

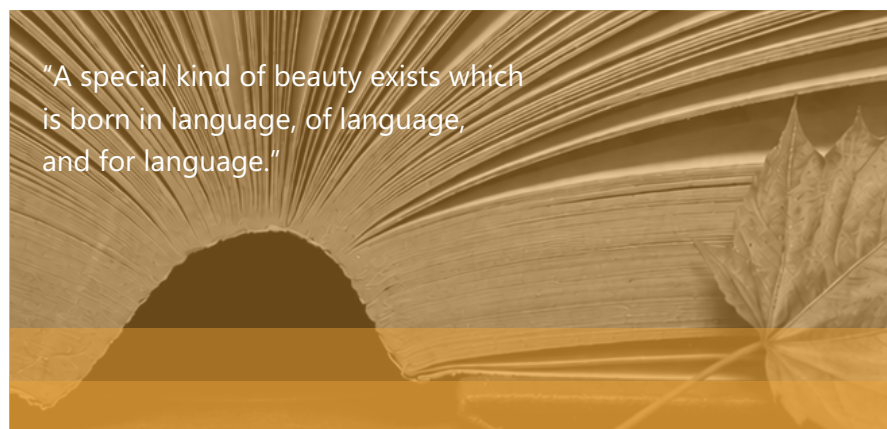


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"A special kind of beauty exists which
is born in language, of language,
and for language."



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Translating Political Intent in Uzbek-English Presidential Discourse

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Annotation *This article examines how political intent is reformulated and adapted for target audiences in the English translations of speeches delivered by Uzbekistan's President Shavkat Mirziyoyev. Rather than evaluating translation solely through formal correspondence, the study focuses on how political meaning is preserved, modified, or reinterpreted during translation. The analysis draws on selected presidential speeches and their official English translations, focusing on expressions conveying authority, solidarity, commitment, respect, and diplomatic positioning. A qualitative comparative approach identifies relationships between political intent, translation decisions, and communicative effects. Cultural and institutional factors influencing translation choices are also considered. The findings indicate that political intent is frequently maintained through functional reformulation, while culturally marked and institutionally sensitive expressions may be adjusted to suit context. The study argues that effective political translation depends less on identical linguistic forms than on preserving the communicative force and political orientation of the source discourse for its intended audience and broader international readership.*

Keywords *Political intent, political discourse, presidential speeches, pragmatic translation, translation shifts, Uzbek-English translation, communicative function*

Prezident nutqlarida siyosiy niyatning o'zbek tilidan ingliz tiliga tarjimasini

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Annotatsiya *Ushbu maqolada O'zbekiston Respublikasi Prezidenti Shavkat Mirziyoyev nutqlarining ingliz tiliga tarjimasida siyosiy niyatning qanday ifodalanishi va maqsadli auditoriyaga moslashtirilishi tadqiq etiladi. Tadqiqot tarjimini faqat shakliy muvofiqlik yoki oldindan belgilangan tarjima strategiyalari asosida baholashdan ko'ra, siyosiy mazmunning tarjima jarayonida qanday saqlanishi, o'zgarishi yoki qayta talqin qilinishiga e'tibor qaratadi. Tahlil O'zbekiston prezidentining tanlangan nutqlari hamda ularning rasmiy inglizcha tarjimalariga asoslanib, birdamlik, majburiyat, hurmat va diplomatik pozitsiyani ifodalovchi birliklarni qamrab oladi. Tadqiqotda qiyosiy va sifat tahlili usullaridan foydalanilib, manba matndagi siyosiy niyat, tarjima qarori va maqsadli matndagi kommunikativ ta'sir o'rtasidagi munosabat aniqlanadi. Shuningdek, madaniy va institutsional omillarning tarjima jarayonidagi roli ham baholanadi. Natijalar siyosiy niyat*

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ko'pincha funksional qayta ifodalash orqali saqlanishini, madaniy jihatdan belgilangan hamda institutsional jihatdan sezgir birliklar esa maqsadli kontekstga mos ravishda o'zgartirilishi mumkinligini ko'rsatadi. Tadqiqot siyosiy tarjimada lingvistik shaklning aynan takrorlanishidan ko'ra, manba nutqining kommunikativ kuchi va siyosiy yo'nalishini saqlash muhimligini asoslaydi. Bu yondashuv tarjima sifatini baholashning kontekstga asoslangan mezonlarini ham taklif etadi.

