



Article

The Functional Role of Phraseological Units in Literary Translation

Toshtemirov Jaxongirmirzo Akramjon o'g'li

1. Alisher UBS Master's student, "Ziyo-kids academy" NTM teacher

Abstract: This article analyzes the functional role of phraseological units in literary translation, examining their semantic, stylistic, and linguo-cultural characteristics. Phraseologisms are one of the key units that constitute the figurative layer of a language, and they play a distinct role in enhancing the expressiveness of a literary text, conveying the national spirit, and revealing the author's style. The study considers the main challenges encountered in the translation of phraseological units, particularly the issues of finding equivalents, preserving national-cultural meanings, and recreating imagery. Furthermore, the effectiveness of equivalent, alternative, descriptive, and adaptive translation methods used for translating phraseologisms is illustrated with examples. The article provides a comparative analysis of the similarities and differences between phraseological units in various languages, thereby revealing their artistic and aesthetic functions. The research findings indicate that the adequate translation of phraseological units depends not only on the translator's linguistic knowledge but also on a deep understanding of the people's culture, mentality, and artistic thinking. Therefore, preserving national identity and stylistic diversity in the process of translating phraseologisms is one of the essential criteria for literary translation.

Keywords: *literary translation, phraseological unit, phraseologism, linguopoetics, equivalent translation, national-cultural feature, imagery, style, translation problems, adequate translation.*

1. Introduction

The functional role of phraseological units (PUs) in literary translation is explained by the fact that they are not merely lexical elements conveying meaning; rather, they serve as significant devices that determine the artistic and aesthetic value, stylistic distinctiveness, and cultural depth of a literary work [1]. By adding semantic richness, expressiveness, and emotional coloring to the text, phraseological units play a decisive role in shaping the author's intention, the characterization of literary figures, and the overall tone of the work. The accurate and skillful translation of PUs is therefore essential for preserving the impact of the original text, its cultural spirit, and the central ideas it seeks to communicate to readers. Conversely, inadequate or superficial translation of phraseological units may diminish the artistic quality of the work, distort its cultural context, and even lead to semantic misinterpretations [2, 3]. Consequently, one of the translator's primary responsibilities is to conduct a thorough analysis of the functional aspects of phraseological units and to preserve these functions as fully as possible in the target language [4, 5].

2. Methodology

Citation: Toshtemirov ogli, J. A., The Functional Role of Phraseological Units in Literary Translation. Central Asian Journal of Literature, Philosophy, and Culture 2026, 7(3), 195-199.

Received: 15th Jan 2025

Revised: 10th Feb 2025

Accepted: 30th Feb 2026

Published: 31st May 2026



Copyright: © 2026 by the authors. Submitted for open access publication under the terms and conditions of the Creative Commons Attribution (CC BY) license (<https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/>)

In literary texts, phraseological units primarily perform stylistic as well as expressive-emotional functions. Their stylistic function is manifested in ensuring compatibility with the genre of the text, the author's individual style, and the overall tone of the work. For instance, literary works closely associated with folklore often employ colloquial or archaic phraseological expressions that contribute a distinctive cultural flavor, whereas scientific or journalistic texts tend to utilize more formal and widely accepted expressions. The expressive and emotional functions of PUs, in turn, enhance the vividness, persuasive power, and evaluative character of the text. They serve to convey the inner experiences of characters, the author's attitude toward events, or the intensity of a particular situation. Expressions such as "in the blink of an eye" (very quickly) or "to bow one's head" (to surrender) convey not only an action but also intensify its emotional and psychological significance. To preserve these functions, translators must identify target-language equivalents that carry comparable stylistic and emotional weight or, where necessary, employ descriptive translation while retaining the expressive effect of the original. This process requires not only linguistic competence but also literary sensitivity and creative insight.

