

THE CHALLENGES IN TRANSLATING TASTE AND SMELL ADJECTIVES FROM ENGLISH INTO UZBEK

Suvonova Damira Kurbanovna

Independent researcher affiliated with Karshi State University

damirasuvonova@gmail.com

Karshi, Uzbekistan

Abstract

This thesis examines the major linguistic and cultural difficulties in translating taste and smell adjectives from English into Uzbek. Sensory adjectives are closely connected with human perception, emotions, and cultural background; therefore, their translation requires more than direct lexical substitution. The study focuses on lexical gaps, semantic differences, polysemy, collocational restrictions, and cultural perception. English contains many nuanced sensory adjectives such as savory, tangy, pungent, and musty, which often lack direct Uzbek equivalents. Consequently, translators frequently rely on descriptive translation, approximation, and contextual adaptation. The analysis demonstrates that successful translation depends not only on linguistic competence but also on intercultural awareness and sensitivity to context.

Keywords

taste adjectives, smell adjectives, sensory language, translation, lexical gaps, semantics, cultural differences

Introduction

Translation is not merely the replacement of words from one language into another; it is the transfer of meaning, cultural values, and human experience. Among the most difficult areas of translation are sensory adjectives related to taste and smell because they are subjective and culturally conditioned. English possesses a rich vocabulary for expressing subtle sensory differences, whereas Uzbek often relies on broader or descriptive expressions.

Taste and smell adjectives occupy a unique place in language because they are closely tied to human senses and emotions. In English, there exists a wide range of descriptive vocabulary used to express subtle differences in flavor and aroma, including terms such as savory, tangy, pungent, and musty. In contrast, Uzbek tends to rely on a more limited set of core adjectives, often supplemented by descriptive phrases to convey similar meanings. This disparity creates challenges for translators, who must find ways to preserve both the denotative and connotative meanings of the original text.

Moreover, sensory adjectives frequently exhibit polysemy and figurative usage, further complicating the translation process. Words like sweet and bitter can carry both literal and metaphorical meanings, depending on context. Without careful analysis, such nuances may be lost or misinterpreted in translation. Therefore, this study aims to explore the key difficulties associated with translating taste and smell adjectives from English into Uzbek, focusing on semantic, cultural, and contextual factors. By examining these challenges, the article seeks to provide practical insights and strategies for achieving more accurate and natural translations. Language is not only a tool for communication but also a reflection of cultural perception. Among the most complex areas of translation are sensory adjectives, particularly those related to taste and smell. These adjectives are subjective and often influenced by cultural habits, cuisine, and environment. Translating such expressions from English into Uzbek presents unique challenges due to differences in lexical richness, metaphorical usage, and cultural associations.

1. Nature of Taste and Smell Adjectives

Taste and smell adjectives describe sensory experiences connected with food, environment, and emotions. English examples include sweet, sour, bitter, salty, spicy, fragrant, musty, pungent, and stale. Uzbek equivalents include shirin, nordon, achchiq, sho‘r, xushbo‘y, dim, and sassiq. However, many English adjectives express nuanced meanings that Uzbek cannot fully reproduce through single lexical items.

2. Lexical Gaps and Equivalence Problems

One of the main challenges is the existence of lexical gaps. Certain English sensory adjectives do not have exact one-word equivalents in Uzbek. For example, savory is often translated as mazali taom or yoqimli, tuzli ta‘m, while tangy may become biroz nordon va o‘tkir. Similarly, zesty requires descriptive translation, and bland is usually rendered as ta‘msiz ovqat, although the Uzbek version sounds more negative.

3. Difficulties in Translating Smell Adjectives

Smell adjectives create similar challenges. Musty is translated descriptively as dim va eski hidli xona, pungent as o‘tkir hid, and stale as qotgan non or eskirgan hid depending on context. Aromatic is generally translated as xushbo‘y, though some semantic richness may be lost.

4. Cultural Differences in Sensory Perception

Cultural context strongly influences how sensory experiences are verbalized. In English, spicy usually refers to hot food, while Uzbek distinguishes between achchiq and ziravorli. Sweet smell is more naturally translated as yoqimli hid or xushbo‘y hid

rather than shirin hid. Similarly, sour may carry negative connotations in English but can sound neutral or positive in Uzbek.

5. Translation Strategies

To overcome lexical and cultural difficulties, translators use descriptive translation, approximation, contextual adaptation, and semantic expansion. These methods help preserve meaning, emotional impact, and naturalness in the target language.

Conclusion

The translation of taste and smell adjectives from English into Uzbek is a complex linguistic and cultural process. Lexical gaps, figurative meanings, and cultural differences make direct equivalence difficult. Effective translation, therefore requires flexibility, contextual understanding, and intercultural awareness. Translators should prioritize meaning and communicative effect rather than strict literal equivalence.

References

1. Baker, M. *In Other Words: A Coursebook on Translation*. Routledge, 2018.
2. Newmark, P. *A Textbook of Translation*. Prentice Hall, 1988.
3. Catford, J. C. *A Linguistic Theory of Translation*. Oxford University Press, 1965.
4. Nida, E. A. *Toward a Science of Translating*. Brill, 1964.
5. Cruse, D. A. *Meaning in Language*. Oxford University Press, 2000.
6. Rahmatullayev, Sh. *O‘zbek tilining izohli lug‘ati*. Toshkent, 2006.