Kalit so'zlar *Siyosiy niyat, siyosiy diskurs, prezident nutqlari, pragmatik tarjima, tarjima o'zgarishlari, o'zbek-ingliz tarjimasi, kommunikativ funksiya*

Выражение политического намерения в узбекско-английском президентском дискурсе

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Аннотация *В статье исследуется, каким образом политическое намерение переосмысливается и адаптируется к целевой аудитории в английских переводах речей Президента Узбекистана Шавката Мирзиёева. В отличие от подходов, оценивающих перевод преимущественно с точки зрения формального соответствия или заранее установленных переводческих стратегий, исследование сосредоточено на сохранении, изменении и переосмыслении политического содержания в процессе перевода. Анализ основан на избранных президентских речах Президента и их официальных английских переводах и охватывает выражения, передающие полномочия, солидарность, обязательство, уважение и дипломатическую позицию. Для выявления взаимосвязи между политическим намерением исходного текста, переводческим решением и коммуникативным эффектом целевого текста применяется качественный сопоставительный анализ. Также учитывается влияние культурных и институциональных факторов на переводческие решения. Полученные результаты показывают, что политическое намерение часто сохраняется посредством функциональной переформулировки, тогда как культурно маркированные и институционально чувствительные выражения могут адаптироваться к целевому контексту. Делается вывод, что эффективность политического перевода определяется не столько воспроизведением идентичной языковой формы, сколько сохранением коммуникативной силы и политической направленности исходного дискурса для предполагаемой целевой аудитории.*

Ключевые слова *Политическое намерение, политический дискурс, президентские речи, прагматический перевод, переводческие трансформации, узбекско-английский перевод, коммуникативная функция*

Introduction

Political speeches are designed to do more than convey information. In presidential communication, a relatively short expression may simultaneously signal authority, express solidarity, demonstrate respect, establish responsibility, or frame a political position. Such meanings are particularly important when a speech moves from a domestic audience to an international one. The translator must then reproduce not only what the speaker says, but also the communicative purpose that the utterance serves in its original setting.

This problem is especially significant in political translation because linguistic form and political function do not always coincide. A source expression may have a direct lexical equivalent in English, yet a literal rendering may sound inappropriate, overly marked, or insufficiently persuasive in the target context. Conversely, an English formulation that differs considerably from the Uzbek wording may preserve the intended political message more effectively. Recent research increasingly treats political translation as a form of discourse mediation in which translation choices can influence the representation of political actors, national identities, institutional relations, and ideological positions (Du & Chen, 2022; Valdeón & Li, 2024).

Corpus-based research has provided important evidence for this perspective. Li and Pan (2021) show that English translations of Chinese political discourse can contribute to the construction of a particular national image for international readers. Their study demonstrates that translation participates in political communication rather than simply reproducing an existing message in another language. Similar observations emerge from research into specific linguistic features. Changes in pronoun use, for example, may affect the representation of political agency, solidarity, and relationships between speakers and audiences (Phanthaphoommee & Munday,

2024). Modality can likewise influence how commitment, obligation, certainty, and ideological positioning are communicated in translated political texts (Du & Afzaal, 2024).

These findings raise a further question that remains insufficiently explored: what happens to political intent when the linguistic realization of a political expression changes in translation? Identifying a translation shift is only the first step. The more consequential question concerns its communicative effect. A shift may weaken an aspect of the source meaning, but it may also make the political message more accessible, institutionally appropriate, or rhetorically effective for the target audience. The same linguistic operation can therefore produce different pragmatic consequences depending on the communicative circumstances.

This distinction is particularly relevant to Uzbek-English political translation. Compared with Chinese-English and several European language combinations, Uzbek-English political discourse has received relatively limited attention in international translation research. Recent Uzbek scholarship has begun to examine communicative strategies in translated political texts, drawing attention to the relationship between political meaning and translation choices (Mamarasulova, 2026). However, the way political intent itself is reconstructed across different communicative settings remains underexplored.

The present study addresses this gap by examining the English translation of selected presidential speeches delivered by Shavkat Mirziyoyev. Rather than reproducing a strategy-based classification used in earlier work, the study places political intent at the centre of analysis. Political intent is understood here as the communicative orientation of a political utterance: the purpose for which an expression is used within a particular political and rhetorical situation. It may involve expressing commitment, asserting authority,

building solidarity, demonstrating respect, appealing to shared values, or presenting a national position to an international audience.

