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EQUIVALENCE PROBLEMS IN TRANSLATING POLITICAL TERMS FROM ENGLISH INTO UZBEK

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Abstract. This article examines the challenges of achieving equivalence when translating political terms from English into Uzbek. It considers differences between the two countries' political systems, the influence of context on term meaning, and the difficulties posed by terms that lack established Uzbek equivalents. The article discusses translation strategies such as using an established equivalent, descriptive translation, calque, and borrowing. It argues that an appropriate choice depends on both the term's meaning in its source context and the conventions of Uzbek political discourse.

Keywords: political terminology, English–Uzbek translation, translation equivalence, political discourse, descriptive translation, calque, borrowing.

Introduction: Political terminology plays an important role in communicating ideas about governance, public policy, elections, and international relations. In political texts, a term often carries a meaning shaped by the institutions and history of the society in which it is used. Consequently, translating a political term requires more than finding a word with a similar dictionary definition. The translator must also consider whether the Uzbek expression conveys the same institutional meaning and produces a clear interpretation for the target reader.

The translation of political terms from English into Uzbek presents particular difficulties when the concepts represented by the two languages do not fully correspond. Terms connected with parliamentary procedures, electoral systems, and forms of political participation may have no established Uzbek equivalent, while apparently familiar equivalents may differ in scope or connotation. Their meaning can also change according to genre: a term used in legislation may require greater precision than the same term used in a news report. These factors make equivalence a matter of contextual and conceptual correspondence rather than word-for-word similarity.

This article aims to examine the main problems of equivalence in the English–Uzbek translation of political terms and to identify suitable ways of addressing them. It focuses on terms with full, partial, or no established equivalents and considers how institutional context affects translation choices. Through comparative and contextual analysis, the study evaluates the use of established equivalents, calques, borrowings, and descriptive translation. The discussion seeks to contribute to greater consistency and accuracy in the translation of political discourse into Uzbek.

Materials and methods: The methodological basis of this study draws on theories of translation equivalence and comparative translation analysis. Baker (2018) examines equivalence at word, grammatical, textual, and pragmatic levels, showing why the absence of a direct lexical

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equivalent does not, by itself, determine whether a translation conveys the intended meaning. This distinction is relevant to political terminology: two terms may have similar dictionary definitions while referring to different institutions or procedures.

The analysis also draws on Nida and Taber's (1969) emphasis on conveying the source message's meaning in the receptor language. For political terms, this principle is applied with particular attention to institutional accuracy: a translation should be understandable to Uzbek readers without obscuring the specific political concept in the English text. Vinay and Darbelnet's comparative approach provides a framework for identifying procedures such as borrowing and calque and examining the circumstances in which each is used.

The study is designed as a qualitative comparative analysis of English political terms and their Uzbek translations in political news, official statements, and institutional documents. Each selected term is examined together with its source sentence and Uzbek rendering. The analysis proceeds in four stages: identifying the concept represented by the English term; determining whether an established Uzbek equivalent exists; comparing the meanings and institutional references of the two expressions; and evaluating the translation procedure used.

For analytical purposes, the examples are classified as cases of full, partial, or absent lexical equivalence. This classification is an analytical framework for the present study, rather than a claim that all political terms belong permanently to one category: equivalence may change with context. The translations are evaluated according to semantic accuracy, institutional correspondence, clarity, and consistency within the text. Where a direct equivalent is inadequate, the analysis considers whether borrowing, calque, or descriptive translation conveys the concept more precisely.

Results and Discussion: The analysis of English–Uzbek political terminology reveals that equivalence is shaped by the relationship between linguistic meaning, institutional reference, and textual context. Political terms do not merely name general ideas; many designate procedures, offices, and relationships that operate within a particular system of government. As a result, a translation may be linguistically understandable but institutionally imprecise. Baker's account of equivalence at different linguistic and pragmatic levels provides a useful basis for examining this distinction.

The examples below are illustrative cases for qualitative analysis. They demonstrate potential translation problems but do not represent statistical findings from a compiled corpus.

