



USAGE OF GRAMMATICAL TRANSFORMATION TRANSLATING THE TEXT FROM ENGLISH INTO TURKMEN

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Abstract

The article examines the application of grammatical transformations in the process of translating texts from English into Turkmen. Special attention is given to the structural, functional, and semantic specifics of both languages, which determine the necessity of transformations during the translation process. English and Turkmen differ significantly in grammatical structure, typological organization, sentence formation, syntactic hierarchy, and morphological patterns. Because of these differences, translators must rely not only on semantic equivalence but also on various grammatical transformations, including transposition, substitution, modulation, expansion, compression, and syntactic restructuring.

The research emphasizes that grammatical transformations are not auxiliary tools but constitute an essential component of translation competence. They allow the translator to convey the deep meaning of the original text while respecting the grammatical norms, stylistic expectations, and natural flow of the target language. The article additionally analyzes how Turkmen and English grammar diverge in terms of word order, verbal categories, tense-aspect relations, case marking, and syntactic dependency, which leads to the need for adaptive transformations.

Examples, theoretical insights, and linguistic explanations demonstrate that successful translation between English and Turkmen relies on a complex interaction between grammatical structure, context, and communicative purpose. The study highlights that grammatical transformations not only help preserve meaning but also ensure the naturalness, clarity, and expressiveness of the translated text.

Keywords: grammatical transformation, English–Turkmen translation, transposition, modulation, substitution, syntactic restructuring, linguistic equivalence.

Introduction

Translation between English and Turkmen presents a unique linguistic challenge because the two languages belong to different typological groups.

English is an analytical Indo-European language with a relatively fixed word order, a well-developed system of auxiliary verbs, and a tendency toward syntactic precision rather than rich morphology. Turkmen, by contrast, is an agglutinative Turkic language with productive suffixation, flexible constituent order, and a syntactic system governed by case marking and postpositional structures. These typological differences determine the translator's need to apply grammatical transformations to bridge the structural gap between the two languages.

The introduction of grammatical transformations into translation theory is rooted in the works of V. Komissarov, L. Barkhudarov, and A. Shveitser, who emphasized structural and functional differences between languages as the primary motivation for transformative operations. When translating from English into Turkmen, grammatical transformations become especially important because literal reproduction of English structures often leads to semantic distortions, stylistic awkwardness, or violations of Turkmen grammatical norms. The translator must therefore balance fidelity to the original with the naturalness and clarity expected in the target language.

Understanding the grammatical contrasts between English and Turkmen—such as differences in sentence structure, verb forms, modality, the expression of possession, definiteness, plurality, and word order—is the foundation for effective translation practice. This article explores these contrasts in depth and explains how transformations help overcome them.

Theoretical Foundations of Grammatical Transformation

The concept of grammatical transformation refers to intentional changes of structural patterns when transferring a message from one language to another. These transformations do not alter the essential meaning but reorganize grammatical forms to achieve proper equivalence. In translation from English into Turkmen, grammatical transformations become not only a theoretical construct but a practical necessity, since direct, structure-by-structure transfer is frequently impossible.

Transformations compensate for the asymmetry of grammatical categories. English distinguishes several tense–aspect forms, while Turkmen relies on different combinations of affixes to express temporal nuance, modality, and speaker attitude. English uses prepositions to show syntactic relations, whereas Turkmen uses cases and postpositions. English expresses possession with the verb “to have,” while Turkmen uses existential and locative-possessive constructions. These mismatches require the translator to choose transformations appropriate for each linguistic situation.

The theoretical basis of grammatical transformation also includes the idea that grammar is inseparable from meaning. Even when the translator preserves the lexical content of the original, the structural form influences the interpretation. Therefore, transformations serve not only to adjust the grammar but also to maintain semantic accuracy and stylistic appropriateness.

Structural Divergence and the Necessity of Transformation

Structural divergence between English and Turkmen represents one of the most decisive factors compelling translators to apply grammatical transformations. The two languages belong to fundamentally different typological systems, and the way they organize syntactic relations, express grammatical categories, encode meaning, and distribute information in a sentence diverges so substantially that literal translation becomes impossible in most communicative contexts. For this reason, structural differences must be viewed not as minor obstacles but as core linguistic realities shaping every step of the translation process.

English adheres to a relatively rigid SVO (subject–verb–object) word order, a characteristic typical of analytical languages that rely heavily on syntactic arrangement to convey grammatical meaning. Deviations from the standard SVO pattern in English usually carry stylistic or emphatic significance and are limited by grammatical constraints. In contrast, Turkmen, as an agglutinative Turkic language, operates with a more flexible but structurally motivated SOV (subject–object–verb) order. Since the verb consistently appears at the end of the clause, the informational flow is organized differently, with a natural progression toward the verbal nucleus. As a consequence, translators must routinely perform sentence-wide restructuring, shifting the predicate to the final position and adjusting the placement of adverbial and nominal elements to reflect Turkmen syntactic logic. This reorganization extends beyond simple word order changes; it often requires reinterpretation of clause hierarchy, redistribution of emphasis, and modification of logical sequencing.

Another significant area of structural divergence arises from the way grammatical relations are expressed. English depends on prepositions to indicate spatial, temporal, and logical connections — "in the room," "for the student," "with the teacher." These prepositional structures, while compact and semantically transparent, do not have direct equivalents in Turkmen. Instead, Turkmen employs a system of case endings and postpositions to encode the same relationships. The translator must therefore engage in systematic substitution, replacing prepositional phrases with appropriate case forms — dative, locative, ablative — often accompanied by postpositions where needed. This transformation changes not only the form but sometimes the syntactic weight and rhythm of the sentence, requiring careful adjustment to preserve semantic accuracy and stylistic naturalness.