3. Results and Discussion

Another important function of phraseological units lies in their cultural and connotative characteristics. Every phraseological expression embodies the cultural codes, historical memory, traditions, and worldview of a particular people. Through such expressions, authors endow their works with national identity, uniqueness, and profound cultural resonance [6]. For example, the Uzbek phraseological expression "qo'y og'zidan cho'p olmagan" (literally, "one who would not take a straw from a sheep's mouth") reflects the Uzbek perception of gentleness and harmlessness through an image rooted in pastoral culture. When translating such expressions, it is essential to convey not only their semantic content but also the cultural connotations underlying them. If a translator neglects this cultural dimension, the translated text may lose its national flavor and appear alien to readers [7]. To bridge cultural gaps and preserve the cultural spirit of the source text, translators should either identify phraseological equivalents with similar cultural imagery in the target language or provide descriptive translations that clarify the cultural context. This is particularly important in intercultural communication, where the successful reception and understanding of a literary work largely depend on the preservation of its cultural nuances [8].

In literary works, phraseological units also serve the function of individualizing character speech. The social status, educational background, age, profession, and even personal traits of a character are often reflected through the phraseological expressions used in their speech. For example, an ordinary member of the community may employ more colloquial and folk-based expressions, whereas an intellectual character may use more literary and sophisticated phraseological constructions [9]. The accurate translation of such units is crucial for maintaining the authenticity and credibility of character portrayal. If translators select inappropriate equivalents or replace phraseological expressions with neutral vocabulary, the character's personality may be distorted, and their speech may appear artificial or unconvincing. Such inaccuracies can significantly reduce the artistic impact of the literary work. Therefore, translators must understand not only the semantic meaning of a phraseological unit in the source language but also its stylistic and sociolinguistic implications, and they must identify an appropriate equivalent in the target language. This process requires careful consideration of the unique speech characteristics of each character and their role within the narrative [10].

Phraseological units also serve text-enriching and pragmatic functions. They enhance a text by adding conciseness, vividness, and expressive power, thereby making it more engaging and meaningful. Phraseological expressions often enable the concise and precise communication of complex ideas that would otherwise require lengthy explanations. This contributes to greater readability and increases the literary value of the text [11]. Their pragmatic function is manifested in their ability to influence readers, appeal to their emotions, and shape particular attitudes or perceptions. Through phraseological

units, readers may experience emotions such as amusement, sympathy, or indignation; they may also be encouraged to reflect on certain issues or arrive at specific conclusions. Preserving these functions in translation is essential for achieving the communicative purpose of the original work. When phraseological units are replaced with neutral lexical items, the text loses its vitality, expressive force, and pragmatic impact. Consequently, the reception of the translated work by its audience may be adversely affected [12].

The classification and characteristics of phraseological units are of considerable importance for translators, as their accurate identification and adaptation play a crucial role in the translation process. These units represent distinctive elements of both language and culture and perform an important function in conveying meaning and stylistic effect. Since phraseological units are highly diverse in nature, their proper classification and interpretation are essential for ensuring translation quality [13].

Generally, phraseological units can be divided into three principal categories: idiomatic expressions, proverbs, and formulaic expressions. Idiomatic expressions are combinations of words that function as a unified semantic unit and reflect the linguistic and cultural specificity of a particular speech community. For example, the Uzbek expression “ko’ngil qilmoq” conveys the idea of a person’s desire, intention, or wish. Because such expressions are deeply embedded in cultural and linguistic traditions, preserving their full meaning in translation is particularly important [14].

Proverbs, by contrast, are traditional expressions that have developed through collective experience and are enriched with wisdom and moral significance. They often reflect practical life lessons or cultural values. For instance, the proverb “Qo’l qulog’iga yetmaydi” emphasizes the limitations of human capabilities or opportunities. When translating proverbs, translators must take into account the cultural context of the target language in order to preserve both their meaning and stylistic effect.

Formulaic expressions, meanwhile, frequently incorporate traditional or folkloric elements and constitute an important component of linguistic and cultural heritage. Such expressions often possess unique semantic and stylistic features that require specialized translation strategies. In many cases, particularly when dealing with national proverbs or culturally specific expressions, translators must either provide explanatory translations or identify culturally appropriate equivalents that convey the intended meaning [15].

The characteristics of phraseological units are equally important in translation practice, as their semantic and stylistic uniqueness requires careful consideration. First, their meanings often cannot be conveyed through literal translation; instead, they must be rendered through contextually appropriate equivalents. Second, they require innovative approaches that take into account intercultural differences to ensure accurate transmission of meaning. Furthermore, their figurative and stylistic dimensions are of particular significance, requiring translators to develop the skills necessary to preserve both semantic content and stylistic impact [16].

