

Rendering Stylistic Devices Of Affection In Translation: A Case Study Of Hamlet's Letter To Ophelia

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Abstract: This article explores the rendering of stylistic devices expressing affection in the Uzbek translations of Hamlet's love letter to Ophelia. The study focuses on the emotional and aesthetic aspects of Shakespeare's language, including metaphor, epithet, and hyperbole as means of conveying tenderness and intimacy. Drawing on theories of equivalence, expressiveness, and cultural adaptation, the analysis examines how translators preserve or transform these stylistic features in the target text. The paper highlights the balance between linguistic accuracy and emotional resonance, arguing that the artistic translation of endearment requires sensitivity not only to language but also to cultural perception of love and affection.

Keywords: Shakespeare, Hamlet, stylistic devices, affection, endearment, artistic translation, equivalence, expressiveness, emotional meaning, Uzbek translation.

Introduction: Translation of literary texts is not merely a linguistic process but an artistic recreation that requires sensitivity to emotional nuance and stylistic distinctiveness. Among the numerous challenges faced by translators of Shakespeare's works, rendering the language of affection remains one of the most intricate. Shakespeare's emotional register, rich in metaphors, epithets, and rhythmic tenderness, poses unique difficulties when transferred into languages with different cultural perceptions of love and endearment. As Bassnett notes, "to translate Shakespeare is to recreate the emotional texture of his world in another linguistic and cultural system" [Bassnett, 2014]. This challenge is particularly evident in Hamlet's love letter to Ophelia, a passage that combines tenderness through stylistic devices that express both love and affection.

When translating stylistic figures expressing endearment and affection the translator must transmit not only semantic content but also the stylistic and emotional impact of such expressions. Newmark emphasizes that artistic translation involves "a constant struggle between the expressive function of language and the constraints of linguistic form" [Newmark, 1988]. Thus, the rendering of affection in translation becomes a negotiation between fidelity to meaning and recreation of style.

In the context of Uzbek literary tradition, translating Shakespearean endearment presents additional challenges. The Uzbek language possesses rich means of expressing tenderness and affection; however, they are often embedded in cultural and emotional frameworks distinct from those of Elizabethan English. As Salomov argues, the translator must "find in the target culture those equivalents that carry the same emotional weight, even if they differ formally" [Salomov, 1983]. When Hamlet's metaphors of love are translated into Uzbek, choices of diction and imagery must align with local poetic sensibilities while preserving Shakespeare's artistic tone.

This study examines how stylistic devices expressing affection in Hamlet's letter to Ophelia are rendered in selected Uzbek translations. By combining linguistic and literary analysis, it seeks to reveal the strategies used to convey emotional depth and stylistic nuance. The paper also explores how cultural adaptation influences the perception of endearment in translation, assessing the balance between literal accuracy and artistic expressiveness.

Ultimately, this article aims to demonstrate that translating stylistic devices of affection is not simply an act of linguistic transfer but an artistic interpretation of emotion. Through the case of Hamlet's letter to

Ophelia, it will highlight the delicate interplay between language, culture, and feeling – showing that the success of an artistic translation lies in its ability to preserve not only meaning, but the heartbeat of affection itself.

LITERATURE REVIEW

The study of artistic translation, particularly in relation to Shakespeare's works, has long occupied a central position within translation studies. Scholars have approached the problem of rendering poetic and emotional language from multiple angles, including equivalence, expressiveness, cultural adaptation, and stylistic transformation. Understanding how stylistic devices function as carriers of affection in Hamlet's letter to Ophelia requires an overview of these theoretical approaches, as well as insight into previous analyses of Shakespearean translation in world and Uzbek scholarship.

The foundation of modern translation theory lies in the notion of equivalence, which seeks to establish a correspondence between source and target texts. Catford defines equivalence as the "replacement of textual material in one language by equivalent textual material in another" [Catford, 1965], while Nida expands this concept into dynamic equivalence, emphasizing the reproduction of the same effect on the target reader as experienced by the source audience [Nida, 1964]. In translating affection-laden language, such as terms of endearment or metaphoric tenderness, dynamic equivalence is particularly significant because it prioritizes the emotional response rather than literal correspondence.

