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The Reflection of Linguocultural Information in Phraseological Units in The Works of George Orwell And Abdulla Qodiriy

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ABSTRACT

The article examines how linguocultural information is encoded and reflected in phraseological units in the prose of George Orwell (Animal Farm, Nineteen Eighty-Four) and Abdulla Qodiriy (O‘tkan kunlar, Mehrobdan chayon). Relying on V.N. Telia’s theory of cultural connotation, V.A. Maslova’s concept of cultural codes, A.V. Kunin’s theory of phraseological stability and A. Naciscione’s discourse-oriented approach, the study treats a phraseological unit as a sign that stores the cultural memory, values and stereotypes of a linguistic community. The comparative analysis shows that the two writers use phraseology in opposite but complementary directions. Orwell deforms traditional English formulas and creates occasional units and anti-proverbs that model the “anti-culture” of a totalitarian society, while Qodiriy actualises traditional Uzbek phraseology and paremia in order to reconstruct the national way of life, ethical norms and worldview of the nineteenth century. Five cultural codes (kinship, religious, somatic, zoomorphic and folklore-precedent) and four types of linguocultural information (ethnographic, axiological, mental-conceptual and socio-ideological) are identified. Recommendations are given for preserving this information in English–Uzbek literary translation and for using the results in university courses of linguoculturology and literary translation.

Keywords: Phraseological unit, linguoculturology, cultural connotation, cultural code, national worldview, anti-proverb, occasional unit, George Orwell, Abdulla Qodiriy, literary translation.

INTRODUCTION

Phraseological units are among the clearest points at which language and culture meet. A single idiom or proverb can contain a whole fragment of a people’s experience: its customs, its values, its religious ideas, its sense of what is honourable and what is shameful. For this reason linguoculturology, which studies the reflection and fixation of culture in language, has from its beginnings treated phraseology as one of its central objects [19; 20]. In a literary text this cultural potential becomes especially visible, because a writer selects phraseological units not randomly but in accordance with the theme of the work, the image of the characters and the picture of the world that the work creates.

The comparison of George Orwell and Abdulla Qodiriy may at first appear unexpected. The two writers belong to different languages, literary traditions and historical contexts. Orwell’s Animal Farm (1945) and Nineteen Eighty-Four (1949) are political allegory and dystopia created in response to twentieth-century totalitarianism [7; 8]. Qodiriy’s O‘tkan kunlar (Bygone Days) and Mehrobdan chayon (The Scorpion from the Altar), written in the 1920s, are the founding novels of modern Uzbek prose and are devoted to the life of Turkestan in the period of the khanates [10; 11]. Yet the two authors share a fundamental feature: both used literature to reflect critically on the society of their time and both paid

exceptional attention to the cultural and ideological power of language. Orwell made the manipulation of language one of the main themes of his work, while Qodiriy turned the living speech of the Uzbek people, rich in proverbs and set expressions, into the foundation of a new national novel. Their comparison therefore makes it possible to observe two opposite strategies of using phraseology as a carrier of culture.

The relevance of the study is determined both by theoretical and practical factors. Theoretically, comparative research on English and Uzbek phraseology from a linguocultural perspective is still relatively limited, especially on the material of literary texts. Practically, the growth of English–Uzbek literary translation and the task of raising foreign-language education to a new qualitative level set by Presidential Resolution PQ-5117 of 19 May 2021 [1] require teachers and translators who can recognise the cultural information encoded in phraseological units and preserve it when moving between languages.

LITERATURE REVIEW

The linguocultural approach to phraseology was developed most fully by V.N. Telia, who introduced the concept of cultural connotation. According to Telia, the image underlying a phraseological unit is interpreted by speakers in terms of the cultural standards, stereotypes and symbols of their community, and this interpretation forms a special layer of meaning that cannot be reduced to the dictionary definition [20]. In the English-language literature this idea was presented by V. Teliya, N. Bragina, E. Oparina and I. Sandomirskaya, who described phraseology as a "language of culture" and a means of representing collective mentality [2; 14]. V.A. Maslova systematised the concept of cultural codes, such as somatic, zoomorphic, spatial, religious and others, through which a culture structures its picture of the world, and showed that phraseological units are the main linguistic carriers of these codes [19]. E.M. Vereshchagin and V.G. Kostomarov developed the theory of background knowledge and culture-specific vocabulary [16], and V.V. Vorobyov proposed the notion of the linguocultureme as a complex unit combining linguistic and extralinguistic content [17].

