

Article

Challenges in Translating Verb-To-Verb Linking Constructions in Uzbek and English

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Abstract: This study investigates the translation of verb-to-verb linking constructions between English and Uzbek, focusing on semantic, grammatical, and pragmatic challenges. It explores the influence of linguistic differences, structural semantics, and extralinguistic factors on achieving communicative equivalence. The article examines translation norms, idiomatic expressions, proverbs, and literary texts, highlighting the complexities of rendering meaning while preserving stylistic and cultural nuances. Findings demonstrate that successful translation of these constructions requires not only profound knowledge of the grammatical and lexical systems of both languages but also extensive intercultural competence and practical translation experience. The study contributes to the understanding of translation strategies in bilingual contexts and provides guidelines for addressing linguistic and pragmatic obstacles in English-Uzbek translation.

Keywords: English-Uzbek translation, verb-to-verb constructions, semantic challenges, grammatical challenges, pragmatic challenges, translation norms, idiomatic expressions, intercultural competence

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1. Introduction

The acceleration of globalization, the development of intercultural communication, and the rapid advancement of science and technology have intensified the exchange of information, thereby increasing the relevance of translation studies and the need to address challenges arising in the translation process. "Translation is a type of linguistic mediation in which the content of a source text in a foreign language is rendered into another language through the creation of a communicatively equivalent text" [1, pp. 248–253]. This process plays a crucial role in facilitating the exchange of information among different nations and cultures. It contributes to the global dissemination of achievements in science, culture, and other fields. It should be noted that the term *translation* itself is understood in two senses. First, it refers to the process of expressing the content of a foreign-language text by means of another language. Second, it denotes the result of this activity. Achieving high quality in translation requires specialists to possess the ability to compare the translated text with the original, identify potential errors, and introduce appropriate corrections. Naturally, the existence of generally accepted norms serves as a fundamental guideline for translators in this process.

2. Materials and Methods

Translation norms refer to the rules and principles that must be observed in the process of translation. According to specialists, translation norms can be classified into the following categories: **(1) equivalence norms; (2) genre and stylistic norms; (3) norms of translation discourse; (4) pragmatic norms; and (5) legal norms** [2, p. 192]. It is evident that the problems arising in the translation of a text from one language into another are semantic, syntactic, and pragmatic in nature. These aspects can also be observed in the translation of linguistic means linking verbs to other verbs.

To overcome translation challenges, it is essential to render lexical and grammatical constructions accurately from one language into another. This involves the appropriate selection of necessary linguistic means and, ultimately, the preservation of their full semantic content. Even within a single language, information (or a text) may be expressed in different forms through the use of various linguistic devices. A translator must take all these factors into account and possess substantial experience to achieve a high-quality translation. As noted, the affiliation of languages to different language families makes the differences between them more pronounced. According to established translation theories, “it is impossible to produce a completely precise translation that fully corresponds to grammatical patterns. Frequently, word combinations in one language do not conform to the literary norms of another and may not align with its stylistic conventions. In expanded sentences, it is rare to find translations in which the word order, number of words, and their grammatical categories entirely coincide with those of the original” [3, pp. 128–132]. These challenges of translation are also evident in rendering constructions that incorporate linguistic means linking verbs to other verbs in English and Uzbek.

In comparative grammar, the differences between the source language and the target language are classified into three groups:

1. The absence of grammatical categories of the source language in the target language.

For example, the definite and indefinite articles and the category of gender in English do not exist in Uzbek. When translating English texts into Uzbek, these forms must therefore be rendered through appropriate linguistic means. Conversely, the mood category in Uzbek is not translated into English as a distinct grammatical category, which necessitates the use of alternative means to convey its meaning.

2. The presence of grammatical categories in both languages that must be applied in translation, even when their usage may appear inappropriate.

In such cases, the translator should rely on logic and avoid using a grammatical form if it distorts the intended meaning. For instance, the category of number exists in both English and Uzbek; however, their usage differs. Nouns such as *socks*, *trousers*, and *glasses* are used in the plural form in English, whereas their Uzbek equivalent ones are typically used in the singular. (*paypoq*, *shim*, and *ko'zoynak*)

3. The existence in the target language of grammatical units that are formally equivalent to those of the source language but differ in function.

