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THE REPRESENTATION OF GENDER MARKERS IN TRANSLATION FROM ENGLISH INTO UZBEK

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Abstract. This article examines how gender markers in English texts are represented in Uzbek translation. English may indicate gender through pronouns, forms of address, occupational titles, and other lexical choices, whereas Uzbek does not have grammatical gender and often uses gender-neutral expressions. These structural differences can make a person's gender less explicit in translation or require the translator to express it through context or additional words. The article considers how such choices affect meaning, characterization, and the portrayal of social roles. It argues that gender should be made explicit in Uzbek when it is relevant to the source text's meaning, while unnecessary specification should be avoided.

Keywords: gender markers, English–Uzbek translation, grammatical gender, gender-neutral expressions, pronouns, forms of address, translation strategies.

Introduction: The representation of gender in translation is a linguistic and cultural issue because languages differ in how explicitly they identify a person's gender. In English, gender may be indicated through third-person pronouns (*he, she*), kinship terms, forms of address, and gender-specific nouns. Uzbek has no grammatical gender category, and the pronoun *u* does not distinguish between *he* and *she*. This difference does not mean that gender cannot be expressed in Uzbek; it means that the translator may need to rely on a name, a lexical expression, or the wider context when gender is relevant to the meaning of a passage.

The problem extends beyond grammatical correspondence. Gender references may contribute to characterization, identify relationships between participants, or reflect assumptions about social roles. Sherry Simon's work places gender within the cultural study of translation, while Luise von Flotow describes its development as an analytical category in translation studies. These perspectives suggest that a translator's choice can affect how identities and social relationships are represented in the target text.

English–Uzbek translation presents two related challenges. First, a gender distinction explicitly marked in the English source may become implicit in Uzbek. For example, translating *she* as *u* is grammatically natural, but the reader may need additional context to identify the referent. Second, an Uzbek translation may introduce a gender distinction where the English source does not specify one. Rendering a neutral occupational title with a gender-specific expression, for instance, can add information or an assumption absent from the original. In both cases, grammatical correctness alone is insufficient for assessing the translation.

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A useful theoretical distinction is between grammatical equivalence and pragmatic equivalence. Baker treats these as separate levels of translation analysis: a form may be grammatically appropriate in the target language, while the interpretation it prompts still requires examination. Applied to gender markers, this distinction directs attention to whether the Uzbek text allows readers to understand who is being referred to, which aspects of identity are relevant, and whether the translation preserves the source text's degree of specificity.

This article aims to examine how gender markers in English are conveyed in Uzbek translation and to identify the conditions under which gender becomes less explicit, remains recoverable from context, or is added through lexical choice. The study focuses on pronouns, forms of address, kinship terms, and occupational titles. By comparing source expressions with their Uzbek renderings in context, it evaluates translation choices in terms of semantic accuracy, referential clarity, and the preservation of gender-related meaning.

Materials and methods: This study adopts a qualitative, comparative approach to the representation of gender markers in translation from English into Uzbek. Its unit of analysis is a source-text expression and its Uzbek rendering within a complete sentence or short passage. Examining the surrounding passage is necessary because gender may be explicit in an English pronoun but recoverable in Uzbek through a name, a kinship term, or an earlier reference. An isolated comparison of *she* and *u*, for example, would show a formal difference but would not establish whether the translated passage remains clear to its reader.

The proposed material consists of English texts and their published Uzbek translations. Examples should be drawn from comparable passages in which a person is identified, described, or addressed. Four groups of markers are relevant to the analysis: (1) third-person pronouns and possessive forms, such as *he, she, his,* and *her*; (2) forms of address and titles, such as *Mr., Mrs.,* and *Ms.*; (3) kinship and relationship terms; and (4) occupational and social-role terms. Source and target passages should be recorded together with their author, translator, publication details, and page numbers. This documentation makes each interpretation traceable to an actual translation.

The study distinguishes grammatical marking from contextual and social meaning. English pronouns can explicitly distinguish *he* from *she*, whereas Uzbek *u* does not encode that distinction. Other expressions may convey gender through lexical meaning rather than grammar. A further distinction is needed between gender information stated in the source text and gender inferred from context or social expectations. This distinction prevents the researcher from treating an inference about a person's identity as though it were explicitly expressed by the English wording.

Baker's discussion of grammatical and pragmatic equivalence informs this two-level analysis: the Uzbek expression is examined both for its linguistic form and for the interpretation it supports in context. Gender is also considered as an aspect of representation, following translation studies approaches that examine how translation choices convey identities and social relationships. These theoretical perspectives guide the analysis; they do not predetermine whether making gender explicit or leaving it implicit is preferable in every case.

