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### LINGUISTIC AND CULTURAL FACTORS IN THE TRANSLATION OF TERM-REALITIES

**Fayziyeva Rano Abdusamadovna**

Teacher at Bukhara State University

ranofayziyeva@gmail.com

**Abstract.** Translation is a complex and intricate process that involves not only converting words from one language to another but also navigating through a web of cultural, historical, and contextual nuances. This becomes even more critical when translating specialized terms, often referred to as "term-realities," which are deeply embedded in specific fields of knowledge, culture, or tradition. These terms may include those from law, medicine, religion, technology, literature, or any discipline that has its own lexicon and connotations. The translation of term-realities is thus not a simple task of finding equivalent words in another language; it requires an understanding of both linguistic structures and the cultural contexts that shape the meaning of these terms. This article explores the linguistic and cultural factors that play a significant role in the translation of term-realities, emphasizing how these elements influence translation accuracy, meaning, and relevance in the target language.

## INTRODUCTION

The concept of term-realities refers to the specialized terms that carry specific meanings within a given field or discipline. These terms are not mere words but reflect a body of knowledge or a cultural construct. For example, in legal contexts, terms such as "habeas corpus" or "mens rea" carry specific legal meanings that are not directly translatable into many languages. Similarly, scientific terms like "photosynthesis" or "quantum mechanics" may be well-known across linguistic boundaries, but their deeper meanings can differ based on local scientific understandings or terminologies.

## METHODOLOGY

In many cases, the challenge for translators lies not only in finding equivalent terms in the target language but also in ensuring that the cultural, historical, and social significance of these terms is conveyed. To accomplish this, translators must go beyond a mere linguistic equivalence and focus on how the term resonates within both the source and target cultures. Understanding these nuances is crucial for ensuring the integrity of the translated text.

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Language is inherently tied to culture, and the structural differences between languages often pose significant challenges when translating specialized terms. Linguistic factors involve both the syntactic and semantic properties of language that influence how a term is represented in another language.

The most immediate challenge in translation is finding lexical equivalents for specialized terms. While some terms may have a direct translation in the target language, others may not. For example, the English term "freedom" may have a straightforward translation in many languages (e.g., "liberté" in French or "libertad" in Spanish). However, the conceptualization of freedom can differ dramatically across cultures. In some societies, freedom may be viewed as an individual right, while in others it may be seen as a collective value.

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When no direct equivalent exists, translators may resort to using loanwords, descriptive translations, or even coining new terms. However, finding lexical equivalence is not always enough; the translation must also preserve the term's cultural resonance. In many instances, translators will have to adapt the term to fit the semantic structures of the target language.

Languages differ in their syntactic structures, and this often influences the way terms are constructed or expressed. For example, in languages such as German or Finnish, it is common to form compound words by combining several smaller words into a single term. In contrast, English often uses phrases to express what might be encapsulated in a single word in other languages.

A compound term in one language, such as "electricity" in English, might be translated as "elektrische Energie" in German, a longer and more descriptive term. While this kind of translation is functionally equivalent, the difference in length and structure can change how the term is perceived. Translators must be aware of these structural differences to ensure that the target language version retains the original term's meaning and significance.

Another key factor in translating specialized terms is understanding the context in which the term is used. Terms may have different meanings in different contexts, and a translator must identify the appropriate meaning based on the surrounding text. A term such as "market" may refer to a physical space for buying and selling goods in one context, but in another context, it could refer to an economic system or the broader concept of trade.

Contextual translation often requires the translator to make judgments about which meaning is most relevant based on the particular domain in which the term is used. This involves a deep understanding of both the source and target languages and an awareness of the discipline or field in question.

While linguistic factors are important, cultural factors often play an even more significant role in the translation of term-realities. Culture shapes how concepts are understood, framed, and expressed, and translators must navigate these cultural boundaries to ensure accurate and meaningful translations.

Cultural sensitivity is critical when translating specialized terms. Terms that carry specific cultural connotations in one language may be perceived differently in another. For instance, the concept of "honor" in many Middle Eastern cultures has a deep societal and familial meaning, whereas in Western contexts, it may be understood as an individual quality. Translators must take care to ensure that these cultural nuances are not lost or misrepresented when translating.

