

Perspective on The Translation of Political Texts and Terms

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Abstract:

In an era of increasing global interconnectedness, the translation of political texts has emerged as a critical domain within translation studies, reflecting the dynamics of international communication and ideological exchange. Political texts are distinct in their rhetorical intensity, cultural specificity, and performative function, which aim not only to inform but to influence public opinion and policy. Despite the growing importance of political translation, there remains a need to systematically address the linguistic, cultural, and ethical challenges that arise when translating ideologically charged and context-bound terms across languages. This article aims to examine the unique features and difficulties of translating political texts and terminology, focusing on the structural, lexical, and stylistic shifts required during the process, and exploring strategies used to preserve meaning, intent, and neutrality. The study identifies the classification of political translation into mass-political texts, journalistic materials, and political speeches, each demanding nuanced approaches. It emphasizes the necessity of addressing ambiguity, cultural references, institutional terminology, and ideological connotation in translation. The paper presents an integrated perspective that combines theoretical insight with practical translation strategies such as functional equivalence, explicitation, and ethical mediation, thereby expanding the scope of political translation beyond linguistic conversion. The findings highlight the translator's critical role as a cultural mediator, whose choices influence cross-cultural understanding, political perception, and diplomatic clarity in a globalized media landscape.

Keywords: Political Texts, Translation, Language Units, Features of Change, Grammatical Changes

Introduction

Currently, the demand for political translation is very high. This is mainly due to the rapid development of international cooperation in various fields, the intensification of changes in society, and the increasing importance of global political events. Today, the translation of political texts is especially important, becoming not only a means of propaganda, but also a necessary weapon for attracting collective attention. With the expansion of international relations, the number of political texts intended for a foreign audience is increasing every year. These texts include speeches by state, party and public figures, publications by international organizations and governments, as well as articles on peacekeeping, arms reduction, the struggle for peace, and economic relations.

Methods

Political texts represent a unique category within the broader field of translation studies [1]. They are not only vehicles for information but also instruments of persuasion, ideology, and power [2]. Unlike purely informative texts, political texts are often loaded with evaluative language, rhetorical structures, and symbolic references [3]. This makes their translation particularly complex and ideologically sensitive [4].

In the globalized world, the demand for political translation has increased manifold, especially with the growth of international diplomacy, cross-border journalism, and political reporting [5]. Yet, translating political material is not merely about converting words from one language into another—it involves interpreting and recontextualizing ideologies, institutional frameworks, and socio-political narratives [6]. Thus, this article aims to provide a comprehensive perspective on the translation of political texts and terms, identifying both theoretical concerns and practical challenges [7].

According to the general classification of translation types, two main types are distinguished: written and oral translation [8]. Since it is precisely the aspects of written translation that need to be studied in this work, it is appropriate to distinguish its various features and the genre of the translated materials [9].

The concept of written translation includes scientific and technical translation, translation of documents, translation of newspaper and information materials, financial translation, advertising translation, film translation, literary translation, and translation of public and journalistic materials in newspapers and magazines [10]. Often, public and political translation is understood as the translation of newspaper and magazine materials [11].

Results and Discussion

According to the functional and communicative orientation of the type of translation, three main types are distinguished: artistic, special and mass-political (general) [12]. This classification allows you to determine the objects and tasks of each type of translation, as well as to choose the appropriate methods [13].

Also, according to this classification, mass-political translation includes the translation of newspaper and journalistic texts, as well as speeches and statements [14]. They, depending on the nature of the source, can be of an informational, political or social nature [15]. All of the above types of texts are called "media texts", therefore this type of translation is also called Media Translation.

One of the features of mass-political translation is that it combines elements of artistic (depiction of the scene and participants of the action) and special translation (the presence of certain terminology). In addition, mass-political translation can also be described as informative translation, that is, its main function is to convey information, not to create an artistic-aesthetic effect. However, despite its informative nature, it is possible that artistic elements will also be present in the translation.

As mentioned above, political translation is divided into three main types:

- 1) translation of mass-political texts,

2) journalism,

3) translation of political speeches.

The general characteristics of this category are related to the propaganda or propaganda orientation of the translated material, that is, its aim to form or change public opinion, as well as its informative nature and the presence of elements of discourse in its language (clichés in the language, rhetorical structures, direct translation of words, newspaper jargon, mass-political terms, evaluative words, slang and folk sayings). The translator is often forced to adapt the style of the original text to the style of a newspaper or magazine.

