# NATIONAL AND CULTURAL SEMANTICS OF POLITICAL TERMS AND THEORETICAL PRINCIPLES OF THEIR REPRESENTATION IN TRANSLATION

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**Abstract:** This article examines the national and cultural semantics of political terms and the theoretical principles of their translation. It explores the linguistic, cultural, and pragmatic features of political terminology, emphasizing the influence of historical, ideological, and sociocultural factors on meaning. Particular attention is given to translation strategies, including equivalence, borrowing, calquing, and descriptive translation. The study highlights the importance of preserving semantic accuracy and cultural specificity in intercultural political communication.

**Keywords:** Political terminology, national-cultural semantics, political discourse, translation strategies, intercultural communication, linguocultural analysis.

**Introduction:** Political terminology plays a significant role in shaping political discourse, reflecting social structures, ideological perspectives, and cultural identities. Political terms are not merely linguistic units used to describe governmental institutions and political processes; they also represent historically established concepts, national traditions, and sociocultural values. Consequently, their interpretation and translation require careful consideration of both linguistic and extralinguistic factors.

In contemporary linguistics, the relationship between language, culture, and political communication has become an important area of interdisciplinary research. Scholars such as Eugene Nida (1964), Peter Newmark (1988), and Lawrence Venuti (1995) have emphasized different aspects of cultural meaning, translation equivalence, and the relationship between source and target cultures. Their theoretical approaches provide a foundation for examining culturally specific political terminology.

The relevance of this study lies in the increasing importance of accurate political communication in international relations, diplomacy, and intercultural interaction. Political terms frequently contain implicit cultural meanings that cannot always be reproduced through direct lexical equivalents.

The aim of this article is to examine the national-cultural semantics of political terminology and identify the theoretical principles and translation strategies necessary for preserving its conceptual and cultural characteristics.

**Main part:** Political terminology represents a specialized lexical system closely connected with the historical development, political institutions, and ideological traditions of individual societies. Unlike many technical terms, political concepts frequently possess culturally conditioned meanings that reflect particular national experiences.

According to Norman Fairclough (1989), language is closely related to power and social relations. His approach to critical discourse analysis demonstrates how linguistic choices can reflect and reproduce ideological structures. From this perspective, political terms should be examined not only as lexical units but also as elements of broader sociopolitical discourse.

Similarly, Teun A. van Dijk (1998) emphasizes the relationship between ideology, discourse, and social cognition. His theoretical framework helps explain how political terminology acquires ideological associations and how these associations influence interpretation across different cultural contexts.

The national-cultural semantics of political terms can be identified through their historical associations, institutional references, ideological connotations, and pragmatic functions. For instance,



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terms such as parliament, congress, senate, and mahalla refer to institutions or forms of social organization that have developed within particular historical and cultural environments. Although some of these concepts may have approximate equivalents in other languages, their institutional functions and cultural associations are not necessarily identical.

Consequently, political terminology requires a linguocultural approach that considers the interaction between lexical meaning and the sociocultural environment in which a term is used.

The translation of political terminology involves the transfer of conceptual information between linguistic systems while maintaining semantic accuracy and communicative relevance. One of the central challenges is the absence of complete equivalence between political concepts belonging to different national and cultural traditions.

Eugene Nida (1964) distinguished between formal and dynamic equivalence, highlighting the importance of both linguistic form and receptor response. These concepts are particularly relevant to political translation, where preserving the original terminology may sometimes conflict with ensuring comprehensibility for the target audience.

Peter Newmark (1988) proposed semantic and communicative translation as two major approaches to transferring meaning. Semantic translation emphasizes the contextual meaning of the source text, whereas communicative translation focuses on producing an understandable and appropriate message for the target readership. Both approaches can be applied to political terminology depending on the communicative purpose and cultural specificity of the term.

Lawrence Venuti (1995) introduced the influential distinction between domestication and foreignization. In political translation, domestication may facilitate comprehension by adapting unfamiliar concepts to the target culture, while foreignization helps preserve the distinctive institutional and cultural characteristics of the source language.

These theoretical perspectives suggest that political terminology cannot be translated effectively through lexical substitution alone. Instead, translators must consider semantic, pragmatic, institutional, and cultural factors.

The translation of nationally and culturally marked political terminology requires the application of different linguistic strategies depending on the semantic structure and communicative function of the original term.

Functional equivalence involves selecting a target-language expression that performs a comparable communicative or institutional function. However, functional similarity does not necessarily imply complete conceptual identity.

Borrowing and transliteration are particularly useful when a political term represents a culturally specific institution or concept without a direct equivalent in the target language. For example, the Uzbek term mahalla is frequently retained in English-language texts because its meaning extends beyond the general concept of a neighborhood and includes elements of community organization and local self-governance.

Calquing involves translating the structural components of a term into the target language. This strategy can preserve the original conceptual structure, although its effectiveness depends on the linguistic conventions of the receiving language.

Descriptive translation provides an explanatory expression when a direct equivalent is unavailable. It is particularly relevant to political and administrative concepts associated with specific national institutions.


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Contextual adaptation involves selecting an appropriate translation according to the political, historical, and communicative context. This approach is essential when political terms acquire different connotations in different societies.

The effectiveness of these strategies depends on the translator's ability to identify the conceptual meaning of the term, recognize its cultural associations, and select an appropriate method of representation.

Political terminology is characterized not only by its denotative meaning but also by ideological, emotional, and evaluative associations. Terms such as democracy, liberalism, sovereignty, nationalism, and reform may be interpreted differently depending on historical experiences and political traditions.

From a pragmatic perspective, the translation of political terminology requires attention to the communicative intentions of the source text and the expectations of the target audience. Inaccurate translation may result in conceptual distortion, ideological misinterpretation, or the loss of culturally significant information.

Furthermore, globalization and international political communication have contributed to the increasing circulation of political terminology across languages. Nevertheless, the internationalization of political vocabulary does not eliminate national-cultural differences in meaning.

Therefore, the translation of political terms should be based on an integrated approach combining semantic analysis, cultural interpretation, pragmatic evaluation, and contextual comparison. Such an approach contributes to greater conceptual precision and intercultural understanding.

**Conclusion:** The analysis demonstrates that political terminology constitutes a linguistically and culturally complex system reflecting national traditions, historical experiences, ideological perspectives, and institutional structures. The translation of political terms requires more than the identification of lexical equivalents, as their meanings are frequently shaped by specific sociocultural contexts.

The theoretical approaches of Nida, Newmark, Venuti, Fairclough, and van Dijk provide valuable perspectives for understanding the relationship between political language, cultural meaning, and translation. Functional equivalence, borrowing, calquing, descriptive translation, and contextual adaptation represent important strategies for preserving the semantic and cultural characteristics of political terminology.

In conclusion, the accurate representation of political terms in translation depends on the integration of linguistic, cultural, and pragmatic principles. Such an approach ensures conceptual clarity, minimizes cultural misinterpretation, and promotes effective intercultural political communication.

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