This approach also requires a distinction between political intent and propositional meaning. The propositional content of an utterance may remain unchanged while its interpersonal or institutional force changes in translation. The reverse is also possible. A translator may modify the wording substantially while retaining the source speaker's communicative purpose. Political translation should therefore be assessed not only by asking whether the same information has been transferred, but also by examining whether the target text performs a comparable communicative function.

The importance of context becomes particularly clear in presidential discourse. A speech addressed to citizens, a commemorative address directed towards veterans and their families, and a statement delivered before the United Nations do not create identical communicative conditions. Expressions of respect, authority, solidarity, or responsibility may require different linguistic realizations in these settings. International political communication, in particular, operates within institutional conventions that may encourage formulations different from those normally used in domestic discourse. Recent studies of political translation similarly emphasize the role of institutional context and discursive environment in shaping translation decisions (Valdeón & Li, 2024; Zhao & Wang, 2025).

The present research therefore focuses on the relationship between source-text intent, translation choice, and target-context effect. Selected expressions from Uzbek presidential speeches are compared with their official English counterparts, with attention to cases in which the translation preserves the original political orientation, modifies its realization, or introduces a shift in communicative force. The analysis considers expressions associated with authority and responsibility, solidarity,

evaluation, commitment, respect, national identity, and diplomatic positioning.

The study is guided by three research questions:

1. How is political intent represented in the English translations of Uzbek presidential speeches?
2. What types of translation shifts occur when politically and culturally meaningful expressions are transferred from Uzbek into English?
3. How do target-audience and institutional context influence the preservation or modification of political intent?

The study contributes to the field in two respects. Empirically, it adds evidence from the relatively underexamined Uzbek-English language pair and focuses on presidential discourse across different communicative settings. Analytically, it shifts attention from the classification of translation procedures to the relationship between translation choices and political intention. This makes it possible to distinguish a change in linguistic form from a change in communicative purpose.

Theoretical framework

Political translation involves more than transferring propositional meaning between languages. Political utterances are shaped by their communicative setting, intended audience, institutional relationships, and ideological context. A translation may therefore remain factually accurate while altering the degree of authority, solidarity, respect, commitment, or evaluation conveyed by the source. Political translation is increasingly understood as a form of discourse mediation in which translation choices can influence the representation of political actors, identities, and national positions (Du & Chen, 2022; Valdeón & Li, 2024).

In this study, political intent refers to the communicative orientation of a political utterance, or what the speaker seeks to accomplish through a particular expression in a particular context. It may involve asserting authority, expressing commitment,

demonstrating respect, establishing solidarity, legitimizing action, or presenting a national position. Political intent is therefore examined through the interaction of linguistic form, immediate discourse context, and communicative situation rather than as an independently observable intention.

The study distinguishes translation shifts from pragmatic shifts. A translation shift is any observable difference between the Uzbek source and English target expressions, whereas a pragmatic shift occurs when such a difference affects communicative function or political force. This distinction is important because formal modification does not necessarily result in pragmatic loss. Research on political discourse shows, for example, that changes in pronouns may influence agency and solidarity (Phanthaphoommee & Munday, 2024), while changes in modality can affect commitment and ideological positioning (Du & Afzaal, 2024).

Context is particularly important when political discourse is translated for international audiences. Li and Pan (2021) demonstrate that English translations of political discourse can reshape the representation of national identity and political positions. Similarly, Valdeón and Li (2024) emphasize the role of institutional and contextual factors in contemporary political translation. For Uzbek presidential discourse, this issue is especially relevant because domestic political expressions may acquire a different communicative environment when presented to international readers.

The framework therefore considers three possible relationships between source and target intent: preservation, negotiation, and modification. Preservation occurs when the target expression performs substantially the same political function. Negotiation involves adaptation to target-language, cultural, or institutional conventions while retaining the principal political orientation. Modification occurs when the target formulation changes an identifiable aspect of the source's political or interpersonal force. These categories provide an analytical basis for examining how

political intent travels between Uzbek and English without reducing translation to a simple opposition between literalness and freedom.

