

LINGUACULTURAL CHALLENGES IN TRANSLATING UZBEK JOURNALS INTO ENGLISH

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Abstract. The translation of Uzbek journals into English presents numerous linguacultural challenges due to distinct differences in language structure, cultural concepts, and socio-political contexts. This paper examines challenges, focusing on culture-specific items, idiomatic expressions, and syntactic disparities, and proposes strategies for achieving culturally sensitive and accurate translations. By analyzing examples from various Uzbek journals, this thesis highlights the importance of balancing linguistic fidelity with cultural adaptation in the translation process.

Key words: translation, linguaculture, translating journals, cultural challenges, linguistic challenges, culture-specific concept, idiomatic expressions.

Annotatsiya. O‘zbek jurnallarining ingliz tiliga tarjimai til tuzilishi, madaniy tushunchalar va ijtimoiy-siyosiy kontekstlardagi aniq farqlar tufayli ko‘plab lingvomadaniy muammolarni keltirib chiqaradi. Ushbu tezisda madaniyatga xos narsalar, idiomatik iboralar va sintaktik nomutanosibliklarga e’tibor qaratilib, muammolar ko‘rib chiqiladi va madaniy jihatdan sezgir va to‘g‘ri tarjimalarga erishish uchun strategiyalar taklif etiladi. O‘zbekistondagi turli jurnallardan olingan misollarni tahlil qilib, ushbu tezis tarjima jarayonida lingvistik sodiqlik va madaniy moslashuvni muvozanatlash muhimligini ta’kidlaydi.

Kalit so‘zlar: tarjima, lingvomadaniyat, tarjima jurnallar, madaniy muammolar, lingvistik muammolar, madaniyatga xos tushuncha, idiomatik iboralar.

In an increasingly interconnected world, the need for effective translation has never been more crucial. Translation acts as a bridge that facilitates the exchange of ideas, knowledge, and culture across national boundaries, enabling countries to learn from one another's scientific advancements, cultural achievements, and historical experiences. By embracing this exchange, nations can foster innovation and understanding, leading to a more harmonious and progressive global community. Moreover, translation promotes inclusivity by providing access to information and

opportunities for people regardless of their native language. It ensures that the benefits of globalization are shared equitably, thus contributing to the overall advancement of humanity. In this way, translation is not merely a linguistic tool, but a fundamental mechanism for international collaboration and development. Reiss's perspective on translation emphasizes its role as a communicative service aimed at bridging linguistic and cultural gaps. By translating a text, the translator opens up a communicative act, initially confined to the source language speakers, to a broader audience who speaks the target language. This process is not merely about converting words from one language to another but involves understanding and conveying the intended meaning, tone, and nuances to ensure the new audience can engage with the content as effectively as the original audience. Translation, therefore, serves as a vital tool for fostering cross-cultural communication and understanding, promoting inclusivity by making information and ideas accessible across linguistic barriers.

In the era of globalization, the demand for translating regional publications like Uzbek journals into widely spoken languages such as English has increased significantly. However, this process is not merely a linguistic task but also a cultural one. The translator serves as a mediator between two linguistic and cultural systems, navigating differences in worldview, traditions, and societal norms. Uzbek, a Turkic language with rich historical, cultural, and Islamic influences, presents unique challenges when translated into English, a language rooted in Western traditions. This thesis aims to identify key linguacultural challenges faced in translating Uzbek journals into English and suggest practical solutions.

Culture-Specific Concepts and Realities. Uzbek culture is deeply embedded in its language, with numerous terms and expressions that are untranslatable or difficult to convey in English due to the absence of direct equivalents. These culture-specific items, also known as *realia*, include references to traditional practices, social institutions, and historical events.

Traditional Practices and Social Structures: Terms like “mahalla” (a neighborhood community with social governance) and “Navruz” (Persian New Year celebrated in Uzbekistan) carry deep cultural meanings. Translating mahalla as “neighborhood” fails to capture its social role, while Navruz may require additional context for readers unfamiliar with Central Asian traditions.

Religious References: Uzbekistan’s Islamic heritage influences its language, with terms like “sozanda” (a singer at traditional gatherings) and “domla” (a religious

scholar or teacher). The challenge lies in maintaining the cultural integrity of these terms without alienating readers unfamiliar with Islamic contexts.

There are some translation strategies to ease translator work while rendering the text from source language to target language:

1. Loanwords with Glossaries: Retaining the original term with an explanation in the footnotes or a glossary.

2. Descriptive Translation: Providing a brief description within the text to clarify the meaning.

3. Idiomatic Expressions and Proverbs. Idiomatic expressions and proverbs reflect the collective wisdom and worldview of a culture. Uzbek is rich in such expressions, which often lose their meaning when translated literally.

Literal vs. Figurative Meaning: For example, the proverb “O‘t o‘chirgani kelgani yo‘q” (literally: "He didn't come to put out the fire") metaphorically means someone didn't come to help in a difficult situation. A literal translation would confuse English readers, while an adapted version like “He didn't come to lend a hand” preserves the meaning but loses the cultural imagery.

Symbolism: Uzbek metaphors often draw from nature, agriculture, and daily life in Central Asia, which may not resonate with Western audiences. Translators must decide whether to retain these cultural images or replace them with equivalents familiar to English readers.