The comparative analysis is conducted in five stages. First, the English marker and its referent are identified. Second, the corresponding Uzbek expression is located, including cases where the marker is omitted or its meaning is conveyed elsewhere in the sentence. Third, the passages are compared to determine whether gender information is preserved explicitly, remains recoverable from context, becomes ambiguous, or is introduced in the translation. Fourth, the translation procedure is

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identified. Finally, its effect on reference, characterization, and social meaning is evaluated within the passage. For consistent analysis, the examples can be coded using the following categories:

Code	Translation outcome	Analytical question
Explicit preservation	Gender remains expressed through an Uzbek word or phrase.	Is the expression justified by the source text and natural in Uzbek?
Contextual preservation	The Uzbek form is gender-neutral, but the referent remains identifiable.	Does the surrounding passage provide sufficient information?
Loss of relevant information	Gender information needed for interpretation is no longer clear.	Does the change affect reference, characterization, or a relationship?
Added specification	The Uzbek translation states a gender distinction absent from the source expression.	Is the addition supported by the wider source context?
Reformulation	Gender-related meaning is conveyed through a different part of the sentence.	Is the overall meaning preserved without an unnecessary addition?

These categories describe observable outcomes, not automatic judgments of translation quality. For instance, the use of *u* for *she* is not necessarily a loss: if the person has just been named, the Uzbek reader may identify the referent without difficulty. Conversely, specifying gender may improve clarity in one passage but introduce unsupported information in another. Each case must therefore be assessed against the complete source and target passages.

The principal methods are contrastive linguistic analysis, contextual analysis, and qualitative content analysis. Contrastive analysis identifies how English and Uzbek differ in the grammatical and lexical expression of gender. Contextual analysis tests whether information that is no longer explicit remains available elsewhere in the passage. Qualitative content analysis groups recurring translation choices and examines their potential effects on the portrayal of people and social roles. Where a passage permits more than one interpretation, that ambiguity should be reported rather than resolved through an unsupported assumption.

To strengthen the reliability of the study, the selection criteria, text types, and coding decisions should be stated before drawing general conclusions. Borderline cases should be explained with the source sentence, its Uzbek translation, and the relevant context. If published translations are taken from different genres, the analysis should identify the genre of each example; a literary description, a news report, and an official document may require different degrees of explicitness. The study's qualitative design supports close explanation of translation choices, while claims about their frequency would require a defined and sufficiently documented corpus.

Results and discussion: The comparative analysis of gender markers in English and Uzbek points to a central distinction between the presence of gender information in a text and the grammatical form used to express it. English often identifies a person through gender-specific third-person pronouns, whereas Uzbek commonly uses *u* regardless of gender. Consequently, a change from *she* or *he* to *u* is a predictable structural shift. Its effect on meaning, however, can be established only by examining whether the person remains identifiable in the translated passage.

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The examples below are constructed to illustrate the analytical categories. They are not presented as quotations from published translations or as frequency-based research findings.

English source example	**Possible Uzbek translation**	**Main issue**
Malika entered the room. She greeted the guests.	*Malika xonaga kirdi. U mehmonlar bilan salomlashdi.*	Gender is not marked by *u*, but the referent remains clear.
The doctor spoke to the nurse. She then left the room.	*Shifokor hamshira bilan gaplashdi. So'ng u xonadan chiqdi.*	The Uzbek pronoun may be ambiguous if the wider context does not identify who left.
The engineer presented the report.	*Muhandis hisobotni taqdim etdi.*	A gender-neutral occupational title remains gender-neutral.
The engineer presented the report.	*Ayol muhandis hisobotni taqdim etdi.*	*Ayol* adds gender information that the English sentence alone does not provide.
Her brother called her.	*Uning akasi unga qo'ng'iroq qildi.*	The sibling's gender is preserved through *aka*; the gender conveyed by *her* is not explicit in the Uzbek sentence.

The first example shows that the grammatical neutralization of gender does not necessarily produce a semantic loss. Although *u* does not reproduce the distinction encoded by *she*, the name "*Malika"* in the preceding sentence allows readers to identify the person. The translation preserves the relevant reference without inserting a gender-specific expression. This illustrates why equivalence should be assessed beyond the level of individual words: the information conveyed by a pronoun may remain accessible through the structure of the passage. Baker's distinction between grammatical and pragmatic equivalence is useful here.