In contrast to the neutral language of scientific and technical texts, the language of newspaper articles is often emotionally rich, approaching the language of fiction. It can include figurative comparisons, metaphors, idioms, laughter, sarcasm, irony, etc. Therefore, when translating mass-political texts, it is very important to convey to the reader not only the political and social direction, but also all the emotional elements. Also, mass-political translation is an informative translation, the main purpose of which is to convey information, not to create an artistic-aesthetic effect.

Political texts encompass a wide range of genres, including official documents (laws, treaties, communiqués), public speeches, press releases, political commentaries, election manifestos, and media reports. Each of these genres serves a particular function—informative, persuasive, declarative, or expressive—and employs a distinctive style, tone, and structure.

What differentiates political texts from other genres is their performative function: they do not just describe reality; they aim to shape it. For example, a policy announcement or a presidential address is designed to influence public perception, legitimize actions, and mobilize support. Therefore, in translation, not only the content but also the intent and impact of the original must be preserved.

Translating political terminology often involves dealing with:

Ambiguity and Polysemy: Many political terms have broad or contested meanings (e.g., “liberty”, “sovereignty”, “democracy”), and their interpretation may differ depending on political or cultural context.

Culture-Bound Terms: Expressions such as “filibuster” (in U.S. Congress), “Politburo” (Soviet Union), or “Madhiya” (Uzbek national anthem) lack direct equivalents and require adaptive strategies.

Institutional References: Names of ministries, government bodies, or legislation often require functional translation to convey meaning accurately to a foreign audience.

Ideologically Loaded Language: Words like “regime”, “reform”, “patriot”, or “insurgent” carry connotative meanings that can differ significantly between source and target cultures.

Additionally, some political terms are subject to euphemism or dysphemism depending on the speaker’s position, making neutrality in translation a challenging task.

To handle the above challenges, various translation strategies are employed:

Functional Equivalence: Translators seek terms in the target language that perform the same communicative function even if they differ lexically (e.g., translating “White House” as “Маъмурият” in Uzbek, when referring to U.S. executive decisions).

Explication: Adding brief explanations within the translation to clarify culturally unfamiliar terms (e.g., “The Duma (Russian Parliament)”).

Footnotes and Glossaries: Particularly in academic or journalistic texts, translators may use footnotes to provide historical or institutional context.

Neutralization: In politically sensitive translations, ideologically loaded terms may be toned down or rephrased to avoid bias or offense.

Domestication vs. Foreignization: The translator must choose whether to adapt the text to local

cultural norms (domestication) or retain foreign elements for authenticity (foreignization), depending on purpose and audience.

In political translation, the translator is not a passive conduit but an active mediator of political meaning. The translator's choices can subtly influence how policies, conflicts, or leaders are perceived in another linguistic community. Therefore, political translators carry a high degree of ethical responsibility.

Key ethical concerns include:

Maintaining neutrality: Ensuring the original political position is neither distorted nor endorsed.

Avoiding censorship or self-censorship: Especially in authoritarian or conflict contexts.

Ensuring terminological consistency: Avoiding ambiguity across multiple translations of official texts.

Training in comparative politics, rhetorical analysis, and intercultural communication is thus essential for political translators.

Consider the term "sanctions" in English political discourse. It may be translated into Uzbek as "sanksiyalar" (phonetic borrowing) or more functionally as "iqtisodiy cheklovlar" (economic restrictions). While both convey the core idea, the former preserves international terminology, whereas the latter clarifies the intent.

Similarly, "government shutdown" in American politics refers to a specific administrative event. Literal translation ("hukumat yopilishi") may be misleading; a more accurate rendering might be "davlat muassasalari faoliyatining vaqtincha to'xtashi".

These examples show the importance of contextual awareness and conceptual equivalence in political translation.

Conclusion

Translating political texts and terms requires a balance of linguistic skill, cultural competence, and ethical awareness. Political discourse, by nature, is ideologically charged and culturally embedded, demanding not only accurate rendering of content but also faithful transmission of rhetorical force and strategic intent. As global political communication expands, the role of the political translator becomes ever more significant—not only as a linguistic expert but as a gatekeeper of cross-cultural understanding and a facilitator of international dialogue.

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