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AN INTERTEXTUAL ANALYSIS OF PHRASEOLOGICAL UNITS IN ENGLISH AND UZBEK SHORT STORIES

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Abstract: This article examines the intertextual functions of phraseological units in English and Uzbek short stories, focusing on their connections with cultural memory, traditional expressions, and other texts. It explores how writers adapt familiar phrases to create new meanings, develop characters, express emotions, and enrich narrative style. The comparative perspective reveals both shared literary functions and culture-specific differences. The article argues that understanding phraseological units requires attention to their conventional meanings, cultural associations, and narrative contexts.
Keywords: phraseological units, intertextuality, English short stories, Uzbek short stories, cultural memory, literary discourse, figurative meaning.

Introduction

Literary texts rarely exist independently of other forms of discourse. They often draw on familiar expressions, proverbs, folklore, and cultural references that enrich their meaning. Phraseological units are particularly important because their significance extends beyond the literal meanings of individual words and reflects the linguistic and cultural experiences of a community [1].

In English and Uzbek short stories, phraseological units help writers express emotions, reveal character, and establish connections between individual narratives and broader cultural traditions. When a familiar expression appears in an unexpected context, it may acquire additional meanings, creating irony, emotional tension, or new interpretations.

The intertextual analysis of these expressions therefore requires attention to both their linguistic structure and their relationship with other texts and cultural knowledge [2].

Phraseological Units as Carriers of Cultural Memory

Phraseological units preserve elements of collective experience, including traditional beliefs, social relationships, and culturally significant images. Through repeated use, these expressions become recognizable components of communication and may evoke meanings that extend beyond their immediate context.

In literary texts, a familiar phrase can communicate an attitude towards dignity, responsibility, loyalty, or conflict without lengthy explanation [3]. When it recalls a proverb, folkloric narrative, or established literary expression, it may also connect a character's experience with a wider cultural tradition.

English and Uzbek phraseological systems share expressions related to common human experiences, such as happiness, fear, disappointment, and hope. However, the images used to express these experiences may differ according to linguistic and cultural traditions. Consequently, similar meanings do not always produce identical associations.

It is also important to distinguish between ordinary phraseological usage and genuine intertextuality [4]. An expression becomes particularly significant for intertextual analysis when its wording, source, modification, or context creates a meaningful connection with another text or recognizable cultural reference.

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Intertextual Transformation and Literary Meaning

Writers do not always use phraseological units in their conventional forms. They may modify familiar expressions, combine them with other linguistic elements, or place them in unexpected situations. These techniques allow established language to communicate new ideas while preserving traces of its original meaning.

Such transformations can produce irony, humour, criticism, or emotional intensity. For example, a familiar proverb may be used in a situation that contradicts its moral message, revealing the difference between a character's words and actions [5]. Similarly, a modified idiom may challenge an established belief or express an attitude that the conventional form does not convey.

These techniques are especially effective in short stories, where concise language often carries several layers of meaning. A single phraseological unit may reveal a character's personality, reinforce a central theme, and establish a connection with a familiar cultural expression.

In English and Uzbek fiction, the effectiveness of such transformations depends on the reader's ability to recognize the expression and interpret its altered meaning within the narrative [6]. Comparative analysis should therefore consider not only the expressions themselves but also the literary purposes they serve.

A Comparative Perspective on English and Uzbek Short Stories

A comparative study of English and Uzbek short stories can reveal both shared communicative functions and culturally specific uses of phraseological units. In both traditions, these expressions can intensify emotion, reproduce everyday speech, communicate evaluation, and connect individual experiences with broader social meanings.

Nevertheless, their cultural associations may differ. Some expressions may reflect particular traditions of family relationships, respect, social responsibility, or communal life, while others draw on different conventional images [7]. Such distinctions should be established through textual evidence rather than assumed to represent entire cultures.

This approach makes it possible to distinguish superficial similarities from deeper intertextual relationships and to explain how phraseological units contribute to the distinctive character of each literary tradition.

Implications for Translation and Interpretation

Phraseological units create particular challenges in translation because their figurative meanings and cultural associations may not have direct equivalents in another language. A literal translation can preserve the wording but lose the intended meaning, while substituting a familiar expression may introduce associations absent from the original.

Translators must therefore consider the function of the expression within the narrative [8]. If it primarily conveys an emotion, a functional equivalent may be appropriate. If it refers to a particular proverb or literary tradition, replacing it with an unrelated idiom may weaken the intertextual connection.

Understanding these expressions also benefits language learning and literary interpretation. Rather than memorizing idioms in isolation, readers should examine how they function within particular situations and how their meanings relate to cultural knowledge.

Conclusion

Phraseological units are important resources for intertextual meaning in English and Uzbek short stories. Through their established meanings, cultural associations, and potential for transformation, they connect individual narratives with familiar expressions, traditional knowledge, and wider literary contexts.

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Their functions extend beyond communication: they contribute to characterization, intensify emotions, create irony, and reinforce narrative themes. However, their intertextual significance must be established through careful examination of their form, context, and identifiable associations.

A comparative approach reveals how English and Uzbek writers use phraseological units to express shared human experiences while drawing on different linguistic and cultural traditions. Ultimately, studying these expressions offers a deeper understanding of how inherited language acquires new meanings and enriches literary discourse.

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