Translation and Lexicographic Representation of Quantifiers

Compensation Strategies for Countability And Determination Gaps

Abdiyeva Saida

Independent researcher, Tashkent State University of Uzbek Language and Literature, Uzbekistan

Abstract: The article analyzes problems of equivalence mismatch that arise in translating quantitative expression units between English and Uzbek, as well as the issues of their lexicographic representation. Based on dissertation findings, three systemic problems are identified: (1) semantic gaps (in particular, mismatches in countability and determination parameters); (2) difficulties in equivalencing quantity degree and evaluative meaning (such as few / a few, much / many, oz / kam); and (3) phraseological-metaphorical shifts. As the methodological basis, the study applies functional-equivalent translation analysis, contrastive-typological comparison, corpus-based observation, and critical analysis of bilingual dictionary entries. As a result, a system of strategies is proposed, including descriptive paraphrase, derivational creativity, contextual specialization, attributive and affixal compensation, as well as recoding (re-coding). For lexicography, a lemma-macrostructure template and entry model are suggested, enabling multi-level description of quantitative units in bilingual dictionaries.

Keywords: Translation; quantifier; countability gap; determiner gap; compensation; paraphrase; recoding; bilingual dictionary; lexicography.

Introduction: Units expressing quantity (numerals, quantifiers, units of measurement, quantitative phraseological expressions) may seem minor in translation, but in practice they are among the key indicators that determine semantic precision and the pragmatic effect of a text. Especially in official-legal and scientific texts, distinctions such as one and several, or none and some, can radically change meaning; in literary discourse, quantity often creates evaluative force through metaphor and hyperbole.

In English, the semantics of quantity is expressed through a differential system based on determiners and the countability parameter, whereas in Uzbek quantity is more often encoded through general quantifiers and derivational affixes. In the dissertation, these mismatches are conceptualized as a countability gap and a determination gap. These gaps require reconsideration both of translation strategies and of the principles for representing quantitative units in bilingual dictionaries.

The aim of the article is to describe, in IMRAD format, the systemic problems that arise in English-Uzbek translation of quantitative units, to justify compensation strategies for solving them, and to propose a practical dictionary-entry model for lexicographic interpretation. The research questions are: (1) What are the main types of equivalence breakdown in quantitative units? (2) How can compensation strategies be classified? (3) How can dictionary entry structure improve equivalence? (4)

What role can corpus and automation (recoding) approaches play in this process?

METHODS

The material includes units that encode quantitative meaning in English and Uzbek, as well as their translation equivalents. This includes indefinite quantifiers (somewhat, a bit, a good deal, plenty, heaps of, etc.), generalizing and distributive units (all, each/every; hamma, har bir; -tadan), as well as quantitative phraseological expressions and measurement constructions.

The methodological framework was built in three directions: (a) functional-equivalent analysis - identifying the function of the source unit in the text (precision, indefiniteness, evaluation, distributivity, collectivity) and selecting a means in the target language that conveys the same function; (b) contrastive-typological analysis - systematizing the gaps caused by differences in grammatical categories and lexical mechanisms; (c) lexicographic audit - critically comparing the structure of entries, translation equivalents, stylistic labels, and the presentation of examples in English-Uzbek and Uzbek-English translation dictionaries.

As shown in the dissertation, corpus-based observation helps evaluate translation variants in terms of register and collocational habits. In addition, to identify a context-appropriate variant, a recoding approach - re-coding quantitative units according to contextual parameters - was adopted as a methodological tool.

RESULTS

The results revealed three main problem clusters and their compensation mechanisms:

1. Semantic gaps: due to mismatch in countability and determination parameters (a/an, the), a direct lexical equivalent is often unavailable.

2. Degree and evaluative meaning: distinctions such as minimally negative quantity (few) vs positive/neutral minimal quantity (a few), as well as pairs like much/many, may be covered in Uzbek by general ko'p/oz (many/few), causing subtle differences to disappear.

3. Phraseological-metaphorical shifts: idioms and hyperboles involving numerals lose their pragmatic effect in literal translation or sound unnatural.

To overcome these problems, the strategies proposed in the dissertation were systematized as follows:

• Descriptive paraphrase: expressing quantitative meaning not through a numeral itself, but through semantic description (especially in idiomatic units).

• Derivational creativity: re-coding quantity using Uzbek affixes such as -lab / -larcha, -tadan or analytic constructions in English.

• Contextual specialization: specifying general quantifiers such as ko'p / oz according to register and object type (many/much; few/little).

• Attributive and affixal compensation: restoring balance by means of another syntactic or morphological device where determination or plural marking is lost.