English term	Possible Uzbek rendering	Point requiring contextual analysis
constituency	*saylov okrugi*; *saylovchilar*	The term can refer to an electoral district or to the people represented by an elected official.
cabinet	*Vazirlar Mahkamasi*; *hukumat tarkibi*	The suitable expression depends on the country and the institution being described.
caucus	*partiya a'zolari yig'ilishi*; *kokas* with an explanation	Its meaning varies across political systems and contexts.
backbencher	*rahbarlik lavozimini egallamaydigan parlament a'zosi*	A literal translation does not adequately convey the political role.
filibuster	*parlamentdagi obstruksiya usuli* with an explanation of the procedure	The term refers to a specific method of delaying legislative action.

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shadow cabinet	*muxolifatning muqobil hukumat tarkibi*	A literal rendering may be unclear without an explanation of its function.

Some English political terms have conventional Uzbek equivalents that work well in many contexts. For example, "*election"* is commonly rendered as "saylov", while "referendum" is used as an established borrowing. Such cases appear relatively straightforward because the Uzbek reader can identify the general political concept. Nevertheless, the existence of a familiar equivalent does not remove the need for contextual analysis. The legal scope, procedures, and participants associated with an election or referendum may differ from one country to another.

The term "constituency" demonstrates this problem more clearly. In a sentence about electoral boundaries, "saylov okrugi" may be an appropriate equivalent. In a statement such as "the representative listened to her constituency," however, the reference is primarily to the people represented. In that context, "saylovchilar" or a fuller expression may convey the intended meaning more accurately. The translation decision therefore depends on the term's referent in the sentence, not simply on its most frequent dictionary equivalent.

Partial equivalence occurs when the Uzbek expression conveys a central aspect of an English term but does not reproduce its full institutional meaning. The term "cabinet", for instance, may refer to the senior ministers who collectively advise or govern with a head of government. Rendering it as "Vazirlar Mahkamasi" can be suitable where the text refers to that named Uzbek institution, but using the same expression automatically for every foreign political system may suggest an institutional identity that the source text does not claim. Depending on the context, "hukumat tarkibi" or a more specific descriptive phrase may be preferable.

This issue can be described as institutional asymmetry: the source and target languages provide words for broadly comparable political functions, while the institutions themselves are organized differently. The translator must therefore distinguish between a term used as a general category and a term used as the proper name of a particular body. Preserving that distinction is especially important in academic, legal, and official texts, where an apparently minor terminological difference may change the reader's understanding of political authority or procedure.

A further difficulty arises with terms strongly associated with a particular political tradition. "Backbencher", for example, refers to a member of parliament who does not hold a senior governmental or party leadership position. A literal translation based on the physical location of parliamentary seats would preserve the word's image but leave its political meaning unclear. A descriptive rendering communicates the function more effectively, even though it is longer.

Similarly, "shadow cabinet" should be understood as an opposition arrangement in certain parliamentary systems. Translating "shadow" literally without explaining the group's role could create an unintended interpretation. The expression "muxolifatning muqobil hukumat tarkibi" makes the institutional function more accessible, while the original term can be supplied in parentheses at first mention in a scholarly text. Such solutions reflect a broader methodological principle: when lexical

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brevity conflicts with conceptual clarity, a limited explanation can help preserve the source term's meaning.

The term "filibuster" illustrates the same challenge at the level of political procedure. A broad equivalent such as "obstruction" captures the aim of delaying action but may not identify the legislative procedure involved. In a text where the procedure itself matters, the translator may retain "filibuster" and add a concise Uzbek explanation. The required degree of detail depends on the intended readership and the purpose of the text.

The examples demonstrate the usefulness of several translation procedures. Borrowing retains the English term, usually in a form adapted to Uzbek usage. Calque translates its meaningful components. Descriptive translation explains the underlying concept or function. Vinay and Darbelnet's comparative methodology provides a framework for identifying such procedures, but their use in English–Uzbek political translation must be evaluated against the meaning of each term in context.

