



TRANSLATION ISSUES OF GERMAN AND UZBEK FOOD NAMES

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Abstract

This article is devoted to the analysis of cultural features encountered in the translation process of food names existing in the Uzbek and German languages, as well as to the identification of the problems arising in this process. The article presents examples of translating food names through several types of translation and examines, in a comparative aspect, the semantic features of national food names, their degree of equivalence, and the methods used in translation. Special attention is also paid to the issues of rendering food names through transliteration, descriptive translation, and alternative equivalents. Through the comparative analysis of food-related terms in the Uzbek and German languages, their conceptual differences and common features are revealed. In particular, the article analyzes how intercultural differences may cause semantic inaccuracies in the translation process. The results of the study serve as an important scientific source for the fields of literary translation, linguoculturology, and comparative linguistics.

Keywords: Translation, food names, culture, semantics, types of translation, direct translation, descriptive translation, explanatory translation, German food names, Uzbek food names.



NEMIS VA O‘ZBEK TAOM NOMLARINING TARJIMA MASALALARI

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Annotatsiya :

Ushbu maqola o‘zbek va nemis tillarida mavjud bo‘lgan taom nomlarining tarjima jarayonida uchraydigan madaniy xususiyatlarini tahlil qilish hamda unda uchraydigan muammolarni aniqlashga bag‘ishlangan. Maqolada taom nomlarini tarjima qilishda tarjimaning bir necha turlari orqali namunalar ko‘rsatilgan hamda milliy taom nomlarining semantik xususiyatlari, ularning ekvivalentlik darajasi va tarjimada qo‘llaniladigan usullar qiyosiy aspektda o‘rganiladi. Shuningdek, taom nomlarini transliteratsiya, tavsifiy tarjima va muqobil variantlar orqali ifodalash masalalariga alohida e‘tibor qaratiladi. O‘zbek va nemis tillaridagi taom atamalarining qiyosiy tahlili orqali ularning konseptual tafovutlari va umumiy jihatlari ochib berilgan. Xususan, tarjima jarayonida madaniyatlararo farqlar qanday semantik noto‘g‘riliklarga sabab bo‘lishi mumkinligi tahlil qilinadi. Tadqiqot natijalari badiiy tarjima, lingvomadaniyatshunoslik va qiyosiy tilshunoslik sohalari uchun muhim ilmiy manba bo‘lib xizmat qiladi.

Kalit so‘zlar: tarjima, taom nomlari, madaniyat, semantika, tarjima turlari, to‘g‘ridan-to‘g‘ri tarjima, tavsifiy tarjima, izohli tarjima, nemis taomlari nomlari, o‘zbek taomlari nomlari.

Introduction

The problem of intercultural communication, which is often not sufficiently effective, especially between Uzbek and German cultural spheres, is illustrated through a translation example before presenting theoretical considerations related to translation and text theory. This example is connected with the translation of the introductory part of the menu of one of the high-level restaurants known as “Deutsches Haus.” After the translation example, some of its inaccurate aspects



are analyzed, and certain erroneous ways of thinking and translation approaches, which are referred to in language didactics as “false friends” (falsche Freunde), are pointed out. These are presented as examples of translation errors that arise when words that seem to be equivalent in translation are, in fact, not fully compatible with each other. All these cases can be explained by insufficient knowledge of language and culture.

The translation of food names is not only a linguistic phenomenon but also a cultural-semiotic one. In his article, F. Debus discusses the translation problems of names and describes them as products of national thinking [Debus, Friedhelm 1991]. Names, including food names, are regarded as cultural signs closely connected with the historical, social, and cultural experience of different peoples. Therefore, in translating food names, simple lexical equivalence is not sufficient; cultural connotations must also be taken into account. The article emphasizes that names possess both denotative, that is, primary, and connotative, that is, additional, meanings. In translating food names, it is important to consider both of these layers. For example, the words “lag‘mon” or “sauerbraten” are not merely names of dishes; they also express ethnic and cultural identity.

Types of Translation

According to F. Debus, the following types of translation exist:

A. Lexical-semantic or direct translation

In this method, the components of a name are translated.