Strategies for translating cultural expressions and phraseological units:

1. Cultural Substitution: Finding an equivalent expression in English that conveys the same meaning.

2. Literal Translation with Explanations: Keeping the original expression but providing context to aid understanding.

Syntactic and Grammatical Challenges. The structural differences between Uzbek and English pose additional challenges in translation.

Word Order: Uzbek follows a Subject-Object-Verb order, while English uses Subject-Verb-Object. For example, the Uzbek sentence “Men kitob o‘qidim” translates to “I read a book” but literally means “I book read”. Translators must restructure sentences to make them grammatically correct in English without altering the original meaning.

Agglutinative Nature of Uzbek: Uzbek relies on suffixes to convey grammatical relationships, which often require more words in English. For instance, “Kitobimni

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o‘qib bo‘ldim” (literally: “I finished reading my book”) includes possessive and action markers that must be unpacked in English.

Strategies for overcoming syntactic and grammatical challenges:

1. Syntactic Adaptation: Restructuring sentences while maintaining the original tone and meaning.
2. Clarification of Implicit Meanings: Making implicit grammatical markers explicit in English.

Formality and Politeness. In Uzbek society, formality and politeness are deeply ingrained cultural values, particularly when it comes to interactions with elders and authority figures. This emphasis on respect is intricately woven into the language itself, which reflects societal norms through the use of specific pronouns and honorifics. For instance, the Uzbek language distinguishes between formal and informal pronouns, with “siz” being the formal address for 'you,' often used for elders or in professional settings, while “sen” is the informal equivalent used among peers or close friends. Honorifics play a crucial role as well, adding an element of respect to conversations. Phrases such as “aka” (brother) or “opa” (sister) may be appended to names to denote respect. These linguistic nuances serve as tools to navigate social hierarchies and maintain harmony within the community, highlighting the importance of respect and courtesy in Uzbek cultural interactions.

Challenges in Translation: English lacks direct equivalents for these formalities, leading to potential loss of cultural nuance. For example, addressing someone as Domla in Uzbek signifies respect for their religious or academic authority, which may be lost when simply translated as “teacher”. To translate cultural nuances translators can use contextual adaptation and explanatory notes. Contextual adaptation and explanatory notes are crucial tools in ensuring that content is accessible and comprehensible to diverse audiences. Contextual adaptation involves tailoring content to suit the cultural, social, and linguistic backgrounds of the target audience. This might include adjusting language, examples, or themes to resonate with the audience's specific experiences or expectations. Explanatory notes, on the other hand, provide additional information or clarification on certain terms, concepts, or references that might not be immediately clear to the reader. These notes can bridge knowledge gaps, offering insights that enhance understanding and appreciation of the content. Together, these strategies help in creating effective translation texts that respects the diversity of its audience, ensuring that the intended message is not only received but also understood in its entirety.

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Socio-Political Context and Historical References. Uzbek journals often reference historical events, political changes, and social issues unique to Uzbekistan and its Soviet past. Translators must navigate these references carefully to ensure that the context is clear to English readers.

Historical References: Terms related to the Soviet era, independence, or national movements may require additional context. For instance, references to “kolkhoz” (collective farms) or independence movements are deeply rooted in the region's history.

Political Sensitivity: Some topics may be sensitive or controversial, requiring the translator to balance fidelity to the original text with cultural and political awareness.

In conclusion, translating Uzbek journals into English is a complex process that goes beyond linguistic conversion. It requires a deep understanding of both linguistic structures and cultural contexts. By addressing the challenges of culture-specific concepts, idiomatic expressions, syntactic differences, and socio-political references, translators can produce texts that are both accurate and culturally sensitive. The goal is not only to convey the literal meaning but also to preserve the cultural essence of the original text, fostering cross-cultural understanding and communication. Uzbek, as a language deeply rooted in the country's rich history and traditions, contains numerous culture-specific items, proverbs, metaphors, and idiomatic expressions that often lack direct equivalents in English. These elements pose significant challenges for translators, requiring them to adopt various strategies such as adaptation, domestication, foreignization, and explanatory notes to maintain both the semantic content and cultural integrity of the original text. Furthermore, the research underscores the role of the translator as a cultural mediator who must balance fidelity to the source text with the expectations and cultural background of the target audience. Misinterpretations or oversimplifications can lead to the loss of cultural nuance, potentially distorting the intended message of the original journal articles. This is particularly crucial when translating texts related to politics, history, or literature, where cultural sensitivity and contextual understanding are paramount. Translation is a nuanced art that extends far beyond mere linguistic conversion, especially when it involves languages as distinct as Uzbek and English. Successful translation requires not only fluency in both languages but also a profound understanding of the cultural contexts that shape their use. This dual requirement ensures that translated content resonates authentically with the target audience, preserving the original's intent and nuance. Future research in this field holds the potential to illuminate specific case studies that exemplify successful cross-cultural

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translation, thus serving as educational models. Additionally, the development of comprehensive translation models could provide structured approaches for translators, enhancing consistency and accuracy. The integration of technology, such as AI and machine learning, presents another layer of opportunity, promising to address some of the linguacultural challenges by automating and refining the translation process. By focusing on these areas, research can significantly contribute to translation studies, promoting practices that are not only linguistically precise but also culturally sensitive and effective.

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