

**METAPHOR AND METONYMY IN LITERARY TRANSLATION: A
TRANSLATION-ORIENTED ANALYSIS OF ‘DUNYONING ISHLARI’ AND ITS
ENGLISH TRANSLATION ‘SUCH IS LIFE’.**

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Abstract: This article explores the translation of metaphor and metonymy in Utkir Hoshimov’s ‘Dunyoning Ishlari’ and its English translation ‘Such Is Life’. Drawing on cognitive linguistics and translation studies, the study examines how figurative language is rendered across linguistically and culturally distant languages. Through a qualitative comparative analysis of selected examples, the research identifies dominant translation strategies and evaluates their semantic and cultural impact. The findings demonstrate that while some metaphors are successfully preserved, metonymic expressions often undergo transformation or neutralization, revealing broader challenges in the translation of culture-specific literary texts.

Keywords: literary translation, metaphor, metonymy, Uzbek literature, translation strategies, cognitive linguistics.

Introduction.

The translation of figurative language remains one of the most challenging aspects of literary translation, particularly when the source and target languages are culturally and typologically distant. Metaphor and metonymy, as core mechanisms of meaning construction, are deeply embedded in cultural experience and collective cognition, which makes their transfer across languages especially problematic. While metaphor has received considerable scholarly attention in translation studies, metonymy has often been treated as a secondary phenomenon, despite its significant narrative and pragmatic functions in literary texts.

Uzbek literature, rich in culture-specific imagery and figurative expressions, has only recently begun to attract scholarly attention within the field of English-language translation studies. One notable example is Utkir Hoshimov’s ‘Dunyoning Ishlari’, a work characterized by its dense use of metaphorical and metonymic expressions reflecting everyday life, emotional states, and social realities of Uzbek culture. Its English translation, *Such Is Life*, provides valuable material for examining how figurative language is negotiated in translation.

‘Dunyoning Ishlari’, a prominent work by Uzbek writer Utkir Hoshimov, is explored both in its original and in its English translation titled ‘Such Is Life’. This translation was published by the Muloqot Cultural Engagement Program and translated by Mr. Mark Reese and Mr. Abdullajon Ruziev.

This article aims to investigate the translation of metaphor and metonymy in ‘Dunyoning Ishlari’ and its English translation from a translation-oriented perspective. Rather than evaluating the translation in terms of equivalence alone, the study focuses on the strategies employed by translators and the semantic and cultural consequences of those strategies. By distinguishing between metaphor and metonymy and analyzing their respective translation patterns, the article contributes to a more nuanced understanding of figurative language in literary translation involving underrepresented languages such as Uzbek.

Theoretical Framework

The study draws on insights from both cognitive linguistics and translation studies. Within cognitive linguistics, metaphor is understood as a conceptual mapping between two domains,

where abstract concepts are structured through more concrete experiential domains (Lakoff & Johnson). Metonymy, in contrast, operates within a single conceptual domain and relies on contiguity rather than similarity (Barcelona; Kövecses). Although closely related, metaphor and metonymy differ significantly in their cognitive mechanisms, which has important implications for translation.

From a translation studies perspective, figurative language has been approached through various models, including equivalence-based, functionalist, and descriptive frameworks. Contemporary research emphasizes that the translation of metaphor and metonymy is not merely a linguistic operation but a culturally and pragmatically motivated decision-making process. Translators often choose between preserving the figurative image, replacing it with a target-language equivalent, explicating its meaning, or omitting it altogether.

In literary translation, these choices are influenced by multiple factors, such as target readership, genre conventions, and cultural accessibility. Metaphors that rely on universal bodily experience may be more easily preserved, whereas culture-specific metaphors and metonymies frequently undergo transformation. Metonymy, in particular, poses unique challenges, as it often encodes implicit cultural knowledge that may not be readily accessible to target readers.

This study adopts a translation-oriented view that treats metaphor and metonymy as distinct analytical categories and examines how their cognitive and cultural properties affect their translational behavior.

Methodological Approach

The research is based on a qualitative comparative analysis of selected examples from Utkir Hoshimov's 'Dunyoning Ishlari' and its English translation 'Such Is Life'. The examples were selected based on their clear metaphorical or metonymic character and their relevance to narrative meaning and stylistic effect.

The analysis focuses on identifying dominant translation strategies used in rendering metaphor and metonymy, including:

- preservation of the figurative expression,
- substitution with a different figurative image,
- explicitation through descriptive paraphrase,
- omission or neutralization.