Examples:

“Apfelstrudel” – “Apple strudel”

“Kürbissuppe” – “Pumpkin soup”

“Qovurma sho‘rva” – “Fried soup”

Advantage: it is simple and understandable. Disadvantage: the cultural layer is lost.

B. Descriptive translation

The name is not translated directly; instead, its function or composition is explained.

Examples:

“Norin” – “A cold Uzbek salad with meat and dough”



“Weißwurst” – “A white sausage typical of Bavaria, intended for breakfast”

“Chuchvara” – “A boiled dough dish filled with meat”

This method explains the meaning to the reader, but it does not preserve the original name.

C. Transliteration

The name is transferred into another language phonetically.

Examples:

“Plov,” “Shashlik,” “Manti,” “Lag‘mon”

“Spätzle,” “Bratwurst,” “Stollen”

This method preserves cultural diversity, but it reduces comprehensibility.

D. Explanatory translation

The name is transliterated and accompanied by an explanation.

Examples:

“Samsa – an Uzbek meat pie baked in a tandir oven”

“Chak-chak – a sweet dish made from honey and pieces of fried dough”

“Knödel – a German round dough dish served as a side dish”

This method combines cultural authenticity and comprehensibility.

E. Cultural adaptation

The name is replaced with an equivalent from another culture.

Examples:

“Lag‘mon” – “meat noodle soup”

“Stollen” – “fruit Christmas bread”

“Do‘lma” – “a Turkish-style dish made of stuffed vegetables”

This approach is more understandable for the reader, but the original culture is lost.

Conclusion

According to F. Debus’s theory, in translating food names, context, the reader’s culture, and semantic load must always be taken into account. Choosing the appropriate type of translation for each name is one of the main tasks of the translator. It is important to preserve cultural signs in translation, as they serve as a key means of explaining the culture of a nation.



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Translation from the Perspective of Culture and History

Translations make an important contribution to transcultural communication. For thousands of years, people have overcome linguistic and cultural boundaries through translators and interpreters, thereby “building bridges” between two or more linguistically and culturally different areas. Even in antiquity, Herodotus reported on linguistic and cultural misunderstandings that led to wars, as a result of which entire civilizations disappeared or developed by partially incorporating foreign culture and language into their own. The historical traces of ancient civilizations, as well as the existence and interconnection of numerous cultures, can be found everywhere in today’s globalized world.

In Southern Europe, for example, the legacy of the Arab conquest of the Iberian Peninsula is particularly noticeable, especially in Portugal from 711 to 1248 and in Castile until 1492. At that time, the achievements of Arab civilization, which was far more advanced than European civilization, had a major influence on language in every technical, agricultural, political, and cultural sphere. As a result, a “mixed language” that united both cultures, Mozarabic, emerged and served as a lingua franca in everyday communication. The interconnection of language and culture in this region is still noticeable today, especially through the presence of numerous Arabic words in the Spanish and Portuguese languages.

Linguistic hegemony is not a modern phenomenon of globalization, but has influenced many cultures and languages throughout history. For example, English, which is today’s global language, is used as a “lingua franca” or as a “Mac Language” that forms part of the global “McWorld.” In every historical period, the dominance of certain languages has been observed, and sometimes such languages have been stylized as a form of fashion. One example is the elevated fashion of the St. Petersburg aristocracy, intellectuals, and industrial elites in the nineteenth century.

In the era of globalization, modern technologies such as the Internet, our knowledge of foreign languages, and in many cases translations, including translations for the mass media, for example from online newspapers, into dozens or even hundreds of languages, allow us to obtain information about world events. This gives us access to the daily flow of information and creates opportunities to



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acquire broad knowledge in an increasing number of areas of life and scientific fields. It would be difficult to imagine today's life without these opportunities.

Translation as Cultural Transfer

If we take into account the various, sometimes sharply changing geopolitical and related cultural developments among many European countries, as well as their mutual influence, including linguistic influence, not only throughout modern history but especially over the last twenty years, it becomes clear that translation-related communicative activities are a complex phenomenon. Languages are inseparably connected with culture; they are embedded in culture. As Schmid emphasizes, "Language ... helps to create cultural forms if it produces text forms suitable for use in terms of content, society, and aesthetics, and if these forms are accepted as models of transmission."

