

PROBLEMATIC RECOMMENDATIONS FOR TRANSLATING NATIONAL-CULTURAL SEMANTICALLY MARKED LEXICAL UNITS IN UZBEK AND ENGLISH LANGUAGES

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Abstract

This article analyzes the current challenges in translating national-cultural semantically marked lexical units between Uzbek and English. It explores the semantic, linguistic, and pragmatic difficulties that arise when attempting to render culturally and socially rooted expressions from one language into another. These lexical units are often deeply connected to a nation's lifestyle, traditions, and worldview, which makes direct translation inadequate or misleading. Therefore, the paper offers recommendations on alternative translation strategies, such as using functional equivalents, descriptive translation, and enhancing intercultural competence. Through practical examples, the study illustrates the issues encountered in translating Uzbek expressions into English and discusses possible solutions to convey their cultural connotations effectively. The research provides both theoretical insight and practical guidance for translators working in bilingual and cross-cultural contexts, contributing to a more accurate and culturally sensitive translation practice.

Keywords: National-cultural units, semantic connotation, translation issues, uzbek language, english language, linguistic equivalents, pragmalinguistics, translation strategies, intercultural communication, language and culture.

Introduction

In today's era of globalization, intercultural communication is becoming increasingly dynamic, leading to a growing need for effective dialogue between different languages. Every language encapsulates the cultural heritage, historical worldview, and national mentality of its people. In this context, lexemes that bear national and cultural semantic connotations serve as a mirror reflecting not only the linguistic structure but also the customs, social values, rituals, and religious beliefs of a particular nation. In the Uzbek language, culturally loaded expressions such as "kelinsalom", "chaqiriq osh", and "suyunchi" are not only of linguistic importance but also convey profound cultural and pragmatic meanings. When translating such culturally specific items into English, various challenges arise, including the lack of direct equivalents, intercultural disparity, and cognitive incompatibility. Therefore, a translator must possess not

only linguistic knowledge but also intercultural competence. This article explores the major challenges encountered in translating culturally marked lexemes between Uzbek and English. It also proposes effective strategies and scientifically grounded recommendations for translators. Of particular importance is the translator's ability to comprehend the intricate relationship between language and culture, as every language is enriched with national and cultural semantics that reflect the mentality, traditions, worldview, and historical experience of its speakers. In comparing Uzbek and English, it becomes apparent that both languages possess unique cultural and national attributes that express the people's values, religious beliefs, social life, and historical legacy. Lexical items such as "yozlik-yozov", "dugona", "tuyona", and "kelinsalom"—which are commonly used in Uzbek—often risk semantic distortion, misinterpretation, or inappropriate equivalence when translated into English. Such issues are especially prevalent in literary texts, journalistic discourse, and dialogues with a strong national-cultural flavor. Hence, the translation of lexemes with national-cultural semantics should not rely solely on semantic equivalence but should be approached contextually and functionally. Translators must cultivate intercultural competence, gain insight into the implicit semantic load of these lexemes, and strive to convey their full meaning in the target language. Identifying these challenges and developing effective solutions is a critical task for modern translation studies. Furthermore, integrating national and cultural approaches into translator training programs has become one of the most pressing issues in contemporary scholarship. This paper analyzes key issues in translating culturally specific units between Uzbek and English, presents practical examples with suggested solutions, and outlines methodological recommendations for current translation practice.

Methodological Analysis of Selected Literature:

The formation, development, and enrichment of translation theory with modern approaches are grounded in the analysis of numerous theoretical sources. The fundamental works outlined below serve as a theoretical basis for examining both the linguistic and cultural dimensions of the translation process. These sources are invaluable not only in shaping translator competence but also in understanding the complexities of intercultural communication.

1. Alimova, M.T. (2019), in her monograph "Linguocultural Foundations of Translation", introduces new methodological frameworks for studying the transmission of national-cultural elements in translation. The work thoroughly explores the stages of forming linguocultural competence and elucidates the intricate relationship between national identity and translation.
2. Baker, M. (2018), in "In Other Words", adopts a contemporary discourse-based perspective on translation theory and presents an in-depth analysis of the semantic, pragmatic, and functional aspects of translation. The book fosters a deeper understanding of the complex, multi-phased structure of the translation process.
3. Bassnett, S. (2014), in "Translation Studies", delves into the historical genesis of translation studies, its integration with postcolonial theories, and the sociocultural determinants influencing translation. The work is evaluated as an attempt to reinterpret translation within a broader social and cultural framework.