Understanding and appropriately selecting phraseological units is therefore a fundamental prerequisite for successful translation. In the case of proverbs and idiomatic expressions, translators must possess a deep understanding of both meaning and context in order to preserve the original message and stylistic effect. Such competence enables translators to address many of the challenges that arise during the translation process and to ensure the accuracy and effectiveness of the translated text.

Moreover, the characteristics of phraseological units are closely connected with intercultural differences. One of the translator’s principal tasks is therefore to adapt these expressions to the target language or identify suitable equivalents. This process often presents considerable difficulties, as finding culturally appropriate correspondences may be challenging. Consequently, translators must undertake a thorough study of phraseological units and develop a comprehensive understanding of their linguistic and cultural dimensions [17].

In conclusion, a proper understanding of the types and characteristics of phraseological units facilitates the resolution of numerous translation challenges. This, in turn, contributes to improved translation quality and promotes intercultural communication. The successful selection and adaptation of phraseological units largely

depend on the translator's expertise and professional competence, factors that ultimately determine the complexity and effectiveness of the translation process. Their appropriate use helps preserve both meaning and style while accurately reflecting the cultural atmosphere and distinctive features of the source text.

With regard to the problems and solutions associated with translating phraseological units, it is essential first to examine the major challenges that arise during the translation process. Phraseological units including idioms, proverbs, and formulaic expressions constitute unique linguistic and cultural elements that frequently present translators with a variety of difficulties. These challenges are primarily linguistic, cultural, and stylistic in nature.

The first major challenge in translating phraseological units is related to their semantic and stylistic uniqueness. Each phraseological unit embodies rich and often complex meanings and stylistic nuances within its native language, requiring translators to exercise considerable care in interpreting and adapting them accurately. In many cases, the meaning of a phraseological unit cannot be transferred through a direct or literal translation because its interpretation is closely connected to contextual factors and cultural distinctions. Consequently, translators must identify equivalent or functionally similar expressions that preserve both the meaning and stylistic effect of the original. This task becomes particularly challenging when significant cultural differences exist between the source and target languages.

A second challenge concerns the identification of appropriate equivalents for phraseological units. Every language and culture possesses its own unique repertoire of phraseological expressions, and finding corresponding equivalents in another language is often difficult. In some instances, translators are compelled to use expressions that convey a similar or approximate meaning rather than exact equivalents. Although such solutions may facilitate comprehension, they can also lead to a reduction in translation quality and may distort the intended meaning of the source text.

The third challenge involves ensuring the contextual appropriateness of phraseological units in translation. Translators occasionally fail to conduct a sufficiently thorough contextual analysis and therefore render phraseological expressions either inaccurately or too literally. Such errors can undermine both the semantic content and stylistic integrity of the literary work. For example, translating a proverb or idiomatic expression without considering its original context may alter or obscure the overall meaning of the text and diminish its communicative effectiveness.

With regard to possible solutions, enhancing translators' linguistic and cultural competence is of primary importance. A deep understanding of the semantic, stylistic, and cultural dimensions of phraseological units is essential for their accurate translation. Furthermore, when selecting equivalents, translators should carefully consider intercultural differences and make extensive use of specialized dictionaries, phraseological databases, and other relevant resources. In addition, professional training programs, workshops, and seminars devoted to the translation of phraseological units can provide valuable practical experience and help translators identify and address potential challenges more effectively.

Technological approaches can also contribute to solving translation problems associated with phraseological units. Computer-assisted translation tools and machine translation systems may facilitate the identification and adaptation of phraseological expressions, particularly when dealing with large volumes of text or time-sensitive translation tasks. Nevertheless, such technologies should be employed in conjunction with human expertise, as automated systems are often unable to account fully for contextual subtleties and cultural connotations. Human translators remain indispensable in ensuring that phraseological units are rendered accurately and appropriately within their communicative and cultural contexts.