Later scholars refined this understanding by addressing the expressive function of language. Newmark argued that the expressive meaning of a text – especially in literary translation – must be prioritized over referential or informative meaning [Newmark, 1988]. According to him, the translator's goal is "to reproduce the writer's intention and the emotional tone of the original". Similarly, Komissarov emphasized that translation must convey the author's stylistic individuality and emotional intent, particularly in literary works where the text is an artistic unity of content and form [Komissarov, 1990]. When applied to Hamlet's letter, this means the translator must interpret and recreate the stylistic devices – metaphor, repetition, hyperbole – not merely as linguistic forms, but as artistic tools shaping the emotional voice of love.

Stylistic devices serve as aesthetic and emotional instruments in literature. In Shakespeare's Hamlet, stylistic devices of affection – such as metaphor, epithet, and hyperbole – create a lyrical intensity that mirrors the speaker's emotional state. These stylistic

features often blur the line between love and madness, sincerity and irony, thus complicating the translator's task.

Venuti draws attention to the cultural dimension of style, noting that the translator must decide whether to domesticate the text, making it familiar to the target reader, or to foreignize it, preserving its strangeness and emotional tone [Venuti, 1995]. In the case of translating endearment from Elizabethan English into Uzbek, this choice determines whether the stylistic beauty of the original is preserved or reinterpreted through culturally acceptable forms of affection.

K. Musayev highlights that imagery and emotion in language stem from the relationship between lexical and contextual meaning, enhancing expressiveness. In translation, these elements should be carefully preserved through thoughtful synonym choice and stylistic precision [Musayev, 2005].

I. Gafurov et al. believe that mutual understanding between the author and the translator is essential in literary translation. It implies not only linguistic competence but also a deep intellectual and emotional connection with the author's worldview, style, and cultural background [Gafurov et al., 2012]. The successful translation indicates the translator's ability to "find a common language" with the author – understanding the aesthetic essence of the original and recreating it artistically in another language. This process transforms translation into both a scholarly and creative act, requiring the translator to be as much a researcher as an artist.

The theoretical literature shows that translating stylistic devices of affection lies at the intersection of linguistic, stylistic, and cultural considerations. The translator's role extends beyond conveying meaning to recreating emotional aesthetics. In Shakespeare's Hamlet, the letter to Ophelia exemplifies how affection is encoded in poetic structure and stylistic harmony. Uzbek scholarship on artistic translation provides valuable insights into preserving emotional and aesthetic integrity through cultural adaptation. The convergence of these perspectives establishes a framework for the present study, which analyzes how stylistic devices of affection are rendered in Uzbek translations of Hamlet's letter to Ophelia, exploring both linguistic strategies and artistic transformations.

METHODS

This study employs a qualitative descriptive and comparative approach, combining stylistic analysis with translation analysis to examine how Shakespeare's stylistic devices expressing affection are rendered into Uzbek. The focus is on Hamlet's love letter to Ophelia (Act 2, Scene 2), a text rich in poetic

and emotional devices. Following the frameworks of stylistic equivalence [Komissarov, 1990], expressive translation [Newmark, 1988], and cultural adaptation [Bassnett, 2014], the study seeks to identify translation strategies used to preserve or transform emotional meaning and stylistic texture.

The analysis proceeds from close reading of the source text to comparison with Uzbek translations by noted translators of Shakespeare, including Maksud Shaykhzoda and Jamol Kamol. These translations were chosen because of their literary quality and influence on Uzbek Shakespearean reception. Each version was analyzed line by line, with attention to metaphors, epithets, and hyperboles that express affection or tenderness.

The passage containing Hamlet's love letter was selected because it contains multiple stylistic markers

of affection. Each line of Hamlet's letter was first analyzed in the original English for its stylistic and emotional features. Then, the corresponding lines from both Uzbek translations were examined. Instances of metaphor, epithet, and hyperbole were cataloged and classified according to their translation outcome: 1. preserved (stylistic device kept with similar emotional force); 2. transformed (device reinterpreted or replaced with a culturally adapted form); lost (stylistic effect omitted or weakened in translation).

