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Article

Challenges in Translating Culturally Bound Expressions between English and Uzbek

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Abstract: This research explores the complex nature of translating culturally bound expressions in English and Uzbek, with a focus on challenges related to linguistic differences, grammar rules, and word order, but it argues that cultural differences are the primary obstacles rather than those mentioned above. While basic vocabulary can help translate and almost explain with relative ease, humor, idioms, proverbs, and politeness formulas bring culturally embedded meanings that oppose direct equivalence in other languages. This article also suggests practical strategies like adaptive translation, functional equivalence, paraphrasing, cultural mediation, and collaboration with cultural experts to make interpretation between two different languages easier and clearer and highlights the importance of understanding both languages professionally to minimize the risk of misinterpretation, emphasizing the translator's role as an intercultural negotiator rather than just a linguistic converter. The findings also discuss some of the most important and influential theories and approaches by famous scholars like Peter Newmark, Jeremy Munday, Mona Baker, Eugene Nida, and George Lakoff. Ultimately, the paper argues that professional interpretation between different languages is not only about bilingual competence, but it also requires deep intercultural awareness and responsibility, as culturally bound expressions show the worldview and value systems of their respective societies.

Keywords: Expression translation challenges, practical strategies and techniques, equivalence, different languages, culturally bound expressions

1. Introduction

Culturally bound expressions represent not only linguistic creativity with several words, but also a rich history, cultural identity, and colorful components of a whole language. In translation, expressions representing a culture cause one of the most intricate challenges, especially, when playing an important role between languages from different linguistic families and cultural backgrounds such as Uzbek and English. Even they can be translated literally and can explain the real meaning, they cannot show emotions and feelings in that language, as their meanings are deeply connected with cultural knowledge and context [1][2][3]. But, what is the real meaning of translation? Translation is not only about converting written text or information from one language to another, but it is also more about the responsibility to transfer meaning across linguistic and cultural boundaries. The main purpose of translation is to make information available to new audiences which is crucial aid, particularly in international meetings, businesses and conferences [4][5]. Interpreters whose work is translation between languages are also required to be aware of the associated cultures, the source and target languages to preserve the original meaning, tone, and context and to avoid

mistranslation. In the context of English-Uzbek translation, translators face challenges due to fundamental differences in the two languages [6][7]. These difficulties include cultural and structural differences, unique historical impacts on grammar rules, word order, and idiomatic expressions that show a certain nation that do not have direct equivalents in other languages. Additionally, the variations in syntax, morphology, and pragmatics between the two languages necessitate that translators have a deep comprehension of both languages and societies [8][9].

2. Methodology

Uzbek, an agglutinative tongue belonging to the Turkic language family, depends on suffixes and intricate morphological frameworks that can express subtleties challenging to duplicate in English. English, being an analytic language, employs a distinct grammatical structure in which the arrangement of words is more essential for expressing meaning. This document analyzes these and other concerns thoroughly, with the goal of illuminating successful approaches for enhancing translation accuracy from Uzbek to English.

3. Finding and Discussion

In the next chart, key challenges in translating expressions from English to Uzbek will be explained, including language and structural difficulties, lack of direct equivalents:

Language Difficulties. Language differences are one of the most apparent challenges. Uzbek utilizes an extensive array of suffixes to indicate grammatical connections, aspects, and modes, a characteristic that is limited in English [10]. Expressions also cannot be translated without losing their meaning, and an expression in English, mostly, may be short, but in Uzbek it may require a longer construcion to give the same meaning. Literal translation of some expressions like "break the ice" do not make sense when translated word-to-word into Uzbek which says, "muzni sindirish", but the actual meaning is "gap boshlamoq" [11][12]. To make expressions clear and understandable, translators must find crestive ways to preserve their meaning with emotional tones and cultural resonances. One of the clear solutions to minimize language difficulties is translators should focus on more meaning or effect in target language, not the exact words which Eugene Nida supports this idea the most. If an English idiom sounds natural to English speakers, the translator should find an Uzbek expression that creates the same impact and make it understandable to Uzbek readers to understand the message the same way as English reader, even the words differ completely.

Structural differences between languages. English and Uzbek languages have very different sentence structures and grammatical systems. English uses many phrasal verbs and idiomatic structures, while Uzbek language expresses by suffixes and flexible verb constructions. The general sentence structure in English is “Subject + verb + object”, but in Uzbek verb comes at the end of the sentence, “Ega + to’ldiruvchi + kesim”. These differences make translation awkward if translated word-to-word. In this case, the interpreter should reorganize the sentence structure which requires them to profession all grammar rules in both languages [13].

Lack of direct equivalents. Many English expressions do not have direct Uzbek equivalents which mean the same thing. Besides, single words do not play a role to give the actual meaning, so translating word-for-word does not work. For instance, consider the idiom "kich the bucket" which means "to die". An Uzbek version is "chelakni tep," which makes no sense. The more culturally and linguistically correct translation would be "ko'z yummoq", which means "to close one's eyes".

One main and clear solution to minimize language difficulties is that translators should focus more on the meaning or effect in the target language, not the exact words which Eugene Nida supports this idea the most. If an English idiom sounds natural to English speakers, the translator should find an Uzbek expression that creates the same impact and make it understandable to Uzbek readers to understand the message the same way as an English reader, even if the words differ completely [14].

Many linguists and translation scholars have addressed the issues of translation of idioms and culturally bound expressions. This chapter discusses some important theories and approaches relevant to expression translation by some famous scholars. One of the most important theorists in translation is Eugene Nida who supports the idea of reproducing the same effect on the target language rather than just copying words in the original text. While Lawrence Venuti developed the concepts of domestication meaning rewording a source text to conform with the cultural and linguistic norms of the target language, and foreignization meaning preserving the original cultural and linguistic elements in the source text. According to Lawrence Venuti, when translating idioms, translators must decide whether to adapt them Uzbek culture (domestication) or preserve the English cultural reference (foreignization) [15].

4. Conclusion

In conclusion, Translating idioms from English into Uzbek is a multifaceted process that involves not only linguistic competence but also cultural awareness and creativity. This thesis has identified six major areas of difficulty in idiomatic translation: lack of equivalence, non-literal meaning, cultural specificity, contextual dependence, structural differences, and multiple target equivalents.

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