• Recoding approach: identifying contextual parameters (countability, definiteness, evaluation, distributivity) and selecting the translation variant algorithmically.

As a lexicographic result, it is proposed that bilingual dictionary entries for quantitative units be structured using the following template: lemma -> transcription -> grammatical class -> core meanings -> contextual examples -> translation variants -> stylistic label -> alternative units. This model makes it possible to integrate a morphological profile, semantic map, and collocational matrix into a unified format.

Sample Micro-entry (Schema)

LEMMA: few (det./pron.)

Core meaning: very few, insufficient (negative evaluation)

Context: few + plural count noun; usually in a more formal register and with negative implicature

Translation variants (Uzbek): juda kam; barmoq bilan sanarli; deyarli hech

Stylistic label: [neutral/bookish]; [emphatic] if needed

Alternative units: scarcely any; hardly any; a handful of (metaphorical)

DISCUSSION

The analysis shows that equivalence breakdown in quantitative units is often not merely a matter of language level, but rather results from mismatches in systemic parameters (countability, determination,

evaluation, distributivity). Therefore, the first step in translation is to identify the unit's function in discourse; the second step is to choose the most natural means in the target language that conveys that function. This aligns with the principle of communicative equivalence in translation theories such as those of Newmark and Nida.

The dictionary-entry model proposed for lexicography solves two problems at once: (1) it explicitly shows polysemy and register differences; (2) it makes the translator's decision points (countable/uncountable, a/an/the, polarity) visible. The inclusion of a corpus-based collocational matrix also makes it possible to verify alternative variants against real usage.

The recoding approach is especially important for translation automation and the creation of educational-didactic resources. As noted in the dissertation, the conceptual basis of an automatic equivalencing algorithm for Uzbek quantitative expressions into English, and a specialized micro-dictionary project, relies precisely on formalizing these parameters. However, the effectiveness of algorithms remains dependent on corpus coverage, contextual accuracy, and register balance.

Limitations: the article generalizes the strategies proposed in the dissertation; for practical implementation, separate corpus profiles and evaluation criteria should be developed by genre (legal, scientific, literary, advertising).

CONCLUSION

In English-Uzbek translation, equivalence problems concerning quantitative units were grouped into three clusters: semantic gaps, degree-evaluation mismatches, and phraseological-metaphorical shifts.

Compensation strategies were systematized through descriptive paraphrase, derivational creativity, contextual specialization, attributive/affixal compensation, and the recoding approach.

The proposed dictionary-entry model for bilingual dictionaries serves to provide a multi-level description of quantitative units, thereby improving translation quality and the precision of language-learning resources.

REFERENCES

1. Nida, E. A. Toward a Science of Translating. Leiden: Brill, 1964.

2. Newmark, P. A Textbook of Translation. Hertfordshire: Prentice Hall, 1988.

3. Chesterman, A. Memes of Translation: The Spread of Ideas in Translation Theory. Amsterdam; Philadelphia: John Benjamins, 1997.

4. Vinay, J.-P., Darbelnet, J. Stylistique comparee du francais et de l'anglais: methode de traduction. 2nd ed. Paris: Didier, 1977.

5. Baker, M. In Other Words: A Coursebook on Translation. 2nd ed. London: Routledge, 2011.

6. Komissarov, V. N. Lingvistika perevoda. Moscow: Mezhdunarodnye otnosheniya, 1980.

7. Bondarko, A. V. Funktsional'naya grammatika: polevoy podkhod. Leningrad: Nauka, 1984.

8. Huddleston, R., Pullum, G. K. The Cambridge Grammar of the English Language. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002.

9. Quirk, R., Greenbaum, S., Leech, G., Svartvik, J. A Comprehensive Grammar of the English Language. London: Longman, 1985.

10. Cruse, D. A. Lexical Semantics. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1986.

11. Kharlamov, V. K. Quantifiers in Uzbek and English: A Comparative Analysis. Philological Sciences, 2002, No. 3, pp. 45-57.

12. Sagimbayeva, A. S. Stylistic labels in explanatory dictionaries of English, Russian, Kazakh, and Uzbek (theoretical and methodological aspects). Foreign Languages in Uzbekistan, 2022, No. 4(45), pp. 38-52.

13. Butayev, Sh. English-Uzbek, Uzbek-English Dictionary: 80,000 words and expressions. Tashkent: Oqituvchi, 2013.

14. Jorayev, L. English-Uzbek Dictionary: 8,000 words. Tashkent: Yangiyol Poligraf Servis, 2008.

15. Mahmudov, N. et al. Explanatory Dictionary of Uzbek Synonyms. Tashkent: Gafur Gulom, 2023.