Therefore, the main function of translation is to express certain, that is, important, information in a form that is harmonious and understandable within the given cultural environment and its specific features. This information, despite the existence of cultural distance or foreignness, must be conveyed to recipients within the linguistic and cultural environment familiar to them. Translators work as intercultural mediators; they must not only know two languages professionally and understand the real differences between them, but also be able to translate effectively for the client, especially in cases where the client does not have perfect command of both languages.

In addition, the translator must take into account the function of the text, or, in Vermeer's terms, the "initial meaningful situation," and must be able to decide which contents should be transferred and how they should be expressed through cultural and linguistic decisions, even by emphasizing or shortening certain elements. Translation is a "special type of cultural transfer," that is, "a communicative process that crosses cultural and possibly linguistic boundaries and is carried out through mediation." In this way, the specific elements of a particular cultural community are transferred into another culture and adapted to it.

On the basis of the anthropologist Goodenough's definition of culture, Göhring decided to define culture as follows:



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... it should consist of what people must know, control, and feel in order to evaluate whether the local population is acting in accordance with or deviating from the behavior expected in their various roles, and in order to act in accordance with the expected behavior in the society they have chosen, provided that they wish to do so and are not prepared to accept the consequences resulting from unexpected behavior. ... Culture also includes everything that people must know and feel in order to perceive the world shaped by nature or created by humans in the same way as the local population.

This definition and the aspects related to the concept of culture serve as the basis for further considerations in translation studies. Based on these ideas, for example, Schmitt additionally states that culture “includes everything that one must know, feel, and be able to do in order to move within an environment without attracting attention, as a member of that environment would.”

G. Floros takes a critical approach to these definitions and considers them to be based only on a general framework, without specifically reflecting culture in texts [Floros, Georgios 2025, 272–278]. He proposes “a methodological approach that establishes the identification of culture in texts as a necessary condition for translation.” He relies on the methodological approaches of K. Mudersbach, who initially defines culture in a very general way [Mudersbach, Klaus 2011]. According to G. Floros’s conclusion, culture is “a system divided into cultural systems,” but at the next stage of his own definition he divides the concept of a “cultural system” into two levels: on the one hand, it is defined as a “convention related to a sphere of life,” while on the other hand, it is viewed as “a holistic system of holemes and subholemes specific to culture.”

According to G. Floros, K. Mudersbach’s four-stage Holontex method provides “the creation of a clear practical guideline for the translator.” This method involves activating the cultural systems contained within the text; that is, “specific units of the cultural system are connected with specific units of the text, which in turn refer back to the cultural system.”

This highly complex method, which requires the creation of lists of cultural systems and similar procedures as a component of text analysis important for translation, appears to be practically difficult for a practice-oriented translation process.



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Nevertheless, although it is difficult to apply in practice, the author emphasizes the, in his view, insufficiently developed connections between culture and its representation in texts, and considers the process “from identifying culture in texts” to Fillmore’s scenes-and-frames concept to be “unsystematizable” [Fillmore, Charles 1982, 111–137]. At the same time, his ideas about activating cultural systems through certain parts of a text and transferring them back into cultural systems, as well as into texts, are combined with the scenes-and-frames concept, which is one of the main translation theories on which this study is based. According to H. Vermeer, culture is connected with “regularity,” and also with the idea that “... the behavior of an individual adapted to society requires the constant adaptation of the members of society” [Vermeer, Hans 2008]. In addition, H. Vermeer defines culture as “... the totality of the behavior of an individual, a society, or a part of society within a certain time-space,” which points to two important aspects of culture: “... the totality of all achievements of society ...” and its temporal-spatial as well as spatial or locational dimensions. Even in universal definitions of culture, as we have seen earlier, the local or geographical factor plays a major role. Language, as an important component of culture, may change depending on the geographical location of a country, even if it is considered “the same” language.