Methodology

The study employs a qualitative comparative approach to examine how political intent is conveyed in the English translations of Uzbek presidential speeches. The empirical material consists of selected Uzbek speeches by Shavkat Mirziyoyev and their official English versions. The texts represent different communicative settings, including domestic political communication, commemorative discourse, and international diplomatic communication. This selection makes it possible to examine how translation choices respond to differences in audience, institutional context, and communicative purpose.

The analysis focuses on 50 selected source-target segments in which political intent is particularly visible. The segments were identified according to their relevance to such functions as expressing authority and responsibility, establishing solidarity, conveying respect, evaluating political developments, expressing commitment, constructing national identity, and presenting diplomatic positions. The purpose of selection was not to quantify all translation phenomena, but to examine cases in which a change in linguistic form could potentially affect political meaning or communicative force.

Each segment was examined comparatively in four stages. First, the Uzbek source expression was interpreted within its immediate discourse context. Second, its official English counterpart was examined to identify the relevant translation shift. Third, the communicative function of the source and target expressions was compared, with attention to audience and institutional context. Finally, the translation was assessed according to whether political intent was preserved, negotiated, or modified.

The analysis combines textual comparison with pragmatic interpretation.

Particular attention is given to culturally marked expressions, forms of address, evaluative language, modality, pronouns, expressions of commitment, and diplomatic formulations. This focus reflects the observation that apparently small linguistic changes can affect political positioning and interpersonal meaning in translation (Phanthaphoommee & Munday, 2024; Du & Afzaal, 2024).

The study does not treat formal difference as evidence of translation failure. Instead, a translation shift is considered significant only when it produces a recognizable change in communicative function or political force. This allows the analysis to distinguish necessary target-language reformulation from genuine pragmatic modification. The resulting interpretation is therefore based on the relationship between source expression, translation choice, communicative context, and political effect, rather than on lexical correspondence alone.

The quantitative information derived from the selected material is used only descriptively. It supports the identification of recurring tendencies but is not presented as statistically representative of all Uzbek-English political translation. This methodological limitation is deliberate: the principal aim is to explain how political intent is reconstructed in context and to identify the conditions under which linguistic reformulation contributes to, or potentially alters, that intent.

Results and Analysis

The comparison of the Uzbek source texts with their official English translations reveals that political intent is generally maintained, although its linguistic realization often changes. The most significant shifts occur where an expression carries interpersonal, cultural, evaluative, or institutional meaning that cannot be transferred effectively through direct lexical correspondence. In these cases, the English version tends to reproduce the communicative purpose of the original while

adjusting its form to the expectations of the target audience.

One clear example is the Uzbek expression "qarz ham, farz", used in a statement concerning the country's responsibility to its people. Its English translation, "duty and sacred obligation," does not reproduce the metaphorical structure literally. Instead, it makes the underlying moral responsibility explicit for an English-speaking audience. The shift from the culturally embedded Uzbek formulation to a more transparent English expression preserves the normative force of the original while reducing the cultural opacity of the metaphor. This is a case of functional reformulation rather than simple lexical substitution.

Forms of address provide another important area of change. In the United Nations speech, "Janobi Oliylari!" is rendered as "Dear Mr. Chairman!". The Uzbek expression functions as a highly respectful honorific, whereas the English formulation combines politeness with explicit recognition of the institutional role of the addressee. The target expression is therefore shaped by the diplomatic environment in which the speech is delivered. The translation does not reproduce the source form, but it retains its central interpersonal purpose: establishing a respectful relationship with the person presiding over the international session.

A comparable tendency can be observed in expressions directed towards specific social groups. "Muhtaram faxriylar!" is translated as "Esteemed veterans!". Here the adjective *esteemed* effectively reproduces the respectful evaluation expressed by *muhtaram*, while *veterans* provides a concise and institutionally natural English designation. The translation remains close to the communicative intention of the original despite minor differences in linguistic realization.

Evaluative and policy-oriented expressions demonstrate a somewhat different pattern. In some cases, the English version makes the political force of the source more

explicit. For example, the Uzbek expression “ta’sirchan choralar ko’rildi” is rendered as “we have taken effective measures to eradicate...”. The target text not only preserves the positive evaluation of the measures but places it within a more explicit policy formulation. The English version consequently presents the action in a manner that is readily interpretable within international political discourse. Such reformulation can strengthen the target text’s policy-oriented clarity without necessarily changing the underlying political position.

