twenty literary excerpts selected from English novels containing metaphors, idiomatic expressions, culture-specific references, symbolism, and stylistic devices. The translations generated by ChatGPT, DeepL, and Google Translate are compared with published or professionally produced human translations. The analysis evaluates semantic accuracy, stylistic equivalence, pragmatic adequacy, and the preservation of cultural meaning. The findings indicate that although AI systems successfully reproduce the denotative meaning of literary texts and significantly improve translation efficiency, they frequently encounter difficulties in preserving figurative language, emotional nuance, and culturally embedded expressions. Human translators demonstrate greater sensitivity to contextual interpretation and aesthetic representation, particularly when translating culturally marked elements. The study concludes that AI should be regarded as a complementary instrument rather than a replacement for literary translators. A collaborative human–AI translation model is proposed to maximize translation quality while benefiting from technological advances.

Keywords: Artificial Intelligence, Literary Translation, English–Uzbek Translation, Transcultural Translation, Comparative Translation Studies, ChatGPT, Neural Machine Translation, Cultural Equivalence.

Introduction

The rapid development of artificial intelligence has fundamentally transformed language-related professions, particularly translation studies. Over the past decade, advances in neural machine translation (NMT) and large language models (LLMs) have significantly improved the quality of automatically generated translations. Systems such as ChatGPT, DeepL Translator, and Google Translate are now capable of producing grammatically accurate and contextually coherent texts in hundreds of languages within seconds. Consequently, AI-assisted translation has become an indispensable component of international communication, localization, education, and professional translation workflows.

Despite these technological achievements, literary translation remains one of the most demanding areas of translation practice. Unlike technical or scientific texts, literary works are characterized by aesthetic value, stylistic individuality, figurative language, emotional expression, symbolism, and profound cultural embeddedness. Literary translators are therefore required not only to transfer linguistic meaning but also to recreate artistic style, preserve the author's voice, and convey the cultural worldview encoded in the original text. These characteristics raise important questions regarding the extent to which artificial intelligence can perform literary translation with the same degree of adequacy as human translators.

Translation scholars have long emphasized that literary translation represents an act of intercultural communication rather than a simple linguistic substitution. Bassnett (2021) argues that literary texts function within particular cultural systems and should therefore be interpreted through both linguistic and cultural perspectives. Similarly, Venuti (2018) maintains that translation inevitably involves cultural negotiation, requiring translators to decide whether to preserve the foreign identity of the source culture or adapt the text to the expectations of the target audience. Such decisions require interpretation, creativity, and cultural competence, abilities that remain difficult for automated systems to replicate consistently.

The emergence of large language models has intensified scholarly debate concerning the future role of professional translators. Unlike traditional statistical or rule-based machine translation systems, contemporary AI models generate translations through contextual prediction learned from enormous multilingual corpora. This enables them to produce more natural sentences, recognize discourse patterns, and adapt lexical choices according to context. Nevertheless, recent research suggests that AI systems continue to experience difficulties when translating figurative expressions, irony, humor, metaphors, idiomatic language, and culture-specific references, all of which constitute fundamental components of literary discourse.

The English–Uzbek language pair presents additional challenges because of substantial linguistic and cultural differences between the two languages. English belongs to the Germanic branch of the Indo-European language family, whereas Uzbek belongs to the Turkic language family. Their grammatical structures, lexical systems, phraseological traditions, and cultural conceptualizations differ considerably. These differences become especially apparent in literary translation, where meaning extends beyond lexical equivalence and frequently depends upon historical, religious, and sociocultural associations. Consequently, literal translation often fails to preserve communicative effect, while successful literary translation requires cultural adaptation and stylistic reconstruction.

Within translation studies, the concept of transculturality has received increasing attention during the past two decades. Transcultural approaches emphasize that translation should not merely transfer texts between languages but should facilitate communication between cultures possessing distinct values, traditions, and systems of meaning. Under this perspective, translators act as cultural mediators who reconstruct messages according to the cultural knowledge and expectations of target readers. Artificial intelligence, however, lacks lived cultural experience and therefore relies exclusively on statistical relationships learned from training data. Whether these computational representations can adequately substitute for human cultural competence remains an open research question.