Each difference listed above gives rise to specific challenges, and their successful resolution in the translation process requires particular approaches. This demands that the translator possess an in-depth knowledge of the grammatical systems of both languages. Furthermore, familiarity with lexical, stylistic, and pragmatic aspects ensures the success and adequacy of the translation. In the translation of constructions employing linguistic means of verb-to-verb linking from English into Uzbek and vice versa—from Uzbek into English—the first and second types of differences outlined above can be clearly observed. The third case, however, is typically characteristic of related languages. In general, it is advisable to classify the problems arising in the translation of constructions involving linguistic means of verb-to-verb linking according to their semantic, grammatical, and pragmatic features.

Semantics encompasses all information conveyed through language and its units. In the translation process, semantic challenges are manifested in differences among word classes and inconsistencies in the transfer of word meanings. Problems related to the grouping of words in translation have been reflected in the research of L.Y. Vaysgerber [4, p. 52]. The scholar laid the foundation for an approach known as structural semantics. According to this approach, the meaning of any linguistic unit cannot be determined in isolation; it is defined only in relation to a field of similar units. This principle inevitably affects the translation process. Indeed, a translator can select the most appropriate unit for the target text only by comparing the linguistic unit within the context of all elements in the semantic system.

For example, in Uzbek there is a proverb: “*Gapni gapir uqqanga*” – (meaning: *Don't cast pearls before swine.*) [5, p. 512]. This proverb, formed as a simple sentence, contains a combination of two verbs in Uzbek: *uqqanga gapirmoq*. This construction is created by attaching a case form to the verb functioning as a predicative modifier (*uqqanga* - *who understands*). The translation of this construction and the entire sentence into English is often rendered, especially in machine translation, as: *Tell someone who understands*. However, for the verb *understand* (*uqmoq*) and its synonyms (*tushunmoq*, *anglamoq*, *fahmlamoq*, *bilmoq*) [6, p. 489], English offers a variety of equivalents: *comprehend*, *understand*, *grasp*, *perceive*, *realize*, *apprehend*, *fathom*, *discern*, *interpret*, *get*. The translator must select the most appropriate option from among these. Considering that the verb *uqmoq* is used within the context of a proverb and that *understand* may not fully convey its meaning, it is preferable to use *comprehend*. Moreover, the translator must also recognize that such sentences contain idiomatic or fixed expressions; therefore, a literal word-for-word translation is often inadequate. The stable nature of proverbs and their constructions must be taken into account to achieve an accurate and contextually appropriate translation.

Semantic challenges in the translation process also arise when a concept present in the source language does not exist in the target language. For example, because there is no single word in Uzbek that fully captures the meaning of *snack*, most dictionaries render the expression as *have a snack*, which is translated using the compound word *tamaddi qilmoq* [7, p. 656]. However, in some advertisements and media texts, the expression is sometimes rendered as “*snek qilmoq*”. Such translations, which represent a form of varvarism, inevitably have negative consequences when broadcast on television. Indeed, television plays a crucial role in the development of communication skills in the state language and in shaping language culture among the population. The results of translation practices across various languages and the principles of translation demonstrate that, when a word in the source text does not exist in the target language and conveys a new concept to the audience, it may be left untranslated. However, in cases where a suitable alternative exists in the target language, leaving it untranslated is inadvisable. In general, correctly understanding the semantic properties of words and selecting appropriate linguistic units in the target text ensures the success of the translation. It also helps to minimize discrepancies between the source and target texts. In constructions involving verbs, the combinatory property of verb units is particularly prominent, making their co-occurrence in text somewhat challenging. The verbs forming these constructions may undergo certain grammatical as well as lexico-semantic transformations. According to Uzbek textbooks and manuals, for a verb to appear in a compound construction, it must function as a dependent unit, expressing action as a process and serving as its own nominal reference. Therefore, these aspects must be carefully considered when translating verb+verb constructions.