Condensation represents the opposite tendency. Some Uzbek expressions contain lexical elements that are not required for an equivalent English formulation. In these cases, the translation may be shorter while retaining the central communicative meaning. The expression “hayotga izchil joriy etilmoqda”, for example, is translated as “being put into practice.” The English version omits the explicit lexical realization of *izchil*, yet the resulting formulation remains sufficiently clear in context. The example demonstrates that reduction in linguistic material does not automatically imply a corresponding reduction in political meaning.

The examples collectively indicate that political intent is frequently preserved through functional rather than formal equivalence. This finding corresponds with research showing that political translation can reshape linguistic realization while maintaining broader communicative or representational purposes (Li & Pan, 2021). The target text is consequently better understood as a reconstruction of political communication for a different linguistic audience than as a word-for-word reproduction of the source.

The analysis also reveals that context determines the significance of a translation shift. The transformation of an honorific in an international speech cannot be interpreted in exactly the same way as the translation of a culturally marked expression in a domestic address. In the first case, institutional protocol

is particularly influential; in the second, cultural accessibility may be more important. This supports the view that political translation is strongly conditioned by the communicative environment in which the target text will operate (Valdeón & Li, 2024).

The findings further suggest that political intent has several interconnected dimensions. Authority is conveyed through formulations of responsibility and institutional position; solidarity through inclusive references and appeals to shared values; evaluation through positive or negative characterization; commitment through modal and policy-oriented expressions; and respect through forms of address and honorific language. These dimensions do not always remain linguistically identical in translation. Their persistence depends on whether the target formulation continues to perform the relevant communicative function.

This observation is particularly important for modality and interpersonal meaning. Political statements frequently communicate degrees of obligation, certainty, and commitment rather than simply describing events. Changes in modal expression can therefore influence how a political position is perceived by the target audience (Du & Afzaal, 2024). Similarly, shifts in pronouns or references to political actors can modify perceptions of agency and solidarity (Phanthaphoommee & Munday, 2024). The Uzbek-English material confirms the broader relevance of these features while showing that their interpretation must remain connected to the specific discourse context.

Across the selected material, three broad tendencies emerge. First, political intent is most stable when the target text preserves the function of the source expression. Second, translation shifts become more pronounced when cultural or institutional differences intervene. Third, target-oriented reformulation can support rather than undermine pragmatic continuity. These tendencies suggest that translation choices should be interpreted in

relation to the communicative conditions of the target text.

The results are also consistent with the wider understanding of political translation as a mediated practice. Contemporary studies emphasize that political texts do not circulate independently of institutional and discursive frameworks (Du & Chen, 2022; Zhao & Wang, 2025). The English translations examined here similarly function within an international communicative environment in which clarity, diplomatic appropriateness, and recognizability can influence how the source message is reconstructed.

The central finding, therefore, is that political intent is more resilient than linguistic form. Expressions may be adapted, condensed, reformulated, or institutionally recontextualized without necessarily losing their principal political function. At the same time, translation can introduce subtle changes in interpersonal force, evaluation, or positioning. A meaningful assessment of political translation must consequently examine both sides of the process: what the translator changes and what remains communicatively intact.

Discussion

The findings suggest that political intent should be treated as a dynamic communicative property rather than as a fixed component of the source text. The English translations examined in this study frequently depart from the linguistic form of the Uzbek originals, yet these departures do not necessarily weaken the political message. In many cases, reformulation appears to be the mechanism through which the intended meaning remains effective in a different linguistic and communicative environment.

This observation is consistent with the broader shift in political translation research from formal equivalence toward discourse-based analysis. Du and Chen (2022) identify political translation as an increasingly interdisciplinary field in which translation interacts with political discourse, ideology, and

mediation. The present findings add a more specific dimension to this discussion by showing that the preservation of political intent depends on how individual expressions function within their communicative setting.

The distinction between formal change and pragmatic change is particularly important. A translator may replace a culturally specific expression with a more transparent English formulation without changing its fundamental political purpose. The translation of *qarz ham, farz as duty and sacred obligation* illustrates this process. The metaphorical structure changes, but the underlying idea of responsibility remains prominent. The translation consequently moves away from formal correspondence in order to make the normative force of the source more accessible to the target audience.

