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Abstract: Lexical gaps are a very serious problem that translators face while working between languages as structurally and culturally different as Uzbek and English. The article deals with such a concept as lexical gaps, which is certain words, expressions, or concepts in one language that do not have their direct equivalent in the other language. It will discuss how the lexical gaps in Uzbek are overcome in their English translation, strategies employed by translators, and the cultural implications of these challenges. Examples will be drawn from literature, everyday language, and specialist terminology. The study is bound to highlight both the complexities and creative solutions involved in bridging these gaps.

Keywords: lexical gaps, translation challenges, Uzbek, English, cultural nuances, translation strategies, equivalence, adaptation.

The translation between two languages is not only a matter of grammar and vocabulary, it is much more. One of the biggest obstacles that translators have to face is so called lexical gaps which occur when a certain word or concept has no corresponding equivalent in the target language. When it comes to the translation from Uzbek into English the lexical gaps are the major problems that are caused by the linguistic and cultural gap between the two languages. Despite the fact that both languages have some common features, which stem from the influence of Russian on Uzbek, they are still rather different in their grammatical and syntactical characteristics as well as in the background of the culture.

Understanding the impact lexical gaps have on translation presupposes an attempt to understand the nature of meaning construction in both languages. Uzbek is a language belonging to the Turkic group and hence has several expressions deeply embedded in Central Asian cultural and social realities. In contrast, English is a Germanic language whose character is different because it is burdened with another set of historical, cultural, and linguistic standards. Therefore, some Uzbek words have no one-to-one equivalent in English; thus, the translators have to paraphrase the original word, use loanwords, or even invent new expressions to convey the meaning of the original word. The following article is intended for the analysis of strategies and problems in translating lexical gaps from Uzbek into English and consequences for accuracy and cultural representation.

Defining Lexical Gaps in Translation. Lexical gaps are those words, concepts, or expressions that lack their direct equivalents in another language. These gaps occur when one language has words that either do not exist or are not easily translatable into another language. Examples of such words in Uzbek are *mehmon*, which means guest, but with a whole cultural load of honor and respect, or *xushmuomalalik*, which means politeness, but with a very subtle sense of decorum. The translator needs to decide on the best equivalent, modify the meaning, or not explain the concept at all.

In many cases, these are not just simple vocabulary gaps but different worldviews as well. The vocabulary of a language reflects the experiences and values of its speakers. Thus, such gaps can only be translated appropriately by consideration of both language and cultural context behind the word. Sometimes, it needs the translation to use the explanation of the descriptive phrases or colloquial sayings of the respective cultures to fully give an English translation to a certain word used in the Uzbek.

Lexical gaps in the Context of Cultural and Contextual Factors: Very often, a word or a phrase owes its untranslatability to its cultural context. Such is the case with a lot of words in Uzbek

regarding family issues, social hierarchies, and traditionalist morals that could not find their corresponding translation units in English in any easier way. Such collocations as "ota-onalar" ("parents") presuppose certain notions in the very core of the Uzbek familial code, such as respect for the elders, expressed in really striking forms. Translating this word into English as simply "parents" may miss important cultural connotations.

Another example might be the Uzbek word "beka", which designates a woman of noble origin. It carries probably some very specific historical and cultural connotations not represented in an equivalent way in the English language. In this respect, translators will have to supply long footnotes or set the cultural contexts that this term was supposed to presuppose. In fact, it is just such cultural shades of meaning which present, very often, one of the biggest tasks in those translations when the task for a translator is not only to translate but to preserve the integrity of an original cultural context.

Translation strategies of lexical gaps. There exist various translation strategies that are in use to go beyond the problems of lexical gap issues. The major stratagems, which are under use to fill lexical gaps, come under substitution, paraphrasing, loanwords, calques, among others. Talking about the first strategy, say substitution, requires substituting an available word with a dissimilar meaning that happens to be understandable and is available as understood in a larger scope in the target language. For example, the Uzbek concept of "yurt" could be translated into English as "tent", but in this case, the latter expression does not contain all the meaning and cultural history represented by the yurt.

Another effective strategy is paraphrasing, which means explaining the concept in detail by the translator. Such a strategy is very appropriate for words related to culture, customs, or certain professions in Uzbek. For instance, the term "khalifalik" may be translated into English as "the traditional Islamic system of leadership." In this respect, the meaning is maintained while compensation for the lack of its exact equivalent in the target language is made.

