

**ТЕОРЕТИЧЕСКАЯ, ПРИКЛАДНАЯ И СРАВНИТЕЛЬНО-СОПОСТАВИТЕЛЬНАЯ
ЛИНГВИСТИКА/THEORETICAL, APPLIED AND COMPARATIVE LINGUISTICS**

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**COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS OF LEXICO-SEMANTIC AND SYNTAX PECULIARITIES OF THE TAJIK
CONJUNCTION *AMMO/BUT* AND ITS ENGLISH EQUIVALENTS**

Research article

Abdukarimova F.S.^{1,*}

¹ Khujand State University, Khujand, Tajikistan

* Corresponding author (firuza.abdukarimova[at]bk.ru)

Abstract

The given article dwells on the comparative analysis of lexico-semantic and syntax peculiarities of the Tajik conjunction *аммо* and its primary English equivalent *but*. The primary textual source for Tajik is the novel “*Gholomon*” (“The Slaves”) by Sadreddin Ayni, with excerpts compared against their professional English translations. The analysis, framed within the theoretical perspectives of contrastive linguistics and translation studies, reveals that while *аммо* and *but* share a core adversative function, they exhibit significant divergences in frequency, semantic scope, syntactic flexibility, and discourse-pragmatic roles. The English *but* shows greater integration into contracted and complex syntactic structures. References are drawn from recent scholarly works to contextualize the findings within contemporary linguistic discourse.

Keywords: contrastive linguistics, Tajik and English languages, adversative conjunction, syntax, semantics, translation.

**СРАВНИТЕЛЬНЫЙ АНАЛИЗ ЛЕКСИКО-СЕМАТИЧЕСКИХ И СИНТАКСИЧЕСКИХ ОСОБЕННОСТЕЙ
ТАДЖИКСКОГО СОЮЗА *АММО/BUT* И ЕГО АНГЛИЙСКИХ ЭКВИВАЛЕНТОВ**

Научная статья

Абдукаримова Ф.Ш.^{1,*}

¹ Худжандский государственный университет имени академика Бободжана Гафурова, Худжанд, Таджикистан

* Корреспондирующий автор (firuza.abdukarimova[at]bk.ru)

Аннотация

В данной статье рассматривается сравнительный анализ лексико-сематических и синтаксических особенностей таджикского союза *аммо* и его основного английского эквивалента *but*. Первичным текстовым источником по таджикскому языку является роман «*Гуломон*» («Рабы») Садриддина Айни, отрывки из которого сравниваются с их профессиональными английскими переводами. Анализ, проведенный в рамках теоретических перспектив контрастивной лингвистики и переводоведения, показывает, что, хотя *аммо* и *but* имеют общую противительную функцию, они демонстрируют значительные различия в частоте употребления, семантическом объеме, синтаксической гибкости и дискурсивно-прагматических ролях. Английский *but* демонстрирует большую интеграцию в сокращенные и сложные синтаксические структуры. Для контекстуализации полученных результатов в рамках современного лингвистического дискурса использованы ссылки на недавние научные работы.

Ключевые слова: контрастивная лингвистика, таджикский и английский языки, противительные союзы, синтаксис, семантика, перевод.

Introduction

The study of conjunctions, as fundamental operators of coherence and logical relation, occupies a central place in understanding the architecture of any language. Within the realm of contrastive linguistics, the analysis of equivalent conjunctive items across typologically distinct languages — such as Persian-based Tajik and Germanic English — offers profound insights into not only grammatical systems but also into cognitive and rhetorical patterns inherent to respective speech communities [8]. The Tajik adversative conjunction *аммо* (*but*) serves as a pivotal discursive marker, orchestrating contrast, objection, correction, and thematic shift.

Despite its functional centrality, a detailed, corpus-driven comparative analysis of *аммо* against its most frequent English counterpart, *but*, remains an under-researched area, particularly in recent scholarship. Existing studies often treat conjunctions within broader grammatical descriptions, lacking the focused, empirical scrutiny required to unveil subtle lexico-semantic and syntactic asymmetries that pose significant challenges in translation and second language acquisition [7].

1.1. Research Objectives

The aims of the article are to:

- systematically identify and categorize the lexico-semantic functions of *аммо* in a canonical Tajik literary text;
- analyze the syntactic behavior and positional distribution of *аммо* in comparison to *but*;
- dwell on the strategies employed in translating *аммо* into English, mapping its functional spectrum onto not only *but* but also other adversative and contrastive markers.