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Hamlet's letter to Ophelia is one of the most intimate and stylistically charged passages in Shakespeare's works. The text combines tenderness, melancholy, and elevated poetic form (Polonius's comments have been omitted for clarity):

William Shakespeare Hamlet, (Act 2, Scene 2)	<p>"To the celestial and my soul's idol, the most beautified Ophelia,— In her excellent white bosom, these, etc. Doubt thou the stars are fire; Doubt that the sun doth move; Doubt truth to be a liar; But never doubt I love. O dear Ophelia, I am ill at these numbers; I have not art to reckon my groans: but that I love thee best, O most best, believe it. Adieu. Thine evermore, most dear lady, whilst this machine is to him, Hamlet."</p>
M. Shaykhzoda's translation (p.72-73)	<p>"Jonimning nigori, ilohi, sohibi jamol Ofeliyaga — Uning so'lum, oppoq ko'ksiga bu... Nurga keltirma imon, Ishonmagin hech kimga, Haqiqatga qil gumon Ishon mening sevgimga. Oh, azizim Ofeliya, men she'rbozlik hunari bilan chiqisholmayman. Ohu faryodni qofiyaga solishga ishqiboz emasman. Ammo, seni joni dildan sevganimga, go'zalim, ishon. Xayr. Bebahom, jonim tanimdan judo bo'lguncha butun borlig'i bilan seniki bo'lmish Hamlet."</p>
J. Kamol's translation (p.258)	<p>"Samoviy iloham, suyukli sanamim, sohibjamol Ofeliyaga Uning nafis, oppoq ko'ksiga bu... Ishonmagil yulduzga Ishonmagil kunduzga, Ishonma hech narsaga, Mening ishqimga ishon. O, azizim Ofeliya! Men she'riyatga oshno emasman. Qofiyaga solib xo'rsinish qo'limdan kelmaydi, ammo seni jondan</p>

	sevishimga ishon, sanamim . Xayr. Shu tani kelbatimdan jonim chiqqunga qadar senikiman, bebaho gavharim . Hamlet".
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The opening line contains a metaphorical epithet (celestial), metaphor (my soul's idol), and hyperbole (the most beautified) that function as expressions of affection. The word celestial elevates Ophelia to divine status, while my soul's idol reflects both love and worship. The superlative most beautified intensifies the emotion through exaggeration and rhythm.

In M. Shaykhzoda's translation, the line reads: "Jonimning nigori, ilohi, sohibi jamol Ofeliyaga" and J. Kamol renders it as: "Samoviy iloham, suyukli sanamim, sohibjamol Ofeliyaga".

M. Shaykhzoda translates celestial as jonimning nigori which literally means "my soul's beauty" where jon – n. soul, heart; -im – possessive suffix which means "my"; -ning – possessive 's; nigor – n. beauty, beloved, loved one, sweetheart (usually of a woman). Obviously, my soul's beauty does not fully correspond to celestial, which carries a metaphorical sense of divinity and heavenly purity rather than intimate, emotional love. While "jonimning nigori" emphasizes personal tenderness, "celestial" elevates the beloved to an idealized, almost sacred realm. Moreover, in translation, the original metaphorical epithet has been transformed into a simple metaphor, losing part of its expressive and emotional nuance.

J. Kamol translates celestial as samoviy iloham i.e. "my heavenly goddess" where samoviy – celestial, heavenly; sky-blue, azure; iloha – n. goddess; -m – possessive suffix which means "my". "Samoviy" preserves the literal "heavenly," and "iloham" (my goddess) intensifies the sacred, idealized aspect. The addition of "iloham" turns the epithet into a full metaphor, explicitly comparing Ophelia to a goddess. Thus, the translator amplifies the metaphorical meaning and enhances emotional intensity. The translation sounds more expressive and romantic than the English original, as it evokes the image of a goddess – a subject of adoration and worship – which is not directly present in "celestial."

The original my soul's idol is a metaphor suggesting that Hamlet adores Ophelia as if she were sacred. This is a metaphorical expression of love and reverence.

