

LEXICAL SEMANTIC PROBLEMS OF TRANSLATION

Supervisor: **Egamberdiyeva.I.A**

Associate professor of ASIFL

Student: **Kurbonaliyeva Gulrux**

Student of Andijan State Institute of Foreign Languages

Annotation. This study investigates the lexical semantic challenges encountered in the translation process, examining the complex relationship between word meanings across different linguistic and cultural systems. The research analyzes how translators navigate issues of polysemy, semantic fields, connotative meanings, and cultural-specific lexical items when transferring content between languages. Through examination of both theoretical frameworks and practical translation cases, this study identifies key lexical semantic problems that affect translation quality, including issues of equivalence, contextual meaning, and the translation of culture-bound expressions, idioms, and metaphors.

Аннотация. В данном исследовании рассматриваются лексико-семантические проблемы, возникающие в процессе перевода, с анализом сложных взаимоотношений между значениями слов в различных языковых и культурных системах. В исследовании анализируется, как переводчики решают вопросы полисемии, семантических полей, коннотативных значений и культурно-специфических лексических единиц при передаче содержания между языками. На основе изучения как теоретических основ, так и практических случаев перевода, в исследовании выявляются ключевые лексико-семантические проблемы, влияющие на качество перевода, включая вопросы эквивалентности, контекстуального значения и перевода культурно-обусловленных выражений, идиом и метафор.

Keywords: Translation studies, lexical semantics, linguistic equivalence, polysemy, semantic fields, connotative meaning, culture-specific items, contextual translation, translation strategies, interlingual relations.

Ключевые слова: Переводоведение, лексическая семантика, языковая эквивалентность, полисемия, семантические поля, коннотативное значение, культурно-специфические элементы, контекстуальный перевод, переводческие стратегии, межъязыковые отношения.

The lexical semantic dimension of translation represents one of the most challenging aspects of cross-linguistic communication. Words, as the fundamental units of meaning, carry complex semantic structures that rarely find perfect equivalents across language boundaries. This phenomenon results from the intricate relationship between language and thought, where each linguistic system categorizes and expresses reality according to its own unique patterns. Consequently, translators must navigate a complex web of semantic relations to accurately transfer meaning between source and target languages.

The fundamental lexical semantic challenge in translation stems from the asymmetry of semantic systems across languages. As Nida observes, "No two languages are identical, either in the meanings given to corresponding symbols or in the ways in which such symbols are arranged in phrases and sentences" [1;48]. This non-isomorphism manifests in various forms of lexical gaps, semantic

overlaps, and divergent connotative associations that complicate the translator's task of finding appropriate equivalents.

Polysemy—the capacity of words to carry multiple related meanings—poses a significant challenge for translators. When a source language word encompasses several semantic variants, the translator must determine which particular sense is activated in the given context and find a corresponding equivalent that captures this specific meaning. For instance, the English word "table" may refer to a piece of furniture, a data arrangement, or a parliamentary procedure, each requiring different lexical equivalents in other languages. Failure to identify the correct semantic variant often results in translation errors or awkward renderings in the target language. Semantic fields—networks of related words that divide conceptual domains—differ markedly across languages, reflecting distinct cultural and cognitive categorizations. As Komissarov notes, "Languages segment reality differently, creating unique semantic maps that rarely align perfectly" [2;76]. For example, kinship terms, color terminology, and emotional vocabulary often exhibit drastically different semantic organizations across languages. The Russian language distinguishes between "голубой" (light blue) and "синий" (dark blue) as separate basic color terms, while English treats these as shades of a single color category. Such divergences require translators to reconfigure semantic relationships when moving between linguistic systems.

Culture-specific lexical items present perhaps the most visible lexical semantic challenges. These include realia (objects or concepts unique to a particular culture), institutional terms, historical references, and culturally embedded expressions that lack direct equivalents in other languages. Vlachov and Florin define realia as "words and expressions for culture-specific material elements" that carry distinct national, historical, or cultural connotations [3;55]. When encountering such items, translators must choose among several strategies: borrowing the original term, creating a calque, providing a descriptive equivalent, or employing functional substitution with a roughly analogous concept from the target culture.