The lack of articles in Turkmen adds another dimension to structural asymmetry. English uses definite and indefinite articles to mark referential specificity: "a book" versus "the book." Turkmen does not have grammatical articles, and the distinction between definite and indefinite reference is achieved through contextual inference, optional lexical markers, or syntactic emphasis. To convey definiteness accurately, translators may need to introduce lexical additions, adjust word order, or use clarifying modifiers. Conversely, when translating from English, the translator must determine whether an article's referential function is essential or stylistically redundant in Turkmen, a decision that requires both linguistic sensitivity and contextual awareness.

Tense and aspect represent another major structural divergence. English distinguishes a wide range of tense–aspect forms — progressive, perfect, perfect progressive — formed with auxiliary verbs “to be” and “to have.” These forms encode temporal relationships, duration, completeness, and relevance to the present moment. Turkmen, however, expresses comparable meanings through single verb forms enriched with suffixal morphology and modality markers. As a result, translating English continuous or perfect constructions into Turkmen often cannot follow a literal grammatical pattern. Instead, translators rely on modulation, reinterpreting the temporal meaning and converting it into a form that reflects Turkmen verbal logic while retaining the original semantic nuance. For example, continuous aspect is commonly conveyed through contextual interpretation rather than a direct morphological counterpart, and perfect meaning may require rephrasing with temporal adverbs or verbal affixes indicating completion or experiential relevance.

In addition, English employs complex predicate structures with auxiliary verbs, participles, and infinitives to express fine shades of meaning. Turkmen predicates, however, are generally morphologically unified and rarely incorporate multiple lexical components within a single verbal phrase. This structural mismatch creates additional necessity for transformation, requiring the translator to condense or expand verbal constructions, reorganize clause structure, or convert compound forms into simpler but semantically aligned Turkmen equivalents.

These numerous structural asymmetries demonstrate that translation from English into Turkmen is inherently transformative. The translator must constantly navigate divergences in syntax, morphology, and grammatical logic, employing a range of structural, functional, and semantic transformations to achieve equivalence. Without such transformations, the translated text would become either unintelligible or stylistically unnatural, underscoring the essential role of grammatical adjustment in cross-linguistic transfer.

Transposition as a Core Transformation in English–Turkmen Translation

Transposition refers to a structural reorganization of sentence elements during translation. When translating from English into Turkmen, transposition becomes the most frequently used transformation because the two languages differ in syntactic alignment.

When translating English sentences that begin with the subject, Turkmen typically preserves this pattern, but the predicate is shifted to the final position. Clauses introduced by conjunctions also undergo transposition: English places subordinate clauses after or before the main clause, whereas Turkmen often places them before the main clause for stylistic naturalness.

Nominal constructions in English, such as “decision making,” “data processing,” or “classroom management,” may require transposition into verbal constructions in Turkmen, since Turkmen tends to express dynamic relations through verbs rather than

noun clusters. This transformation preserves the functional meaning while adjusting the syntactic form to the norms of the target language.

Substitution and the Use of Equivalent Grammatical Forms

Substitution involves replacing an English grammatical structure with a Turkmen form that serves the same communicative purpose. This transformation is essential because some English structures have no direct analogues in Turkmen. Modal verbs such as “might,” “should,” “would,” “could” often require contextual substitution, using Turkmen affixes or auxiliary particles to express modality.

Passive voice also demands substitution. English uses the passive voice frequently, especially in academic writing. Turkmen, however, uses passive forms more sparingly; therefore, translators often substitute passive constructions with active or reflexive structures that sound more natural to a Turkmen reader.

Similarly, English complex object constructions (“I saw him leave”) require substitution with subordinate clauses or altered syntactic forms in Turkmen, because the target language does not use the same structure.

Modulation as Semantic Adjustment in Translation

Modulation allows the translator to adjust grammatical and semantic relationships without altering the overall sense. This transformation becomes necessary when English expresses a relationship indirectly, while Turkmen uses a direct grammatical form, or vice versa.

Temporal modulation is especially important when translating continuous or perfect forms. For instance, the English present perfect often does not map directly onto a single Turkmen tense form and may require rephrasing based on context.

Modulation is also used to preserve idiomatic meaning when literal grammatical equivalence is impossible. English abstract nouns often require modulation into Turkmen verbal or descriptive forms. This preserves naturalness while maintaining meaning.

Syntactic Restructuring when Translating Complex Sentences

Complex sentences require extensive restructuring. English tends to pack information into subordinate clauses, participial phrases, and relative constructions. Turkmen prefers clearer, more linear structures, often expressing relationships through separate sentences or explicit connectors.

Relative clauses in English require restructuring because Turkmen does not use relative pronouns in the same way. Instead, it relies on participial constructions, suffixes, or clause reorganization. Translators must restructure the syntax while preserving the logical sequence of events.

Participial constructions (“having finished,” “speaking frankly,” “given the circumstances”) rarely translate directly into Turkmen and require syntactic expansion or clause restructuring.

Conclusion

The analysis demonstrates that grammatical transformations are intrinsic to successful translation from English into Turkmen. Because the two languages belong to different typological systems and rely on different grammatical mechanisms, transformations serve as the primary tool for achieving equivalence and naturalness. Structural reorganization, substitution, modulation, expansion, and syntactic restructuring allow translators to preserve meaning while adapting grammatical form to the target language. Without these transformations, translation would be either semantically distorted or stylistically unnatural.

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