
THE NEED FOR AND SIGNIFICANCE OF STUDYING SIDNEY SHELDON'S NOVEL "IF TOMORROW COMES" FROM A LINGUOCULTURAL PERSPECTIVE

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ABSTRACT

This article examines Sidney Sheldon's novel *If Tomorrow Comes* from a linguocultural perspective. The English original, the Russian intermediary translation, and the Uzbek translation are comparatively analyzed to identify the linguocultural features of ethnographic units, social realia, religious expressions, metaphors, phraseological units, and culture-specific geographical elements represented in the novel. Particular attention is paid to the preservation, adaptation, generalization, and semantic transformation of cultural information during the translation process from English into Uzbek through Russian. The findings demonstrate that the novel constitutes a valuable source for studying the interaction between language and culture, as well as the processes of recoding, cultural adaptation, and transformation of linguocultural information in translation.

Keywords: linguoculture, literary text, linguocultural unit, Sidney Sheldon, *If Tomorrow Comes*, translation, ethnographic unit, social realia, religious unit, metaphor, phraseological unit, cultural information.

Contemporary linguistic studies devoted to the relationship between language and culture recognize literary texts as one of the richest and most complex sources of linguocultural information. This is because literary works not only explicitly represent a nation's historical memory, social experience, national values, and cultural stereotypes, but also embody them through the system of images, the author's perspective, the speech of the characters, and various expressive devices. From this perspective, a literary text is not merely an aggregate of linguistic units, but rather functions as a conceptual model of a particular linguocultural space.

Another important factor determining the significance of contemporary English novels in linguocultural studies is their translation into numerous languages. In the process of translation, linguistic and cultural units belonging to one cultural environment are transferred into another cultural space. Consequently, the original text and its translated versions provide valuable opportunities for linguocultural comparison. Such comparative analysis makes it possible to identify the extent to which cultural meanings are preserved, transformed, or neutralized. In particular, national realia, religious units, phraseological expressions, and metaphors constitute the most sensitive layers of linguocultural specificity in translation.

Another factor determining the linguocultural value of a literary text is its multilayered semantic structure. Alongside the meanings explicitly expressed by the author, literary texts also contain implicit cultural meanings. These meanings are often associated with historical realities, social experiences, religious beliefs, or collective memory. As Sh. Safarov points out, the content-related aspect of speech activity often relies on systems of knowledge extending beyond the text

itself*. Therefore, linguocultural analysis of a literary text is not limited to describing linguistic units; it also involves reconstructing the cultural information underlying those units.

Table 1.

Main reasons for a linguacultural study of the novel “If Tomorrow Comes”

No.	Main reason	Description
1	Linguocultural richness of the literary text	The novel reflects historical memory, social experience, national values, and cultural stereotypes.
2	Representation of Anglo-American culture	The social structure of American society and such values as individual freedom, success, competition, and individualism are represented.
3	Speech of different social groups	Formal and informal communication, social status, ethno-regional identification, and religious beliefs are reflected in the characters' speech.
4	Integration of national and universal values	Universal concepts such as freedom, justice, loyalty, love, and conscience are integrated with the cultural values of American society.
5	Availability of translations	A comparison of the original and translated versions makes it possible to identify the preservation or transformation of cultural meanings.
6	Multilayered semantics	Alongside explicit meanings, the text contains implicit cultural meanings.
7	Abundance of linguocultural units	Realia, religious units, phraseological expressions, metaphors, and other culture-specific units are actively employed.

In the global literary process, works that are widely read by a broad audience are often regarded as examples of popular literature. However, contemporary philological studies demonstrate that the popularity of such works does not diminish their scholarly value. On the contrary, literary texts embraced by millions of readers constitute an important source for examining the social attitudes, cultural stereotypes, system of values, and collective mentality of a particular society. From this perspective, the literary oeuvre of Sidney Sheldon, one of the prominent representatives of twentieth-century American literature, is of particular significance for linguocultural research.

His works attract scholarly attention because they provide literary representations of the lives of people belonging to various social strata of American society, the system of social relations, economic and political realities, as well as values characteristic of contemporary Western culture. The distinctive feature of Sidney Sheldon's literary oeuvre is manifested, above all, in the fact that his works reflect not only the external aspects of reality but also the internal patterns and cultural codes governing a particular cultural space[†].

Sidney Sheldon's novel *If Tomorrow Comes* reached Uzbek readers under the title *Orziqib kutaman ertani*. The significance of this work for linguocultural research is determined, first and

* Safarov, Sh. S. *Pragmalinguistics*. Tashkent: State Scientific Publishing House of the National Encyclopedia of Uzbekistan, 2008. 320 p.

[†] Wijayanti K. *Anxiety of Tracy Whitney in Sidney Sheldon's If Tomorrow Comes: A Psychoanalytic Approach*: Undergraduate Thesis. – Surakarta: Muhammadiyah University of Surakarta, 2009. – 79 p

foremost, by the fact that it exists simultaneously in three linguistic and cultural layers: the English original, the Russian intermediary translation, and the Uzbek translation. The fact that the novel was translated into Uzbek not directly from English but through Russian is of particular importance for linguocultural analysis. This is because, in such a case, the cultural content undergoes a two-stage process of transformation: initially, a culture-specific unit characteristic of Anglo-American culture is re-expressed in Russian, after which the Russian text is rendered into Uzbek through a literary interpretation.

