

NEGOTIATING CULTURE IN TERMINOLOGY TRANSLATION: IDEOLOGY, METAPHOR, AND ADAPTATION

Ortiqova Iroda Shukhratovna

UzSWLU

<https://doi.org/10.5281/zenodo.15386351>

Abstract

This article critically examines the inherent cultural and ideological dimensions involved in terminology translation, particularly addressing metaphorical, politically sensitive, and culture-specific terms. Through comprehensive analysis and illustrative case studies across educational, political, and social contexts, it highlights adaptive translation strategies that balance conceptual precision and cultural appropriateness. The theoretical framework draws upon translation theory (Venuti, 1995; Newmark, 1988), terminology science (Sager, 1990; Cabré, 1999), and cultural studies (Lakoff & Johnson, 1980) to outline strategies suited to post-colonial and post-Soviet settings. Ethical implications and the translator's role as a cultural mediator are emphasized, providing practical recommendations and identifying future research directions in the fields of terminology, translation studies, and intercultural communication.

Keywords: cultural adaptation, ideological translation, conceptual metaphor, functional equivalence, terminology policy.

Terminology transcends linguistic boundaries, deeply embedded in specific cultural, epistemological, and ideological frameworks. Specialized terms develop uniquely within institutional and cultural contexts, often carrying distinct historical trajectories and professional community ideologies. Unlike general vocabulary, terminological translation demands precise linguistic accuracy coupled with significant cultural insight (Cabré, 1999). Translators face the dual challenge of maintaining conceptual accuracy and ensuring cultural resonance and intelligibility, necessitating strategic mediation between linguistic fidelity and cultural adaptation (Venuti, 1995).

This paper applies theoretical insights from descriptive terminology studies (Cabré, 1999), cultural translation theory (Venuti, 1995), and conceptual metaphor theory (Lakoff & Johnson, 1980) to explore the complex task translators undertake in balancing these competing demands.

Cultural Challenges in Terminology Translation: Culture-Bound Concepts in Education

The concept of "liberal arts" education serves as a prominent example of a culture-bound term rooted in the Western educational tradition. Central Asian contexts pose significant translation challenges due to divergent educational philosophies, organizational paradigms, and associated social values (Newmark, 1988). Direct translations such as the Russian калька "свободные искусства" inadequately convey the holistic and critical-thinking emphasis inherent to the term.

A more culturally resonant approach involves functional equivalence, translating the underlying philosophy rather than the literal form. Effective examples include Kazakh "кең көзқарасты білім беру" (broad-perspective education) and Uzbek "keng qarashli ta'lim" (education promoting broad outlooks). These adaptations capture the essence of the liberal

arts' broad educational perspective and commitment to critical inquiry, adapting these concepts effectively to local educational paradigms.

Ideologically Loaded Political Terminology

Politically charged terminology, such as "grassroots movement," presents further complexities due to its democratic connotations in Western contexts (Venuti, 1995). In post-Soviet societies, such terms evoke associations with politically sensitive phenomena, such as "color revolutions," complicating direct translation approaches.

Strategies employed include neutralization, exemplified by the Uzbek "fuqarolar tashabbusi" (citizens' initiative), which removes direct political connotations and focuses instead on the grassroots essence of civic engagement. Cultural substitution, as seen with terms like "xalq harakati" (people's movement), aligns more closely with local historical contexts of collective political mobilization. Additionally, explicit explanatory glosses provide contextual clarity, particularly valuable in academic and diplomatic discourse (Newmark, 1988).

Conceptual Metaphors in Social Discourse

Metaphorical terms significantly reflect cultural conceptualizations (Lakoff & Johnson, 1980). The American metaphor "melting pot," denoting cultural assimilation, contrasts sharply with metaphors from other cultural contexts, such as the Canadian "mosaic," emphasizing coexistence without assimilation; the Mexican "cosmic race," highlighting a harmonious racial synthesis; or Central Asia's "dastarkhan," representing hospitality and shared communal life.

Translators may opt for metaphor replacement, such as the Uzbek "millatlar maydoni" (nation's square), invoking imagery of inclusive public space rather than assimilation. Literal translation complemented by explanatory notes can preserve the metaphor's richness while elucidating its cultural specifics. Alternatively, shifting entirely to neutral terminology like "madaniy integratsiya" (cultural integration) offers a more universally comprehensible concept free from cultural bias.

Adaptation Strategies for Cultural Terminology:

Functional Equivalence

Functional equivalence translates the essence of terms within different cultural frameworks, best suited to institutional contexts (Sager, 1990). Effective examples include translating "affirmative action" as "ijobiy diskriminatsiya" (positive discrimination), explicitly highlighting its intended beneficial outcome despite initial semantic contradictions. Similarly, translating "community college" as "kasb-hunar kolleji" captures the vocational and community-oriented aspects relevant to local educational structures.

Cultural Substitution

Cultural substitution is particularly effective in handling metaphorically dense terminology (Newmark, 1988). For instance, "glass ceiling" is adapted into Uzbek as "gips peshtoq" (plaster archway), effectively utilizing local architectural metaphors familiar to the target audience to communicate the concept of invisible yet formidable barriers. Similarly, "think tank" becomes "fikir laboratoriyasi," leveraging intuitive understandings of laboratories as spaces for innovation and idea generation.

Explanatory Techniques

Sensitive or complex terms often require explanatory footnotes or glosses, ensuring comprehension without diluting original concepts (Venuti, 1995). An example includes

translating "woke" as "ijtimoiy adolat tarafdori" (social justice advocate), supplemented by context-specific explanations. These notes clarify the term's cultural origin and political implications, essential for understanding its nuanced application within new cultural contexts.

Institutional Standardization

Institutional standardization is crucial for consistent terminological application, especially in multilingual and multicultural contexts (Cabr , 1999). Organizations like UNESCO provide guidelines shaping effective cultural adaptation strategies. The development of standardized Uzbek legal terminology illustrates institutional roles in ensuring clarity, reducing ambiguity, and promoting consistent usage across various linguistic contexts.

References:

Используемая литература:

Foydalanilgan adabiyotlar:

1. Cabr , M. T. (1999). *Terminology: Theory, Methods and Applications*. John Benjamins.
2. Lakoff, G., & Johnson, M. (1980). *Metaphors We Live By*. University of Chicago Press.
3. Newmark, P. (1988). *A Textbook of Translation*. Prentice Hall.
4. Sager, J. C. (1990). *A Practical Course in Terminology Processing*. John Benjamins.
5. Venuti, L. (1995). *The Translator's Invisibility*. Routledge.