4. Conclusion

Ultimately, addressing the challenges of translating phraseological units requires effective collaboration among translators, academic researchers, and technology

developers. Such cooperation can contribute to the development of innovative methods, resources, and translation technologies that improve translation quality and facilitate intercultural communication. Moreover, the challenges and solutions associated with phraseological translation require continuous refinement not only from a technical perspective but also from cultural and stylistic standpoints. This ongoing process plays a significant role in strengthening intercultural relations and enhancing the professional competence of translators.

REFERENCES

- [1] A. Alimov, *Tarjimashunoslikda korpus lingvistikasi imkoniyatlari*. Toshkent, Uzbekistan: Innovatsiya, 2023, pp. 130–145.
- [2] D. Ergashova, *Ingliz va o‘zbek tillaridagi idiomatik iboralarning tarjima muammolari*. Andijon, Uzbekistan: Andijon Davlat Universiteti Nashriyoti, 2022, pp. 40–55.
- [3] Sh. To‘rayev, *Frazeologik birliklarni tarjima qilishda madaniy adaptatsiya*. Termiz, Uzbekistan: Termiz Davlat Universiteti Nashriyoti, 2021, pp. 95–110.
- [4] S. Ochilov, *Tarjima jarayonida frazeologik birliklarning pragmatik aspektlari*. Urganch, Uzbekistan: Urganch Davlat Universiteti Nashriyoti, 2023, pp. 60–75.
- [5] N. Xolmatov, *Frazeologik birliklarning leksikografik tahlili va tarjima lug‘atlari*. Toshkent, Uzbekistan: Ziyo Nashr, 2024, pp. 100–115.
- [6] O. Bobojonov, *Frazeologik birliklarni tarjima qilishda kontekstning roli*. Namangan, Uzbekistan: Namangan Davlat Universiteti Nashriyoti, 2022, pp. 35–50.
- [7] B. Yo‘ldoshev, *Frazeologik birliklarning semantikasi va pragmatikasi*. Samarqand, Uzbekistan: Samarqand Davlat Universiteti Nashriyoti, 2022, pp. 45–60.
- [8] J. Sharipov, *Tarjima san‘ati: nazariy va amaliy masalalar*. Toshkent, Uzbekistan: Akademnashr, 2024, pp. 110–125.
- [9] M. Sobirov, *Frazeologik birliklarning madaniy-konnotativ xususiyatlari*. Buxoro, Uzbekistan: Buxoro Davlat Universiteti Nashriyoti, 2023, pp. 30–45.
- [10] A. Hojiyev, *Tilshunoslik terminlarining izohli lug‘ati*. Toshkent, Uzbekistan: O‘zbekiston Milliy Ensiklopediyasi, 2022, pp. 210–215.
- [11] J. Norxo‘jayev, *Frazeologik birliklarni tarjima qilishda ekvivalentlik muammosi*. Toshkent, Uzbekistan: Fan, 2021, pp. 65–80.
- [12] A. Qurbonov, *Madaniyatlararo muloqotda frazeologik birliklarning o‘rni*. Farg‘ona, Uzbekistan: Farg‘ona Davlat Universiteti Nashriyoti, 2023, pp. 90–105.
- [13] U. Eshonqulov, *Badiiy matnda frazeologik birliklarning stilistik funksiyalari*. Qarshi, Uzbekistan: Qarshi Davlat Universiteti Nashriyoti, 2022, pp. 50–65.
- [14] Z. Xudoyberdiyeva, *Frazeologik birliklarning tarjima strategiyalari: qiyosiy tahlil*. Toshkent, Uzbekistan: Tafakkur, 2024, pp. 70–85.
- [15] A. Alimov, *Tarjimashunoslikda korpus lingvistikasi imkoniyatlari*. Toshkent, Uzbekistan: Innovatsiya, 2023, pp. 130–145.
- [16] D. Ergashova, *Ingliz va o‘zbek tillaridagi idiomatik iboralarning tarjima muammolari*. Andijon, Uzbekistan: Andijon Davlat Universiteti Nashriyoti, 2022, pp. 40–55.
- [17] Sh. To‘rayev, *Frazeologik birliklarni tarjima qilishda madaniy adaptatsiya*. Termiz, Uzbekistan: Termiz Davlat Universiteti Nashriyoti, 2021, pp. 95–110.