3. Results and Discussion

Semantic challenges in the translation of verb+verb constructions are particularly pronounced in the translation of literary texts. Regarding the complexities of literary

translation, it is worth noting the following observation: “In the process of translation, a work may naturally lose some of its original qualities, yet, as it moves into another language and serves the moral and cultural education of another people, it simultaneously acquires a number of new virtues” [8, p. 234]. At this point, the discussion concerns the nationalization of the translated text. That is, the unique characteristics grounded in the linguistic basis of the original text are partially lost, while its features that are universally comprehensible to humanity become more prominent. For example, translating the sentence “*Eshilib, to’lg’onib ingranadi kuy*” (A. Oripov) (*literally describing the song as twisting and vibrating*) requires more than a perfect command of the lexical resources of both languages. The translator also encounters the problem that the words forming the verb+verb construction in this sentence have no direct equivalents in English. Using the *Explanatory Dictionary of the Uzbek Language*, the translator can identify that the verb “*eshilmoq*” carries meanings such as “*aylanmoq*” (to rotate), “*buralmoq*” (to twist), and “*tovlanmoq*” (to vibrate), while the verb “*to’lg’anmoq*” conveys meanings such as “*chayqalmoq*” (to shake), “*tebranmoq*” (to sway), and “*silkinmoq*” (to tremble) [9, p. 777]. Finding English equivalents for the identified synonymic words does not pose significant difficulty. Accordingly, the translator can render the sentence containing the verb+verb construction as: “*Twirling, swaying, the melody moans.*” Naturally, the English sentence cannot fully convey the meaning of “*Eshilib, to’lg’anib ingranadi kuy*”, which reflects the unique national color characteristic of Uzbek culture. Indeed, “it is impossible to preserve all the historical and national features of the original text in the translation. The retention of such elements depends on whether similar concepts exist in the language of the target audience” [10, p. 234]. Thus, it is evident that resolving semantic challenges in the translation process requires the translator to possess deep knowledge and extensive experience in both languages.

Differences between languages also manifest in the non-correspondence of grammatical tools, a phenomenon emphasized in both translation theory and practice. According to Franz Boas, grammatical forms can sometimes reflect features that must be preserved in translation [11, pp. 170–180]. This can be observed, for example, in the inability to translate the English pronouns *he* or *she* in some contexts into Uzbek using the third-person singular pronoun (*u*), due to the absence of the gender category in Uzbek. In an English version of a text reflecting a dialogue between two genders, it is not necessary to indicate the speaker explicitly—the applied grammatical tools convey this information. However, in Uzbek texts, the personal pronoun alone is often insufficient to specify the speaker clearly. Translation issues related to grammatical tools also become evident in sentence structure and collocational analysis, including in the translation of verb-to-verb linking constructions. For instance, the infinitive and gerund forms of verbs, phrasal and modal verbs, as well as certain connectors that serve as verb-to-verb linking tools in English, are not always translated into Uzbek using exact equivalents. As noted, this can be explained by the fact that English and Uzbek belong to different language families, which results in significant differences between their grammatical tools. Similarly, in Uzbek, participial, adjectival, case forms, and auxiliaries that function as verb-to-verb linking tools can be translated into English using alternative mechanisms or other linguistic units. This is because the translator’s primary goal is to preserve the meaning of the original text, which sometimes necessitates formal modifications. For instance, the Uzbek construction *tayyorlanishni boshlamoq* (*start preparing*) consists of a verb+verb pattern in which a case form functions as the linking device. Its translation into English appears as *start preparing*. The case form (*-ni*) that serves as a linking tool in Uzbek (*tayyorlanishni*), which attaches to the verb, is rendered in English as a gerund formed with the *-ing* suffix. Most grammatical sources treat the gerund as a verbal noun, indicating that an equivalent translation has been applied in the process. However, since English does not have case forms identical to those in Uzbek, the agreement encoded in the Uzbek case form cannot always be preserved in the English translation.

In English, the translation of verb+verb constructions also encounters challenges

related to either preserving grammatical markers or replacing them with other linguistic units. This is particularly evident when impersonal forms of verbs (gerunds, infinitives), phrasal verbs, modal verbs, and certain conjunctions functioning as verb-to-verb linking devices cannot always be translated directly into Uzbek. In such cases, the difficulties arise not only from grammatical tools but also from their semantic properties. As noted, “grammatical devices do not merely fulfill syntactic and morphological functions but can also affect the overall meaning of the construction” [12; 50–53]. This issue was discussed in detail in the preceding sections. For instance, when translating phrasal verbs, the translator must pay attention not only to their grammatical features but also to their semantic aspects. It follows that in translation, examining semantic and grammatical dimensions together often contributes significantly to the success of the translation.