Cultural sensitivity also requires an understanding of the social norms and practices that influence the use of certain terms. For example, the term "family" in many Asian cultures may include extended family members, while in Western cultures, it may refer only to the nuclear family. Such differences can affect how a term is translated and understood in the target culture.

The historical context of a term also plays a significant role in its translation. Many specialized terms are shaped by historical events or social movements, and translating these terms requires an understanding of their historical significance. For example, the term "revolution" may refer to the French Revolution in one context, the Russian Revolution in another, and the American Revolution in yet another.

Translators must understand the historical context in which a term originated and ensure that its cultural and political implications are appropriately conveyed. This is especially important when translating terms related to politics, law, or social movements, where the term may carry vastly different meanings depending on the historical background of the source and target cultures.

## THE MULTIDISCIPLINARY JOURNAL OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

### VOLUME-5, ISSUE-5

Certain terms are deeply embedded in a specific culture and may not have a direct equivalent in other languages. For instance, the Japanese concept of "wabi-sabi" refers to a particular aesthetic that embraces imperfection and transience. This concept is closely tied to Japanese culture, and attempting to translate it directly into another language can result in a loss of meaning. In such cases, translators may need to use a descriptive approach or even introduce the foreign term into the target language.

Similarly, terms related to religion or spirituality often carry deep cultural significance that cannot be easily captured in another language. For example, the term "karma" in Hinduism and Buddhism may be understood in different ways depending on the cultural and philosophical background of the speaker. Translators must carefully consider how these terms are understood in the source and target cultures and decide whether to retain the term or provide an explanation.

The values and beliefs of a culture influence the meanings attributed to specialized terms. For example, legal terms related to human rights, such as "justice" or "equality," may be understood differently depending on the political system and societal values of the culture in question. A term that signifies fairness in one country may have a different connotation in another, especially if the legal systems or social structures are different.

Translators must understand the underlying values that shape these terms to ensure they are translated accurately. In many cases, cultural beliefs around topics such as freedom, religion, and family influence how a term is used and understood. By being aware of these differences, translators can navigate the cultural complexities involved in translating specialized terms.

The translation of term-realities requires careful attention to both linguistic and cultural factors. Several strategies can help translators address the challenges posed by these factors.

Adaptation involves modifying a term to fit the cultural and linguistic context of the target language. This may involve changing the term to reflect local practices, beliefs, or understandings. For example, a legal term that has no equivalent in the target language may be adapted by borrowing a concept from the target culture's legal system.

When no direct equivalent exists, descriptive translation involves explaining the meaning of the term in the target language. This strategy is commonly used for culturally specific terms or technical concepts that require elaboration. For example, the Japanese term "ikigai," which refers to a reason for being or a purpose in life, may be translated as "a reason for living" or "a sense of purpose."

Loanwords involve borrowing a term directly from the source language. This is common in fields such as science, technology, and business, where certain terms have become globally recognized. For example, terms like "internet," "software," and "email" are used across many languages without translation. While loanwords can preserve the integrity of specialized terms, they may also require explanation in the target language to ensure they are understood.

Cultural substitution involves replacing a term with one that carries a similar cultural meaning in the target language. This is often used when a term has no direct equivalent but has a similar cultural significance. For example, the concept of "Thanksgiving" in the United States might be replaced with a similar harvest festival tradition in another culture.

### CONCLUSION

The translation of term-realities is a complex task that requires a deep understanding of both linguistic and cultural factors. Translators must navigate the intricacies of language structure and cultural context to ensure that specialized terms are accurately conveyed in the target language. By being mindful of these factors and employing appropriate strategies, translators can preserve the



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### VOLUME-5, ISSUE-5

meaning and significance of term-realities, ensuring that they resonate with the target audience. Ultimately, the translation of term-realities is not just about finding equivalent words but about bridging cultural divides and ensuring that knowledge is accurately and meaningfully transferred across languages and cultures.

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