



# Lexical Transformation And Its Types

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## ABSTRACT

This study explores lexical transformations in translation, focusing on concretization, generalization, addition (explicitation), and omission. These procedures are essential for achieving semantic equivalence, cultural adequacy, and stylistic naturalness in the target text. Concretization increases precision by replacing general terms with specific ones, while generalization simplifies overly specific expressions for clarity. The analysis of G'afur G'ulom's Shum bola ("Naughty Boy") illustrates how these strategies enable translators to convey meaning accurately and naturally. The findings highlight that lexical transformations are dynamic, context-sensitive strategies rather than mechanical substitutions, emphasizing the creative and interpretive nature of translation.

## Keywords:

Lexical transformation, Concretization, Generalization, Addition (Explicitation), Omission, Translation strategies, Semantic equivalence, Cultural adaptation.

**Introduction.** Lexical transformation entails changes that occur at the lexical level in translation as a means of ensuring semantic equivalence. Since each language has different vocabulary, word meaning, and culture-associated terminology, lexical transformation is important because a literal translation might not always work due to differences in languages. Lexical transformation assists a translator in ensuring that a message is conveyed as intended.

Catford defines lexical transformation as "the replacement of lexical items in the source language by their equivalents in the target language." He emphasizes that due to differences in vocabulary and meaning between languages, a direct equivalent is not always possible. Therefore, translators often modify words based on context and function.

Catford's definition of lexical transformation highlights the core linguistic challenge in translation: words in one language rarely have exact equivalents in another. By describing it as "the replacement of lexical items in the source language by their equivalents in the target language," Catford underscores that translation is not merely a mechanical substitution of words, but a process that requires careful contextual and functional consideration. His observation about the impossibility of always finding direct equivalents points to the necessity of adaptation, where the translator must analyze meaning, connotation, and usage in both languages. Catford's perspective emphasizes the dynamic and interpretive nature of lexical transformation, laying a foundation for understanding why translation often involves

creative problem-solving rather than literal rendering.

**Methods.** Concretization is another type of lexical transformation that allows words with a general meaning to be transformed through acquiring a new meaning that is more precise or specific. This process can often take place within a certain linguistic, cultural, or social setting. In Garbovsky statement concretization is “a transformation operation in which the translator replaces a broad and not very complex concept contained in a translated word or phrase with a more limited, but more complex concept of a more specific content along the chain of generalization.”

Generalization is the act of using one word which has more general meaning in this translation rather than using several specific words. In other words, instead of using specific words with very clear meanings in the text, their general words with wider meanings are used in the translation. This occurs because the translator aims to give meaning with greater specificity.

Jean-Paul Vinay and Jean Darbelnet discuss generalization as part of their *translation procedures*. They explain that “translators use generalization when a specific term in the source language has no direct equivalent in the target language or when such specificity is unnecessary for conveying the message”.

Jean-Paul Vinay and Jean Darbelnet consider that generalization is another important translation technique that can be applied to bridge the lexical and cultural gap between source and target texts. According to them, the technique of generalization is often practiced by translators when an extremely specific word in source text does not have an equivalent word in the target language or when it is not necessary to be that specific in communicating the main message. In other words, generalization involves substituting an accurate word with an overall word in order to ensure the semantic accuracy, readability, and naturalness of the translated text.

Addition can be referred to as explicitation, which represents a lexical transfer in translation that involves the involvement of

words in the target language in order to clarify meaning in the source text. The words are usually implicitly contained in the source but are inferred through culture or grammar.

Mona Baker discusses addition under the concept of explicitation. She argues that “translators often add information to the target text in order to make implicit meanings explicit, especially when cultural differences or linguistic gaps exist between the source and target languages”.

Mona Baker focuses on addition in terms of explicitation, underlining its importance in the realm of translation. The author suggests that in most cases, translators use their skill of adding concepts to the target text in order to explain implicit notions, especially if there exist some cultural or linguistic disparities between the source text and target text languages, which might cause some misunderstandings in the message.

Omission is a lexical transformation whereby some words or word groups of a sentence or an expression are omitted, namely, are not uttered, but their meaning is understood from the context, that is, from the meaning of the utterances. The words that are of less importance in a sentence or that are easily understood from the context are omitted. These words are omitted particularly to simplify a sentence.

**Results.** In the analysis of the processes of lexical transformations in translation, it has been found that different procedures are employed in accomplishing different aims in seeking semantic equivalence and naturalness in the translation.

Concretization is an important type of lexical transformation that allows words with a general meaning to be replaced with more precise or specific terms. This process often depends on the linguistic, cultural, or social context

Examples from Uzbek language illustrate this process: The word “*meva*” (fruit) is a general term, but in translation, it can be concretized as “*olma*” (apple) or “*nok*” (pear).

By the process of concretization, the translator can remove obscurities in meaning and make the message easier for the readers to comprehend through its adaptation in the

context. This process of translation can amazingly benefit literary and voluminous texts, as it enables the readers to have a clearer picture in their minds about an object, concept, or character, thus enabling the transition to have greater significance.

