

Semantic Analysis Of Linguocultural Elements In English And Uzbek Fairy Tales And Translation Challenges

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Abstract: The article illustrates the semantic properties of semiotic elements (linguoculturemes) in fairy tales of English and Uzbek and also the translation difficulties caused by cultural and linguistic disparity between these two languages. Linguoculturemes are verbal representations of cultural ideas that are so much a part of a nation's collective consciousness, hence, they show the nation's worldview, values, and customs. The results indicate that the successful translation of fairy tale linguoculturemes necessitates not just linguistic skill but also profound cultural knowledge and the ability to switch between domestication and foreignization techniques.

Keywords: Linguoculturemes, fairy tales, semantic analysis, translation strategies, cultural asymmetry, folklore, cultural concepts.

Introduction: Linguoculturemes are one of the hardest to translate aspects of translation theory and practice, especially when one has to deal with very culturally bound texts like fairy tales. The concept "linguocultureme," which was first used by the Russian linguist V.V. Vorobyov, denotes a complex dialectical unit made up of linguistic and cultural aspects and at the same time is a representation of the verbalized cultural phenomena that are present in the collective consciousness of a nation [1]. Fairy tales, being the most essential and direct manifestations of folk culture, are particularly the most linguoculturemes laden forms of literature since they pass on from one generation to another whole cultures with their specific social norms and moral values as well as the way of thinking through them. The semantic analysis of the linguoculturemes in the English and Uzbek fairy tales exhibit rather remarkable discrepancies in the two linguocultures' perception of and expression of universal themes such as the battle between good and evil, family ties, divine beings, and moral teaching [2]. English fairy tales, shaped by the Celtic, Germanic, and later Christian

legacies, are the home of linguoculturemes that actually bear witness to the thousands of years' journey through time of the Anglo-Saxon culture, the feudal social structures and the unfolding of the British national character. In contrast, the Uzbek fairy tales are the historical document of the Central Asian nomadic past, the Islamic era, the Silk Road cross-culture influences, and the mixture of Turkic and Persian cultures which is the main characteristic of the Uzbek population's [3].

The conversion of fairy tales from English to Uzbek and vice versa is not an easy task at all because, by nature, linguoculturemes resist easy translation due to the fact that these are embedded in the specific cultural contexts which might have no equivalent in the culture of the target language. If a translator comes across the word "goblin" in English or "dev" in Uzbek, then they do not just have to deal with a single word, but rather, they have to grapple with an entire set of cultural associations, folkloric traditions, and symbolic meanings that can never be expressed adequately through the use of simple word-for-word translation.

The importance of this research is that it benefits linguistics of theorems and the area of linguocultural studies, besides it also helps translation studies that are concerned with practical matters, thus giving insights that can uplift the standard of cross-cultural literary translation [4].

METHODOLOGY

The methodological framework for this research draws upon comparative linguistics, semantic analysis, and translation studies, combining theoretical approaches from multiple disciplines to examine linguoculturemes in fairy tale discourse. The corpus for analysis includes classical English fairy tales such as those collected by Joseph Jacobs and Andrew Lang, as well as traditional Uzbek fairy tales from collections by Ghafur Ghulam and other folkloric sources, providing a representative sample of linguocultural elements from both traditions [5]. The theoretical foundation for understanding linguoculturemes draws heavily on the work of scholars in the field of linguistic and cultural studies, particularly the concept of the linguistic worldview and the relationship between language, culture, and cognition. Sapir and Whorf's linguistic relativity hypothesis provides important background for understanding how linguistic structures encode cultural perspectives, while more recent work in cognitive linguistics, particularly conceptual metaphor theory, helps explain how culturally specific conceptualizations are embedded in linguistic expressions [6].

In the context of Uzbek linguistics, scholars such as Rahmatullayev have extensively studied phraseological units and their cultural foundations, demonstrating how Uzbek linguistic expressions reflect specific cultural concepts related to hospitality, kinship structures, and moral values that are central to Central Asian culture [7]. The translation studies literature offers various theoretical frameworks for approaching the translation of culturally specific elements, ranging from Eugene Nida's concepts of formal and dynamic equivalence to Lawrence Venuti's discussion of domestication versus foreignization strategies, and Peter Newmark's categorization of translation procedures for cultural words [8].

Aixelá's work on culture-specific items in translation provides a useful taxonomy of strategies including repetition, orthographic adaptation, linguistic translation, extratextual gloss, intratextual gloss, synonymy, limited universalization, absolute universalization, naturalization, deletion, and autonomous creation, all of which are relevant to the translation of linguoculturemes in fairy tales [9]. In the specific context of fairy tale translation, scholars have noted that these texts present unique challenges

because they serve multiple functions simultaneously, acting as entertainment for children, vehicles for moral instruction, and repositories of cultural heritage. The semantic analysis of linguoculturemes requires examining not only dictionary definitions but also connotations, cultural associations, symbolic meanings, and pragmatic functions within their narrative contexts, considering how these elements contribute to the overall meaning and cultural significance of fairy tale texts [10].