The factor of time is also closely connected with such concepts as culture and civilization. Medieval customs of a country at a particular time require explanation in accordance with present-day customs, practices, and mentalities. From this perspective, including the temporal-spatial viewpoint, H. Vermeer defines culture as follows:

... The behavior of society, as well as the behavior of the individual, that is, also society-specific behavior in this context, encompasses all forms of the life of that society and is therefore understood as a general term for rule-governed behavior. Such almost rule-governed behavior emerges through enculturation and upbringing within society. ... It is a set of behaviors determined by rules, laws, norms, and conventions, or by their violation, where rules are generalized into predictable, general, and spatial-temporal similarities or redundancies, such as “conventions” and the like.



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There seems to be no single “solution” that includes all relevant factors related to the definition of culture and that is valid even only for the science of translation. Depending on various “indicators, culture is situated at very different levels of abstraction.” Therefore, this concept can be defined in many ways, especially within the humanities. For translators, the most important issue is to determine “which group-specific differences in behavior and evaluation in their source culture and target cultures may be relevant for processes of intercultural communication.”

Such an assessment can only be tentative, since “the interdisciplinary research field of intercultural communication ... includes cultural anthropology or ethnology, sociology, political science, psychology, especially social psychology, linguistics, communication studies, and literary studies, as well as history, religious studies, and philosophy.” Creating a holistic definition that covers all important elements of culture and supports practical translation activity is a difficult, or even impossible, task if the translator is expected to identify and transfer all of these elements.

A concept of culture based on detailed analyses in cultural studies was proposed by J. Heinrichs through his action-oriented and systematic theory of culture [Heinrichs, Johannes 2007]. In this theory, he defines culture as follows:

“Culture” may be understood as inherited meaning-content and patterns of action transmitted through actions. It is social inheritance, something socially preserved. ... The context of social actions is not cultural in itself; rather, what is cultural is that which is not genetically based but is inherited through learning. Culture is what is inherited within the social sphere, not its nature.

J. Heinrichs’s theory of action focuses on “the acting subject as the central point of connection,” while his systematic theory of culture considers “society or community as the leading point of connection.” According to Schmid’s general interpretation, the highly complex cultural system developed by J. Heinrichs includes not only language, which he calls “the absolute medium of the possibility of preservation” and defines by stating that “the linguistic level of social communication is the cultural level par excellence,” but also “content that must be learned and must become part of upbringing, education, and study,” including elements of political, philosophical, religious, and economic culture.



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In J. Heinrichs's theory of culture, an important aspect for translation is the comparison of the source culture and the target culture. Through this comparison, differences should be better understood, and, accordingly, the "transformation" of source cultural, linguistic, and textual content into target cultural, linguistic, and textual content should be ensured. One of the results of such comparison is the following: "what is considered meaningful and worthy of preservation for one society is accepted by future generations, while another society does not develop this cultural form, but manifests other forms specific to itself." ... On the basis of this comparison, ideas may then be introduced regarding how a text adapted to the target culture and corresponding to its function should be created. This "adaptation" may be reflected in the expected textual convention of the target text, in the relevant terminology, and in the legal form; it may also lead to the inclusion of temporal and content-related explanatory notes, references to other parts of the text, and references to legal institutions.

Such comparison, that is, the comparison of identical, similar, different, or completely absent aspects, is aimed at transforming the source text in accordance with the intended function of the target text. This transformation is carried out together with the target culture.

The function-oriented translation theories presented below serve as the basis for analyzing the target and source texts in this study. Their main purpose is to transfer culture and the content of one culture into another in an understandable way, that is, into a transcultural, interlingual, and intertextual form of communication. At the same time, they appear as a general framework that provides considerable freedom and flexibility, while also serving as a constant guide and means of self-control in seeking the fulfillment of the translation purpose.

The specific, ambivalent nature of this issue, a phenomenon that has been debated over the last thirty years, may be clearly reflected in the following quotation by Hönig:

"This is precisely what makes the functionalist approach to translation in general, and especially to the assessment of translation quality, so difficult for critics: there are no absolute rules, only strategies; there is no correct translation for any word, only an acceptable translation."



The Translation Process and Semantics

The traditional concept of semantics is enriched with additional aspects in the context of translation studies. These aspects, just like an individual word, cannot exist independently. It is no longer only a matter of “the influence of context and world knowledge on determining the meaning of an expression,” but also of the fulfillment of a defined purpose, and consequently of the transformation of the source content, or even its radical change in the form of reduction or expansion, thereby changing its original form in the source language.