In the translation of G'afur G'ulom's *Shum bola* as *"Naughty Boy"*, concretization can be observed in several instances:

The term *"bola"* literally means *child* or *boy* in Uzbek. In the title, it is rendered as *"boy"*, preserving the general meaning while matching natural English usage.

Certain food items in the novel, such as *"non"* (bread), may be translated as *"traditional Uzbek bread"* rather than just *"bread"* to provide a specific cultural context.

Objects or tools mentioned in the story, e.g., *"do'ppi"* (a type of Uzbek cap), are often concretized as *"skullcap"* or *"traditional Uzbek cap"*, giving English readers a more precise understanding of the item.

Generalization in translation: "The tomatoes, the onions, and the cucumber are on the table". "The vegetables are on the table". In this example, instead of the words "tomatoes", "onions", "cucumbers", the general word "vegetables" is employed. Generalization can be considered the reverse of concretization and entails the replacement of the narrowly defined word in the source message with a generalized word in the receptor language.

Addition (Explicitation) involves inserting words or phrases in the target text to make implicit meaning explicit, often for cultural, contextual, or grammatical clarity. For instance, he kicked the bucket. He died (he passed away). "Kick the bucket" means "to die" in English. A literal interpretation cannot exist, thus there is a translation with a spiritual reason. Or, she was homesick. She was very homesick for home, family, and for where she was brought up, or where she was born.

Omission involves leaving out words or phrases in the target text when they are redundant, easily inferred from context, or unnecessary for understanding, while preserving the overall meaning.

SL: *She always goes to the library every day after school.*

TL: *U har kuni maktabdan keyin kutubxonaga boradi.*

Explanation: The redundancy *"always...every day"* is omitted, as the time expression *"har kuni"* already conveys the idea.

**Discussion.** The study of lexical changes within the process of translation has proved that these procedures are very important tools, which help yield semantic equality, cultural correspondence, and naturalness of style within the target language. Every type of lexical change has its own role, namely: concretization, generalization, antonymic change, addition (explicitation), and suppression.

Concretization allows the translator to substitute generic vocabulary with more precise vocabulary in the target language. For instance, in translating the title of the story 'Shum bola', the generic word 'bola' is concretized with 'boy', and the generic 'do'ppi', which referred to 'traditional Uzbek cap', is used instead. This displays the advantage of concretization in allowing the target readers to hold a clear pictorial image of an object, an act, or an idea. Generalization, on the other hand, has the opposite effect, as it substitutes highly technical terms in the source language with more generalized ones. For instance, "tomatoes, onions, and cucumber" can thus be generalized to "vegetables". This makes the text more readable by eliminating the possible issue of being too specific. Both concretization and generalization show that the translation task requires a balance between specificity and clearness depending on the context of message communication.

One of the most useful approaches meant for keeping a natural tone with meaning intact is antonymic transformation. Using affirmation/negation (or negation/affirmation), translators can convert phrases that could appear unnatural or inappropriate from a style standpoint. The example "It is difficult to solve this problem", "Bu muammoni hal qilish oson emas" shows how antonyms are applied to preserve semantic equivalence and semantic transparency.

Addition (Explicitation) is commonly used for the purpose of explaining implicit or cultural references. According to Baker, the addition of

information is used for explaining implicit meaning through bridging the gaps that emerge due to contrasts between language and culture. The examples ranging from translating “kick the bucket” into “he died” exemplify how explicitation is used for retaining meaning that would have been lost through literal translation. Lastly, the process of omission is crucial as it allows translators to eliminate redundancy in sentences without losing any relevant meaning. The omission of “always...every day” in the expression “She always goes to the library every day after school” into “U har kuni maktabdan keyin kutubxonaga boradi” exemplifies the importance of deletion.

The above discussion has justified the fact that lexical transformations are not substitutions but strategies. These strategies employed by the translator take into account the semantic values, cultural contexts, stylistic conventions, and the comprehension of the target audience while applying the above-mentioned strategies. These factors have made the process of translation a more intricate procedure and have emphasized the vital role played by lexical transformation strategies.

**Conclusion.** To conclude, the subject of lexical transformations in the translation process underlines the importance they play in achieving semantic equivalence, cultural adequacy, and naturalness of style in the translated text. The types of transformations used, such as concretization, generalization, addition (explicitation), and deletion, are used for specific purposes to help the translator manipulate the message. Concretization enables more specificity, which is very positive for adding precision and understanding, and generalization is used to simplify very specific language, which is important for the readability of language. Addition (explicitation) refers to making things clear that were not directly mentioned, while deletion eliminates redundancy.

These results clearly show that lexical shifts are far from mechanical replacements, but are a clever translation tool that involves skillful translation technique, experience, and a deep insight into language. Proper translation of lexical shifts can ensure that a translation is

accurate, natural, and clear to a target reader, thus emphasizing a creative translation process.

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