



EUPHEMISM TRANSLATION STRATEGIES: A COMPARATIVE STUDY OF ENGLISH AND UZBEK PUBLICISTIC TEXTS

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Annotation: This article examines the translation strategies used in rendering euphemisms in English and Uzbek publicistic texts. Euphemisms play a significant role in media discourse, political communication, and journalistic writing because they help soften harsh realities, avoid taboo expressions, and maintain politeness. The research analyzes linguistic and cultural differences between English and Uzbek euphemistic expressions and identifies the main translation techniques applied in publicistic materials. Comparative analysis demonstrates that literal translation is not always effective due to differences in cultural background, social norms, and communicative purposes. The study highlights the importance of contextual adaptation and semantic equivalence in achieving accurate and culturally appropriate translations.

Keywords: Euphemism, translation strategies, publicistic texts, comparative linguistics.

Introduction

Language is not only a means of communication but also a reflection of cultural values, traditions, and social norms. In modern linguistics, euphemisms occupy an important place because they allow speakers and writers to express sensitive ideas indirectly and politely. Euphemistic expressions are widely used in publicistic texts such as newspapers, magazines, political speeches, television reports, and online media publications.

The translation of euphemisms is considered one of the most challenging aspects of translation studies because translators must preserve both the semantic meaning and the stylistic effect of the original text. In English and Uzbek publicistic discourse, euphemisms often differ in lexical structure, cultural connotation, and pragmatic function. Therefore, translators need to apply specific translation strategies to achieve equivalence between the source and target languages.

The purpose of this article is to investigate the major strategies used in translating euphemisms between English and Uzbek publicistic texts and to



identify similarities and differences in their linguistic representation.

Main Part

The Nature and Functions of Euphemisms

The term “euphemism” originates from the Greek words eu meaning “good” and pHEME meaning “speech.” Euphemisms are indirect or mild expressions used instead of harsh, unpleasant, or socially unacceptable words. They are commonly applied in discussions related to death, illness, politics, war, unemployment, economic crises, and social problems.

In publicistic texts, euphemisms perform several important functions:

1. Politeness Function – avoiding offensive or rude expressions.
2. Manipulative Function – influencing public opinion through softened language.
3. Diplomatic Function – reducing tension in political communication.
4. Ethical Function – respecting cultural and moral norms.

For example, English media often use expressions such as “passed away” instead of “died,” while Uzbek publicistic texts may use “olamdan o‘tdi” or “vafot etdi.”

Translation Strategies of Euphemisms

The translation of euphemisms requires not only linguistic competence but also cultural awareness. Researchers identify several major strategies for translating euphemistic expressions.

1. Literal Translation

Literal translation involves direct lexical equivalence between the source and target languages. This strategy is effective when both languages share similar euphemistic concepts.

Example:

English: “passed away”

Uzbek: “vafot etdi”

In this case, the emotional softness of the expression is preserved in translation.

However, literal translation is not always successful because some euphemisms are culture-specific and may sound unnatural in another language.

2. Cultural Substitution

Cultural substitution is used when the original euphemism has no direct equivalent in the target language. The translator replaces it with a culturally appropriate expression.

Example:

English: “senior citizen”

Uzbek: “keksa inson”

Although the literal meanings differ slightly, both expressions



demonstrate respect and politeness toward elderly people.

3. Descriptive Translation

Sometimes euphemistic expressions require explanation in translation. Descriptive translation helps convey the implied meaning clearly.

Example:

English: “economically disadvantaged”

Uzbek: “moddiy jihatdan qiynalgan insonlar”

This strategy maintains the euphemistic tone while making the meaning understandable for readers.

4. Omission

Certain euphemisms may lose their stylistic effect or sound redundant in translation. In such cases, translators may omit the euphemistic element partially or completely.

For instance, political speeches often contain highly indirect phrases that may be simplified in Uzbek translation for clarity and readability.

5. Semantic Adaptation

Semantic adaptation is one of the most effective strategies in translating publicistic texts. It involves modifying the euphemistic expression according to the cultural and communicative norms of the target audience.

Example:

English: “collateral damage”

Uzbek: “tasodifiy qurbonlar”

The translated version avoids excessive ambiguity while preserving the diplomatic tone.

Comparative Analysis of English and Uzbek Euphemisms

English euphemisms are often influenced by political correctness and media ethics. Modern English journalism tends to avoid direct references to race, disability, gender, and social status. Expressions such as “visually impaired” or “low-income families” are commonly used to ensure social sensitivity.

Uzbek euphemisms, on the other hand, are strongly connected with cultural traditions, respect for elders, and moral values. Uzbek publicistic discourse frequently employs religious and ethical euphemisms, especially when discussing death, illness, or family matters.

Another important difference lies in stylistic structure. English euphemisms are usually concise and metaphorical, while Uzbek euphemisms may be longer and more descriptive. Therefore, translators must consider linguistic economy and emotional expressiveness during translation.

Challenges in Translating Euphemisms

Translators face several difficulties when working with euphemistic



language:

- Lack of direct lexical equivalents;
- Differences in cultural perception;
- Loss of stylistic coloring;
- Misinterpretation of implicit meanings;
- Political and ideological sensitivity

To overcome these challenges, translators should possess strong intercultural competence and deep knowledge of both source and target language traditions.

Conclusion

Euphemisms are essential elements of publicistic discourse because they reflect social norms, political ideologies, and cultural values. The comparative analysis of English and Uzbek publicistic texts demonstrates that euphemism translation requires more than direct linguistic substitution. Effective translation depends on cultural adaptation, contextual understanding, and preservation of pragmatic meaning.

Among the most commonly used translation strategies are literal translation, cultural substitution, descriptive translation, omission, and semantic adaptation. Each strategy serves a particular communicative purpose and helps translators maintain equivalence between the source and target texts.

The study concludes that successful translation of euphemisms contributes to accurate intercultural communication and improves the quality of publicistic translation. Future research may focus on euphemisms in literary texts, political speeches, and digital media discourse.

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