

Translation Challenges of Phraseological Units in Utkir Hoshimov's "Dunyoning Ishlari"

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Abstract:

This paper examines phraseological units and their importance in literary translation. The phraseological units used in Utkir Hoshimov's *"Dunyoning ishlari"* (*Such Is Life*) are analyzed with an emphasis on the difficulties that arise when rendering them into English. Particular attention is paid to problems encountered in translating phraseological units that appear in both the source and target texts, and to strategies for achieving equivalence. The study also proposes alternative English equivalents for selected phraseological units in order to preserve semantic content and expressive coloring.

Keywords: literary translation; phraseological units; equivalence; classification; alternative variants

Introduction

Translation and translation studies are currently among the most popular subjects in the world. Across all nations and continents, the field of translation has developed over several millennia. Humanity has been using ships and caravans to travel across continents for a variety of reasons for centuries. Such caravans and ships, of course, included translators in addition to traders, military commanders, academics, religious authorities, craftspeople, astrologers, doctors, and healers. Translators who "render" one language into another were referred to as *tilmoch* in the past[1]. They were intellectually capable, quick-witted individuals who mastered several languages and provided oral interpreting. As translation developed as a profession, translators began to be viewed not only as mediators in international relations—facilitating communication, agreements, treaties, and political negotiations between countries—but also as cultural agents who translate books and literary works representing nations' cultural

heritage[2]. In this sense, the field of translation and the work of translators can be regarded as among the leading and socially significant professions created by humankind.

Methodology

The present study employs a qualitative descriptive approach grounded in translation studies and phraseology. The primary objective of the methodology is to identify, analyze, and classify translation challenges arising from the rendering of phraseological units in Utkir Hoshimov's literary work *Dunyoning ishlari* and their equivalents in English translation.

Selected phraseological units taken from *Dunyoning Ishlari's* original Uzbek text and their English translations make up the study's corpus. Semantic complexity, cultural specificity, and frequency of occurrence within the text are taken into consideration when choosing examples[3]. Semantic indivisibility, structural stability, and idiomaticity are among the established phraseological criteria used to identify phraseological units. Semantic, stylistic, and pragmatic changes between the source and target texts can be examined thanks to the comparative and contrastive approach used in the analysis. When translators use transformation techniques like paraphrasing, substitution, omission, or explicitation and there is no direct equivalency, special consideration is given to these situations. The efficacy of these tactics in maintaining the phraseological units' original meaning, emotional tone, and cultural implications is examined[4]. The study makes use of important theoretical frameworks in phraseology and translation theory, especially those of Vinay and Darbelnet, Newmark, Baker, and Teliya. These frameworks serve as the foundation for classifying translation methods and assessing the level of equivalency attained. Since many phraseological units in the source text have strong roots in Uzbek national culture and worldview, cultural and linguocultural factors are also taken into account.

Results and Discussion

Without a thorough examination of phraseological units, it is impossible to study Uzbek and English literary works—or literary texts translated into English—in-depth.

A distinctive linguistic phenomenon, phraseological units disclose a people's way of life and national mindset[5].

In particular, Uzbek phraseological units can be characterized as a complex, multilayered mental construct that reflects the linguistic, cultural-educational, historical, psychological, and physiological traits of the Uzbek people.

This is due to the fact that phraseological units are rich in imagery and figurative language that have been developed over centuries by people[6].

Translating phraseological units often causes difficulties for translators. This is especially true in literary translation, where phraseological units may have culture-specific meanings and may not possess direct equivalents in the target language. In such cases, the translator must decide whether to use a literal rendering, an explicative (descriptive) translation, or another strategy depending on context and communicative effect[7].

Phraseological units are unchangeable fixed word-combinations with in part or wholly figurative (metaphorical) sense. They make literature more expressive, emotive, and semantically colored. Phraseological units are widely used by many Uzbek writers, and Utkir Hoshimov, is one of the most prominent ones. Many of his works have made an indelible mark in the cultural life of our people.

The People's Writer of Uzbekistan, Utkir Hoshimov, wrote "Dunyoning ishlari," which is a memoir. It is made up of several stories of different lengths that were written over many years and published in full by Sharq Publishing House in 2005. The author wrote this book in honor of his mother. To date, the book has been translated into several languages, including English [8]. In the present study, we analyze phraseological units in the English translation *Such Is Life*, prepared

by the well-known American translator Mark Riz and the Andijan-based young translator Abdulloh Ruziyev. While the author wrote the work over many years, the translation process also took a long time: Abdulloh Ro'ziyev completed an initial translation in 2018, having worked on it for two years[9]. In order to publish the translation, he met the writer's family members to obtain permission; based on their recommendations, he became acquainted with Mark Riz and planned joint editing. At that time, Mark Riz was translating Abdulla Qodiriy's "*Utgan kunlar*", and as a result the editing process was delayed. Eventually, once that work was completed, Mark Riz and Abdulloh edited *Such Is Life* together and published it in 2024[10].

