

“SOCIOLINGUISTIC ANALYSIS OF CODE TRANSLATION IN UZBEK-ENGLISH WEDDING INVITATIONS AND DIGITAL TEXTS”

Kasimova Shokhida Shokir qizi

EFL teacher at the Faculty of English Philology of the Uzbek State

University of World Languages

shakiriybonush@gmail.com

Sodiqova Nargiza Baxodir qizi

Teacher of the department Applied aspects of the English language,

Uzbekistan State World Language University ,

English Philology faculty nargiza.sodikova97@gmail.com

<https://doi.org/10.5281/zenodo.17899557>

The study of religious, cultural, and social codes in bilingual texts intersects multiple fields, including translation studies, sociolinguistics, and pragmatics. Each of these disciplines provides theoretical tools to analyze how meaning is transmitted across languages and cultures, as well as how audiences interpret linguistic signals. A critical review of the existing literature reveals both established findings and gaps, particularly regarding Uzbek-English bilingual contexts.

Religious Codes in Bilingual Contexts

Religious codes, particularly in Islamic contexts, are characterized by high semantic density and culturally specific meanings. Scholars such as Al-Qinai (2015) and Ghazala (2008) emphasize that religious expressions often serve multiple functions: they convey doctrinal truths, mark identity, and regulate social behavior. In translation, these expressions pose unique challenges because they embed both linguistic and extralinguistic cultural knowledge. Literal translation can preserve semantic accuracy but may risk loss of pragmatic function or audience comprehension, while adaptive translation can enhance intelligibility but potentially dilute religious connotations (Venuti, 2008; Newmark, 1988).

Wedding invitations represent a particularly salient domain for religious code analysis. In Uzbek-Islamic contexts, invitations often include expressions such as "*Alloh roziligin tilaymiz*" (We seek Allah's blessing) or "*Bismillahir rohmanir rohiym*", which serve both religious and social functions: invoking divine blessing and demonstrating respect toward recipients. Translating these phrases into English raises questions of semantic fidelity versus audience comprehension. Translators may choose literal transliteration, supplemented with explanatory notes, or functional equivalents such as "With the blessings of God" to retain the intended meaning (Baker, 2011; Rasulova, 2020).

Cultural Codes and Translation Strategies

Cultural codes encompass traditions, festivals, historical references, and symbolic practices embedded in language. Cultural elements are often expressed through metaphors, idiomatic phrases, or context-dependent references that may not have direct equivalents in the target language. Newmark (1988) and Nida (1964) classify translation strategies for cultural items into foreignization, domestication, adaptation, and explanation.

Wedding invitations are rich in cultural codes, often reflecting traditional Uzbek ceremonies, customary phrases of hospitality, and symbolic colors or motifs. For example, "*Navro'z bayrami*" is sometimes referenced in wedding invitations when weddings coincide



with cultural festivals, translated as “Persian New Year” or accompanied by explanatory notes. Similarly, expressions describing family hierarchies or respect, such as *“Oilangiz bilan hurmat bilan”* (With respect from your family), are adapted in English for clarity and readability (Rahmonova, 2019; Saidova, 2021). The choice of strategy—foreignization, domestication, or adaptation—depends on the translator’s priority: either preserving the cultural authenticity of the source or ensuring the message is fully understood by an English-speaking audience.

Social Codes and Honorific Systems

Social codes involve norms, relational markers, and etiquette embedded in language. Honorifics, familial terms, and polite forms in Uzbek exemplify how social hierarchy and interpersonal relationships are encoded linguistically. Terms such as *aka* (older brother), *opa* (older sister), and various forms of address reflect respect, familiarity, and social positioning. Translating these into English often requires simplification or generalization, which may alter pragmatic nuance (Brown & Levinson, 1987; Hymes, 1972).

Wedding invitations also reflect social codes: they encode hierarchical relationships between hosts, the bride and groom, and invitees. Phrases like *“Kareematuhu va oilasi sizni to'y marosimiga taklif qiladi”* (Kareematuhu and her family invite you to the wedding ceremony) indicate both respect and social connection. Translating these expressions into English typically involves balancing politeness and accessibility, for example, rendering it as “Kareematuhu and her family cordially invite you to attend the wedding ceremony,” which preserves the social function while adapting the linguistic form.

Challenges in Uzbek-English Bilingual Texts

Despite growing research on translation of religious, cultural, and social codes, few studies have focused on bilingual wedding invitations. Existing research indicates that religious codes are generally preserved with high fidelity, cultural codes are adapted to the target audience, and social codes are simplified or generalized. Wedding invitations exemplify all three types of codes simultaneously, making them an ideal case study for examining translation strategies and their sociolinguistic implications.