Language, as Snell-Hornby states, “... does not take place in a vacuum, but arises from a specific situation within a cultural context. Translation, however, is not the transfer of words or sentences from one language into another, but the process of reporting on a source text or source content in a new situation, within new functional, cultural, and linguistic conditions, while attempting to imitate it formally as far as possible” (1994 1986: 13ff).

H. Vermeer defines translation as “cultural and linguistic transfer” as well as “a complex cultural act in which the translator conveys the information offer of the source text to the recipient of the target text.” Nord makes this definition more precise by stating: “Translation is a task assigned by a commissioner, and depending on the purpose or skopos of the translation, information may be offered about various situation-related aspects of the source text.”

In this way, H. Vermeer moves away from the notion that “translation is only a linguistic matter.” For him, the ideal translator must not only be multilingual, but also multicultural. This means that the translator “must be able to distinguish between the world of the commissioner, his or her own world, and the world of the target recipient, and must be able to connect them with one another.”

Ideally, this should be the case: ... if additional knowledge and experience are necessary in order to fully understand the cultural aspects of the source text and to integrate the corresponding cultural content into the target text, then it is necessary for the translator to consult a specialist in the unfamiliar culture and to direct the research precisely.

However, in the case of errors in menu translations, the problem is much more fundamental: translators are apparently unable to assess whether one or another meaning of a word expresses the required content in this context or whether it



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leads to a completely incorrect interpretation. Not to mention translation competence, which includes the working languages and the cultures associated with them; such competence provides translators with an analytical tool and enables them to justify their decisions, but these translators are almost entirely deprived of it.

Such amateurs underestimate the complexity of the translation process and the requirements that must be fulfilled in order to perform this task responsibly. They also fail to take into account that serious translation deficiencies may lead to significant consequences.

Examples of German Names from International Cuisine: A Semantic Approach to Translation Solutions

The idea of this approach emerged from the need for guidelines oriented toward the target language. As guidelines for analyzing the future translation, examples of food names from international cuisine in German had to be identified. These examples were intended to serve as successful translations from foreign languages into German: existing German equivalents of foreign names or other forms, such as descriptive explanations of foreign dishes or the creation of new words. Here, the question “how?” is of central importance: which expressions and sentences are used, and in what syntax and style are the dishes described? The best approaches are included in this study and will later be discussed as examples for the analysis of the subsequent translation.

Two examples selected from a collection of different menus were taken from French and Indian restaurants in Vienna. They were chosen because their language, like the source texts of Polish menus, is highly decorative and figurative, often using invented names, metaphors, and comparisons.

The menus of these restaurants may not be considered translations in the traditional sense: in both places, dishes are named with short, keyword-based titles and are then described in detail. In the French restaurant, the short names remain in French even in the German menu, and sometimes, like the descriptions of the dishes, they are written in German. In the Indian restaurant, the short names are in Hindi and are often mixed with English, for example, BEEF SHAHI KORMA, CHICKEN BIRYANI, or LAMB GRILL MASALA, while the descriptions are presented first in German and then in English. The introduction



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to the Indian menu and the short explanations of preparation methods or special offers in the French menu are written in German, grammatically correct and stylistically fluent, and appear to have been written by native German speakers. Thus, short names in a foreign language may serve more to emphasize cultural distance and authenticity, while the following translation is not a source text, but rather a special form of explaining meanings. A more detailed explanation of this will be shown in the following general overview.

Regarding the use of Austrian variants for food names, it should be noted that in some cases, for example, Beiried, Blunzen, Fisolen, Geselchtes, Kraut, Topfen, and others, there are variants familiar only to Austrians and requiring translation for Germans. In such cases, food names are selected in a way that is as neutral as possible and understandable to all German-speaking guests.

