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THE OMISSION OF NONVERBAL COMMUNICATIVE MEANS IN LITERARY TRANSLATION: COMPLEXITIES, CAUSES, AND CONSEQUENCES

Yusupova Ziynatjan Djumanazarovna
Teacher, Urgench State University

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ABSTRACT

This article explores the phenomenon of omitting nonverbal communicative means – such as gestures, facial expressions, and paralinguistic cues – in literary translation. These elements play a vital role in conveying emotional depth, character development, and cultural nuance. However, translators often face challenges in rendering such nonverbal features due to linguistic, cultural, and contextual differences between source and target languages.

KEYWORDS: *Literary Translation; Nonverbal Communication; Omission; Cultural Adaptation; Translation Strategy; Uzbek Literature; Dynamic Equivalence; Translator's Decision-Making*

INTRODUCTION

The issue of omission of nonverbal communicative means in translation is a critical topic within translation studies. Nonverbal elements—such as gestures, facial expressions, and paralinguistic cues—play a significant role in literary texts, contributing to character portrayal, emotional tone, and cultural authenticity. However, these elements often present challenges for translators due to linguistic, cultural, and contextual differences between source and target languages. This article examines the reasons, implications, and strategies related to the omission of nonverbal communicative means in literary translation, drawing on theoretical perspectives and practical examples. The omission of nonverbal communicative means in translation represents a significant and complex issue within translation studies, particularly in the realm of literary translation. Nonverbal elements—such as gestures, facial expressions, body language, paralinguistic features like tone and intonation, and culturally specific emblems—are integral to conveying meaning beyond words. They contribute profoundly to character development, emotional nuance, socio-cultural context, and the authentic atmosphere of a literary work. However, these nonverbal cues often pose substantial challenges for translators due to their inherent cultural specificity, variability in interpretation, and the difficulty of rendering them equivalently in a target language and culture

The role of nonverbal communication extends beyond mere decoration of text; it serves as a rich source of information that deepens the portrayal of characters and the socio-historical realities embedded in literature. For instance, gestures and facial expressions can reveal unspoken attitudes or social norms of a particular period or community, which are crucial for preserving the integrity of the source text's cultural background.Moreover, nonverbal cues are closely tied to speech communication elements such as tone, rhythm, and intonation, which influence how messages are perceived and emotionally received by readers or audiences. Despite their importance, nonverbal elements are frequently omitted or inadequately translated, often due to translators' limited awareness, the complexity of interpreting culturally bound signs, or the constraints of the target language medium. This omission can lead to a loss of subtlety, misrepresentation of characters, and diminished cultural authenticity, ultimately affecting the reader's experience and understanding of the literary work. Translators must therefore develop strategies to negotiate these challenges, such as conducting thorough cultural and contextual analyses, employing footnotes or paratextual explanations, or creatively adapting nonverbal cues to preserve their communicative function. This article aims to explore the multifaceted reasons behind the omission of nonverbal communicative means in literary translation, analyze its implications for literary fidelity and reader reception, and discuss practical strategies informed by theoretical insights and translator experiences. By highlighting the critical interplay between verbal and nonverbal communication in translation, this study underscores the need for heightened sensitivity and methodological rigor in handling nonverbal elements to achieve more authentic and culturally resonant literary translations

METHODS

This study employs a comparative textual analysis approach, examining both source texts and their translations to identify instances where nonverbal communicative elements are omitted. The analysis is supported by references to translation theory, including the works of Punga, Nida, Dimitriu, and others, to contextualize the findings within established frameworks. Specific examples from Uzbek literary works and their English translations are used to illustrate the practical challenges and decisions faced by translators1.

The omission of nonverbal communicative means in translation can occur for several reasons: We can look through Cultural Differences: Nonverbal cues may have different meanings or

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may not exist in the target culture, leading translators to omit or adapt them to avoid misunderstanding.
Contextual Relevance: If a nonverbal element is not crucial to the overall meaning or context of the translated text, it may be omitted without significant loss of meaning.

Linguistic Constraints: Some nonverbal cues, such as facial expressions or gestures, may be difficult to express adequately in written form, especially in languages with different narrative traditions.

Translation Purpose: When the primary goal is to convey the main idea rather than every detail, translators may prioritize conciseness over completeness, omitting nonverbal elements that are deemed non-essential.

Audience Considerations: For certain audiences, such as children or readers with limited language proficiency, simplifying the text by omitting complex nonverbal cues may enhance comprehension.

Stylistic Norms: Literary translation often requires adaptation to the stylistic and poetic norms of the target language, which may involve omitting or altering nonverbal elements for clarity and fluency.

Examples from Literary Translation
The analysis of translated Uzbek literary works reveals that the omission of nonverbal cues can lead to a reduction in emotional depth and character authenticity. For example, the phrase “iliqlik bilan qo‘l uzatib” (“warmly holding out his hand”) loses its expressive nuance when rendered simply as “held his hand out,” stripping the scene of its intended warmth and interpersonal significance. Similarly, culturally specific gestures such as “qo‘lini ko‘ksiga qo‘yib ta’zim bajo qildi” (“put his hand on his chest and bowed lightly”) may be omitted or inadequately rendered, resulting in a loss of cultural color and character depth.

LITERATURE REVIEW
Translation theorists such as Punga and Dimitriu have observed that while the omission of words, phrases, or even sentences may have a minimal impact on the overall narrative content, it can significantly erode the expressive force of the text1. This tension is further articulated in Nida’s theory of “dynamic equivalence,” which posits that a translation’s success lies in its ability to evoke a similar response in the target audience as the original does in its own context. Yet, as Punga notes, readers often sense these subtle shifts, recognizing the translated nature of the text through the absence of certain expressive details.

Dimitriu expands this analysis, identifying a range of pragmatic and stylistic motivations for omission, such as: Harmonizing grammatical structures between source and target languages to avoid redundancy. Presenting information more concisely.Prioritizing only essential content. Avoiding unnecessary cultural, temporal, or spatial references. Adhering to genre conventions and editorial norms.Supporting ideological or political frameworks. Tailoring the text to the age, education, gender, or social class of the intended readership.

ANALYSIS
The omission of nonverbal communicative means in literary translation is not inherently a translation error. Rather, it is a complex decision influenced by cultural Adaptation: Ensuring that the translation is accessible and meaningful to the target audience may require omitting culturally specific nonverbal cues. Omissions can help streamline the text, focusing on essential information and avoiding unnecessary details. Adhering to the conventions of the target language’s literary genre may necessitate the omission or modification of nonverbal elements.

However, excessive omission can lead to a loss of emotional nuance, character depth, and cultural authenticity. The translator’s skill lies in balancing fidelity to the original with the needs and expectations of the target audience. As highlighted by researchers such as Hall, Mehrabian, and Birdwhistell, nonverbal communication can convey more information than words alone, underscoring the importance of careful consideration in translation decisions.

CONCLUSION
Having concluded the article,we can admit that, omitting nonverbal communicative means in literary translation is a nuanced process shaped by linguistic, cultural, and pragmatic factors. While such omissions are sometimes necessary for clarity, readability, or cultural adaptation, they can also diminish the expressive richness and authenticity of the original text. Translators must exercise informed judgment, considering the purpose of the translation, the nature of the source and target cultures, and the expectations of the intended audience. Ultimately, the decision to omit, adapt, or retain nonverbal elements is central to achieving a translation that is both accurate and resonant.

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