Existing studies investigating AI-assisted translation have primarily focused on European language pairs such as English–French, English–German, English–Spanish, and English–Chinese. These studies generally report that neural machine translation has reached remarkably high levels of grammatical accuracy and lexical consistency. However, considerably fewer studies have examined AI performance in

low-resource language pairs, particularly English–Uzbek literary translation. The limited availability of parallel literary corpora, combined with the structural differences between English and Uzbek, makes this language pair an important yet underexplored area of translation research.

Moreover, previous investigations have often evaluated translation quality using general automatic metrics such as BLEU or COMET scores. While these measures provide valuable quantitative information, they are insufficient for assessing literary translation because they cannot accurately measure stylistic elegance, emotional resonance, metaphorical meaning, or cultural appropriateness. Literary translation therefore requires qualitative analysis based on linguistic, stylistic, pragmatic, and transcultural criteria. This study addresses that gap by employing a comparative qualitative framework rather than relying exclusively on automated evaluation metrics.

The present research adopts a transcultural-contrastive approach to compare translations produced by ChatGPT, DeepL Translator, Google Translate, and professional human translators. Twenty literary excerpts containing metaphors, idiomatic expressions, cultural references, symbolism, irony, and stylistic devices were selected from representative English literary works. Each excerpt was translated into Uzbek using the selected AI systems and subsequently compared with professional translations. The comparison focuses on four principal dimensions: semantic accuracy, stylistic equivalence, pragmatic adequacy, and cultural transfer.

Unlike many previous studies that discuss AI translation theoretically, this research is based on direct textual comparison. By analyzing authentic literary examples, the study seeks to identify specific strengths and weaknesses of contemporary AI systems within English–Uzbek literary translation. Particular attention is devoted to culturally marked lexical items, figurative language, and context-dependent meanings that typically challenge automated translation systems.

The objectives of this study are therefore:

- to examine the effectiveness of AI-assisted translation in English–Uzbek literary translation;
- to compare AI-generated translations with professional human translations through a transcultural perspective;
- to identify translation problems involving metaphors, idioms, symbolism, and culture-specific references;

- to evaluate the preservation of semantic, stylistic, pragmatic, and cultural equivalence;
- to propose an effective collaborative model integrating artificial intelligence with professional literary translation.

The significance of this research extends beyond translation studies. As artificial intelligence becomes increasingly integrated into publishing, education, localization, and digital humanities, understanding both its capabilities and limitations becomes essential for translators, educators, researchers, and software developers. The findings may contribute to improving AI-assisted translation technologies for low-resource languages, expanding English–Uzbek translation scholarship, and supporting the development of culturally informed AI systems capable of producing more accurate literary translations.

Methods

2.1 Research Design

This study employed a qualitative comparative research design supported by descriptive analysis. A transcultural-contrastive approach was adopted to evaluate the effectiveness of artificial intelligence in English–Uzbek literary translation compared with professional human translation. The study focused on identifying similarities and differences between AI-generated translations and human translations, particularly in preserving semantic meaning, stylistic characteristics, and culture-specific elements. Unlike quantitative studies that primarily rely on automatic evaluation metrics, this research emphasized close textual analysis. The objective was not to determine which translation system produced the highest numerical score but rather to investigate how different translation approaches interpret literary language and transmit cultural meaning.

2.2 Research Corpus

The research corpus consisted of twenty literary excerpts selected from well-known English literary works. The selected texts represented different literary styles and periods while containing sufficient linguistic and cultural complexity for comparative analysis.

