



LINGUOCULTURAL KNOWLEDGE AS THE TRANSLATOR'S TOOL

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Abstract

This article explores the close and inseparable relationship between linguoculturology and translation studies. Based on the premise that language and culture constitute an indivisible unity, the paper examines the challenges of correctly understanding and conveying national and cultural characteristics in the process of translation. The role of linguocultural units, concepts, phraseological expressions, and language elements related to national mentality in translation is analyzed. Furthermore, the importance of a linguoculturological approach in ensuring intercultural communication is highlighted. The findings of the study substantiate the necessity of taking cultural factors into account in order to achieve equivalence in the translation process.

Keywords: linguoculturology, translation studies, language and culture, national mentality, linguocultural units, equivalence, translation process, intercultural communication, concept.

Introduction

Linguistics is a scientific discipline that studies language from its origin to its development over years and centuries, as well as its current state. It examines the relationship between language and thought, the connection between language and society, the role of language in social life, its internal structure, classification, methods of linguistic analysis, and a range of related issues. Studying linguistic fields in isolation, without going beyond their own boundaries, significantly narrows the scope of research. This is because the multidisciplinary nature of linguistics emerges precisely through its interaction with other fields of knowledge.

In modern linguistics, studying language not as an isolated phenomenon but as a complex socio-cultural entity has become increasingly important. In this regard, linguoculturology and translation studies deserve particular attention. Although these two disciplines are closely interconnected, their approaches and objects of research differ to a certain extent. Linguoculturology is a scholarly field that examines the relationship between language and culture, focusing on cultural values, national mentality, and cultural codes expressed through language. In its research, linguistic units are analyzed within their cultural context. According to V. Vorobyov, "Linguoculturology studies language as a cultural phenomenon and reveals the interconnection between linguistic units and national-cultural mentality."

Translation studies serve as a bridge between languages and cultures, aiming to adequately transfer meaning, style, symbols, and cultural imagery from the source language into the target language. Linguoculturology, in turn, investigates language within a cultural context, recognizing that meanings, symbols, and connotations are shaped by culture. These two disciplines intersect at the junction of language and culture, and achieving truly successful translation outcomes requires careful consideration of linguoculturological aspects.

The interrelation between translation studies and linguoculturology can be observed in the following areas:

Cultural codes and connotations. Translated texts often contain specific symbols or cultural codes (such as customs or conventional expressions). Linguoculturology analyzes the origins of these codes and their place within national culture. Based on such analysis, the translator can adapt the text in a way that is appropriate for the target culture.

Terminology and cultural commentary. In translation studies, rendering terms and culturally complex concepts requires knowledge of the cultural background of words. Linguoculturology helps to understand this background, as meaning is inseparable from culture, history, and social context.

Literary translation and aesthetic elements. In literary texts, metaphors and idiomatic expressions are culturally motivated elements. Linguoculturology explains their cultural and aesthetic significance, while the translator must render them appropriately in the target language. For example, the concept of “guest” differs between Uzbek and English cultures. Although the English word guest denotes a visitor, the associated cultural obligations, hospitality practices, intonation, and customs differ. While a translator may convey the lexical meaning accurately, linguoculturological analysis may require additional context, explanation, or alternative expressions. Without a deep understanding of both language and culture, translation risks conveying cultural experience and meaning incompletely.

Translation studies and linguoculturology complement each other: translation conveys not only language but also culture, history, social customs, emotional and aesthetic values. A translator must focus not only on grammatical and lexical equivalence but also on cultural meanings, connotations, and interlingual differences. Translation is not merely the transfer of linguistic units from one language to another; it is a means of intercultural communication. Each language possesses unique semantic and pragmatic layers shaped by culture. Therefore, linguoculturological knowledge plays a crucial role in translation. If a translator fails to grasp the cultural information and connotations embedded in the source language, the core meaning of the text may be lost.

Common Ground Between Linguoculturology and Translation Studies

Linguoculturology investigates cultural codes, mentality, and tradition-based semantics in language, while translation studies aim to convey these codes in a comprehensible way to representatives of another culture. Thus, the two disciplines are inherently complementary. Achieving complete equivalence between the source and target texts is difficult, even when the translator is familiar with the source culture. As R. Jakobson noted in *On Linguistic Aspects of Translation*: “No translation can fully reproduce the cultural foundation of the original text; however, a skilled translator should strive to approximate it as closely as possible.”