The cognitive dimension of the problem is represented by the theory of conceptual metaphor of G. Lakoff and M. Johnson [4], which explains many idioms as manifestations of underlying conceptual structures, and by Z. Kövecses, who demonstrated that such structures are partly universal and partly culture-specific [3]. A. Wierzbicka showed that the key words and set expressions of a language reveal its culture-specific values [15], while F. Sharifian's cultural linguistics describes how cultural conceptualisations, such as cultural schemas and categories, are encoded in language [13]. The structural basis of the study is A.V. Kunin's theory of phraseological stability and occasional transformation [18], and A. Naciscione's distinction between the base form of a phraseological unit and its instantial stylistic use in discourse [6]. Among the works of Uzbek scholars, Sh. Rahmatullayev's explanatory phraseological dictionary provides the description of the Uzbek phraseological stock [12], while N. Mahmudov substantiated the importance of anthropocentric and linguocultural research for Uzbek linguistics [5].

Of special importance for this study is Orwell's own theory of language. In the essay Politics and the English Language, he criticised "dying metaphors" and ready-made phrases such as toe the line, ride roughshod over, Achilles' heel and swan song, arguing that their mechanical use allows a writer to avoid thinking and makes political language vague and deceptive [9]. Orwell's attitude to conventional phraseology was therefore deeply critical, and this attitude directly shaped the way he used and deformed phraseological units in his fiction.

Thus, the existing literature provides a well-developed theory of the cultural content of phraseological units and of their stylistic use in discourse. However, comparative studies applying this theory to English and Uzbek literary prose, and in particular to the works of Orwell and Qodiriy, remain few. The present article aims to fill this gap.

The aim of the article is to identify how linguocultural information is reflected in phraseological units in the works of George Orwell and Abdulla Qodiriy, to determine the cultural codes and types of cultural information they convey, and to describe the similarities and differences in the authors' strategies. To achieve this aim, the following objectives were set: to select culturally marked phraseological units from the chosen works; to establish their base forms and cultural connotations; to group them according to cultural codes; to determine the type of linguocultural information they carry; to compare the strategies of the two authors; and to formulate recommendations for translation and teaching.

METHODS

The material of the study is formed by phraseological units, paremiological units and phraseologised formulas selected from four works: Animal Farm [7] and Nineteen Eighty-Four [8] by George Orwell, and O‘tkan kunlar [11] and Mehrobdan chayon [10] by Abdulla Qodiriy. The works were chosen for three reasons. First, they are the most significant and most widely translated works of both authors. Second, in each of them phraseological material occupies strong positions of the text, such as the title, the opening or the key formulas of the work. Third, all four works are closely connected with the representation of a particular society and its values, which makes them especially suitable for linguocultural analysis.

A unit was included in the analysis if it met two conditions: (a) it is registered in phraseological or paremiological dictionaries, or it is a recognisable transformation of such a unit or of a precedent text; (b) its image or meaning contains a culturally marked component, that is, information about customs, values, beliefs, social relations or precedent texts of the linguistic community. Base forms of English units were checked against A.V. Kunin’s description of English phraseology [18], and base forms of Uzbek units against Sh. Rahmatullayev’s dictionary [12].

The analysis was carried out in five consecutive stages, presented in Table 1.