“In world linguistics, the tendency to study linguistic activity and the aspects in which the human factor manifests itself has intensified, and the scope of research interpreting language in relation to humans—their consciousness, cognition, and psycho-practical activity—is steadily expanding” [13; 121]. In this context, the study of non-linguistic devices becomes particularly significant. Research that selects communication as the object of linguistic analysis and evaluates the role of language factors within this system increasingly enhances the practical efficiency of language use. This is also a matter that should capture the translator’s attention. “The pragmatic importance of a translation is determined by how well the text, rendered from one language into another, aligns with the objectives of translation” [14; 239]. Pragmatic issues in the translation process include the translator’s proper understanding and application of non-linguistic devices that cooperate with linguistic means to convey the text’s meaning. Furthermore, in order to express the meanings of stable collocations, idioms, and proverbs, the correct selection of units in the target language can also be regarded as part of the pragmatic challenges of translation. Indeed, in order to convey a thought fully, linguistic means alone are often insufficient. Only when non-linguistic devices collaborate with linguistic devices does the message become comprehensible to the listener, and the speaker’s communicative intention is realized. “The pragmatic features of linguistic activity, as well as the factors that bring these features into effect, are important for determining the social essence of language. They allow researchers to find evidence confirming that linguistic communication manifests in accordance with social and psycho-psychological regularities, and on this basis, that the language system develops” [15; 320]. In other words, when a translator renders a text from one language into another, attention must be paid not only to linguistic means themselves but also to extralinguistic devices. Pragmatic challenges in the translation process also arise due to the existence of formal and informal types of communication and the potential misinterpretation of certain modes of meaning transfer. For example, a literal translation of the Uzbek sentence “*Ortda qolganlar matbuotda ‘savalandi’*” into another language would fail to convey its intended meaning. Such a rendering could result in a completely different interpretation. In this example, a syntactic construction formed through the combination of verbs—more precisely, a simple sentence—is employed (*ortda qolganlar savalandi*). The English translation of this sentence is: “*Those left behind were criticized in the press.*” In this translation, the Uzbek verb *savalanmoq* is interpreted as “*to be criticized*” and is rendered by the verb *criticized*, demonstrating that the translator has taken extralinguistic factors into account. The presence of the phrase *matbuotda* (“*in the press*”) serves as a contextual key, facilitating the correct interpretation and ensuring the success of the translation. Had the influence of non-linguistic factors been ignored, the translation might have conveyed an entirely different meaning. Such pragmatic considerations must remain at the forefront of the translator’s attention. A translator’s profound knowledge of extralinguistic factors in both languages contributes to overcoming pragmatically related translation problems and ensures the adequacy of the translated text. As noted, “Extensive reading not only expands one’s vocabulary but also helps to learn how to construct speech correctly” [16, pp. 369–375]. It follows that, in order to overcome

pragmatic challenges in the translation process, a translator must be well acquainted with authentic communicative practices in both languages, possess detailed knowledge of fixed expressions and semantic shifts, and demonstrate a high level of intercultural competence.

4. Conclusion

It cannot be asserted that the challenges encountered in the translation process are limited solely to semantic, grammatical, and pragmatic aspects. Indeed, translation difficulties may also arise from differences between the cultures of two nations, as well as from shortcomings on the part of the translator. Nevertheless, the principal challenges are associated with the semantic, grammatical, and pragmatic features of the languages involved in the translation of a text. Furthermore, all three categories of difficulties are evident in the translation of constructions employing linguistic means of verb-to-verb linking. In addition, the grammatical and lexical complexities inherent in the combination of two verbs further intensify translation challenges. Therefore, in order to translate constructions involving linguistic means of verb-to-verb linking successfully, the translator must possess not only profound linguistic knowledge of all levels of the two languages but also a thorough understanding of the culture, traditions, and values of the peoples who speak them.

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