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The comparative semantic analysis of English and Uzbek fairy tale linguoculturemes reveals several major categories of cultural-linguistic elements that present significant translation challenges. The first category comprises mythological and supernatural beings, which represent fundamental differences in how English and Uzbek cultures conceptualize the supernatural realm. English fairy tales feature linguoculturemes such as "fairy," "elf," "goblin," "troll," "ogre," and "witch," each carrying specific semantic and cultural content that reflects Celtic and Germanic mythological traditions, with distinct visual imagery, behavioral patterns, and symbolic associations that are well understood within English-speaking cultures. For instance, the English "fairy" typically connotes a small, winged, magical being associated with nature, often female, capable of both benevolence and mischief, derived from medieval Arthurian legends and Celtic folklore. In contrast, Uzbek fairy tales contain linguoculturemes such as "div" (a powerful malevolent giant demon), "pari" (a beautiful supernatural female being associated with beauty and sometimes assistance to heroes), "ajina" (a shapeshifting evil spirit), and "alvasti" (a female demon associated with water and childbirth), each reflecting Central Asian and Islamic cultural concepts of the supernatural.

The semantic fields of these linguoculturemes do not overlap neatly, making direct translation problematic. While "pari" is sometimes translated as "fairy," the semantic content differs significantly, as "pari" in Uzbek culture carries associations with Islamic mythology, Persian poetic traditions, and specifically Central Asian folk beliefs that are absent from the English "fairy." Translation strategies employed for these linguoculturemes include cultural substitution, where a functionally equivalent supernatural being from the target culture is used, though this risks semantic distortion, or transliteration with explanatory notes, which preserves cultural specificity but may interrupt narrative flow. The second major category consists of culture-specific objects, practices, and rituals that are embedded in the social and material culture of each tradition. English fairy tales contain linguoculturemes

related to feudal social structures such as "castle," "knight," "princess," "kingdom," and specific objects like "spinning wheel," "golden goose," or practices like "christening" and "ball," all of which carry cultural connotations beyond their literal meanings.

Uzbek fairy tales similarly contain culture-specific linguoculturemes such as "choyxona" (traditional teahouse serving as social gathering place), "dasturxon" (traditional meal spread on floor with specific cultural protocols), "do'ppi" (traditional male cap with cultural significance), and "kelin" (daughter-in-law, with complex cultural connotations regarding family hierarchy and gender roles in Uzbek society). These linguoculturemes are semantically dense, encoding information about social structures, gender relations, power dynamics, and daily life practices that require cultural knowledge to fully comprehend. Translation of such elements requires decisions about whether to maintain cultural specificity through foreignization, which educates target readers about source culture but risks alienation, or to domesticate through cultural substitution, which enhances readability but erases cultural distinctiveness. The third category involves kinship terms and forms of address, which reveal fundamental differences in how English and Uzbek cultures structure and conceptualize family relationships.

While English has a relatively simple kinship system with terms like "aunt," "uncle," "grandfather," and "grandmother," Uzbek possesses a highly elaborate kinship terminology that distinguishes between maternal and paternal lines, relative age, and gender, with terms like "amma" (paternal aunt), "hola" (maternal aunt), "amaki" (paternal uncle), "tog'a" (maternal uncle), "buvi" (grandmother), "bobo" (grandfather), "aka" (older brother), "uka" (younger brother), "opa" (older sister), and "singil" (younger sister). These distinctions carry important semantic and cultural information about social hierarchies, respect patterns, and family obligations that are central to Uzbek culture but have no direct equivalents in English. When translating Uzbek fairy tales into English, the semantic richness of kinship linguoculturemes is often lost due to the poverty of English kinship vocabulary, resulting in semantic flattening where culturally significant distinctions disappear. The fourth category encompasses metaphorical and proverbial expressions that encode cultural wisdom and worldview in condensed linguistic form. English fairy tales contain expressions like "happily ever after," "once upon a time," "the third time's the charm," and various proverbial sayings that carry cultural associations and narrative functions specific to English storytelling traditions.

Uzbek fairy tales similarly employ culturally specific metaphorical expressions and proverbial linguoculturemes such as "qirq yilning bir kuni" (once in forty years, indicating extreme rarity), "ko'zi kulgu" (literally "eye laughing," meaning happy or cheerful), and various proverbs derived from agricultural life, nomadic traditions, and Islamic teachings. These metaphorical linguoculturemes present translation challenges because they are motivated by source culture conceptual systems and often lose their metaphorical power when translated literally. The analysis further reveals that linguoculturemes in fairy tales serve multiple semantic functions beyond simple denotation, including establishing cultural setting, signaling moral frameworks, creating emotional resonance through cultural associations, and connecting narratives to broader cultural knowledge systems.

CONCLUSION

This research has demonstrated that linguoculturemes in English and Uzbek fairy tales represent complex semantic units that encode deep cultural knowledge and present significant challenges for translation due to fundamental differences in how these two linguocultures conceptualize and verbalize cultural phenomena. The semantic analysis has identified major categories of linguoculturemes including supernatural beings, culture-specific objects and practices, kinship terminology, and metaphorical expressions, each presenting distinct translation difficulties arising from cultural asymmetry between English and Uzbek linguistic worldviews. The study reveals that direct literal translation of linguoculturemes is generally inadequate because it fails to capture the full semantic content and cultural associations that these elements carry in their source contexts, often resulting in incomprehensibility, semantic loss, or cultural misrepresentation. Effective translation of fairy tale linguoculturemes requires translators to possess not only bilingual competence but also bicultural knowledge, understanding both the explicit and implicit cultural meanings embedded in linguistic expressions. The research findings have practical implications for translation pedagogy and practice, suggesting that translator training programs should emphasize cultural studies alongside linguistic skills, and that translation of culturally rich texts like fairy tales requires flexible, context-sensitive approaches rather than rigid adherence to single translation methods. The tension between domestication and foreignization strategies reflects broader questions about the purposes of translation, whether to make foreign texts accessible and familiar to target readers or to preserve cultural otherness and educate readers

about source culture diversity.

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