No single procedure is suitable for every political term. Borrowing can preserve the name of a distinct foreign institution, but an unexplained borrowing may be inaccessible to readers. A calque is concise, but its components may produce an unfamiliar or misleading Uzbek phrase. Descriptive translation improves clarity, although excessive explanation can interrupt the flow of a news report. Accordingly, the procedure should be assessed using four interrelated criteria:

Semantic accuracy: Does the rendering convey the meaning intended in the source passage?

Institutional accuracy: Does it identify the correct office, body, role, or procedure?

Clarity: Can the intended Uzbek readership understand it without unnecessary effort?

Terminological consistency: Is the same concept translated consistently throughout the text, with changes made only when context requires them?

These criteria extend the assessment beyond a word-for-word comparison. They are also compatible with Nida and Taber's emphasis on conveying the source message's meaning in the receptor language. In political translation, however, readability must be balanced with the need to preserve distinctions between different systems of government.

The appropriate level of explanation also varies by genre. In a short news report, a translator may introduce a foreign term with a brief descriptive phrase and then use a shorter form in subsequent sentences. An academic article can define the term at first use and retain the original English expression for terminological precision. An official document may require even closer attention to the formal names of institutions and to established usage within that document.

Audience knowledge is equally relevant. A reader specializing in comparative politics may recognize *caucus* or *filibuster*, whereas a general readership may require an explanation. This does not mean that the underlying concept should be simplified or replaced with a superficially familiar Uzbek institution. Rather, the translator should supply enough information for the reader to understand the foreign concept accurately. The discussion shows that English–Uzbek political translation involves

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negotiating degrees of equivalence. Established equivalents are useful when their referents align; partial equivalents require contextual adjustment; and institution-specific terms may need borrowing combined with explanation or descriptive translation. These conclusions are analytical interpretations of the examples presented here. To claim that one problem or procedure is more frequent than another, a subsequent study would need a defined corpus of source texts and their published Uzbek translations, together with transparent selection and coding criteria.

Conclusion: The analysis demonstrates that the translation of political terms from English into Uzbek requires attention to both linguistic meaning and institutional context. Political terminology is closely connected to the structure and practices of a particular political system. Consequently, two expressions may appear equivalent at the lexical level while referring to different offices, procedures, or relationships. The accuracy of a translation must therefore be evaluated in the context of the source text, rather than on the basis of dictionary correspondence alone.

The discussion identifies three principal types of equivalence. Full equivalence is possible when an established Uzbek term conveys the relevant concept without a significant change in meaning. Partial equivalence arises when an Uzbek expression communicates the general idea but omits a distinction that matters in the source context. Absence of a concise equivalent is most apparent in terms associated with a specific parliamentary or electoral tradition. These categories should be treated as analytical tools: the degree of equivalence may change according to how a term is used in a particular sentence.

The findings also indicate that translation procedures have different strengths. An established equivalent supports clarity and consistency when its institutional meaning is appropriate. Borrowing preserves the identity of a foreign political concept, but may require an explanation at first mention. A calque can be concise if its components form a meaningful Uzbek expression. Descriptive translation is useful when a short equivalent would conceal the function of an unfamiliar institution or procedure. The choice among these procedures should be based on semantic accuracy, institutional precision, readability, and the conventions of the target text.

Text type and readership further influence the translation decision. A news report generally requires a concise expression that a broad audience can understand. An academic article can retain the English term alongside an Uzbek explanation to support conceptual precision. In official or legal contexts, particular care is needed to distinguish the formal name of an institution from a general description of its function. Consistency remains important in all three settings, although a change in context may justify a change in rendering.

The principal contribution of this study is a context-based approach to assessing English–Uzbek political terminology. It shows why an effective translation must preserve the political concept represented by a term while making that concept intelligible to Uzbek readers. The examples discussed are qualitative illustrations; they do not provide evidence about the frequency of particular problems or strategies. Future research could examine a defined corpus of published translations,

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compare renderings across text types, and assess how readers interpret terms with partial or no established equivalents.

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