The cuisine of every nation is an integral part of its culture and history, and cultural differences play an important role in the translation of food names. The main problem in translating food names arises from the differences between the national-cultural customs, eating culture, and historical traditions of both peoples. While German dishes are often associated with meat, bakery products, and beer culture, Uzbek dishes are more commonly prepared using rice, vegetables, and spices. Therefore, each language and culture has formed terms and expressions specific to its own dishes. National dishes are closely connected with the cultural values, customs, and historical development of every nation. For this reason, in translating food names, in addition to linguistic skills, it is necessary to conduct a deep analysis of intercultural differences. Since the cuisine of every nation is a product of its specific mentality, way of life, climatic conditions, and historical traditions, food names are often explained not only through linguistic means, but also through cultural context. These differences become even more evident in the example of German and Uzbek national dishes.

Examples:

German: Schweinebraten — “roast pork.” Since pork is not used in Uzbek culture, cultural compatibility is lost in direct translation.

Weißwurst — white sausage, a traditional Bavarian dish. If this dish is translated into Uzbek simply as “white sausage,” it loses its national and traditional character.



Uzbek: Norin — a mixture of finely sliced meat and noodles served cold. Such a dish does not exist in German cuisine; therefore, descriptive translation is necessary.

Qovurdoq — a dish made of finely chopped fried meat and onions, sometimes with potatoes. Since its exact name may not be sufficiently understandable in German, it can be translated into another language not only by explaining its necessary ingredients and preparation process, but also by indicating when and at what ceremonies it is eaten, thereby preserving the cultural character of the dish. When comparing German and Uzbek cuisines, significant differences can be observed in the approach to dishes and in cooking techniques. This requires a special approach in the translation process. The influence of cultural differences on the translation of food names primarily arises from the differences in each nation's food culture and cooking methods. For example, Uzbek national cuisine is often based on festive and ceremonial dishes, such as palov, while in German cuisine, meat products, sausages, and various forms of breakfast occupy an important place. This difference, in turn, requires different approaches in translating food names.

For example, the Uzbek dish “norin” is a traditional dish made from thinly sliced dough and meat. If translated literally into German, the full meaning and cultural essence of this dish are not conveyed. If the word norin is translated as “geschnittene Teig- und Fleischrolle” (a mixture of sliced dough and meat), the uniqueness of the dish is lost. Therefore, descriptive translation with a brief cultural explanation is the most appropriate option for norin:

“Norin” – thinly sliced strips of dough with boiled meat, a traditional dish of Uzbek cuisine.

Similarly, when translating the German dish “Weißwurst” (white sausage) into Uzbek, cultural differences must also be taken into account. It can be literally translated as “white sausage,” but the role of Weißwurst in Bavarian culture, its traditional method of preparation, and its specific taste are not sufficiently reflected through a simple translation. Therefore, after translating it as “white sausage,” it is recommended to include a short cultural explanation:

Weißwurst – a special type of sausage with a mild taste, belonging to traditional Bavarian cuisine.



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Another manifestation of cultural differences is reflected in religious and social values. Most Uzbek dishes are prepared according to Halal principles, meaning that pork and alcoholic beverages are not used. In German cuisine, on the contrary, pork and beer are considered integral components of many dishes. For example, when translating the dish “Schweinebraten” (roast pork) into Uzbek, it is necessary to approach the translation carefully, taking religious and cultural factors into account. When such a dish is translated for an Uzbek audience, the principle of cultural sensitivity should be followed, and the dish should be conveyed through description or explanation.

From this point of view, when translating food names, it is always necessary to ask the following questions:

Does this dish exist in another culture?

What are the main ingredients and method of preparation of the dish?

Does the dish have any religious or social sensitivity?

If the translator does not take these factors into account, the translated text may cause cultural ambiguities or misunderstandings.

Cultural differences are also connected with the way a dish is consumed and with the ceremonies associated with it. For example, among Uzbeks, palov is not only an ordinary meal, but also a ceremonial dish consumed at weddings, religious holidays, and mourning ceremonies. In German cuisine, “Sauerbraten” (marinated beef roast) is more often prepared for special holidays, although it is also commonly served at general gatherings. In translation, a simple description is not sufficient to convey such cultural background; the cultural context must also be explained.