The text of "*Dunyoning ishlari*" contains a rich phraseological layer. Through diverse situations and character portrayals, the author skillfully uses idioms typical of Uzbek speech. These phraseological units serve to express various moral and psychological states—joy and sorrow, surprise and regret, dislike and affection—more vividly and precisely through folk-style idiomatic language. Below, several phraseological units from the work are examined in terms of their semantic properties and their rendering in English, with attention to translation-related difficulties[11].

1) "Tagida" (under) vs. "near"

Source text:

"Shu bodom tagida supa bor edi. Kun botishi bilan onam hovliga ko'loplatib suv separ, kun bo'yi oftobda qizigan yer hidi supa oldidagi rayhonlar isiga qo'shilib, ajib bir tarovat taratar, atrof jimjit bo'lib qolar edi."

Target text:

"Near this solitary almond tree sat a small supa. At sunset, my mother would sprinkle water about the hovli cooling the ground baked by the sun throughout the day. The earth always emitted a heady scent mingled with the fragrance of basil growing nearby a stillness always descended throughout with the arrival of dusk".

In the source text, the word **tagida** means "under/beneath." However, in the English translation it is rendered as **near**, which means "close to," not "under." A more adequate equivalent would be: "**Under this solitary almond tree...**" rather than "Near this solitary almond tree...". In other words, **bodom tagida** → "near this almond tree" weakens the spatial precision of the original; the closer alternative is "**under this almond tree**".

In addition, the words *hovli* and *supa* are culture-specific realia reflecting national lifestyle. Since English culture does not have direct equivalents for these objects, they are transliterated in the translation ("*supa*," "*hovli*") and explained in a note, which is a reasonable strategy for preserving cultural specificity[12].

Within the same excerpt, another unit requires attention: *ko'loplatib suv sepmoq*. In the translation it appears as *sprinkle water*, which conveys the basic meaning "to sprinkle," but does not render the intensifying component *ko'loplatib*—i.e., "to splash/douse generously (to cool the yard in hot weather)." Because there is no single-word equivalent in English, the intensifier is omitted[13]. As a result, the expressive force and vividness of the original are reduced. A more expressive descriptive rendering could be "to splash (or douse) the yard with water" to preserve the intensity.

2) "Rahm qilmoq" (to show compassion)

Source text:

"Ko'rdingmi, yaxshi o'smay qolgan. Yetimlarga rahm qilish kerak."

English translation:

"You see, it could not grow properly. Mercy should be shown about orphans."

The verb **rahm qilmoq** expresses compassion, pity, and humane concern. In English it can be conveyed through options such as "**show compassion to**," "**take pity on**," or, depending on context, even "**take care of**" (when the implication is not only emotional sympathy but also practical support and guardianship). In this case, the translation uses "mercy," which partially

conveys the ethical meaning; however, to capture the humanistic nuance more naturally, alternatives such as **“Orphans deserve compassion”** or **“We should show compassion to orphans”** may better preserve both meaning and tone[14].

3) **“Og’zi qulog’iga yetmoq” (to be extremely happy)**

Another example is the idiom **“og’zi qulog’iga yetmoq,”** which indicates that a character is extremely happy. In the work, the child narrator describes his joy as follows:

“Kechqurun og’zim qulog’imga yetkudek bo’lib bir do’ppi yong’oq ko’tarib keldim”.

Semantically, this means that he was so delighted that he was smiling broadly (as if his mouth reached his ears). In English, the idiom **“grinning from ear to ear”** is a close phraseological equivalent[15]. Here, the imagery (ear-to-ear smiling) is preserved through a culturally natural idiom, and the expressive meaning is not lost. In such cases, the translator can be said to have achieved **semantic and stylistic equivalence** by selecting an idiomatic counterpart rather than translating word-for-word.

Conclusion

The literary translator should not only maintain the information content of the original text in translation, but also maintain the expression style, expressiveness, and poignancy of the text. Most translators in most situations cannot retain the original meanings and connotations attached to idioms and phraseological units and thus the translator may find themselves compromising the aesthetic impact and the quality of the text. Consequently, the selection of strategies of the translator as idiomatic equivalence, descriptive translation, transliteration with commentary, and necessary omission, in accordance with the necessity of their preservation of semantic adequacy and stylistic power, in culturally saturated texts, in particular, in Utkir Hoshimov, of the article "Dunyanging ishlari" should be determined by the necessity to maintain the adequacy of semantics and stylistic power. Lastly, the contextual analysis is used in order to evaluate the role of phraseological units in the narrative form of the literary text. Under this line of analysis, it is possible to assess the effect of options in translation in terms of replying characters, their storyline, and the general coherence of the text in the foreign language.

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