

TRANSLATION CHALLENGES OF COMMISSIVE SPEECH ACTS IN ENGLISH AND UZBEK DETECTIVE FILM DISCOURSE

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Abstract: *The present study investigates the translation challenges of commissive speech acts in English and Uzbek detective film discourse. Commissive speech acts, including promises, threats, guarantees, and commitments, play a significant role in establishing interpersonal relationships and advancing plot development in detective narratives. The research aims to identify the pragmatic difficulties that arise during the translation of commissive speech acts between English and Uzbek and to examine the strategies used to preserve their illocutionary force. The study is based on a comparative analysis of commissive speech acts extracted from the English detective series Sherlock Holmes and the Uzbek detective series Shaytanat. The research employs pragmatic, discourse, and comparative methods to analyze how promises and threats are translated across languages and cultures. The findings indicate that linguistic and cultural differences often lead to shifts in meaning, loss of pragmatic force, and changes in the communicative intention of the speaker. In particular, implicit threats and culturally bound expressions present significant challenges for translators. The study concludes that achieving pragmatic equivalence is essential for the successful translation of commissive speech acts. Appropriate translation strategies help preserve the communicative function and intended effect of the original utterances in detective film discourse.*

Keywords: *commissive speech acts, translation, pragmatics, detective discourse, promise, threat, Sherlock Holmes, Shaytanat.*

INTRODUCTION

Speech Act Theory has become one of the most influential approaches in modern pragmatics, focusing on language as a form of action rather than merely a means of conveying information. The foundations of this theory were established by J. L. Austin [1] and later developed by John Searle [9], who classified speech acts into several categories, including assertives, directives, commissives, expressives, and declarations [2]. Among these categories, commissive speech acts occupy a special position because they commit the speaker to a future course of action. *Promises, threats, guarantees, and commitments* are common examples of commissive speech acts. Their communicative function extends beyond the transmission of information, as they establish obligations, expectations, and interpersonal relationships between speakers and hearers.

In detective film discourse, commissive speech acts play a crucial role in character development and plot progression. Promises often create trust and cooperation, while threats contribute to tension, conflict, and dramatic development [5]. Therefore, preserving the pragmatic meaning of such utterances during translation is essential for maintaining the communicative effect of the original dialogue. Despite numerous studies on speech acts and translation, limited attention has been paid to the translation of commissive speech acts in English and Uzbek detective film discourse [4]. This study aims to examine the translation challenges of commissive speech acts and identify effective strategies for preserving their illocutionary force in translation. The analysis is based on examples selected from the English detective series *Sherlock Holmes* and the Uzbek detective series *Shaytanat*.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

This study employs a qualitative comparative research design to investigate the translation challenges of commissive speech acts in English and Uzbek detective film discourse. The research focuses on identifying and analyzing promises, threats, commitments, and guarantees as major types of commissive speech acts [3]. The

data were collected from two detective film sources: the British detective series Sherlock Holmes and the Uzbek detective series Shaytanat. These films were selected because both contain a wide range of communicative situations in which characters frequently use commissive speech acts to influence events, establish social relationships, and advance the plot [6]. The selected utterances were transcribed and analyzed using Speech Act Theory proposed by Austin [1] and Searle [9,10]. Particular attention was paid to the illocutionary force of commissive speech acts and the extent to which this force is preserved in translation. The study also applies pragmatic and discourse analysis methods to examine contextual meaning and communicative intentions.

Furthermore, a comparative method was employed to identify similarities and differences in the translation of commissive speech acts between English and Uzbek. The analysis focuses on linguistic, cultural, and pragmatic factors that may affect the successful transfer of meaning from the source language into the target language. The findings are presented through selected examples of promises and threats extracted from both detective series.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Translation of Promise Speech Acts: Promise speech acts constitute one of the most frequent types of commissive utterances in detective film discourse. Their primary function is to establish trust, loyalty, and future commitment between interlocutors [7,8].

An example from the Uzbek detective series “*Shaytanat*” is the following utterance:

“Siz xotirjam bo‘ling, men sizga tog‘man. Umrbod xizmatigingizda bo‘lay.”

Translated into English: *“Rest assured, I will always support you. I will remain at your service for life.”*

In this example, the speaker explicitly commits himself to future loyalty and support. The commissive force is realized through the expressions “*I will always support you*” and “*I will remain at your service.*” The translation successfully conveys the speaker’s commitment; however, the cultural connotations of the Uzbek

phrase “*men sizga tog‘man*” are only partially preserved because the metaphorical meaning associated with protection and reliability is difficult to reproduce fully in English.