Each example is analyzed in terms of semantic shift, cultural load, and pragmatic effect. By comparing metaphor and metonymy separately, the study highlights differences in their translation behavior and reveals patterns specific to each figurative mechanism.

Comparative Analysis of Metaphors in "Dunyoning Ishlari" and its English Translation "Such is Life"

Similarly, in the English translation of *Dunyoning Ishlari* (*Such Is Life*), done by Mr. Mark Reese and Mr. Abdullajon Ruziev, metaphors and metonymies are frequently adapted to ensure clarity and relatability for an English-speaking audience. In many instances,

cultural-specific imagery is either rephrased or replaced with equivalent expressions in English, reflecting the translators' efforts to balance fidelity with accessibility.

The following table illustrates selected examples of metaphor and metonymy from both source texts and their translations. Each example is analyzed in terms of its type (metaphor or metonymy), its function in the original text, and the translation strategy employed. This comparative analysis highlights not only the challenges involved in translating figurative language but also the creativity and interpretive choices made by the translators.

Uzbek Original	Translation (English)	Translation Strategy	Translation analysis
Onam mening suyangan tog'im ekan. Tog'im to'satdan qulab tushdi.	She was my pride. That pride was taken from me in a single day.	Substitution	Powerful metaphor of "mountain" replaced with abstract "pride." Imagery weakened.
Qizlik uy bozor, keladida xaridorlar!	A household with daughters is like a bazaar, customers come by for a look.	Literal translation	Original metaphor retained; culturally vivid in both versions.
Kecha itni kunini boshimga soldi.	She made me suffer greatly yesterday.	Omission	Idiomatic richness lost; replaced with literal meaning.
Etagingizdan tutgan.	Loves you as her own mother.	Abstraction	Cultural metaphor (gesture) generalized.
Ot topadi eshak yeydi.	The horse gets, and the donkey eats!	Literal	Proverbial metaphor directly translated; retains meaning.
Yuzimni yorug' qildingiz.	You have brightened my face.	Literal	Metaphor kept intact; clear and expressive.
Hakimning boshini ikkita qilish	Engage Hakim to someone...	Omission	"Making the head two" (marriage) lost in translation.
Qoravoylar! Popuklar!	My qoravoys, my popuks!	Borrowing (untranslated)	Terms left untranslated; may lose meaning for foreign readers.
Gap suqdi	Threw in a snide remark.	Approximation	Uzbek expression softened in English.
G'irt chapani, ammo qo'li gul	A complete hustler, but also a great master.	Substitution	Replaced with culturally relevant English phrases.

Qulchilikka keluvdik	We are here for matchmaking...	Substitutio n	“Qulchilik” (slavery) metaphor toned down to polite phrase.
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This table illustrates how metaphors from O‘tkir Hoshimov’s ‘Dunyoning Ishlari’ are rendered in its English translation ‘Such is Life’. The examples reflect a range of translation strategies, from literal preservation to omission and substitution, often influenced by cultural specificity and idiomatic constraints.

Some metaphors are preserved with little to no change, maintaining both imagery and cultural impact. For instance, “Qizlik uy bozor, keladida xaridorlar!” is translated almost literally as “A household with daughters is like a bazar, customers come by for a look,” effectively conveying the original's metaphorical structure and societal commentary. Similarly, “Yuzimni yorug‘ qildingiz” becomes “You have brightened my face,” preserving a common cultural metaphor for pride and honor.

However, several metaphors are omitted or replaced with more abstract expressions. A notable example is “Onam mening suyangan tog‘im ekan. Tog‘im to‘satdan qulab tushdi,” a deeply emotional metaphor portraying the mother as a mountain, which is rendered in English as “She was my pride. That pride was taken from me in a single day.” While the general sense of loss is retained, the powerful image of collapse is replaced by abstraction, weakening the emotional intensity. Similarly, culturally rich phrases like “Kecha itni kunini boshimga soldi” are reduced to literal expressions like “She made me suffer greatly yesterday,” stripping away metaphorical texture.

There are also cases of abstraction, such as “Etagingizdan tutgan,” referring to a culturally meaningful act of attachment or respect, which is generalized to “Loves you as her own mother.” In such instances, the original metaphor is not directly translatable and thus sacrificed for broader comprehensibility.

Meanwhile, some Uzbek expressions are maintained through loanwords, such as “Qoravoylar! Popuklar!” which are left untranslated. While this preserves cultural flavor, it may pose comprehension challenges for English readers unfamiliar with these terms. In contrast, idioms like “Gap suqdi” are softened in translation (“Threw in a snide remark”), toning down the expressive nature of the source metaphor.