In this process, the cultural connotations of some units are preserved, while others are adapted, and still others are conveyed through descriptive explanations or generalization. In translation theory, such a phenomenon is regarded as the recoding of cultural content through an intermediary language[‡]. From this perspective, the novel *Orziqib kutaman ertani* represents not merely a literary text but also a complex research corpus through which processes of intercultural transfer, semantic shifts, and linguocultural adaptation can be observed.

Table 2.

Three-Language Research Model of the Novel

Stage	Text	Cultural Process
Stage 1	English original – <i>If Tomorrow Comes</i>	Linguocultural units characteristic of American culture are formed and represented.
Stage 2	Russian translation – <i>Если наступит завтра</i>	The original culture-specific units are re-expressed in Russian.
Stage 3	Uzbek translation – <i>Orziqib kutaman ertani</i>	The text is adapted for Uzbek readers on the basis of the Russian intermediary text.
Result	English → Russian → Uzbek	Cultural information undergoes a two-stage process of recoding.

The linguocultural potential of the work is manifested, first and foremost, in the active use of ethnographic units. Ethnographisms, as units that represent the everyday life, dress culture, dietary practices, social rituals, and domestic environment of a particular people, convey national and cultural information within a literary text[§]. The units occurring in the novel, such as “*negligee*,” “*cheese steaks*,” “*cassoulet*,” “*Mardi Gras*,” “*café au lait*,” “*beignets*,” “*shrimp gumbo*,” and “*Irish stew*” introduce into the text markers of real life associated with American, French, Italian, Irish, and other cultural layers. For example, the English text contains the passage “*She selected a bright red negligee to wear so that the blood would not show*,” which is rendered in Russian as “*яркую красную ночную рубашку*” and in Uzbek as “*qirmizi rangli ichki ko‘ylak*”^{**}. Here, the unit “*negligee*” functions as an ethnographism associated with Western dress culture, whereas in the Russian and Uzbek translations it is conveyed through a more general term denoting an item of everyday clothing. Thus, the ethnographic units in the work not only represent the cultural environment but also reveal processes of cultural specification, generalization, and adaptation in translation. Food-related terms constitute another important layer of linguocultural information in the novel. In the sentence “*They ate cheese steaks at a pavement table at Geno’s and dined at the Café Royal*,” the units “*cheese steaks*” and

[‡] Vlahov, S., & Florin, S. *The Untranslatable in Translation*. Moscow: International Relations, 1980. 352 p.

[§] Maslova, V. A. *Linguoculturology: A Textbook*. Moscow: Akademiya, 2001. 208 p.

^{**} Sheldon, S. *If Tomorrow Comes*. New York: William Morrow and Company, 1985. 501 p.

“*Café Royal*” convey markers of American urban culture, eating establishments, and social status, whereas in the Uzbek translation they are rendered descriptively as “*pishloqdan tayyorlangan kotletlar*” and “*Filadelfiyaning eng qimmatbaho restoranlaridan biri*”^{††}. In this case, rather than preserving the cultural name in its original form, the translator chooses a descriptive expression that is more accessible to Uzbek readers. A similar case can be observed with the unit “*cassoulet*”: while the English text retains the specific name of a dish associated with French cuisine, the Uzbek translation provides a description of its ingredients as “*loviya solib go’sht qovurmoq*”^{‡‡}. Such examples demonstrate the abundance of gastronomic ethnographisms in the novel and indicate that, in translation, they are frequently conveyed through cultural compensation and descriptive adaptation.

Table 3.

Rendering of Ethnographisms in Translation

English Original	Russian Translation	Uzbek Translation	Transformation in Translation
<i>negligee</i>	ночную рубашку	<i>ichki ko‘ylak</i>	A specific culture-bound term is rendered through a more general term denoting an item of clothing.
<i>cheese steaks</i>	сырные стейки	<i>pishloqdan tayyorlangan kotletlar</i>	Descriptive translation.
<i>Café Royal</i>	кафе «Ройал»	<i>Filadelfiyaning eng qimmatbaho restoranlaridan biri</i>	The name is rendered through a descriptive explanation.
<i>cassoulet</i>	кассуле	<i>loviya solib go’sht qovurmoq</i>	The French dish name is transformed into a description of its ingredients and method of preparation.

The second major layer determining the linguocultural potential of the work is associated with social realia. The events of the novel unfold against the background of social institutions connected with banks, courts, prisons, the police, mass media, intelligence agencies, and the international criminal underworld. Units such as “*district attorney*”, “*Criminal Court of the State of Louisiana*”, “*Southern Louisiana Penitentiary for Women*”, “*CIA*”, “*FBP*”, “*Secret Service*”, “*Treasury Department*” and “*Interpol*” constitute linguistic markers of the legal, administrative, and political structures characteristic of American society. For example, the sentence “*By order of the Criminal Court of the State of Louisiana...*” is rendered in Russian through legal and judicial terminology, while in Uzbek it is translated as “*Luiziana shtati Jinoyat sudining ... qaroriga binoan*”^{§§}. These units create the sociocultural background of the text and reveal the legal order and institutional structure of the society in which the characters operate. Therefore, the novel provides rich material for the linguocultural analysis of social realia.