Loanwords and Adaptation. In certain cases, loanwords serve to fill the gap in lexical shortages. A loanword is a foreign word borrowed directly into the receptor language. Loanwords are most often applied in specialized spheres like technology, economics, and science. For example, such words as "IT" or "internet" have been widely used both in Uzbek and English without any essential transformation. However, in the case of culturally specific words, like "shashlik" (skewered meat), the word is borrowed in its main core or slightly adapted when speaking in English.

Loanword adaptation can also be extended to pronunciation or spelling to make the term more familiar to English speakers. This approach, at times, leads to the loss of cultural context since the word might not carry the full weight of its meaning or significance anymore.

Challenges in Literary Translation. Lexical gaps are most evident in literary translation since it often involves creative uses of language to denote meaning and evoke emotions. Uzbek literature, being one of the richest in oral traditions, is replete with metaphors, proverbs, and expressions that are peculiar to the language and cannot be found in their exact form in English. Translation of poetry, for instance, requires that the translator weigh the need to maintain rhyme and rhythm against that of accurately conveying the cultural meaning.

Literary translators often do not translate the word to retain its original form and to allow the reader to experience the foreignness of the term. Sometimes, they give explanations in foot- or endnotes, which can put the word in context for the reader. In this way, the cultural integrity of the text is retained, while the meaning is conveyed to a wider audience.

The Role of the Translator's Creativity. Ultimately, the translator's creativity plays a key role in overcoming lexical gaps. Translators are not just linguistic mediators but cultural interpreters. In this regard, they have to find some creative ways of bringing out the meaning of a word or any other concept in a way that best suits the target audience. By doing so, they should be true to the

essence of the original text while bending it according to the expectations and norms of the target language.

This means that the translation of a work, say from Uzbek literature into English, calls for a translator to find not only the cognates but also to seek the cultural implication and emotive power of these words. To handle this, a deep knowledge of both the source and the target culture is required, in addition to more creative use of the language rather than a straight translation of mere words.

The Impact of Technological Developments on Lexical Gaps. In recent times, technological changes have created opportunities for translators to handle lexical gaps more effectively. The presence of machine translation systems, such as Google Translate or specific tools for the Uzbek-English language, normally uses algorithms that may help in identifying patterns and thus suggesting possible translations. These are helpful in simple and widely used vocabularies but still can't catch subtleties in lexical gaps, particularly those having to do with cultural contexts and specialist terminologies. Machine translation, while gradually improving, generally can't take into consideration deeper meanings associated with culturally significant terms that have no direct equivalents.

More recently, AI and NLP began to leapfrog over such weaknesses by learning from vast data of parallel texts. In turn, the current AI-powered translations are good enough to read whole phrases or sentences in context; yet, terms closely embedded in particular cultural or historical backgrounds remain an important issue – for instance, the meanings of some old traditional Uzbek conceptions or idiomatic sayings.

Yet as much as technology is improving in their methodologies, human translation is still valuable in bridging these lexical gaps. Human translators offer cultural and contextual knowledge that just has not been fully encapsulated with the machines yet.

Lexical Gaps in Technical and Specialized Fields. Lexical gaps pose a peculiar problem when translation has to occur in specialized fields like law, medicine, or science. In such domains, terms need to be very precise, and the inability to find an exact equivalent between languages may lead to ambiguity or misinterpretation. A term like "qozi" in Uzbek, referring to a religious-legal professional, may not have an exact English cognate since, in English, different countries define the terms used to describe such legal professionals. This circumstance may force translators to use a description or to borrow a word directly from the original Uzbek text, which may be confusing to an English-speaking reader.

Moreover, some terms might be in use only within education or industry in Uzbekistan and therefore can be locally restricted or developed; thus, they could be unknown for the English speaker. Normally, the ways out in these contexts are the invention of new terms in the target language on an already existing linguistic structure or borrowing the terms from a related field. This, of course, requires not only deep knowledge of both languages but also the ability to fathom how to spread this highly specialized knowledge across linguistic and cultural barriers. The problem is not simply finding the proper translation for the words but rendering the translated material to be accurate and accessible for specialists in the target language.

Conclusion. Translation of lexical gaps between Uzbek and English is complex but exciting in itself, requiring not only linguistic skill but also cultural sensitivity. No single translation strategy can manage to bridge all the gaps; instead, substitution, paraphrasing, loanwords, and creative adaptation together go a long way toward resolving many of the problems. It is a very demanding job for the translator not to lose both the meaning and cultural context of the original text. Understanding the subtlety of lexical gaps helps translators create more efficient and meaningful translations, which further facilitates cross-cultural communication and appreciation.

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