Table 1. Stages and methods of the analysis

Stage	Content of the stage	Method applied
1. Identification	Establishing that a word combination is a phraseological unit, a proverb or a transformation of a precedent text; determining its base form	Method of phraseological identification (A.V. Kunin); dictionary definition analysis
2. Cultural interpretation	Determining the cultural connotation of the image and the background knowledge needed to understand it	Linguocultural analysis (V.N. Telia, V.A. Maslova)
3. Code classification	Assigning the unit to a cultural code (kinship, religious, somatic, zoomorphic, folklore-precedent)	Classification; conceptual analysis
4. Contextual and stylistic analysis	Defining the function of the unit in the text and the type of transformation, if any	Contextual and stylistic analysis (A. Naciscione)
5. Comparison	Comparing the strategies of the two authors and assessing translation options	Comparative-typological analysis of English and Uzbek phraseology

Source: compiled by the author.

This procedure combines linguistic and cultural analysis. It allows the researcher not only to describe a unit but also to explain why it is used in a particular text and what it tells the reader about the culture depicted.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The analysis showed that both writers use phraseological units as concentrated carriers of cultural information, but they do so in opposite directions. In Orwell’s works, culturally marked phraseology appears predominantly in a deformed, parodied or newly created form. In Qodiriy’s works, it appears predominantly in its traditional form and serves to reconstruct a national way of life. These two strategies can be described as the deconstruction and the reconstruction of culture through phraseology. They are discussed below through the cultural codes identified in the material.

1. The kinship code

Kinship terms belong to the most culturally loaded units of any language, since they reflect the structure of the family and the norms of relations between people. Orwell uses this code in the central formula of Nineteen Eighty-Four: Big Brother is watching you [8]. The word brother carries strong positive connotations in English culture, associated with family protection, solidarity and, through religious and political discourse, with fraternity and equality. In the

formula, this familiar image is combined with the idea of total surveillance. The resulting contradiction between the warmth of the kinship term and the threat of control creates a new phraseological unit that later entered the English language and many other languages as a name for intrusive state or corporate surveillance. Here the cultural connotation of the base image is not simply used but deliberately inverted: the totalitarian state appropriates the language of the family in order to disguise domination as care.

In Qodiriy's novels the kinship code works in the opposite way. The plot of O'tkan kunlar is built around family relations and the rituals that regulate them: matchmaking (sovchi qo'ymoq), the blessing of a marriage (oq fotiha bermoq, non sindirmoq), the wedding (to'y), and the relations between in-laws (quda-andachilik) [11]. These set expressions name institutions that are central to Uzbek culture and that have no direct equivalents in English culture. Particularly significant is the concept of kundosh, the rival co-wife, which lies at the heart of the tragic conflict between Kumush and Zaynab. The traditional phraseology of family life is not deformed in the novel. On the contrary, it serves as an ethnographic background against which the author raises the social problems of his time, such as forced marriage, the power of parents over their children's fate and the suffering caused by polygamy. The kinship code thus performs ethnographic and axiological functions: it reconstructs the customs of the period and at the same time evaluates them.

2. The religious code

Both writers address religious culture, but again in different ways. In Animal Farm, the Seven Commandments of Animalism are an obvious allusion to the biblical Ten Commandments, a central precedent text of English culture [7]. Their gradual distortion, culminating in the formula All animals are equal, but some animals are more equal than others, shows how a quasi-sacred moral code is transformed into a tool of power. The image of Sugarcandy Mountain, the paradise promised to the animals by the raven Moses, parodies Christian ideas of heaven and their use to make the oppressed accept their suffering. In both cases, phraseological formulas rooted in the religious culture of the English-speaking world are used ironically, to show the manipulation of belief.

In Qodiriy's work, the religious code appears most strikingly in the title Mehrobdan chayon [10]. The mehrob (mihrab) is the niche in a mosque that indicates the direction of prayer and symbolises sanctity, while the scorpion (chayon) is a traditional image of a hidden, poisonous danger. The combination of the two images forms a phraseologised metaphor of hypocrisy: evil that emerges from the very place that should be the most sacred. The title thus condenses the idea of the novel, the exposure of hypocritical representatives of the clergy and court at the time of the Kokand khanate. Unlike Orwell, Qodiriy does not parody religion itself. His criticism is directed at those who abuse sacred values, while the values themselves remain positive within the cultural system of the novel. In addition, set expressions connected with the Islamic worldview, such as peshonaga yozilgan (literally 'written on the forehead', i.e. 'predestined'), reflect the concept of fate (taqdir), which plays an important role in the Uzbek traditional picture of the world [12].