Linguoculturological differences frequently arise in translation. Idioms, expressions, symbols, and even communication styles are often culture-specific and may appear unfamiliar or unclear to members of another culture. Literal translation of such elements may lead to misunderstanding or cultural distortion. For example, the English idiom “the elephant in the room” refers to an obvious but unspoken problem. A literal translation into Uzbek would be meaningless or humorous. An adequate translation would be “a problem everyone is aware of but avoids mentioning,” or a contextually appropriate equivalent. As L. S. Barkhudarov



emphasized in Fundamentals of Written Translation, "Translation is the art of transferring grammatical, semantic, and linguocultural balance from one language to another."

Pragmatic Equivalence and Cultural Connotations

Translation must be pragmatically as well as semantically appropriate. In advertising, political discourse, literature, and film translation, cultural adequacy is a key factor. Pragmatic equivalence implies that an utterance is rendered in accordance with context, situation, purpose, and audience. For example, "Can you open the window?" is grammatically a question but pragmatically a request. A literal translation may sound awkward, whereas an appropriate pragmatic translation would be "Please open the window."

Cultural connotation refers to additional meanings or emotional associations that words evoke within a specific culture. In English, white symbolizes purity and innocence, whereas in some Asian cultures it is associated with mourning and death.

Cultural Connotation as a Key Factor in Translation. Cultural connotation refers to the additional meaning or emotional associations that a word or expression evokes within a particular culture. In every culture, words and images trigger different emotions, values, or perceptions. For instance, in English culture, the color white symbolizes purity and innocence. However, in some Asian cultures, white is associated with mourning and death. As Susan Bassnett emphasizes in her work *Translation Studies*, "the translator must decode not only words, but also the culture embedded within them." Therefore, when selecting a word or expression, a translator must take into account its cultural implications in the target culture.

Linguocultural Competence as a Translator's Essential Tool. Linguocultural competence is the ability to understand, interpret, and appropriately apply the relationship between language and culture in communication. When speaking or translating in a particular language, it is essential to comprehend and correctly use the cultural values, traditions, mentality, and connotations inherent in that language. Linguocultural competence plays a crucial role in both language learning and translation. A language learner who lacks this competence may fail to grasp implicit meanings, humor, irony, or idiomatic expressions. Similarly, if a translator does not possess linguocultural competence, the original spirit of the text may be lost and inappropriate connotations may emerge. For example, the English expression "Break a leg!" is used in theatrical contexts to wish someone good luck. A literal translation such as "Break your leg" would be misleading and inappropriate. A linguoculturally equivalent Uzbek translation would be "Omad yor bo'lsin!" ("Good luck!"). This example clearly demonstrates that the translator must possess linguocultural competence to avoid misunderstanding and distortion of meaning.

The Role of Culture in Achieving Translation Equivalence. The ability to understand language and culture in an integrated manner and to consider them during communication or translation is essential in the translation process. The level of equivalence achieved in translation is not determined solely by linguistic knowledge; rather, it depends on cultural competence—that is, the degree to which the translator understands both the source and target cultures. As V. Komissarov states in *Fundamentals of Translation Theory*, "what matters in translation is not the words themselves, but their cultural and functional value." This viewpoint proves that without a linguocultural approach, translation cannot be complete or adequate.

Every language is a product of culture, and the translator serves as an intermediary who deeply understands cultural differences between societies. Therefore, in modern translation

studies, cooperation with linguoculturology is essential from both theoretical and practical perspectives. Interdisciplinary Nature of Linguistics and Translation Studies. To study any discipline thoroughly, focusing solely on that field is insufficient. A deeper understanding can be achieved by exploring related disciplines, as all sciences are interconnected. Studying the relationship between language and other fields helps to reveal its broader potential. Consequently, modern linguists increasingly draw on the achievements of other disciplines.

In contemporary linguistics, attempting to strictly separate modern approaches and their objects of study may lead to conceptual confusion, as linguistic fields are closely interconnected. Linguoculturology and translation studies, in particular, are deeply interrelated and mutually reinforcing. One serves as the foundation for the other. Language cannot exist independently of society; human needs give rise to communication and interaction. Thus, the study of language, culture, and translation as an integrated whole is both necessary and inevitable.

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