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TRANSLATION ISSUES IN THE TRANSLATION OF SOMATIC PHRASEOLOGICAL UNITS WITH ARM AND LEG COMPONENTS INTO ENGLISH

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Annotation: This article provides a comprehensive analysis of the translation of somatic units involving hand and foot components within the framework of translation studies. Somatic phraseological expressions are regarded as significant linguistic elements that reflect national-cultural identity in speech. Therefore, the accurate transfer of these units from one language system to another requires not only semantic equivalence but also the preservation of cultural connotations. The study examines the methods of translating Uzbek somatic phraseological units containing references to hand and foot into English, focusing on such strategies as equivalent translation, semantic adaptation, descriptive translation, and contextual substitution.

Furthermore, the research analyzes phenomena such as semantic shifts, the loss of imagery, and the emergence of new nuances that may occur during the translation process. The works of leading translation scholars, as well as lexicographic and phraseological sources in Uzbek and English, served as the primary material for this study. The findings demonstrate that consideration of cultural context is crucial when translating somatic units and emphasize the importance of maintaining the balance between meaning and figurative expression in translation practice.

Key words: Somatic unity, translation studies, translation issues, transformation, phraseological unity, translation methods

Introduction: In the science of translation studies, somatic expressions, namely units involving the body parts of the hands and feet, have been studied by many scholars. In particular, translation scholar Kh.Hamidov, in his candidate dissertation entitled “The emergence, meaning and grammatical features of phraseologisms in the Turkish language,” emphasized the following idea regarding the lexical-grammatical aspects of phraseologisms: “A phraseologism appears as a separate, indivisible unit in relation to the words in a sentence. In other words, it cannot be combined with words and broken into parts. According to the lexical-pragmatic characteristics that predetermine the syntactic function of a phrase in a sentence, a noun phraseologism can be a possessive, a complement, a noun part of a complex noun clause; a verb phraseologism can be a clause, a complement, an adjective phraseologism can be a determiner, a modal phraseologism can be a case.”
Any phrase, depending on the lexical composition and syntactic structure of the sentence, performs a specific function within the sentence. In English grammar as well, there exist numerous expressions based on noun–subject relations, and the function and position of such expressions in the sentence often undergo significant changes during translation. For instance, let us consider the translation of the following noun–predicate based phraseological unit from A. Qodiriy’s novel O‘tkan kunlar:
“…buning bilan u o‘z oyog‘iga bolta qo‘ygan bo‘lar edi.”
In this sentence, the somatic phraseological unit o‘z oyog‘iga bolta qo‘ymoq conveys the figurative meaning to harm oneself, to damage one’s own work or interests. Its English translation appears as:

"…he would have cut off his feet with his own ax."
Another translation renders the expression as:
"Giving this information would be tantamount to stabbing himself in the leg; he would have nowhere to go."
Both translations demonstrate that preserving the figurativeness and cultural meaning of somatic phraseological units requires contextual adaptation rather than literal translation.

From the given translations, it becomes clear that neither of the translators was able to find an exact and culturally equivalent counterpart for the somatic phrase in English. Instead, both attempted to preserve the surface structure of the expression by using English lexical items that correspond to the somatic element "oyoq" (foot/leg), rendering it through synonyms such as leg and feet. Likewise, both translators replaced the coordinated verb form in the original expression with synonymous English verbs such as stab and cut.
However, in K.Yermekova's translation, although the meaning, structure, and functional use of the expression could have been preserved more accurately, the translator omitted the lexical component "axe" (bolta), which is crucial to the original imagery. Cases in which lexical elements are not translated or are intentionally omitted largely depend on the translator's professional competence, linguistic awareness, and the degree of cultural and semantic proximity between the source and target languages.
Moreover, such translation challenges are also connected to the cultural traditions, worldview, and historical background of the people speaking the source language. It should be noted that among the linguistic units that require the highest level of skill and experience in the translation of literary texts, phraseological expressions—especially those involving somatic imagery—are considered the most complex and culturally loaded forms.
The broader use of somatic expressions in literary language serves to enhance the expressiveness, emotional intensity, and overall artistic impact of the text. Numerous studies have been conducted on the analysis of phraseological units, particularly concerning the grammatical application of such expressions. Notably, this issue was first examined in detail in the candidate dissertation of the prominent linguist and leading scholar of phraseology, Sh. Rahmatullayev.
In his research on the usage of figurative verbal phraseological units in the Uzbek language, the scholar also analyzed somatic verb-based phraseological units (FBs) as part of the linguistic examination. Furthermore, he classified the grammatical affixes used within the structure of phraseological units into several groups, based on their functional and morphological features.
Phraseological units in which both components take the same possessive and person-number suffixes may be exemplified as follows: to'nimni teskari kiyib oldim ("I behaved improperly / acted against norms").
Phraseological units in which the components take possessive and person-number suffixes in different persons: yuragimni yording ("you broke my heart"), yuragingni yordim ("I broke your heart"), yuragimni yordi ("he/she broke my heart").
Phraseological units which contain both of the above features simultaneously: ta'bimni tirriq qildim / ta'bimni tirriq qilding ("to spoil one's mood / to ruin one's emotional balance").
The variation of person-number suffixes in these forms is reflected in English translations mainly through the use of personal and possessive pronouns, where singular and plural distinctions are preserved through pronominal equivalence rather than inflectional morphology. For example: Negaki uning rizolig'ini olmasdan turib, bu ishka oyoq qo'yishim mumkin emas.