The corpus included excerpts from the following works:

- Jane Austen's *Pride and Prejudice*

- Lewis Carroll's Alice's Adventures in Wonderland
- Mark Twain's The Adventures of Tom Sawyer
- George Orwell's Animal Farm
- Oscar Wilde's The Happy Prince

These works were selected because they contain numerous metaphors, idiomatic expressions, culture-specific references, symbolism, irony, and stylistic devices that typically present challenges for machine translation systems.

Each excerpt contained approximately 120–180 words. The total corpus comprised approximately 3,000 English words.

2.3 Translation Procedure

Each literary excerpt was translated independently using four different approaches:

1. ChatGPT (GPT-4.1/ChatGPT)
2. DeepL Translator
3. Google Translate
4. Published or professionally prepared human translation (used as the reference translation)

The AI-generated translations were produced without post-editing in order to evaluate their original performance. Human translations served as the reference standard for comparison because they reflected professional literary translation practice.

All translations were collected under identical conditions to ensure methodological consistency.

2.4 Analytical Framework

The translations were examined using a transcultural-contrastive analytical framework. This framework combines principles from comparative translation studies, cultural translation theory, and discourse analysis.

The analysis focused on four major dimensions:

Semantic Equivalence

Semantic equivalence refers to the degree to which the translated text preserves the original meaning.

The following aspects were examined:

- lexical accuracy;
- sentence meaning;
- contextual interpretation;
- preservation of implicit meaning.

Stylistic Equivalence

Literary translation requires preservation of artistic style rather than merely lexical meaning.

The following stylistic features were evaluated:

- imagery;
- narrative voice;
- rhythm;
- emotional tone;
- figurative language;
- lexical choice.

Pragmatic Adequacy

Pragmatic adequacy concerns whether readers of the target text receive approximately the same communicative effect as readers of the source text.

Special attention was given to:

- irony;
- humour;
- indirect speech;
- implied meaning;
- communicative intention.

Cultural Transfer

Since this study adopts a transcultural perspective, cultural transfer represents one of the principal analytical categories.

The following cultural elements were investigated:

- culture-specific vocabulary;
- historical references;
- customs and traditions;

- religious expressions;
- proper names;
- food and clothing;
- social institutions;
- idiomatic expressions.

The effectiveness of each translation system was evaluated according to its ability to preserve these elements while maintaining readability for Uzbek readers.

2.5 Evaluation Criteria

To ensure systematic comparison, every translated excerpt was evaluated using four qualitative criteria.

Table 1 Evaluation Criteria Used in the Comparative Analysis

Criterion	Description
Semantic Accuracy	Preservation of propositional meaning and contextual interpretation
Stylistic Equivalence	Preservation of literary style, imagery, and expressive language
Pragmatic Adequacy	Preservation of communicative intention and reader response
Cultural Equivalence	Successful transfer of culture-specific meaning and transcultural references

Rather than assigning arbitrary numerical scores, each translation was analyzed descriptively according to these criteria. This approach is considered more appropriate for literary translation because aesthetic quality cannot always be measured objectively.

2.6 Data Analysis

The collected translations were analyzed through comparative textual analysis. The analysis proceeded in five stages:

1. Identification of significant linguistic and cultural elements in each source text.
2. Comparison of AI-generated translations with the professional human translation.
3. Identification of translation shifts, omissions, additions, and semantic modifications.
4. Classification of translation problems according to semantic, stylistic, pragmatic, or cultural categories.
5. Interpretation of the findings from a transcultural perspective.

Representative translation examples were selected to illustrate typical strengths and weaknesses of each translation system.

2.7 Reliability and Validity

To improve the credibility of the research, identical source texts were translated using all four translation approaches. The same analytical framework was applied throughout the study, ensuring consistency in data interpretation.

Furthermore, the analysis was based on established theories of translation studies, including dynamic equivalence, functional equivalence, domestication and foreignization, and transcultural translation. Employing multiple theoretical perspectives reduced analytical bias and strengthened the validity of the findings.

Although literary translation inevitably involves a degree of subjective interpretation, the comparative analysis focused on observable linguistic and cultural features rather than personal preferences.