1.2. Theoretical Framework and Literature Review

The analysis is situated within the framework of functional contrastive linguistics [6], which emphasizes the comparison of languages based on parallel texts to reveal “tertium comparationis”. Recent studies on adversative conjunctions highlight their role beyond mere clause linkage, functioning as metadiscursive markers managing information flow and speaker stance [5, P. 112]. Research on Persian conjunctions (to which Tajik is closely related) notes their sensitivity to information structure, often

marking thematic boundaries [9, P. 87]. In English corpus linguistics, but has been extensively analyzed for its use in spoken and written registers, showing a high degree of grammaticalization in compound sentences [7, P. 154]. However, a direct Tajik-English comparative study referencing authentic, culturally significant Tajik prose is absent from recent literature, a gap this paper seeks to fill [2], [3].

1.3. Methodology and Data

The primary data source is Sadriddin Ayni's novel "Ghulomon" (2019), a cornerstone of modern Tajik literature. A representative corpus of 150 instances of *аммо* was extracted. Each instance, along with its co-text, was manually aligned with its corresponding passage from an authoritative English translation ("The Slaves"). This parallel corpus forms the empirical basis for a qualitative and quantitative analysis. The method involves:

1. Functional tagging of each *аммо* instance.
2. Syntactic description of its host sentence.
3. Recording the English translation equivalent.
4. Comparative analysis of matched pairs.

Research methods

2.1. Corpus Compilation

A digital version of "Ghulomon" was used to extract all instances of the conjunction *аммо*. The search was conducted using simple string matching, followed by manual verification to exclude false positives (e.g., homographs). Each occurrence was assigned a unique ID, and a text window of 2–3 sentences before and after was captured to preserve context.

2.2. Analytical Procedures

1. Lexico-Semantic Analysis: Each instance was classified based on a modified taxonomy of adversative relations (updated for Tajik semantics) [2]:

- Direct Opposition: Contrasting two factual propositions.
- Concessive: Acknowledging a point to counter it with a stronger one ("Yes, but...").
- Corrective: Replacing or rectifying a previous statement.
- Discourse-Contrastive: Shifting to a new topic or speaker turn.
- Emphatic/Intensifying: Used for rhetorical emphasis rather than logical contrast.

2. Syntactic Analysis: The following parameters were recorded for each Tajik sentence and its English counterpart:

- Position of the conjunction (sentence-initial, between clauses, post-comma, etc.).
- Structure of linked elements (clauses, phrases, sentences).
- Presence of ellipsis or contraction in the English version.

3. Translation Analysis: The English equivalent for each *аммо* was recorded. Frequencies of *but*, *however*, *yet*, *although*, *while*, and, and zero-translation (parataxis) were calculated. The pragmatic success of each translation was evaluated contextually.

Main results

3.1. Quantitative Overview

From the sampled corpus of "Ghulomon" *аммо* appeared with a frequency of approximately 4.2 instances per 1000 words. In the English translation, *but* was the direct equivalent in 68% of cases. Other equivalents included: *however* (12%), *yet* (8%), *and* (5%), *while* (3%), and omission or restructuring (4%).

3.2. Lexico-Semantic Functions with Illustrative Examples from "Ghulomon"

3.2.1. Direct Opposition

This is the most common function, presenting a clear contradiction between two statements.

For example: *Ман ба ҳамаи ин корҳо тайёр ҳастам, аммо манро ба ин сафар намебаранд* [1, P. 100] — I am prepared for all this work, *but* they are not taking me on this journey [translated by the author].

Designing on the premise of the above-mentioned sentence one can assert that *аммо* is directly translated as *but* denoting a straightforward contrast between the subject's readiness and the others' action. The syntactic structure is perfectly mirrored.

3.2.2. Concessive Adversativity

The relevant Tajik conjunction often follows a concessive premise, introducing a more compelling argument.

For example: *Ҳа, ман мефаҳмам, ки шумо хонандагон ва донишмандони бузургед, аммо дар ин масъала хато мекунед* [1, P. 20] - Yes, I realize you are great readers and scholars, *however*, you are mistaken on this point [translated by the author].

In the course of translating we have chosen *however*, which, while adversative carries a more formal and discourse-organizing tone than *but*, perhaps to mirror the rhetorical weight of the Tajik *аммо* in this polite yet firm objection.

3.2.3. Corrective Function

Аммо can introduce a statement that rectifies a previous misconception or imprecise wording.

For example: *Вақте ки ба деҳа ворид шудем, ягон ҷоравез надидем. Аммо, дур дар канори дарё, ҷанд сар ғов дида мешуд* [1, P. 305] — When we entered the village, we saw no herdsmen. *Yet*, far off by the river, several head of cattle were visible [translated by the author].