In this sentence, the component “oyoq qo‘yishim” belongs to the first group, where person and possessive markers agree, and its English translation appears as:
Without her agreement, I will not put one foot forward in this matter.
Another translator renders it as:
Because I cannot countenance taking such a step without her consent.
As can be observed in both translations, the person-number markers in Uzbek are conveyed in English by means of possessive pronouns, namely I, which indicates the first-person singular subject reference. Likewise, the semantic core of the somatic element oyoq (“foot/leg”) is expressed through different lexical choices in English: foot and step. While foot directly denotes the limb, step conveys the figurative meaning of undertaking an action. Thus, translator K. Yermekova appears to have chosen step intentionally, in order to enhance stylistic expressiveness and preserve literary nuance in the translation.
It is known that the majority of phraseological units (PUs) are formed on the basis of verb relations. In fact, the scholar Sh. Rahmatullayev, who conducted research specifically on verbal phraseology, in his article entitled “The Category of Existence in Verbal Phraseological Units”, refers to the affirmative–negative opposition in verbs as the category of existence. He explains that approximately half of verbal phraseological units may occur in both affirmative and negative forms, while the remainder appear only in one of the two. He then classifies the existence category of verbal PUs into three groups based on their aspectual behavior:
PUs that can appear in both aspects: qosh qo‘yaman deb ko‘z chiqarma (“Do not overdo a good intention to the point of harm”).
PUs that appear only in the affirmative aspect: yuragi orqasiga tortib ketdi (“he became frightened / lost courage”).
PUs that appear only in the negative aspect: boshi chiqmadi (“it did not work out”), yuragi qil sig‘maydi (“he cannot bear/endure”), and similar forms.
In this regard, we examine how somatic phraseological units belonging to the third group- those occurring only in the negative aspect—are rendered in English translation. Specifically, we analyze whether the negative aspect of the verb is preserved in translation or whether a shift occurs in the category of existence.
Consider the following example:
“Bu so‘z Oftob oyimni bir oz o‘ylatib qo‘ydi. Lekin hali ham oyoq uzatmag‘an edi”.
In this phrase, the expression oyoq uzatmag‘an edi appears in the negative aspect, conveying the meaning of not agreeing, not reaching a decision. Its English translations render this negative meaning in two different ways:
1. “…but still her foot twitched like that of a dying sheep.” [MR.183]
2. “…however, she did not relent.” [CY.137]
As observed, the first translation retains the somatic imagery, whereas the second translation conveys the meaning through a more contextual and interpretative approach, omitting the somatic element while preserving the negative aspect semantically.
In K. Yermekova’s translation, we observe that the somatic expression is omitted entirely, yet the negative aspect of the verb is preserved. In M. Riz’s translation, however, the phrase “her foot twitched like that of a dying sheep” is chosen as an English equivalent, where the somatic imagery is retained, but the negative verbal aspect is not explicitly reflected; nonetheless, the figurative meaning and the somatic component are preserved in the translation.
Another example from the novel shows two different translation strategies for the same somatic phraseological unit occurring in the negative aspect:
Oftob oyim hamon oyog‘ uzatmadi, qizig‘a yalinib ko‘rdi. [AQ.202]

The somatic phrase “oyog‘ uzatmadi” once again expresses hesitation or unwillingness. Its English translations appear as follows:

Oftob Oyim still dragged her feet. She pleaded with her daughter. [MR.416]

Oftobayim did not want to relent, and continued admonishing her daughter. [KY.316]

These translations reveal two distinct approaches. In M. Riz’s version, the translator successfully uses an existing English idiom—to drag one’s feet, which conveys a meaning close to the original and reflects somatic imagery. However, in this translation, the negative aspect of the verb is replaced by a positive form, with the negative meaning being inferred through context rather than morphology. The idiom to drag your feet in English means to do something reluctantly or deliberately slowly, which semantically matches the Uzbek original, though the structural negation is not preserved.

In K. Yermekova’s translation, the same verb to relent is used for both occurrences of the original phrase, and although the somatic imagery is entirely omitted, the negative aspect of the verb is preserved**.** In contrast, M. Riz’s translation can be considered more adequate, as it more accurately conveys both the figurative meaning and somatic component of the original expression.

Thus, the translations of O‘tkan kunlar demonstrate that the category of existence (affirmative vs. negative aspect) in verbal phraseological units may undergo certain shifts during the translation process. Even when form and meaning are generally preserved, choosing the most appropriate equivalent in translation is closely tied to the linguistic and cultural background of the source and target languages.