2.8 Ethical Considerations

The study used publicly available literary texts solely for academic analysis. Short excerpts were examined for research purposes in accordance with accepted scholarly practice. No personal data or human participants were involved; therefore, formal ethical approval was not required.

Results

3.1 Comparative Analysis of AI-Assisted and Human Literary Translation

This study compared translations generated by ChatGPT, DeepL Translator, Google Translate, and a professional human translator. The comparison focused on twenty literary excerpts selected from English literary works containing metaphors, idiomatic expressions, cultural references, symbolism, and stylistic devices.

The analysis demonstrated that all three AI systems successfully conveyed the literal meaning of most source texts. However, considerable differences emerged in preserving figurative language, cultural implications, and literary style. ChatGPT consistently produced more natural and context-sensitive translations than DeepL and Google Translate, while professional human translations remained superior in preserving the artistic qualities of the original texts.

The findings are organized according to four analytical categories: semantic equivalence, stylistic equivalence, pragmatic adequacy, and cultural transfer.

3.2 Semantic Equivalence

Semantic equivalence refers to the preservation of the propositional meaning of the source text.

Example 1

Source Text (Jane Austen, *Pride and Prejudice*)

"She was tolerable, but not handsome enough to tempt me."

ChatGPT "U yomon emas edi, ammo meni maftun etadigan darajada go'zal emas edi."

Google Translate "U chidasa bo'ladigan edi, lekin meni vasvasaga soladigan darajada chiroyli emas edi."

DeepL "Uni qabul qilish mumkin edi, ammo meni o'ziga jalb qiladigan darajada go'zal emas edi."

Human Translation "U unchalik xunuk emasdi, ammo meni rom etadigan darajada go'zal ham emas edi."

Analysis

ChatGPT successfully preserved the contextual meaning of tempt by rendering it as maftun etmoq, which conveys emotional attraction rather than literal temptation. Google Translate interpreted tempt literally (vasvasaga solmoq), resulting in semantic distortion. DeepL maintained grammatical accuracy but produced a less idiomatic expression. The human translator achieved the highest level of naturalness and stylistic appropriateness.

3.3 Translation of Metaphors

Metaphorical language presented greater challenges for AI systems.

Example 2

Source Text "Hope is the thing with feathers."

ChatGPT "Umid — patlari bor qushga o'xshaydi."

Google Translate "Umid patli narsadir."

DeepL "Umid patlarga ega bo'lgan narsadir."

Human Translation "Umid — qalbda qanot qoqadigan qushdir."

Analysis

The human translator reconstructed the metaphor creatively while preserving its poetic imagery. ChatGPT correctly identified the figurative comparison but translated it more literally. Google Translate and DeepL rendered the sentence almost word-for-word, reducing its literary effect.

3.4 Idiomatic Expressions

Idioms represented one of the most difficult translation categories.

Example 3

Source Text "**Break the ice.**"

ChatGPT "Suhbatni boshlab, noqulaylikni yo'qotmoq."

Google Translate "Muzni sindirmoq."

DeepL "Muzni buzmoq."

Human Translation "Suhbatga jon kiritmoq."

Analysis

ChatGPT demonstrated contextual understanding by interpreting the idiom instead of translating it literally. Google Translate and DeepL produced literal translations that fail to communicate the intended meaning. The professional translator selected an equivalent Uzbek idiomatic expression that preserves both meaning and communicative function.

3.5 Culture-Specific References

Culture-specific vocabulary required considerable adaptation.

Example 4

Source Text

"They gathered around the fireplace on Christmas Eve."

ChatGPT "Ular Rojdestvo oqshomida kamin atrofiga yig'ildilar."

Google Translate "Ular Rojdestvo kechasida kamin atrofida to'plandilar."

DeepL "Rojdestvo arafasida ular kamin yoniga yig'ildilar."

Human Translation "Rojdestvo bayrami arafasida oila a'zolari an'anaga ko'ra kamin atrofida jam bo'lishdi."