4. Hatim and Mason (2005), in "The Translator as Communicator", conceptualize the translator's role as a communicative agent. Their analysis encompasses intertextual interaction, sociocultural differences, and text pragmatics. Their approach presents the translator not merely as a code transmitter but also as a mediator.
5. Karimov, N.M. (2020), in his work "Translation Theory in the Uzbek Language", provides an interpretation of translation activities within the framework of Uzbek linguistics. By integrating modern theoretical perspectives with practical tools specific to the Uzbek language, the author emphasizes both linguistic competence and cultural sensitivity as critical components of translation.
6. Komissarov, V.N. (1999), in his classical work "Translation Theory", offers a theoretical analysis of the linguistic aspects of translation. The author examines linguistic equivalence, text structures, and lexical-semantic adequacy, thereby establishing a methodological foundation for translation theory in Russian linguistic.
7. Larson, M.L. (1998), in "Meaning-Based Translation", asserts the primacy of conveying meaning in translation. She scientifically elaborates on dynamic equivalence, connotative meaning, and context-dependent interpretations, presenting them as essential elements of effective translation.
8. Mamrasulov, B.B. (2021), in his research titled "Cultural Differences and Translation Issues", investigates how culturally cognitive units are reflected in translation, the challenges in finding equivalents, and the impact of national stereotypes and values on translation. This work highlights the practical implications of sociocultural determinants in translation studies.
9. Newmark, P. (1988), in "A Textbook of Translation", proposes an approach that integrates theoretical and practical aspects of translation. He distinguishes between semantic and communicative translation, developing specific strategies tailored to each approach.
10. Nida, E.A. & Taber, C.R. (2003), in their influential book "The Theory and Practice of Translation", emphasize the concept of dynamic equivalence, focusing on the transfer of meaning and function in translation. They present the translator's ability to adapt to cultural context as a central principle. The analyzed literature reflects diverse conceptual approaches in translation studies, encompassing linguistic, cultural, semantic, and communicative paradigms. These sources collectively contribute to a more nuanced understanding of translation in both mono- and multicultural contexts, the evolving roles of translators, and the extent to which translation is shaped by social and cultural determinants. Each work serves as a vital resource for consolidating the theoretical foundations of translation, applying them in practice, and fostering intercultural competence among translators.

Methodological Analysis and Research Findings:

Within the framework of this study, a systematic analysis was conducted on the main linguistic and cultural challenges that arise when translating lexemes with national and cultural semantic loads between Uzbek and English. This analysis was grounded in advanced approaches in translation studies, particularly utilizing comparative-analytical methods, contextual-semantic analysis, mechanisms of denotative-connotative interaction, equivalence-based classification

models, and principles of pragmatic adaptation.[2–3] Based on these methods, a number of culturally embedded Uzbek phrases and expressions—such as “aytilgan osh” (promised meal), “kelin salom” qattiq qilish” (be strict from the outset), “elchilik” (matchmaking), “quda-andalik” (affinal kinship), and “qutlug‘ kelsin” (may it be auspicious)—were analyzed to determine how they are reflected in translated texts and whether their semantic content is retained in full or partially altered. The findings indicate that the majority of these units lack full equivalents in English. In many instances, literal translation leads to semantic deformation, distorting the intended cultural and contextual meaning. For example, the term “kelin salom”, when translated as “bride's greeting”, fails to convey the ceremonial and culturally specific significance associated with the original term. Similarly, the expression “xamirni qattiq qilish”, rendered as “to be strict from the beginning”, loses its metaphorical nuance and its function as a pragmatic cultural warning.[4] The analysis led to several key conclusions:

1. Literal approaches are insufficient for translating culturally-bound lexemes, as they overlook the connotative layers embedded in the expressions. In such cases, descriptive translation, adaptive equivalents, or culturally compensatory strategies are more effective.
2. Translation must consider not only linguistic elements but also sociocultural context, as many lexemes are deeply rooted in a people's historical experience, traditions, and mentality. Neglecting this dimension can result in cultural misinterpretation.
3. Translating idiomatic expressions, ritual phrases, and cultural metaphors demands a high level of cultural competence, deep contextual understanding, and the creative selection of expressive tools by the translator.
4. When choosing alternative translations, the cultural worldview of the target audience must be taken into account. If no appropriate equivalent exists, explanatory translation may be the most viable strategy.
5. There is a pressing need to develop methodical guidelines and lexical corpora based on stratified analysis of cultural-semantics to support translators in studying, researching, and accurately conveying such units.