3. The somatic code

Somatic phraseology, that is, phraseology built on the names of parts of the body, is often regarded as the most universal layer of phraseology, since all people share the same bodily experience. However, linguocultural analysis shows that different cultures associate emotions and values with different organs [3; 19]. In English, the main seat of emotion is the heart. In Uzbek phraseology, alongside ko'ngil ('heart, soul'), this role is also performed by the liver and the inner part of the chest: jigar, bag'ir. A beloved child is called jigarbandi (literally 'a part of one's liver'), deep grief is expressed by bag'ri qon bo'lmoq (literally 'one's chest becomes blood'), and an only and dearly loved child is described as ko'zining oqu qorasi (literally 'the white and the black of one's eye') [12]. These units belong to the phraseological field of parental love and grief, which is central to O'tkan kunlar, where the fate of children is decided by their parents and where the death of Kumush becomes a tragedy for two families.

Another important element of the Uzbek somatic code is the face (yuz) as a symbol of honour and reputation. Expressions such as yuzi shuvut bo'lmoq ('to be disgraced') and yuzini yerga qaratmoq ('to bring shame on someone') reflect the high value of public reputation and the concept of or-nomus (honour) in traditional Uzbek society [12]. This concept explains much of the behaviour of Qodiriy's characters, who often act not according to personal feeling but according to what is considered honourable in the eyes of the community.

In Orwell, the somatic code is subordinated to the theme of control over the body and mind. The eyes of Big Brother that follow a person everywhere, and O'Brien's picture of the future as a boot stamping on a human face for ever [8], turn the face from a symbol of individuality and dignity into an object of violence. Thus, in both authors the face is connected with human dignity, but in Qodiriy it is protected by the norms of the community, whereas in Orwell it is destroyed by the state.

4. The zoomorphic code

Animal images are among the most culture-specific in phraseology, since the same animal may have opposite evaluations in different cultures. Orwell builds the whole allegory of Animal Farm on the English zoomorphic code. The pig, traditionally associated in English with greed and dirtiness (as in to make a pig of oneself), becomes the ruling class. The sheep, associated with mindless obedience, repeat the slogan Four legs good, two legs bad, which later turns into Four legs good, two legs better [7]. The horse Boxer, embodying the English image of the loyal workhorse, repeats his personal maxims I will work harder and Napoleon is always right, which function as proverbs of blind faith. These formulas are short, rhythmic and memorable, like real proverbs, but their content shows how slogans replace thinking, a direct illustration of the ideas Orwell expressed in Politics and the English Language [9].

In Qodiriy, as already noted, the zoomorphic image of the scorpion in the title Mehrobdan chayon conveys danger and treachery. It is worth emphasising that the Uzbek zoomorphic code differs considerably from the English one. For example, the pig, which in English phraseology is a neutral or comically negative image, is strongly negative in the Uzbek cultural context for religious reasons, while the owl, a symbol of wisdom in English (as wise as an owl), is associated in Uzbek culture with ruin and misfortune. Such differences are crucial for the translator, because a literal rendering of a zoomorphic image may evoke associations in the target culture that are absent from, or even contrary to, the original.

5. The folklore and precedent-text code

The fifth code concerns phraseological units and formulas based on folklore and well-known precedent texts. In Nineteen Eighty-Four, the old nursery rhyme Oranges and lemons, say the bells of St Clement's becomes a fragment of the vanished English past that Winston Smith tries to reconstruct [8]. The rhyme, familiar to every English reader from childhood, represents genuine national cultural memory, which the Party seeks to destroy. Similarly, the song Under the spreading chestnut tree, I sold you and you sold me is a sinister parody of a familiar English song and expresses the betrayal that the regime forces on people. The revolutionary song Beasts of England in Animal Farm parodies the genre of the anthem and the revolutionary hymn [7]. In each case a familiar cultural form is filled with new content, which makes the reader feel the distortion of culture.