In Shaykhzoda's version, jonimning placed at the beginning also refers to ilohi (iloh – n. God, Allah). Both the original and translation employ religious imagery to express idealized love – in English, idol suggests worship and adoration but with a slightly human, poetic tone. In Uzbek, iloh (from Arabic ilah) is stronger

– it means deity or god, which adds a divine and exalted nuance. Thus, the translator intensifies the metaphor, making Ophelia not just worshipped but divinized. In translation, jonimning ilohi becomes a hyperbolic metaphor – it heightens the sense of reverence and spiritual devotion, amplifying the emotional tone. In other words, Shaykhzoda preserves the metaphorical essence of worship and adoration but strengthens it semantically and emotionally. The translation conveys deeper spiritual intensity, transforming a metaphor of affection into one of divine exaltation.

Kamol's suyukli sanamim literally means "my beloved idol". The word suyukli – adj. beloved; sanam – idol; fettish; in Uzbek poetic usage it has developed the figurative meaning beloved, beautiful one; -im – possessive suffix which means "my". While idol in English evokes religious worship and reverence, sanam naturally combines both the notions of "idol" and "beloved," making it culturally appropriate in Uzbek verse. By adding suyukli, the translator softens the religious connotation and shifts the tone from sacred devotion to emotional affection. Thus, the translation preserves the metaphorical essence of "idol" while adapting it to Uzbek poetic tradition, transforming a metaphor of spiritual worship into one of tender love, and rendering the expression warmer, more romantic, and culturally and stylistically natural.

The original phrase "the most beautified Ophelia" functions as a hyperbolic expression, exaggerating Ophelia's beauty to emphasize Hamlet's idealized admiration. Shaykhzoda's "sohibi jamol" is an izafa (genitive) construction meaning "possessor of beauty" (sohibi – owner/possessor, jamol – beauty, charm, elegance). Kamol's "sohibjamol", which appears similar, is an adjective often used in Uzbek poetic language, meaning "beautiful". Both "sohibi jamol" and "sohibjamol" function as epithets, but with slightly different nuances: while "sohibi jamol" retains a formal, slightly elevated tone, highlighting the abstract possession of beauty, "sohibjamol" is more poetic and fluid, fitting naturally into verse or literary expressions and emphasizing the beloved's elegance and charm in a compact form. Although both Uzbek translations preserve the poetic and aesthetic appreciation of the original, "sohibjamol" feels more natural and concise in literary Uzbek.

The original "dear Ophelia" contains the epithet dear. The expression is rendered as "azizim Ofeliya", where aziz is an adjective meaning 1) expensive, costly,

beloved, favorite, precious, valuable, and 2) darling, dear, dearest; -im is a possessive suffix meaning “my.” The possessive suffix -im emphasizes personal attachment, making the address more intimate. Together, the phrase means “my dear Ophelia.” Both expressions function as vocatives, i.e. direct addresses to the beloved (original – simple vocative epithet; translation – possessive vocative epithet). While the English dear is neutral in tone and suitable for both affectionate and formal contexts, the Uzbek azirim carries stronger emotional warmth and personal closeness, characteristic of Uzbek endearment expressions.

Notably, Shakespeare often uses redundant superlatives to convey the depth of feeling, as in “I love thee best, O most best ...”. Both translators simplify the phrasing and omit the double intensifier, but reinforce the affectionate tone by adding vocatives such as “go’zalim” and “sanamim”. M. Shaykhzoda’s go’zalim literally means “my beautiful one” (go’zal – adjective: nice, beautiful, handsome, fine; -im – possessive suffix meaning “my”), while Kamol’s sanamim means “my idol” (see above). These additions intensify the emotional charge of the declaration of love, transforming it into a more intimate and endearing address.

“Most dear lady” is a hyperbolic expression which is formal yet tender, expressing both respect and deep affection. Shaykhzoda’s “bebahom” means “my priceless one” (bebaho – adj. priceless, invaluable; -m – possessive suffix “my”). The adjective bebaho shifts the focus from emotional endearment (dear) to value and uniqueness (priceless), thus conveying the depth of emotional and moral worth rather than mere affection. The possessive suffix -m adds intimacy (“my priceless one”), softening the tone while keeping its dignity. The translation preserves the hyperbolic sense but transforms it into a more metaphorical and culturally natural Uzbek expression of love.