A similar example can be observed in “*Sherlock Holmes*”:

“I promise you, I will solve this case.”

The utterance contains an explicit performative verb (“*promise*”), which makes the commissive force clear and direct. Compared with the Uzbek example, the English promise is more straightforward and less culturally dependent, facilitating a more accurate translation.

Translation of Threat Speech Acts

Threats represent a significant subtype of commissive speech acts because they commit the speaker to performing a future action that may negatively affect the hearer. In detective film discourse, threats are frequently employed to establish power relations, create tension, and intensify conflict between characters.

A notable example from the Uzbek detective series “*Shaytanat*” is the utterance:

“Bilasan-ku, bunaqa gaplar kechirilmaydi. Chiq.”

Possible English translation:

“You know such words are not forgiven. Get out.”

This utterance contains an implicit threat rather than a direct one. The speaker does not explicitly state the consequences of the hearer’s actions; however, the warning implies possible punishment. The threatening force is conveyed through contextual meaning rather than lexical markers. During translation, preserving this implicit illocutionary force becomes a challenge because the threat relies heavily on cultural and situational knowledge.

Another example from “*Shaytanat*” demonstrates a stronger commissive intention:

“Ularni kulini ko‘kka sovurib alamimdan chiqmasam, otimni boshqa qo‘yaman.”

English translation:

“If I do not destroy them and take my revenge, I do not deserve my name.”

In this example, the speaker commits himself to future revenge. The utterance combines the functions of a promise and a threat, creating a powerful commissive effect. The translation preserves the general meaning; however, the emotional intensity and cultural expressiveness of the Uzbek original are partially reduced. A comparable example can be found in “*Sherlock Holmes*”:

“If you do not tell me the truth, things will become very difficult for you.”

Unlike the Uzbek examples, this threat is more direct and explicit. The speaker clearly indicates negative future consequences. As a result, the illocutionary force is easier to identify and translate. The comparison suggests that English detective discourse tends to express threats more directly, whereas Uzbek detective discourse frequently employs indirect and culturally nuanced threatening expressions.

Pragmatic Challenges in Translating Commissive Speech Acts

The analysis reveals several pragmatic challenges in translating commissive speech acts between English and Uzbek detective film discourse. First, cultural differences influence the interpretation of promises and threats. Certain expressions in Uzbek contain metaphorical and culturally specific meanings that cannot be transferred directly into English without losing part of their communicative impact. Second, the translation of implicit commissive speech acts presents considerable difficulty. While explicit promises and threats are usually identifiable through grammatical markers such as “*promise*,” “*will*,” or other performative expressions, implicit commissives require contextual interpretation. Failure to recognize these meanings may lead to pragmatic loss. Third, translators often face difficulties in preserving the illocutionary force of the original utterance. In some cases, a strong threat may become weaker in translation, while a culturally significant promise may lose its emotional value.

The findings indicate that successful translation depends not only on linguistic equivalence but also on pragmatic equivalence. Translators should consider cultural context, speaker intention, interpersonal relationships, and discourse functions in order to maintain the communicative effectiveness of commissive speech acts.

CONCLUSION

This study examined the translation challenges of commissive speech acts in English and Uzbek detective film discourse using examples from Sherlock Holmes and Shaytanat. The analysis demonstrated that promises and threats serve as important communicative tools for establishing interpersonal relationships, expressing commitment, and advancing plot development in detective narratives. The findings reveal that the translation of commissive speech acts involves not only linguistic transfer but also the preservation of pragmatic meaning and illocutionary force. Cultural differences, implicit meanings, and context-dependent expressions often create difficulties for translators. In particular, indirect threats and culturally specific promises were found to be more challenging to translate than explicit commissive utterances.

The comparative analysis showed that English detective discourse tends to employ more direct forms of commissive speech acts, whereas Uzbek detective discourse frequently relies on implicit, metaphorical, and culturally embedded expressions. As a result, literal translation may lead to pragmatic loss and reduced communicative impact. Therefore, achieving pragmatic equivalence should be considered a primary objective in the translation of commissive speech acts. Translators should pay careful attention to contextual meaning, speaker intention, and cultural factors in order to preserve the communicative effectiveness of the original discourse. The findings of this study may contribute to future research in pragmatics, discourse analysis, and audiovisual translation studies.

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