Analysis

Although all systems translated the lexical content accurately, only the human translation successfully conveyed the cultural significance of the event. The additional contextual information reflects shared cultural practices that AI systems generally omit.

3.6 Stylistic Features

Preserving literary style proved to be one of the greatest challenges for machine translation.

Example 5

Source Text

"The wind whispered through the trees."

ChatGPT

"Shamol daraxtlar orasida xuddi pichirlayotgandek esardi."

Google Translate

"Shamol daraxtlar orasida pichirladi."

DeepL

"Shamol daraxtlar orqali pichirladi."

Human Translation

"Shamol daraxtlar orasida mayin shivirlar edi."

Analysis

The human translation preserves personification while maintaining poetic rhythm. ChatGPT also captures the figurative meaning reasonably well, whereas Google Translate and DeepL produce grammatically acceptable but stylistically flatter translations.

3.7 Comparative Summary

The comparative analysis reveals several consistent patterns.

Table 2 Strengths and Weaknesses of the Translation Systems

Translation System	Major Strengths	Major Weaknesses
ChatGPT	Strong contextual interpretation, fluent language, effective handling of idioms	Occasional loss of poetic subtlety and symbolism
DeepL	High grammatical accuracy and lexical consistency	Limited cultural adaptation and figurative interpretation
Google Translate	Fast and accurate literal translation	Frequent literal rendering of idioms and metaphors
Human Translator	Excellent stylistic, cultural, and pragmatic equivalence	Requires substantial time and professional expertise

3.8 Overall Findings

The analysis demonstrates that AI-assisted translation has reached a level at which it can reliably reproduce the denotative meaning of literary texts. Among the examined systems, ChatGPT achieved the highest degree of contextual interpretation and generated the most fluent Uzbek translations. Nevertheless, all AI systems exhibited limitations when translating metaphorical language, symbolism, irony, and culturally embedded expressions.

Professional human translation remained superior in preserving literary aesthetics, emotional resonance, and transcultural meaning. Rather than replacing literary translators, artificial intelligence currently functions most effectively as an assistive technology capable of increasing productivity while still requiring expert human revision for publication-quality literary translation.

Discussion

The present study examined the capabilities of contemporary artificial intelligence systems in English–Uzbek literary translation through a transcultural-contrastive framework. By comparing translations produced by ChatGPT, DeepL, Google Translate, and a professional human translator, the research sought to determine how effectively AI systems preserve semantic meaning, stylistic expression, pragmatic function, and cultural references. The findings indicate that while AI has made remarkable progress in generating fluent and grammatically accurate translations, it continues to face significant limitations when dealing with literary language and culturally embedded meaning.

One of the most notable findings is that ChatGPT demonstrated stronger contextual interpretation than the other AI systems. Unlike Google Translate and DeepL, ChatGPT more frequently recognized the intended meaning of idiomatic expressions and selected contextually appropriate lexical equivalents. This observation is consistent with recent studies on large language models, which suggest that transformer-based AI systems outperform traditional neural machine translation models in tasks requiring contextual reasoning and discourse-level understanding (Jiao et al., 2023; OpenAI, 2025). Nevertheless, even ChatGPT occasionally simplified metaphors and reduced the stylistic richness of literary passages, indicating that contextual fluency does not necessarily guarantee literary adequacy.

The analysis further revealed that figurative language remains one of the greatest challenges for artificial intelligence. Metaphors, symbolism, irony, and personification often require interpretation beyond the literal meanings of words. Human translators naturally draw upon cultural knowledge, literary experience, and contextual inference when reconstructing these elements in another language. AI systems, by contrast, rely on statistical patterns learned from training data. Consequently, they tend to preserve lexical meaning while weakening aesthetic effect. This finding supports Newmark's (1988) argument that literary translation is fundamentally an interpretative act requiring creativity rather than mechanical substitution. It also aligns with Bassnett's (2021) assertion that literary translation should recreate artistic experience rather than merely reproduce linguistic content.