J. Kamol rendered the original hyperbolic expression as “bebaho gavharim” which literally means “my priceless jewel” (bebaho – priceless; gavhar – pearl, jewel; gem; -im – “my”). The addition of gavharim introduces a vivid metaphor – the beloved is not only priceless but also compared to a rare and precious gem. The translation becomes more expressive and poetic, amplifying emotional warmth and admiration. The image of a “priceless jewel” evokes both tenderness and reverence, which aligns with the tone of Hamlet’s letter yet reflects Uzbek poetic tradition, where beloveds are often compared to gems or treasures.

Both bebahom and bebaho gavharim retain the hyperbolic quality of “most dear lady.” However,

bebahom emphasizes emotional value and intimacy, and bebaho gavharim adds imagery and poetic elevation, transforming the epithet into a metaphor of beauty and preciousness. Thus, Kamol’s version is more ornate and affective, while Shaykhzoda’s remains simpler and more direct, yet both succeed in conveying the affectionate tone of Shakespeare’s hyperbolic address.

The comparative analysis reveals that both translations of Hamlet’s letter display poetic beauty and emotional depth, yet they differ in precision and stylistic fidelity. Jamol Kamol’s version, translated directly from the English original, stands out for its lexical, semantic, and stylistic accuracy. His rendering captures the nuances of Shakespeare’s diction and imagery while preserving the expressive grace characteristic of Uzbek poetic language. M. Shaykhzoda’s translation, created from the Russian intermediary text, is equally rich in poetic charm and sincerity, but certain deviations in meaning and tone reflect the influence of the Russian version rather than the English source. While Shaykhzoda’s phrasing occasionally prioritizes lyricism over exact correspondence, it remains artistically impressive and emotionally compelling. Overall, Kamol’s translation achieves a finer balance between accuracy and artistry, while Shaykhzoda’s version offers a more interpretive yet aesthetically captivating re-creation of Hamlet’s tender and affectionate address.

CONCLUSION

The comparative analysis of M. Shaykhzoda’s and J. Kamol’s renderings of Hamlet’s letter to Ophelia demonstrates how semantic precision and stylistic nuance determine the overall faithfulness and artistic power of literary translation. Both translators successfully transmit the emotional tenor and poetic atmosphere of Shakespeare’s original text; however, their approaches reveal different priorities. Shaykhzoda’s version, mediated through Russian, focuses on emotional immediacy and lyrical fluency, often reinterpreting Shakespeare’s metaphors through culturally familiar and affective expressions. Kamol’s translation, by contrast, adheres more closely to the original English text, maintaining the metaphorical structure and stylistic integrity of Shakespeare’s diction while preserving its aesthetic resonance in Uzbek poetic language.

From a semantic standpoint, Kamol’s translation demonstrates greater lexical and conceptual equivalence, particularly in the preservation the meaning of celestial, my soul’s idol, and the most beautified. His choices retain the sacred and affectionate duality of Shakespeare’s imagery, ensuring that emotional and symbolic layers are conveyed with

precision. Shaykhzoda's renderings are equally expressive but often shift the semantic emphasis from divinity to intimacy, transforming spiritual admiration into personal affection. These shifts reveal how cultural and linguistic systems shape the emotional register of translated affection, as Uzbek endearment naturally gravitates toward warmth and closeness rather than formal veneration.

Stylistically, both translators skillfully employ Uzbek poetic conventions – metaphors, epithets, and hyperbolic expressions – to reproduce the ornate beauty of Shakespeare's language. Yet Kamol's renderings integrate these devices more seamlessly, resulting in a stylistically cohesive and rhythmically balanced text. Shaykhzoda's translation, while equally elegant, sometimes leans toward a literal or culturally adaptive approach that modifies the tone of reverence found in the original. The comparison thus highlights how stylistic fidelity in translation depends not only on lexical choices but also on the translator's sensitivity to the aesthetic and emotional equilibrium of the source text.

Ultimately, both translations stand as distinguished examples of poetic craftsmanship in Uzbek literary translation. Their renderings together illustrate the translator's dual responsibility: to preserve semantic meaning and stylistic artistry while allowing the target language to express its own poetic identity. Through these two approaches, Hamlet's words of affection to Ophelia continue to resonate – reimagined, yet faithful to the timeless eloquence of Shakespeare's love.

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