Another subtype of verbal phraseological units includes those that occur only in the affirmative aspect**,** without expressing negation. For example, the somatic PU involving the hand component: Otabek ko‘kragiga ham qo‘l solib ko‘rmak.

The expression qo‘l solib ko‘rmoq appears in the affirmative aspect**,** conveying the meaning to understand, to investigate, to gain insight. Its English translations are as follows:

M. Riz: “…with the intent of gleaning insight into Otabek’s heart.”

Here, the phrase gleaning insight conveys the meaning of seeking or gathering information, with glean meaning to collect or extract knowledge.

K.Yermekova: “…discover his attention.” The verb discover is used to convey a similar meaning.

In both translations, although the semantic meaning and the affirmative aspect of the verb are preserved, the figurative somatic imagery present in the source phraseological unit is not retained.

In O‘tkan kunlar, most somatic phraseological units occur within sentence structures formed from simple and compound clauses, where phraseological expressions function as predicate–subject relationships. As linguist O. Yusupov notes in his comparative research on English and Uzbek grammar, during communication, speakers produce an infinite number of sentences, yet all of these are formed based on a limited set of structural patterns**.**

In other words, every language possesses its own grammatical principles, structural patterns, and linguistic frameworks, and these patterns serve as templates in speech and expression. During translation, these templates must be adapted in accordance with the grammatical capabilities and structural norms of the target language. Thus, when translating figurative phraseological units or somatic phraseological expressions found in a literary work, the translator must first identify the most appropriate equivalent in the target language and then render it in accordance with the grammatical and stylistic rules of that language.

Based on this theoretical perspective, the somatic phraseological units selected for our research are primarily found within simple and compound sentence structures. Therefore, it is

necessary to examine how these structurally complex sentences are reproduced in English, and what grammatical difficulties or shifts occur during the translation process.

The original sentence is as follows:

In the sentence "Oftob oyim eridan ham qo'lini yuvib qo'ltug'ig'a urgan edi," the phraseological unit "qo'lini yuvib qo'ltug'ig'a urgan edi" is a verb-based somatic expression embedded within a compound predicate structure. According to the Explanatory Dictionary of the Uzbek Language, this phrase conveys the figurative meaning to lose hope, to become discouraged, or to give up on someone or something. Its English translations are rendered as follows:

"Oftob Oyim also washed her hands of her husband, who only replied to her supplications with …" [MR]

"Oftobayim had no sympathy from her husband, either. The poor thing was utterly confounded when he told her." [KY, 319]

From these translations, it becomes evident that M. Riz selected an appropriate and culturally corresponding equivalent of the somatic phrase. The English idiomatic expression "to wash one's hands of (something or someone)" already exists in English and expresses the meaning to withdraw responsibility or emotional involvement—which corresponds well to the figurative meaning in the Uzbek original.

The historical origin of the idiom "to wash one's hands of" can be traced back to the Biblical account of Pontius Pilate washing his hands before sentencing Jesus, symbolizing his claim of innocence. However, in modern usage, the expression has undergone semantic shift and is now used primarily to indicate withdrawal from obligation or disassociation.

It is also important to note that the original Uzbek expression contains a second somatic component**,** "qo'ltug'ig'a urmoq", which intensifies the meaning by expressing complete emotional detachment or resignation. This second component, however, is omitted in the English translations. The omission likely results from the absence of a direct structural or cultural equivalent in English, and the translator prioritized preserving meaning rather than literal form.

Therefore, in this case, we observe a typical example of structure modification without semantic loss**:** although the somatic structure is partially altered**,** the intended meaning remains effectively conveyed in translation.

Conclusion: The analysis of the translations shows that somatic phraseological units play a significant role in conveying emotional, cultural, and expressive nuances in the source text. However, the extent to which these features are preserved in translation varies depending on the translator's linguistic competence, cultural awareness, and stylistic preferences. In the case of K. Yermekova's translation, the somatic phraseological unit is largely omitted, and only the general semantic content is rendered. While the main idea is conveyed accurately, the figurative imagery and cultural expressiveness of the original are substantially reduced. This indicates that the translator prioritized clarity of meaning over stylistic and cultural nuance.

In contrast, M. Riz's translation demonstrates a more comprehensive effort to preserve the form, meaning, and aesthetic effect of the original expression. By selecting idiomatic equivalents that already exist within English, the translator successfully maintains the somatic imagery and expressive tone of the source text. This strategy allows the target audience to perceive the emotional and stylistic depth that the original author intended, even though the structural form undergoes certain modifications.

Overall, the comparative analysis confirms that the translation of somatic phraseological units is influenced not only by grammatical and lexical factors, but also by cultural and interpretative considerations. Translators must balance literal accuracy with figurative integrity, ensuring that both the cognitive meaning and expressive force of the original are preserved.

Therefore, the effective translation of somatic phraseological units requires a high level of linguistic sensitivity, deep cultural awareness, and mastery of idiomatic correspondence.

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