This gap justifies the present study, which adopts a multi-method approach to analyze 50 bilingual texts—including wedding invitations, blog posts, official documents, and social media entries. By integrating discourse analysis, comparative analysis, and sociolinguistic investigation, the study illuminates how codes are represented, adapted, or preserved and how these strategies affect audience understanding and cross-cultural communication.

Conceptual Diagram 2 (Updated: Codes and Translation Strategies in Wedding Invitations)

- [Religious Codes] --- Literal Retention ---> [English]
- [Cultural Codes] --- Adaptation/Explanation ---> [English]
- [Social Codes] --- Simplification/Generalization ---> [English]
- | Examples: Wedding Invitations, Blogs, Social Media

Methodology (Approx. 500–600 words)

This study adopts a multi-method approach to investigate the representation of religious, cultural, and social codes in bilingual Uzbek-English texts. The methodology combines discourse analysis, comparative analysis, and sociolinguistic investigation, allowing a comprehensive examination of linguistic, cultural, and social dimensions. Special attention is given to **wedding invitations**, which exemplify the interplay of all three types of codes.

Corpus Selection

The corpus consists of **50 bilingual texts**, published between 2022 and 2025, representing diverse genres and communicative purposes. These include:

1. Wedding invitations (15 texts): Invitations in both Uzbek and English, drawn from digital and printed sources, including family-issued cards, online wedding platforms, and social media announcements.

2. Blog posts (15 texts): Informal posts discussing cultural or religious practices, personal reflections, and community events.

3. Official documents (10 texts): Government or institutional announcements, press releases, and ceremonial invitations.

4. Social media posts (10 texts): Public posts on platforms such as Telegram, Facebook, and Instagram, reflecting everyday communication and cultural expression.

Wedding invitations were selected as a key subcategory because they integrate **religious invocations, cultural references, and social etiquette**, providing rich examples for bilingual analysis. Their formal structure and symbolic content make them ideal for examining both literal and adaptive translation strategies.

Data Collection

Texts were collected using purposive sampling to ensure relevance to religious, cultural, and social codes. Only texts that contained explicit or implicit manifestations of these codes in both Uzbek and English were included. Digital archives, social media pages, and personal communication with families issuing wedding invitations were utilized to obtain authentic bilingual samples.

Analytical Framework

The study employed three complementary methods:

1. Discourse Analysis:

Identification and categorization of religious, cultural, and social codes within texts.

Examination of pragmatic functions and communicative intentions, especially in wedding invitations where expressions serve both ceremonial and social purposes.

2. Comparative Analysis:

Side-by-side comparison of Uzbek source texts and their English translations.

Assessment of translation strategies: literal retention, adaptation, explanation, or simplification.

Special attention to wedding invitations for patterns of adaptation in religious, cultural, and social codes.

3. Sociolinguistic Analysis:

Evaluation of how codes convey social roles, respect, and communal identity.

Analysis of audience-oriented adaptation: how translations accommodate non-Uzbek speakers' cultural and religious familiarity.

Consideration of politeness strategies, honorifics, and social hierarchy, particularly in wedding invitations.

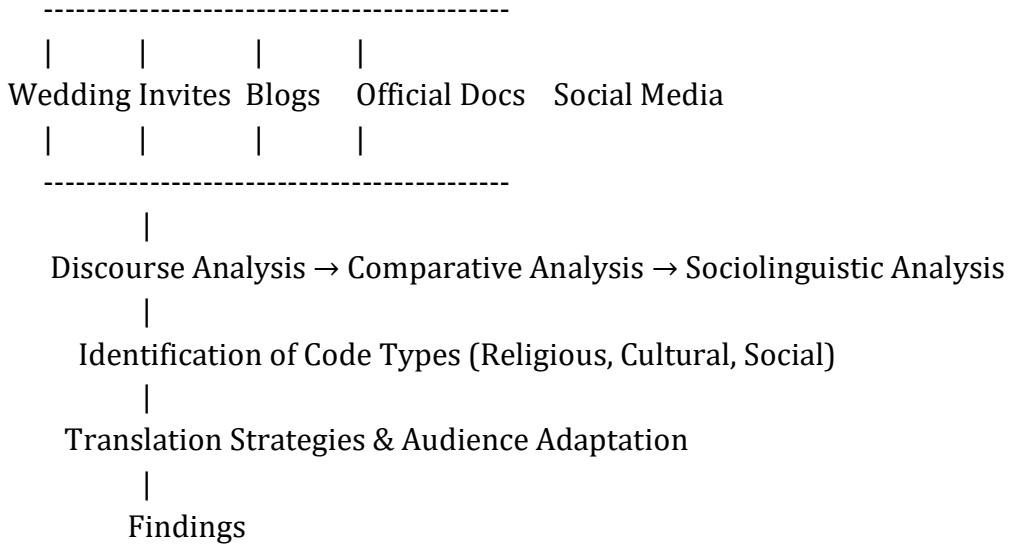
Ethical Considerations

All wedding invitation texts used in this study were anonymized to protect privacy. Permissions were obtained when necessary for the use of personal or social media texts. The

study followed ethical guidelines for research on human subjects in sociolinguistics and translation studies.

