TRANSLATION CHALLENGES FROM UZBEK INTO ENGLISH

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Abstract. *This paper explores the primary translation challenges encountered when translating from Uzbek to English, highlighting both linguistic and cultural issues. Drawing on examples from various texts, we analyze the core areas of difficulty, including syntax, idiomatic expressions, and cultural nuances. The research indicates that the lack of direct equivalents between the two languages often results in meaning distortion and requires creative solutions by translators. Furthermore, cultural differences play a crucial role in shaping the translation process, as certain concepts and references do not exist in English. The findings suggest that while translation tools can aid the process, human expertise remains essential in achieving accurate and culturally appropriate translations.*

Keywords: *Translation challenges, Uzbek, English, linguistic barriers, cultural differences, translation strategies, idiomatic expressions.*

INTRODUCTION

Translation is a dynamic process that requires more than just the ability to replace words from one language to another. It involves a nuanced understanding of the linguistic structures, idiomatic expressions, cultural context, and historical background of both the source and target languages. In the case of translating from Uzbek, a Turkic language, to English, a Germanic language, these complexities are amplified due to significant differences in grammar, syntax, vocabulary, and cultural practices.

Uzbek, the official language of Uzbekistan, is spoken by over 30 million people and holds a central role in communication, education, and administration. English, on the other hand, is a global lingua franca, widely used in international business, diplomacy, science, and technology. The gap between these two languages, both in their structure and in their associated cultures, creates a fertile ground for translation challenges. This paper aims to explore these challenges through the lens of various translated texts and professional insights, with an emphasis on identifying the specific hurdles faced when translating from Uzbek into English.

METHODS

This study uses a combination of textual analysis and qualitative interviews with professional translators. The textual analysis includes a broad spectrum of materials: literature, legal documents, technical texts, and everyday conversational translations.

These texts were selected for their diversity in terms of genre, style, and complexity, allowing for a comprehensive view of the translation process.

In addition to the textual analysis, semi-structured interviews were conducted with translators who specialize in Uzbek-English translation. These professionals, working across various domains, were asked to share their experiences and strategies for overcoming the common challenges they face. The goal was to gain an understanding of how translators navigate issues like syntax, idiomatic phrases, cultural references, and the limitations of machine translation tools.

The data from the textual analysis and interviews were combined to generate insights into the key obstacles that persist in the translation process from Uzbek to English.

RESULTS

The analysis of translated texts and insights from interviews revealed several recurring themes and issues:

Syntactic and Structural Differences. One of the most prominent challenges when translating from Uzbek to English is the syntactical difference between the two languages. Uzbek follows a Subject-Object-Verb (SOV) structure, whereas English adheres to a Subject-Verb-Object (SVO) order. As a result, direct translations often result in sentences that sound awkward or convoluted in English. For example, an Uzbek sentence like *"Men maktabga boraman"* (I school to go) would naturally need to be rearranged in English as "I go to school."

Additionally, the use of cases in Uzbek (for marking subjects, objects, and possession) does not always map neatly onto English prepositions. This structural difference leads to frequent rephrasing in English, requiring the translator to find creative solutions that maintain the integrity of the original meaning.

Lexical Gaps and Vocabulary Choices. There are numerous instances in Uzbek where no direct equivalent exists in English. For example, the term "qadrdon" in Uzbek refers to someone who is both a close friend and a person deeply respected, which doesn't directly correlate with a single English word. Translators often have to rely on descriptions or adopt the nearest equivalent term in English, which may not fully capture the depth of the original concept.

Moreover, some Uzbek words are culturally charged and carry meanings rooted in local traditions or historical events. These words can be difficult to translate in a way that conveys the full cultural context without losing significance.

Idiomatic Expressions and Figurative Language. Uzbek, like all languages, is rich in idiomatic expressions and proverbs that often have no equivalent in English. Phrases such as "bir og'iz so'z bilan" (literally "with one word") meaning "with a simple word" or "yuzdan o'n marta o'qishdan ko'ra, bir marta ko'rish yaxshiroq" (literally "better to see once than to hear a hundred times") present challenges for translators seeking to retain

both meaning and idiomatic flair. Translators may either choose a close English equivalent or opt for an explanatory approach, both of which can alter the tone or intent of the original phrase.

Cultural Context and Reference. Cultural context plays a significant role in the translation process. For example, concepts like "mehmondo'stlik" (hospitality) in Uzbek have deep cultural significance and are expressed in specific ways in the language. Translating such cultural references into English may require not only linguistic creativity but also the inclusion of background information to ensure the audience understands the full meaning. Furthermore, historical events or figures specific to Uzbekistan, such as the legacy of Amir Timur or the role of Islam in the region, may need to be explained in English to avoid confusion or misinterpretation.

The cultural gap between Uzbek and English also becomes evident when translating humor, social norms, and traditional values. Translators must carefully balance staying true to the source material while making the text relatable and understandable for the target audience.

DISCUSSION

The results of this study reaffirm that translation between Uzbek and English presents a range of linguistic, cultural, and contextual challenges. While machine translation tools like Google Translate have made strides in bridging some of the gaps, they still fail to capture the subtleties of cultural references and idiomatic expressions. The nuances of syntax, vocabulary, and context often require human intervention to ensure that the translated text is not only accurate but also culturally appropriate.

Professional translators rely on various strategies to address these issues. For instance, they may use paraphrasing or employ equivalent expressions when a direct translation is not possible. In some cases, footnotes or glosses are added to provide additional cultural context. Furthermore, experienced translators often collaborate with experts in the relevant field (e.g., historians, cultural specialists) to ensure that the translation is both linguistically and contextually accurate.

The complexity of translating from Uzbek to English highlights the importance of preserving both the linguistic form and cultural meaning of the original text. This is a delicate balancing act that requires not just proficiency in both languages, but a deep understanding of the cultures involved.

Conclusion. Translation from Uzbek into English is fraught with numerous challenges arising from differences in syntax, vocabulary, idiomatic expressions, and cultural references. While machine translation tools have their place, human expertise is essential in delivering high-quality translations that are both linguistically accurate and culturally relevant. Translators must navigate these challenges by utilizing creative strategies and maintaining sensitivity to both linguistic form and cultural context. As the demand for

translation services grows globally, further research and development in translation technology, alongside continued emphasis on human expertise, will be crucial in improving the accuracy and effectiveness of translations between languages with such distinct characteristics.

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