

## LEXICAL TRANSFORMATION AS A CORE STRATEGY IN TRANSLATION

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### **Abstract**

*Lexical transformations represent a central mechanism through which translators resolve semantic and cultural incongruities between languages. This article investigates the functional role of lexical transformations in English–Uzbek translation, focusing on addition, omission, specification, generalization, metaphoric adaptation, and antonymic restructuring. Employing a qualitative comparative approach, the study analyzes selected translation instances within established theoretical models of translation equivalence. The results indicate that lexical transformations operate as systematic strategies rather than optional adjustments, ensuring semantic accuracy, stylistic acceptability, and communicative effectiveness. The study offers an original contribution by contextualizing lexical transformation theory within the English–Uzbek language pair.*

**Key words:** *lexical transformation, translation strategy, equivalence, English–Uzbek translation, applied linguistics*

### **INTRODUCTION**

In contemporary translation studies, it is widely acknowledged that linguistic equivalence cannot be achieved through direct lexical substitution. Languages differ not only in grammatical structure but also in conceptual organization and cultural conventions. Consequently, translators must adopt adaptive strategies to preserve meaning across languages. Lexical transformations constitute one such strategy, enabling translators to restructure lexical units in accordance with target language norms. Rather than distorting meaning, these transformations facilitate semantic alignment and pragmatic coherence. In English–Uzbek translation, this

process is particularly prominent due to typological asymmetry and divergent cultural coding. Translation studies have long emphasized that equivalence between source and target texts cannot be achieved through literal transfer alone. Differences in linguistic structure, semantic systems, and cultural conventions necessitate various forms of transformation. Among these, lexical transformations occupy a central position, as lexical units carry not only denotative meaning but also cultural and pragmatic value. Vinay and Darbelnet (1995) argue that translation procedures are systematic responses to interlingual differences rather than arbitrary choices. Similarly, Newmark (1988) stresses that translators must prioritize communicative effectiveness over formal similarity. In the context of English–Uzbek translation, lexical transformations are particularly significant due to typological divergence between the two languages. The aim of this study is to analyze the main types of lexical transformations and to demonstrate their functional role in ensuring translation adequacy and naturalness.

## METHODS

This study employs a qualitative, interpretive research design aimed at identifying and explaining lexical transformation strategies in English–Uzbek translation. The focus is not on frequency measurement but on functional and semantic interpretation of lexical shifts occurring during the translation process. The research data consist of carefully selected translation instances representing common lexical transformation patterns. These examples were chosen based on their relevance to meaning transfer, cultural adaptation, and structural adjustment between the source and target languages.

The analytical procedure was conducted in three stages. First, source-language lexical units were examined in relation to their target-language renderings to detect deviations from direct equivalence. Second, the identified deviations were categorized according to transformation type, such as addition, omission, specification, generalization, metaphoric adaptation, and antonymic restructuring. Third, each transformation was interpreted in terms of its communicative function and contribution to semantic adequacy and naturalness in the target language. The theoretical grounding

of the study integrates functional and equivalence-based approaches in translation studies. Concepts of dynamic equivalence, communicative translation, and comparative stylistics were employed as analytical tools rather than descriptive frameworks. This methodological approach ensures analytical originality and avoids mechanical classification.

To enhance reliability, transformations were analyzed within their contextual environment rather than as isolated lexical units. This context-sensitive method allows for a more accurate interpretation of translational decisions and supports the validity of the findings.

## RESULTS

The analysis revealed six dominant lexical transformation types consistently applied in English–Uzbek translation. Lexical addition emerged as a compensatory mechanism for implicit meanings absent in the source text but required in the target language. Lexical omission functioned as a means of stylistic compression, eliminating redundant semantic elements. Specification was used to enhance semantic precision, while generalization reduced unnecessary specificity. Metaphoric transformation involved either metaphor retention or semantic neutralization, depending on cultural relevance. Finally, antonymic translation demonstrated how opposite lexical forms may preserve identical propositional meaning. These findings confirm the systematic nature of lexical transformations.

## DISCUSSION

The findings confirm that lexical transformations function as essential mediating mechanisms between languages with distinct structural and cultural systems. Consistent with Nida's concept of dynamic equivalence, the analyzed transformations prioritize receptor-oriented meaning over formal correspondence.

Lexical addition and specification were particularly frequent, reflecting the need to compensate for implicit information in English texts when translating into Uzbek. Conversely, omission and generalization contributed to stylistic economy and

communicative efficiency. Metaphoric and antonymic transformations highlight the translator's interpretive role and intercultural competence.

These results align with previous research emphasizing that translation quality depends on strategic lexical adaptation rather than literal accuracy.

### **CONCLUSION**

This study confirms that lexical transformations are essential for achieving semantic and communicative equivalence in English–Uzbek translation. Rather than relying on direct lexical correspondence, translators employ systematic strategies such as addition, omission, specification, generalization, metaphoric adaptation, and antonymic restructuring to ensure natural and accurate meaning transfer. The findings highlight the role of lexical transformations as core translation strategies and emphasize their importance in professional translation practice and further research.

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