Qodiriy, by contrast, draws on the folklore tradition to establish continuity with the national past. The preface to O'tkan kunlar opens with a proverb-like formula: Moziyga qaytib ish ko'rish xayrlik, deydilar ('They say it is beneficial to look back to the past when undertaking a deed') [11]. The reference to collective wisdom (deydilar, 'they say') gives the author's decision to write a historical novel the authority of tradition. The rich use of proverbs and set expressions in the dialogues, characteristic of Qodiriy's style, reproduces the living speech of different social groups and makes the characters recognisable to the Uzbek reader as bearers of the national culture.

The results of the comparison by cultural codes are summarised in Table 2.

Table 2. Cultural codes in the phraseology of G. Orwell and A. Qodiriy

Cultural code	G. Orwell	A. Qodiriy
Kinship	Big Brother is watching you: the image of the family inverted into total surveillance	sovchi qo'ymoq, oq fotiha bermoq, to'y, kundosh: rituals and norms of family life
Religious	The Seven Commandments (allusion to the Ten Commandments); Sugarcandy Mountain: parody of manipulated belief	Mehrobdan chayon: hypocrisy emerging from a sacred place; peshonaga yozilgan: the concept of fate

Cultural code	G. Orwell	A. Qodiriy
Somatic	The eyes of Big Brother; a boot stamping on a human face: the body under control	jigarbandi, bag‘ri qon bo‘lmoq, ko‘zining oqu qorasi, yuzi shuvut bo‘lmoq: love, grief and honour
Zoomorphic	Pigs, sheep and the horse Boxer; Four legs good, two legs bad: social types and slogans	chayon (scorpion): hidden danger and treachery
Folklore-precedent	Oranges and lemons; Under the spreading chestnut tree; Beasts of England: distorted cultural memory	Moziyga qaytib ish ko‘rish xayrlik, deydilar; proverbs in dialogue: continuity with tradition

Source: compiled by the author on the basis of [7; 8; 10; 11; 12].

The comparison makes it possible to generalise the types of linguocultural information conveyed by phraseological units in the works of the two authors. These types are presented in Table 3.

Table 3. Types of linguocultural information in phraseological units

Type of information	Content	Dominant in
Ethnographic	Customs, rituals, everyday life and social institutions of a people	Qodiriy: matchmaking, blessing, wedding, relations between in-laws
Axiological	Values and norms: honour, shame, loyalty, family duty	Qodiriy: or-nomus, yuz; Orwell: loyalty and betrayal
Mental-conceptual	Culture-specific concepts and ways of thinking	Qodiriy: taqdir (fate); Orwell: doublethink, thoughtcrime
Socio-ideological	Relations of power, propaganda and manipulation	Orwell: slogans, commandments, Newspeak; Qodiriy: criticism of hypocrisy in Mehrobdan chayon

Source: compiled by the author.

As the tables show, the two authors use phraseology for different, though related, purposes. In Orwell’s works, the dominant type of information is socio-ideological: phraseological units reveal the mechanisms of power, propaganda and manipulation. Traditional English cultural content, such as biblical, folklore and kinship images, is present mainly as a background that is distorted or destroyed. Orwell’s newly created units, such as Big Brother, doublethink, thoughtcrime, Newspeak and more equal than others, have entered general usage and become part of the English phraseological stock [8]. This shows that a literary work can not only reflect culture but also enrich it with new cultural concepts.

In Qodiriy’s works, the dominant types of information are ethnographic and axiological. Phraseological units reconstruct the customs, rituals, social hierarchy and moral values of nineteenth-century Uzbek society and simultaneously express the author’s evaluation of them. While Orwell creates new phraseology to describe a new and frightening reality, Qodiriy preserves and actualises traditional phraseology in order to restore the cultural memory of his people at a time of radical change. Both strategies, however, are united by a common goal: to make the reader think critically about society, its values and its use of language.