Table 1. Types of Translation of Food Names in German and Uzbek

Uzbek food	German translation	Translation recommendation
Noreen	Sliced dough strips	Needs descriptive translation and commentary
Dumplings	Pastry with meat filling (Manti)	Descriptive and equivalent
Pilaf	Pilaw / Uzbek rice dish	Descriptive + cultural commentary
Shashlik	Shashlik / Meat skewer	Equivalent available
German food	Uzbek translation	Translation recommendation
Weißwurst	White sausage (Bavarian dish)	Descriptive translation
Sauerbraten	Glazed beef	Descriptive translation
Potato salad	Potato salad	Descriptive translation
Schweinebraten	Pork roast	Descriptive + cultural commentary

According to scholars, translations made without taking cultural differences into account lead to communicative breakdowns. In particular, G. Hofstede emphasizes the direct connection between cultural differences and language and stresses the necessity of cultural adaptation in translation [Hofstede, 1980]. From this perspective, the translation of food names should also be regarded not merely as a linguistic issue, but as a cultural phenomenon.

As can be seen from the above analysis, cultural differences require special attention in the process of translating food names. Since each culture has its own distinctive cuisine, literal translations often do not produce sufficiently accurate results. For correct and effective translation, it is necessary to study cultural differences, use descriptive or explanatory translation strategies, and preserve intercultural sensitivity. Thus, in translating German and Uzbek food names, the combination of linguistic and cultural approaches produces the most appropriate result.

In the translation process, it is necessary to take into account the specific features of national culture. Rather than direct translation, explanatory or descriptive translation methods are more appropriate. German dishes are often prepared from pork, which is unacceptable in Uzbek culture.

Thus, translations made with consideration of cultural differences help preserve the meaning and content of food names.



Errors in the Direct Translation of Food Names

In translation practice, a literal approach is often used in many cases; however, in the translation of food names, this method may lead to many errors.

Sometimes translators translate food names directly and literally. This leads to distortion of meaning and may even result in humorous or incorrect understanding. Direct translation is suitable only for dishes that provide general information and are internationally recognized.

In translation practice, literal or direct translation is often used as a convenient and quick solution. However, in translating food names, this method does not always produce the desired result. This is because dishes appear not only as food, but also as expressions of culture, historical traditions, and national values. Therefore, it is important to analyze the errors that arise in direct translation and their cultural and communicative consequences.

Examples:

German: Kartoffelsalat — “potato salad.” This can be translated directly, because potato salad also exists in Uzbek.

Uzbek: Chuchvara — if translated directly as “dumpling,” it comes closer to English usage, but in German the term Maultaschen may be considered a suitable equivalent.

Errors in direct translation and their consequences

Literal translation and its shortcomings.

Examples of translations that do not take context and cultural differences into account.

Direct translation errors:

German dishes:

Leberknödel — dumplings made from liver. If translated directly as “liver balls,” it sounds strange.

Rote Grütze — a dessert made from red berries.

Uzbek dishes:

Qatlama — layered dough.

Osh — it is better to render it correctly as “pilav” or “plov”; translating it simply as “rice” would be incorrect.



The greatest shortcoming of direct translation is the risk of losing the original meaning of the food name, its method of preparation, and its cultural context. A food name translated literally may often seem foreign, unclear, or even strange to the reader. The specific composition and method of preparation of dishes may not be sufficiently reflected through literal translation.

For example, if we translate the name of the famous Uzbek dish “sho‘rva” directly into German, it would mean “Salzige Suppe” or “salty soup.” However, this translation does not express either the specific method of preparing sho‘rva or its distinctive taste. In German, the term “Salzige Suppe” is perceived as an ordinary soup that has mistakenly been made too salty, and it does not actually convey the meaning of the traditional Uzbek dish sho‘rva.

Similarly, translating the German dish “Leberknödel” literally into Uzbek as “liver dumpling” or “liver ball” may create an incorrect impression of the dish. In Uzbek, the expression “liver ball” does not convey a clear meaning, and it must be described with a special explanation:

Leberknödel — a round-shaped dish prepared from finely minced liver and pieces of bread, cooked in boiling water or broth.

The main errors encountered in direct translation are the following:

Semantic distortion:

The meaning and content of the original food name are lost or changed in translation.

For example: “Chuchvara” → “Teigtaschen” (dough pockets) — this expresses only the shape of the dish, but does not convey its traditional meaning.