The study also highlights the importance of transcultural competence in literary translation. English and Uzbek differ not only linguistically but also culturally, historically, and socially. Expressions associated with religion, customs, historical

traditions, social etiquette, or everyday life often lack direct equivalents in Uzbek. Human translators therefore adapt these expressions to maintain their communicative function for target readers. AI systems generally transfer lexical meaning successfully but frequently fail to communicate the broader cultural significance of such expressions. This finding reinforces Venuti's (2018) concept of translation as cultural negotiation, in which translators continuously balance fidelity to the source culture with accessibility for the target audience.

Another significant observation concerns stylistic equivalence. Literary style encompasses rhythm, imagery, sentence structure, emotional tone, and the author's individual voice. The comparative analysis demonstrated that AI-generated translations often produce grammatically correct sentences but fail to preserve subtle stylistic features. For example, poetic imagery may become explanatory rather than evocative, and emotionally expressive passages may lose their intensity after automatic translation. Human translators consistently maintained greater stylistic flexibility by selecting culturally appropriate expressions that preserved both meaning and artistic quality. These findings correspond closely with Nida's (1964) theory of dynamic equivalence, which emphasizes producing an equivalent response in the target audience rather than achieving purely formal correspondence.

The results also suggest that different AI systems possess distinct strengths. Google Translate performed efficiently when translating straightforward informational sentences but frequently translated idioms and metaphors literally. DeepL demonstrated high grammatical accuracy and lexical consistency but showed limited ability to interpret culturally complex passages. ChatGPT generated the most fluent and contextually coherent translations among the evaluated AI systems, particularly when handling conversational language and implicit meaning. However, even ChatGPT occasionally omitted stylistic nuances or replaced culturally specific expressions with more general wording. These observations indicate that although contemporary AI models have substantially improved, no system currently matches the interpretative competence of experienced literary translators. From a practical perspective, the findings support a collaborative approach to literary translation. Rather than viewing artificial intelligence as a replacement for human translators, the evidence suggests that AI functions most effectively as an assistive technology. AI systems can rapidly generate draft translations, identify terminology, and improve productivity, allowing translators to devote greater attention to stylistic refinement,

cultural adaptation, and creative decision-making. Such human–AI collaboration combines computational efficiency with human interpretative expertise, producing translations that are both accurate and aesthetically appropriate.

The implications of this study extend beyond English–Uzbek translation. Many low-resource languages face similar challenges due to limited bilingual corpora and insufficient representation in AI training datasets. As AI technologies continue to evolve, improving translation quality for these languages will require larger multilingual corpora, culturally balanced datasets, and evaluation methods that assess literary quality in addition to lexical accuracy. Integrating insights from translation studies into AI development may contribute to systems capable of producing more culturally informed and stylistically sensitive translations.

Despite its contributions, this study has several limitations. First, the corpus consisted of twenty literary excerpts rather than complete novels. Although the selected passages represented a variety of literary styles, larger corpora could provide a broader basis for comparison. Second, the analysis relied primarily on qualitative interpretation. Future research may combine qualitative literary analysis with quantitative evaluation metrics such as COMET or human assessment scales to produce more comprehensive evaluations. Third, only three AI translation systems were examined. As new large language models continue to emerge, comparative studies involving additional systems will further enhance understanding of AI-assisted literary translation.

Future research should also investigate how prompt engineering influences AI translation quality, whether fine-tuning AI models on literary corpora improves stylistic performance, and how translators interact with AI during post-editing. These directions would contribute to the growing field of computer-assisted literary translation and help establish best practices for integrating artificial intelligence into professional translation workflows.

Overall, the findings demonstrate that artificial intelligence has become a valuable resource in literary translation but has not yet achieved the interpretative, cultural, and creative competence of professional human translators. Literary translation remains a fundamentally human activity because it requires not only linguistic knowledge but also imagination, cultural awareness, emotional sensitivity, and aesthetic judgment. AI can therefore be regarded as a powerful partner in the translation process rather than a substitute for the literary translator.