Implications for English–Uzbek literary translation

The results have direct consequences for translation. The linguocultural information encoded in a phraseological unit can easily be lost if the translator conveys only its dictionary meaning. The appropriate strategy depends on the type of unit and the type of information it carries. The main strategies are presented in Table 4.

Table 4. Translation strategies for culturally marked phraseological units

Strategy	Example	Effect on linguocultural information
Calque preserving the author's transformation	Big Brother is watching you → Katta Og'a seni kuzatmoqda	The kinship code and the irony are preserved; recommended for author-created key units
Calque preserving the deviation	more equal than others → a literal rendering keeping the comparative of teng	The grammatical paradox and the idea are preserved
Calque or transliteration with commentary	oq fotiha bermoq → to give the white blessing (fotiha) + translator's note	National colour is preserved and explained to the foreign reader
Analogue with a different image	bag'ri qon bo'lmoq → to be heartbroken	Meaning and emotion are preserved, the somatic image is adapted; suitable for units without key cultural load
Descriptive translation	yuzi shuvut bo'lmoq → to be publicly disgraced	Meaning is conveyed, but the image and part of the cultural information are lost

Source: compiled by the author on the basis of [12; 18].

Two principles follow from this analysis. First, when an author creates or deforms a unit in order to express the idea of the work, as Orwell does, the translator should preserve the author's image and transformation, even if the result sounds unusual in the target language, because the unusualness itself is part of the meaning. In this case, the Uzbek rendering of Big Brother as Katta Og'a keeps the kinship code and, given the especially respectful connotation of og'a in Uzbek culture, may even strengthen the irony of the original. Second, when a unit carries ethnographic information about the source culture, as in Qodiriy's novels, the translator into English should preserve its national colour by means of a calque, transliteration or a combined strategy with commentary, rather than replacing it with an English idiom that would transfer the action into an alien cultural context.

Implications for teaching

The results can be used in university courses of linguoculturology, comparative phraseology, stylistics and literary translation. Comparing culturally marked units from Orwell and Qodiriy helps students to understand that a phraseological unit carries not only meaning but also cultural memory and evaluation. Practical tasks may include grouping units according to cultural codes, identifying their cultural connotations, comparing English and Uzbek images with similar meanings and assessing different translation variants. Such tasks develop students' phraseological, intercultural and translational competence at the same time.

The limitations of the study should also be noted. The material is restricted to four works, which is sufficient for a qualitative comparison but not for quantitative conclusions. In addition, the perception of cultural connotation depends on the reader's background knowledge, and this factor requires separate empirical research.

CONCLUSION

The study has shown that in the works of George Orwell and Abdulla Qodiriy phraseological units serve as concentrated carriers of linguocultural information. The information is organised through five cultural codes, namely kinship, religious, somatic, zoomorphic and folklore-precedent codes, and is realised as four types of linguocultural information: ethnographic, axiological, mental-conceptual and socio-ideological.

The two writers use phraseology in opposite but complementary directions. Orwell deconstructs culture through phraseology: he deforms traditional English formulas, parodies precedent texts and creates new units

that model the anti-culture of a totalitarian society. Many of these units, such as Big Brother, doublethink and more equal than others, have become part of the English phraseological stock. Qodiriy reconstructs culture through phraseology: he actualises traditional Uzbek phraseological units and paremia to restore the national way of life, moral norms and worldview of the past and to evaluate them critically.

In English–Uzbek literary translation, the strategy should depend on the type of unit and the information it carries. Units created or deformed by the author should be preserved in their transformed form, while units carrying ethnographic information should keep their national colour, if necessary with the help of a translator's commentary.

Thus, phraseological units in a literary text are not only means of expressiveness but also keys to the culture depicted in the work. Further research may be directed at a corpus-based comparison of the phraseology of Orwell and Qodiriy and at an analysis of how linguocultural information is preserved or lost in published English and Uzbek translations of their works.

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