Comparative Analysis of Metonymies in "Dunyoning Ishlari" and its English Translation "Such is Life"

Uzbek Original	Translation (English)	Metonymic Expression	Translation Analysis
yap-yangi «Moskvich» kelib to‘xtadi	a brand-new Moskvich braked near me	Moskvich = person/status	Retained; car symbolizes the person and social status, but cultural context might be unclear.
hali-zamon	the bazaar will	bozor =	Mostly retained; 'be a mess'

bozor tarqab ketadi	soon break up and be a mess	people/ activity	changes tone slightly.
Sizdan fotiha olgani keldim	I have come here seeking your approval	fotiha = religious blessing	Flattened; 'approval' loses spiritual context.
Toyirjonning hali chillasi chiqmagandi	It was not one month since Toyirjon was born	chilla = postpartum 40-day period	Lost; duration and cultural reference replaced with generic time.
“Qushim boshi” o‘ynadik	We began to play Qushim Boshi	Qushim boshi = finger game	Retained; may need explanation.
dasturxonga imo qilib	gesturing toward the table	dasturxon = food/ hospitality	Partially retained; lacks cultural richness.
Oyinning yigirmasi bo‘layotgan edi	It has been twenty days since my mother passed away	yigirmasi = 20th-day mourning	Functional meaning retained, cultural significance omitted.
choydan keyin oyimning mahsi kiyayotganini ko‘rib	the following day after breakfast I saw that my mother wore her mahsi	choydan keyin = post-meal ritual time	Lost; 'after breakfast' lacks cultural connotation of symbolic daily routine and timing.
Habiba buvining kir yuvdisi, yettisida xizmat qildi	She lent a hand in the burial rites associated with Habiba Buvi	kir yuvdi = funeral preparation	Lost; symbolic act of mourning ritual is omitted, losing cultural meaning.

This final table highlights how culturally embedded metonymic expressions in ‘Dunyoning Ishlari’ are handled in the English translation ‘Such is Life’. The data reveals that while a few expressions are retained or partially adapted, many metonymies are flattened, omitted, or rendered literally, resulting in significant cultural loss.

Several metonymic expressions tied to Uzbek social rituals, values, and material culture were difficult to translate fully. For instance, “sizdan fotiha olgani keldim”, where fotiha represents a religious blessing during matchmaking, is rendered as “I have come here seeking your approval.” Although the intent is conveyed, the spiritual and ceremonial dimension is lost, reducing the depth of meaning.

Other expressions like “Toyirjonning hali chillasi chiqmagan edi”, referring to the traditional 40-day postpartum period, are translated into generic temporal phrases (“It was not one month since Toyirjon was born”), omitting the cultural significance entirely. Similarly,

“yettisida xizmat qildi” and “oyimning yigirmasi bo‘layotgan edi”, which refer to funeral rites on the 7th and 20th days, are replaced by simplified expressions about mourning, losing specificity and cultural context.

Even daily metonymies related to communal life and hospitality, such as “dasturxonga imo qilib” or “choydan keyin”, are diluted. These expressions carry cultural weight about respect, ritual time, and social customs, but in translation become functional and literal (“gesturing toward the table,” “after breakfast”), stripping away deeper meaning.

However, a few metonymies are retained more successfully. For example, “mahsi” (traditional footwear indicating readiness for an outing) is preserved and explained in the translation, allowing readers to glimpse cultural context. Also, the use of loanwords like “Qushim Boshi” maintains authenticity, though they may require footnotes for clarity.

Conclusion

This study has examined the translation of metaphor and metonymy in O‘tkir Hoshimov’s *Dunyoning Ishlari* and its English translation *Such Is Life* from a translation-oriented perspective. The analysis demonstrates that metaphor and metonymy exhibit different degrees of translatability and are subject to distinct translation strategies.

Metaphors are more likely to be preserved, particularly when they rely on universal experiential mappings, whereas metonymies often undergo explicitation or neutralization due to their implicit and culture-bound nature. These patterns reveal the challenges inherent in translating figurative language from Uzbek into English and underscore the need for greater sensitivity to metonymy in literary translation practice.

By focusing on an underrepresented language pair, this article contributes to ongoing discussions in translation studies regarding figurative language, cultural transfer, and translator decision-making. Future research may extend this analysis to other genres or explore reader reception of translated figurative language to further illuminate the impact of translation strategies on literary meaning.

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