The second example presents a different outcome. If two people are possible referents, u may make it unclear which person left the room. The translator could resolve the ambiguity by repeating the appropriate name or role – for example, "So'ng hamshira xonadan chiqdi" – provided that the English context establishes that the nurse is the person referred to by "she". Such repetition changes the surface structure but can preserve the source passage's reference more accurately. If the English text itself leaves the identity uncertain, the translator should not resolve that uncertainty without justification.

These cases show that the relevant question is not simply whether a gendered English pronoun becomes a gender-neutral Uzbek pronoun. The question is whether the target text retains the source text's degree of referential clarity or ambiguity. The translation of occupational titles presents a second type of problem. Uzbek nouns such as "shifokor, muhandis, and o'qituvchi" do not grammatically identify the person's gender. English occupational nouns such as "doctor, engineer, and teacher" may likewise be gender-neutral. Translating "engineer as muhandis" therefore preserves the unspecified status of gender in the example above.

By contrast, "ayol muhandis" explicitly identifies the engineer as a woman. That rendering may be appropriate if the wider source passage makes this information relevant. If the source provides no such evidence, the addition changes the informational content of the sentence. It may also suggest

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that gender is a noteworthy feature of the person's profession, even when the original does not present it that way. Gender-related additions should therefore be examined for both their factual basis and their effect on representation. Translation studies scholarship on gender draws attention to these cultural and interpretive dimensions of the translator's choices.

The final example demonstrates that gender information can be distributed differently across the two languages. English "brother" identifies the sibling as male, while Uzbek "aka" also conveys that information and adds that he is older than the person to whom he is related. Meanwhile, English "her" identifies a female referent, but the Uzbek forms "uning and unga" do not express that distinction. The sentence therefore preserves one gender distinction while leaving another to be recovered from context.

This example also shows why a translator should consider added meaning as well as lost meaning. Choosing "aka for brother" supplies an age relationship that the English term alone does not specify. Depending on context, "uka" would introduce a different age relationship. If the source does not establish whether the brother is older or younger, a translator may need to reformulate the sentence to avoid presenting an unsupported distinction. The issue is not limited to gender: accurate translation requires attention to every semantic feature introduced by a target-language choice.

The illustrative cases support four analytical observations. First, the grammatical absence of gender marking in Uzbek does not automatically erase gender-related meaning from a passage. Second, a gender-neutral form may create referential ambiguity when several people are mentioned. Third, explicitly identifying gender in Uzbek can clarify a passage, but it can also add information absent from the source. Fourth, kinship and address terms may introduce distinctions that differ from those expressed in English.

These observations suggest that the translation of gender markers should be evaluated through three related questions: What does the English text explicitly state? What can readers infer from its context? What does the Uzbek translation explicitly state or allow readers to infer? Keeping these questions separate helps prevent both the loss of relevant meaning and the addition of unsupported assumptions. The present discussion offers a framework for close qualitative analysis; it does not establish how often these outcomes occur in published English–Uzbek translations. A study using a documented parallel corpus could apply the proposed categories to authentic passages and compare patterns across literary, journalistic, and official texts.

Conclusion: The study demonstrates that the representation of gender markers in English–Uzbek translation cannot be assessed through word-for-word correspondence alone. English may explicitly mark gender through pronouns and certain lexical expressions, while Uzbek often conveys reference through gender-neutral forms and the wider context. The translation of "he or she as u" is therefore a natural grammatical choice, but its effect depends on whether the reader can still identify the intended person.

The analysis highlights three principal outcomes: gender-related meaning may remain clear from context, become ambiguous, or be made explicit through an additional Uzbek expression. None of these outcomes can be judged independently of the source passage. Repeating a name or role may be necessary to preserve referential clarity when several people are mentioned. Conversely, adding a gender-specific word to translate a neutral occupational title may introduce information or an emphasis absent from the original.

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The findings also show that kinship terms and forms of address require careful attention. A target-language expression may preserve a gender distinction while adding another feature, such as relative age or social status. Translators should therefore compare the full set of meanings conveyed by the English expression and its Uzbek rendering, including meanings that are implied rather than directly stated.

The central principle emerging from this discussion is that gender should be expressed in the Uzbek translation to the extent supported by the source text and required for accurate interpretation. A suitable translation preserves relevant identity and relationships without resolving deliberate ambiguity or introducing unsupported assumptions. Since the examples in this article are illustrative, further research based on a documented corpus of published translations is needed to determine how these translation patterns occur across different genres

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