Conclusion

This study investigated the role of artificial intelligence in English–Uzbek literary translation through a transcultural-contrastive perspective. By comparing translations generated by ChatGPT, DeepL, Google Translate, and a professional human translator, the research evaluated the extent to which contemporary AI systems preserve semantic meaning, stylistic expression, pragmatic function, and cultural references in literary texts. The findings demonstrate that although recent advances in artificial intelligence have significantly improved machine translation quality, literary translation remains a domain in which human expertise continues to play a decisive role.

The comparative analysis revealed that all three AI systems successfully conveyed the basic semantic content of the selected literary passages. Among the evaluated systems, ChatGPT consistently produced the most fluent and contextually appropriate translations, while DeepL demonstrated high grammatical consistency and Google Translate performed effectively in rendering straightforward informational content. However, each system exhibited noticeable weaknesses when translating metaphors, idiomatic expressions, symbolism, irony, and culturally specific references. These observations are consistent with recent research showing that large language models substantially improve literary translation quality but still produce critical stylistic and interpretative errors that require human revision.

The findings also confirm that literary translation is fundamentally a process of cultural interpretation rather than linguistic substitution. Human translators demonstrated superior ability to reconstruct artistic imagery, preserve emotional tone, and adapt culturally embedded expressions to the expectations of Uzbek readers. Such interpretative decisions depend upon linguistic competence, literary sensitivity, cultural awareness, and creative judgment—qualities that current AI systems cannot fully replicate despite remarkable advances in contextual language generation. Recent scholarship likewise argues that AI is becoming increasingly capable of supporting literary translation while human translators remain essential for preserving authorial voice and interpretative depth.

From a practical perspective, this research supports the adoption of a collaborative human–AI translation model. Instead of considering artificial intelligence as a substitute for professional translators, AI should be regarded as an intelligent assistant capable of accelerating translation workflows, generating preliminary drafts,

improving lexical consistency, and supporting terminology management. Human translators should then perform stylistic revision, cultural adaptation, and literary editing to ensure that the final translation preserves both artistic quality and communicative effectiveness. Such cooperation combines computational efficiency with human creativity and cultural competence.

The study also contributes to English–Uzbek translation research, an area that remains relatively underrepresented in contemporary AI translation studies. Most previous investigations have concentrated on high-resource European language pairs, whereas the present research demonstrates the particular challenges associated with translating between linguistically and culturally distant languages. The proposed transcultural-contrastive framework may therefore serve as a useful model for future studies involving other low-resource languages.

Nevertheless, several limitations should be acknowledged. First, the research analyzed twenty literary excerpts rather than complete literary works. A larger corpus including novels, short stories, poetry, and drama would provide a more comprehensive understanding of AI performance across different literary genres. Second, the study employed primarily qualitative analysis. Future research may integrate qualitative literary evaluation with quantitative assessment methods, including human evaluation protocols and automatic metrics, to obtain a more comprehensive picture of translation quality. Finally, as artificial intelligence develops rapidly, newly released language models should be examined to determine whether they overcome the limitations identified in this study.

Future research should also explore prompt engineering strategies for literary translation, domain-specific fine-tuning of large language models, translator–AI interaction during post-editing, and the development of evaluation frameworks specifically designed for literary translation quality. Expanding bilingual literary corpora for English and Uzbek may further improve the performance of AI systems while supporting the preservation and international dissemination of Uzbek literary heritage.

In conclusion, artificial intelligence has become an influential technological innovation in translation studies and has already transformed professional translation practice. However, the findings of this study indicate that AI has not yet achieved the interpretative, aesthetic, and transcultural competence required for high-quality literary translation. Literary translation continues to depend upon human creativity,

cultural intelligence, and critical interpretation. Therefore, the future of literary translation should not be understood as a competition between humans and machines but rather as a collaborative partnership in which artificial intelligence enhances productivity while human translators preserve the artistic and cultural integrity of literary works.

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