Apparently, the usage of *yet* in English effectively captures the corrective nuance, implying contrary to what you might conclude from the first statement. The Tajik *аммо* is in sentence-initial position, separated by a comma, emphasizing this thematic shift — a pattern less common for stand-alone English *but*.

3.3. Syntactic Peculiarities

3.3.1. Positional Distribution

Tajik: *Аммо* frequently occupies the absolute initial position of a sentence (approx. 40% of cases), acting as a discourse marker to signal a major contrastive turn in the narrative or argument. This is less typical for English *but* in formal written prose, where it is more commonly clause-medial.

English: *But* demonstrates high integration, often forming contracted constructions like *but he didn't*, whereas Tajik maintains a more analytic structure: *аммо ў накард*.

3.3.2. Ellipsis and Coordination

English often employs ellipsis after *but* (He was tired, but [he was] determined). In the Tajik corpus, such ellipsis is less frequent; the clause following *аммо* tends to be more fully articulated.

Discussion

The findings substantiate the hypothesis that *аммо* and *but*, while functional equivalents, are not isomorphic. Their differences are traceable to broader typological and discursive norms.

4.1. Semantic Scope and Translation Asymmetry

The semantic field of *аммо* appears to overlap with, but is not entirely covered by, *but*. As seen in the examples, *аммо* can drift into the functional territory of *however* (for thematic contrast) and *yet* (for corrective or surprising opposition). This supports the notion that language-specific conjunctions occupy unique positions on a semantic map of contrastive relations [10, P. 203]. The translator's choice is often a negotiation between syntactic simplicity (*but*) and pragmatic fidelity (*however, yet*).

4.2. Syntax and Information Structure

The propensity of *аммо* for sentence-initial position aligns with findings on Persian/Tajik information structure, where new or contrastive topics are often fronted [9, P. 92]. *Аммо* in this position serves as a frame-setting device. English *but*, while possible sentence-initially, carries a more colloquial or emphatic tone in that position in formal writing. The English preference for clause-medial *but* reflects a different strategy for integrating contrast into a complex sentence unit, as noted in studies on English syntactic packaging [7].

4.3. Pragmatic Weight and Cultural Discourse

The use of *аммо* in "Ghulomon" often carries a weight of logical, social, or moral contradiction reflective of the novel's thematic core —the clash between oppression and dignity. Its consistent use in debates and internal monologues marks it as a tool for ideological and intellectual confrontation. The English equivalents sometimes soften or formalize this pragmatic force, a phenomenon observed in cross-cultural translation where "pragmatic adjustment" is necessary to meet target-language norms [2], [3], [4], [8].

4.4. Implications for Translation and Language Teaching

For translators, a mechanical substitution of *аммо* with *but* risks flattening the rhetorical texture of the Tajik source text. Awareness of the corrective, thematic-shifting, and emphatic potentials of *аммо* is crucial. For Tajik learners of English (and vice versa), instruction must move beyond simple equivalence, highlighting the syntactic constraints (e.g., caution with sentence-initial *but* in academic writing) and the availability of a richer repertoire of contrastive markers (*however, nevertheless, whereas, yet*) to express nuances captured by *аммо*.

Conclusion

Adducing the results of the conducted comparative analysis, one can come to the conclusion that the intricate relationship between the Tajik conjunction *аммо* and its English equivalents, primarily *but* is clearly observed. While a systematic consideration of data from "Ghulomon" it has been demonstrated that *аммо* possesses a distinct lexico-semantic profile, often requiring translation not by a single equivalent *but* by a set of adversative-contrastive items chosen based on context. Syntactically, *аммо* shows a stronger discourse-marking function through sentence-initial positioning, whereas *but* exhibits greater syntactic integration and versatility in forming contracted structures.

The study contributes to the under-researched field of Tajik-English contrastive linguistics and provides a methodology for fine-grained conjunction analysis. It underscores the importance of corpus-based, context-sensitive approaches in understanding grammatical items that sit at the intersection of syntax, semantics, and pragmatics. Future research should expand the corpus to include modern media and spoken Tajik to chart diachronic and register-based variations in the use of *аммо*.

Конфликт интересов

Не указан.

Рецензия

Все статьи проходят рецензирование. Но рецензент или автор статьи предпочли не публиковать рецензию к этой статье в открытом доступе. Рецензия может быть предоставлена компетентным органам по запросу.

Conflict of Interest

None declared.

Review

All articles are peer-reviewed. But the reviewer or the author of the article chose not to publish a review of this article in the public domain. The review can be provided to the competent authorities upon request.

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