PRAGMATIC ASPECT IN THE TRANSLATION OF ANTONYMS IN ENGLISH AND UZBEK LITERATURE

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Abstract

Translation is not a mere process of word-for-word substitution; it involves a complex interplay between linguistic, cultural, and pragmatic aspects. One of the most subtle and significant challenges in translation is the correct rendering of antonyms, especially between languages of different typological backgrounds, such as English and Uzbek. This article explores the pragmatic aspects of translating antonyms in English and Uzbek literature. It highlights the cultural, contextual, and stylistic nuances that influence how oppositional meanings are conveyed in two languages. The study draws on examples from well-known literary texts and offers insights into how translators navigate the pragmatic intricacies of antonymy to preserve authorial intent, emotional tone, and communicative impact.

Keywords: Pragmatics, antonyms, translation, English literature, Uzbek literature, semantic opposition, context, equivalence.

Introduction

In literary translation, the translator's role extends far beyond linguistic substitution; it involves rendering the meaning, mood, style, and cultural essence of the source text into the target language. Among the many linguistic elements that pose challenges in translation, antonyms occupy a special place. Antonyms are not merely semantic opposites but are contextually charged expressions that can carry emotional, cultural, and pragmatic significance. In the realm of English and Uzbek literature, this complexity is further heightened by the differences in syntactic structures, cultural worldviews, and literary traditions of the two languages. The present study focuses on the pragmatic aspect of antonym translation, analyzing how antonyms are translated across English and Uzbek

literary texts and what strategies are employed to maintain pragmatic equivalence.

Pragmatics is the branch of linguistics concerned with language use in context and the implications that go beyond literal meanings. In translation, pragmatics plays a critical role because linguistic elements cannot always be translated directly without loss of meaning or function. For instance, idioms, metaphors, politeness markers, and pragmatic markers often require adaptive strategies rather than literal rendering. When it comes to antonyms, their pragmatic value often emerges from their role in rhetorical devices such as contrast, irony, paradox, and emphasis. These roles are not only linguistic but deeply embedded in the communicative intentions of the author. Therefore, the translator must understand not only what the antonyms mean, but why the author chose them, and how they function within the communicative context of the literary work.

Antonymy in English and Uzbek

English and Uzbek represent two very different linguistic systems. English, as an Indo-European language, relies heavily on fixed word order and syntactic constructions, while Uzbek, a Turkic language, has an agglutinative morphology and relatively flexible word order. This difference also manifests in the way antonyms are formed and used. In English, antonyms can be formed through prefixes (happy/unhappy), root contrasts (hot/cold), and conceptual binaries (life/death). In Uzbek, antonymy is often realized through native lexical pairs (katta/kichik – big/small; issiq/sovuq – hot/cold) or contextually derived oppositions that may not have direct lexical opposites in English. Moreover, in Uzbek literature, especially classical poetry and folklore, antonymy is often used for rhythmic and poetic effects. For example, the juxtaposition of "yorugʻ" (light) and "qorongʻu" (dark) may evoke deeper spiritual or symbolic meanings than their literal translations. Similarly, English literature often uses contrastive pairs to highlight psychological, moral, or philosophical dilemmas.

Pragmatic Challenges in Translating Antonyms

Translating antonyms is not always straightforward because their oppositional meanings are often context-dependent. Let us consider the English sentence: *"He was silent, not because he was calm, but because he was afraid."* Here, "calm" and "afraid" are presented in contrast, and the pragmatic function

is to correct a possible misunderstanding. If translated into Uzbek literally, the sentence might lose its implicature unless restructured carefully. In Uzbek: *U uyalganidan emas, qo'rqqani uchun jim edi.* (He was silent not because he was shy, but because he was afraid.)

In this translation, although the antonym pair is not a direct match (calm/shy), the pragmatic goal of correcting a misconception is preserved. This demonstrates how translators must sometimes replace one lexical pair with another to maintain the communicative function of contrast. Another example from literature can be taken from Shakespeare's "Romeo and Juliet": *"My only love sprung from my only hate."* The contrast here is rich in emotional and poetic nuance. The direct translation into Uzbek: *Mening yagona sevgim, mening yagona nafratimdan paydo bo'ldi.*

While this is semantically equivalent, the emotional depth and poetic rhythm might not fully carry over. A skilled translator might use more culturally resonant expressions or restructure the sentence for effect, illustrating that the pragmatic force of antonyms lies in their function, not just their meaning.

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