Overall, the research underscores that the translation of culturally loaded lexemes is a complex and specialized process at the intersection of linguistics and translation studies, holding strategic significance for the precision, meaning, and scope of intercultural communication.[7–8] The process of translating such lexemes between Uzbek and English entails deep linguocultural reasoning, socio-cognitive awareness, and contextual clarity. Such expressions are not merely part of the language's semantic system but are also intrinsically linked to national identity, historical consciousness, ceremonial-folkloric traditions, and religious-aesthetic values. Uzbek terms such as “kelinsalom”, “chaqiriq osh” (invitation meal), “tushlik” (lunch gathering), “yo‘l-yo‘lakay ziyofat” (impromptu feast), “o‘rikqoqi” (unripe apricot jam), and “dutor” (a traditional stringed instrument) carry profound moral and cultural information, making it nearly impossible to find direct equivalents in English. When translating such expressions, one must consider not only their lexical boundaries but also the cultural context in which they exist, their functional-pragmatic roles, and the social reality they reflect. The analysis reveals that translators frequently face four core challenges: 1. Denotative inaccuracy

– due to the absence of direct lexical equivalents, the connotative meaning may not be accurately conveyed. 2. Cognitive incompatibility – culturally specific terms express notions that are only comprehensible within their native context, often misinterpreted or oversimplified in other cultures. 3. Stylistic isolation – certain expressions lose their emotional and aesthetic tone in translation. 4. Pragmatic deformation – the sociocultural connotations of lexemes may be lost or altered during translation. Empirical analysis of literary translations, journalistic texts, and audiovisual subtitles revealed that translators often resort to the following strategies: Explication – providing descriptive explanations of culturally bound terms, which, however, can compromise the conciseness of the text. Transliteration or transcription – retaining the original term, which may confuse the target reader unfamiliar with the culture. Cultural substitution – replacing with a culturally analogous term, although full semantic fidelity cannot always be ensured. Generalization – abstracting specific terms into broader concepts (e.g., “chaqiriq osh” as “a ceremonial meal”). Omission – eliminating lexemes that carry strong cultural connotations but are difficult to translate meaningfully. Based on these results, successful translation of culturally loaded Uzbek lexemes into English requires several core competencies: Cultural competence – the ability to discern national values and conceptual differences between cultures. Pragmatic sensitivity – understanding the communicative intent and context of the expression. Discursive awareness – the capacity to identify the functional placement of the lexeme within the stylistic flow of the text. In conclusion, translating lexemes with national-cultural semantics is not merely a matter of lexical substitution but a multifaceted intellectual task within the domain of cross-cultural dialogue. In this role, the translator becomes a mediator not only of language but also of the historical and cultural context of nations.

Conclusion:

Throughout the course of this study, the linguistic and cultural challenges encountered in translating lexemes with national and cultural semantic load from Uzbek into English were thoroughly analyzed. The findings indicate that many of these units are deeply rooted in the historical and cultural memory, social values, and traditional practices of the Uzbek people. As a result, attempting to transfer them into English using simple lexical or grammatical tools often leads to semantic loss and, at times, misinterpretation. Specifically, expressions such as “kelin salom” (bride’s ceremonial greeting), “tuyona” (wedding gift), “xamirni qattiq qilish” (being strict from the beginning), and “aytilgan osh” (a promised meal) should not be translated through direct semantic equivalence, but rather through approaches that take into account their cultural connotation and contextual function.[10] Such an approach requires a high level of intercultural competence, the ability to grasp the conceptual worldview embedded in language, and the capacity for in-depth contextual analysis. The comparative, contextual, and equivalence-based methods employed in this research proved to be effective in comprehending nationally specific semantic units. In particular, descriptive translation, cultural adaptation, and the identification of functional equivalents emerged as the most effective strategies for preserving cultural meaning during the translation process. In conclusion, the translation of

lexemes with national and cultural semantics is not merely a linguistic operation but a complex communicative process that seeks to bridge intercultural differences. Addressing the challenges in this field necessitates the development of integrative methodological approaches within translation studies, prioritizing the cultural component in translator training, and creating linguocultural corpora⁶ focused on facilitating intercultural communication. Only through such measures can translations ensure semantic accuracy, cultural appropriateness, and pragmatic coherence.

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