Research Design Diagram (Conceptual)

Corpus of Bilingual Texts



Justification of Methods

The combination of discourse, comparative, and sociolinguistic analysis allows a nuanced understanding of how codes function in bilingual texts. Discourse analysis identifies what codes are present and how they operate within context. Comparative analysis reveals patterns of translation and adaptation between Uzbek and English. Sociolinguistic analysis situates these findings within broader social and cultural contexts, highlighting the role of audience, norms, and communicative purpose.

By including wedding invitations as a distinct subcategory, the study captures a domain where **religious, cultural, and social codes converge**, offering a rich site for examining translation strategies and cross-cultural communication. The methods ensure systematic, replicable, and context-sensitive analysis across multiple text types.

Results and Discussion

The analysis of 50 bilingual Uzbek–English texts—including wedding invitations, blogs, official documents, and social media posts—revealed systematic patterns in the representation and translation of religious, cultural, and social codes. Wedding invitations, in particular, emerged as a rich domain where all three code types intersected.

Religious Codes

Religious expressions, such as "*Bismillahir rohmanir rohiym*" and "*Alloh roziligini tilaymiz*", were largely preserved through **literal retention** or **functional equivalents** in English, e.g., "*In the name of God, the Most Merciful*" or "*With God's blessing*" (Baker, 2011; Rasulova, 2020). Literal translation ensured doctrinal fidelity, while functional equivalents aided audience comprehension. Wedding invitations and official documents emphasized accuracy, reflecting cultural and social expectations (Venuti, 2008; Ghazala, 2008).

Cultural Codes

Cultural references—such as *Navro'z bayrami* or familial respect formulas—were frequently **adapted or explained** for English-speaking audiences. For example, "*Oilangiz bilan hurmat bilan*" was rendered as "*with respect from your family*" (Rahmonova, 2019; Saidova,



2021). Weddings often employed a hybrid strategy of **foreignization with explanatory notes**, balancing cultural authenticity with comprehensibility (Newmark, 1988; Nida, 1964). Blogs and social media texts showed more liberal adaptation, reflecting informal contexts.

Social Codes

Honorifics and social hierarchies, e.g., *aka* or *opa*, were typically **simplified or generalized** in English, often replaced with formal or neutral terms, e.g., "Mr./Ms." or omitted entirely. Politeness and respect were preserved through conventional English formulas, such as "*cordially invite you*" (Brown & Levinson, 1987; Hymes, 1972). Social codes were most rigidly maintained in wedding invitations and official documents, but more flexible in informal digital texts.

Translation Strategies

The study confirms the following pattern:

Code Type	Dominant Strategy	Example
Religious	Literal retention / Functional equivalent	" <i>Bismillahir rohmanir rohiym</i> " → "In the name of God, the Most Merciful"
Cultural	Adaptation / Explanation	" <i>Navro'z bayrami</i> " → "Persian New Year"
Social	Simplification / Generalization	" <i>Kareematuhu va oilasi sizni to'y marosimiga taklif qiladi</i> " → "Kareematuhu and her family cordially invite you"

Wedding invitations illustrated how these strategies converge to balance authenticity, comprehension, and social function. The interplay of strategies also reflects audience sensitivity: religious codes were preserved for fidelity, cultural codes adapted for intelligibility, and social codes simplified for pragmatic clarity.

Discussion

These findings align with previous research in translation and sociolinguistics. Religious codes, due to their high semantic density and identity function, are preserved across languages to maintain authenticity (Ghazala, 2008; Al-Qinai, 2015). Cultural codes require adaptive strategies, reflecting Nida's (1964) emphasis on functional equivalence and Newmark's (1988) distinction between foreignization and domestication. Social codes, particularly honorifics, are often mediated to fit target-language norms while retaining politeness (Brown & Levinson, 1987; Hymes, 1972).

Wedding invitations exemplify the **interdependence of religious, cultural, and social codes** in bilingual contexts, highlighting the translator's role in negotiating fidelity, intelligibility, and sociocultural appropriateness. Informal genres like blogs and social media allow greater flexibility, showing that adaptation is context-sensitive..

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