Connotative meanings—the emotional, stylistic, and evaluative associations of words—often prove more elusive in translation than their denotative content. Words that share similar denotations across languages frequently diverge in their connotative values, register markings, or frequency of use. For example, synonyms for "home" in various languages may carry different emotional resonances, social implications, or poetic qualities that resist direct translation. Experienced translators recognize that preserving connotative meaning is often crucial for maintaining the text's overall effect and communicative intention.

Idioms, fixed expressions, and figurative language constitute another category of lexical semantic translation problems. These expressions derive their meanings not from the sum of their component words but from conventionalized usage within a linguistic community. Baker identifies four main difficulties in translating idioms: identifying expressions as idioms, interpreting their meanings correctly, finding appropriate equivalents, and assessing the appropriateness of using idiomatic language in the target text [4;68]. When confronted with idiomatic expressions, translators may either seek corresponding idioms in the target language, paraphrase the semantic content, or create compensatory figurative language elsewhere in the text.

Semantic extension and narrowing processes further complicate lexical choices in translation. Words that appear as direct equivalents often cover different semantic territories, with one language using a

broader term where another employs a more specific one. The English word "cousin" encompasses multiple kinship relations that many languages distinguish with separate terms based on gender, lineage side, and other factors. Conversely, specialized vocabulary in certain domains may be more developed in one language than another, requiring translators to employ circumlocution or adaptation strategies.

Context-dependent meaning represents another crucial aspect of lexical semantic problems. The semantic content of words is not fixed but fluctuates according to their textual environment, collocational patterns, and pragmatic situation. As Neubert emphasizes, "Words are chameleons that take on the color of their surroundings" [5;33]. Skillful translators must interpret how context modifies and specifies word meanings, often requiring creative solutions when contextual factors operate differently across languages.

Translation strategies for addressing lexical semantic problems vary according to text type, purpose, and audience. In technical and scientific translation, terminological precision and conceptual accuracy take priority, often necessitating borrowings or neologisms to fill lexical gaps. Literary translation, by contrast, places greater emphasis on preserving stylistic nuances, connotative values, and cultural resonances, sometimes requiring significant semantic restructuring to achieve equivalent effects. Advertising and marketing translation frequently employs transcreation—creative adaptation of content to evoke similar consumer responses across cultural boundaries.

The cognitive process of resolving lexical semantic translation problems involves several stages. First, the translator must comprehend the full semantic content of the source text unit, including its denotative meaning, connotative values, and contextual implications. Next, they must consider potential equivalents in the target language, evaluating their semantic coverage, register appropriateness, and pragmatic effects. Finally, they must select or construct an optimal solution that balances accuracy, naturalness, and communicative function, often negotiating inevitable semantic compromises.

Modern translation technologies offer valuable support for addressing lexical semantic challenges. Corpus-based translation tools provide insights into contextual usage patterns and collocational behavior across languages. Semantic networks and ontologies help visualize conceptual relationships that underlie lexical choices. Nevertheless, these technologies cannot fully resolve the fundamental semantic asymmetries between languages, which continue to require human judgment, cultural sensitivity, and creative problem-solving skills.

The study of lexical semantic problems in translation has significant implications for translator training and practice. By developing systematic awareness of semantic relations within and across languages, translators can make more informed decisions and develop effective strategies for navigating complex meaning transfer problems. Furthermore, contrastive lexical semantic analysis contributes to our broader understanding of linguistic relativity, cultural cognition, and the nature of meaning itself.

REFERENCES

1. Nida, E.A. *Toward a Science of Translating*. Leiden: E.J. Brill, 1964. p. 48-50.
2. Komissarov, V.N. *Modern Translation Studies*. Moscow: ETS, 2002, p. 75-77.
3. Vlahov, S., Florin, S. *Untranslatable in Translation*. Moscow: International Relations, 1980. - p. 55-58.
4. Baker, M. *In Other Words: A Coursebook on Translation*. London: Routledge, 2018. - p. 67-70.
5. Neubert, A. *Text and Translation*. Leipzig: Verlag Enzyklopädie, 1985. - p. 32-35.