Ignoring the cultural context:

Failure to provide information about the ceremony or circumstances in which the dish is consumed.

For example: “Palov” → “Reisgericht” (rice dish) — this eliminates the ceremonial and national significance of palov.

Stylistic errors:

The translated name sounds aesthetically or phonetically awkward.

For example: “Qazi” (a sausage made from horse meat) → “Pferdewurst” (horse sausage) — this translation may sound strange and even create a negative impression.



Unnaturalness:

A literal translation may seem unnatural and unclear to the reader.

For example: “Mastava” → “Reissuppe mit Fleisch und Gemüse” (soup made with rice, meat, and vegetables) — this becomes a very complex and overly detailed expression.

Table 2. Analytical Examples of the Translation of Food Names in German and Uzbek

Original dish name	Direct translation	Disadvantage
Dumplings	Teigtaschen	Cultural and cooking method is not lost
Pilaf	Reisgericht	Ceremonial and cultural significance is lost
Judge	Horsewurst	Negative connotation
Soup	Salzige Suppe	Vagueness and error
German dish name	Direct translation	Disadvantage
Leberknödel	Liver round	Vague and strange
Weißwurst	White sausage	Lack of context
Sauerkraut	Sour cabbage	Traditional cooking method of the dish is not lost
Schwarzwälder Kirschtorte	Black forest cherry cake	Cultural values and recipe details are lost

Translation theorists, in particular Newmark, extensively analyzed the problems of literal translation and semantic correspondence in his work. According to them, the main purpose of every translation is to preserve the meaning of the source-language text and its cultural background. In particular, in the translation of food names, direct translation may create an inappropriate impression not only from a linguistic point of view, but also from cultural and psychological perspectives [Newmark, 1988, 93].

In addition, J. House, in a model that combines communicative translation and cultural adaptation, recommends developing adaptation strategies precisely in order to prevent cultural errors [House, 2015, 84].

The main consequences arising from direct translation are the following:



Incorrect perceptions: The reader forms an incorrect, negative, or unclear idea about the dish.

Cultural alienation: The reader feels alienated from the translated text.

Communicative breakdown: The translation fails to fulfill its main purpose, namely ensuring mutual understanding.

Therefore, the culturological content of the dish must always be taken into account in translation.

Based on the analyses discussed above, it can be stated that the direct translation of food names often leads to serious errors in conveying meaning and cultural context. For this reason, cultural adaptation, descriptive translation, and, when necessary, explanatory translation strategies are the most appropriate approaches in the translation of food names. The translator must regard each food name not only as a linguistic unit, but also as an expression of culture. Only in this way can translation become complete not only at the level of words, but also at the level of meaning and spirit.

Literal translations lead to cultural and semantic errors; therefore, in the translation process, attention must be paid to similarity and context.

Only certain generalized food names should be translated directly; otherwise, translation methods should be selected with consideration of cultural information and context.

Conclusion

The issue of translating food names is extremely important from the perspective of translation studies and intercultural communication. Since food names in the Uzbek and German languages differ significantly from one another and have been formed on the basis of the historical, cultural, religious, and social characteristics of both peoples, many difficulties arise in translating them.

First of all, the absence of lexical equivalents in both languages and cultures is the greatest problem. For example, Uzbek dishes such as “norin,” “halim,” and “manti” cannot be translated directly into German word for word, because such names denote not only a certain type of food, but also include the method of preparation, historical meaning, and ceremonial features associated with the dish.



Since there are no corresponding words for such dishes in German, the translator is forced to resort to descriptive or explanatory translation.

Similar problems are also observed when translating German food names into Uzbek. For example, names such as “Eintopf,” “Brezel,” or “Quarkkaulchen” may refer to new and unfamiliar products that do not exist in Uzbek culture. In such cases, translation methods such as transliteration, explanation, or cultural adaptation are chosen. This, in itself, shows that translation is a difficult and responsible process.

In conclusion, in order to overcome the problems involved in translating food names, the translator must set not only the task of conveying meaning, but also the task of ensuring cultural communication and serving as a bridge between cultures. Only then can translation achieve true functional and cultural equivalence.

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