The same principle applies to institutional language. The rendering of *Janobi Oliylari!* as *Dear Mr. Chairman!* demonstrates how diplomatic context can influence translation choices. The English expression does not reproduce the Uzbek honorific literally. Instead, it combines respectful address with explicit recognition of the institutional position of the addressee. This supports the argument that political translation is partly an exercise in contextual negotiation. The translator must consider not only what an expression means but also how it is conventionally used in the target political environment (Valdeón & Li, 2024).

The findings therefore complicate the traditional distinction between faithful and free translation. If faithfulness is defined exclusively through lexical or structural similarity, several of the translations examined here might appear to involve substantial departures from the source. If, however, faithfulness is evaluated through communicative purpose, the same choices can be interpreted as successful adaptations. Li and Pan (2021) similarly demonstrate that political translation can reshape the presentation of political meaning while contributing to a

coherent representation for target-language audiences.

Another important implication concerns audience design. Presidential speeches may have a primary domestic audience, but their official English versions can reach diplomats, international organizations, researchers, journalists, and foreign governments. The translated text therefore enters a communicative environment that is potentially wider and institutionally different from that of the original. A translator working in this environment may need to clarify culturally embedded references, adjust forms of address, or select internationally recognizable formulations. Such intervention should not automatically be regarded as ideological distortion. In some cases, it may be necessary for the source political intent to remain intelligible.

At the same time, adaptation is not neutral. Any modification of a political expression creates the possibility of changing its interpersonal or ideological force. This is particularly evident in areas such as modality and pronoun use. Changes in modal expressions may affect perceptions of certainty, obligation, or commitment, while changes in pronouns may influence the representation of agency and solidarity (Du & Afzaal, 2024; Phanthaphoommee & Munday, 2024). These observations indicate that political intent should be examined at several levels rather than reduced to a single notion of meaning.

The present study consequently suggests that political intent can be viewed through a set of related dimensions: authority, solidarity, evaluation, commitment, respect, and diplomatic positioning. These dimensions are not independent. A single expression may simultaneously establish respect and authority, or express commitment while reinforcing solidarity. Translation may preserve some dimensions more successfully than others. This helps explain why a target expression can be considered pragmatically successful even when a minor interpersonal nuance is altered.

The findings have a practical implication for translators of presidential and diplomatic discourse. Before selecting a target equivalent, translators should identify the political function of the source expression and consider the target audience and institutional setting. A culturally marked expression may require explanatory reformulation; an honorific may need to follow diplomatic conventions; and a policy statement may require a formulation that makes its degree of commitment immediately recognizable in English. Such decisions should be guided by communicative purpose rather than by an assumption that closer wording is always better.

Conclusion

The study has examined how political intent is reconstructed in the English translations of selected Uzbek presidential speeches. The analysis demonstrates that political meaning is not confined to the lexical or grammatical form of an utterance. It is closely connected to communicative purpose, audience, institutional setting, and the interpersonal relationship established through political language.

The findings show that translation shifts do not necessarily indicate a loss of political meaning. Expressions may be reformulated, condensed, or adapted when direct correspondence would not produce an equally effective message in English. The examples examined in the study demonstrate that such changes can preserve authority, respect, solidarity, evaluation, commitment, and diplomatic positioning even when the linguistic form of the source is not reproduced.

The study also confirms the importance of distinguishing linguistic translation shifts from changes in political intent. A formal difference becomes pragmatically significant only when it affects the communicative force or political orientation of the utterance. This distinction provides a more nuanced basis for evaluating political translation and avoids reducing translation quality to lexical similarity.

For Uzbek-English translation, the findings highlight the importance of contextual awareness. Presidential discourse often contains culturally and institutionally marked expressions whose effective translation requires consideration of the target audience and communicative environment. Translators therefore need to identify the political function of an expression before selecting its English formulation. This is particularly important when Uzbek political discourse is transferred into international diplomatic communication.

The study contributes to research on political translation by placing political intent at the centre of the source-target relationship. It shows that successful translation is not necessarily the reproduction of identical linguistic forms, but the reconstruction of communicative purpose in a new discourse environment. Further research based on a larger longitudinal corpus could examine how political intent is negotiated across different periods, policy domains, languages, and international contexts.

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