Religious units also perform a specific cultural function in the novel. They are primarily manifested in connection with Christian culture, religious rituals, and beliefs. Units such as “*Mardi*

^{††} Sheldon, S. *If Tomorrow Comes* [Если наступит завтра]. Translated from English. Moscow: AST, 2004. 432 p.

^{‡‡} Sheldon, S. *Orziqib kutaman ertani: Novel*. Translated from Russian by Shoir Usmonxo‘jayev. Tashkent: Yangi asr avlodi, 2018. 368 p.

^{§§} Komissarov, V. N. *Contemporary Translation Studies*. Moscow: ETS, 2004. 424 p.

Gras”, “*Lent*”, “*Dear God*”, “*For God’s sake*”, and “*angel of mercy*” contribute to characterizing the characters’ psychological states, cultural environment, and speech patterns. The sentence “*Of course. It was February, the time when the whole city celebrated the beginning of Lent*” is rendered in the Uzbek translation as “*Fevral – butun boshli shahar Buyuk ro‘za boshlanishini bayram qiladigan vaqt*”^{***}. In this example, “*Lent*,” as a theological and culture-specific concept associated with the Christian religious calendar, constitutes an ethno-religious layer of the text. The use of the expression “*Buyuk ro‘za*” in the Uzbek translation makes it possible to convey the religious concept through a lexical pattern that is relatively more familiar to Uzbek readers.

Metaphorical representations constitute another major means of enhancing the linguocultural potential of the work. In a literary text, metaphor not only creates imagery but also reveals culture-specific patterns of evaluation, perception, and associative thinking^{†††}. In the novel, metaphorical expressions such as “*He was a bulldog, with a computer for a brain*” and “*The penitentiary had a music all its own*” serve to convey the characters’ psychological states, the intensity of situations, and the psychological pressure of the social environment^{‡‡‡}. For instance, the description of prison life as having “*a music all its own*” presents the sounds of iron doors, ringing bells, guards’ radio communications, and nighttime screams as a unified acoustic landscape. This representation portrays the prison not simply as a physical location but as a closed social space characterized by its own internal rules and distinctive auditory markers. Thus, metaphors in the novel deepen the representation of the cultural environment from psychological and emotional perspectives.

Table 4.

Major Linguocultural Units in the Novel

No.	Type of Linguocultural Unit	Examples from the Text	Main Cultural Meaning
1	Ethnographisms	<i>negligee, cheese steaks, cassoulet, café au lait, beignets, shrimp gumbo, Irish stew</i>	Clothing, food, and lifestyle
2	Social realia	<i>district attorney, CIA, FBI, Secret Service, Interpol</i>	Legal, political, and social systems
3	Religious units	<i>Mardi Gras, Lent, Dear God, For God’s sake</i>	Christian religious and cultural environment
4	Metaphors	<i>He was a bulldog...; The penitentiary had a music...</i>	Imagery, psychological states, and cultural perception
5	Phraseological expressions and slang	<i>got busted, fresh meat, big house, cop, grand</i>	Informal communication and social-group identity

^{***} Sheldon, S. *Orziqib kutaman ertani: Novel*. Translated from Russian by Shoir Usmonxo‘jayev. Tashkent: Yangi asr avlodi, 2018. 368 p.

^{†††} Yo‘ldoshev, M. *Literary Text and Its Linguopoetic Analysis*. Tashkent: Fan, 2007. 123 p.

^{‡‡‡} Kubryakova, E. S. *Language and Knowledge: Towards the Acquisition of Knowledge about Language: Parts of Speech from a Cognitive Perspective. The Role of Language in Cognizing the World*. Moscow: Languages of Slavic Culture, 2004. 560 p.; Bennison, N. “Accessing Character through Conversation: Tom Stoppard’s *Professional Foul*.” In J. Culpeper, M. Short & P. Verdonk (Eds.), *Exploring the Language of Drama: From Text to Context*. London and New York: Routledge, 1998, pp. 67–82.

Another aspect determining the linguocultural potential of the work is the abundance of cultural shifts that emerge in the translation process. Some units in the English text are retained in Russian, while others are adapted to Russian cultural and pragmatic norms. In the Uzbek translation, certain units may acquire additional shades of meaning based on their Russian interpretation.

It can therefore be concluded that the linguocultural potential of *Orziqib kutaman ertani* is determined by the extensive use of ethnographic units, religious concepts, social realia, metaphorical representations, phraseological devices, speech units with paremiological content, and national and cultural markers. The fact that the novel was translated from the English original into Uzbek through Russian makes it possible to trace the two-stage transformation of cultural content. The material of the novel provides a sufficient basis for a comprehensive study of the semantic, pragmatic, and translational characteristics of linguocultural units.

From this perspective, the novel can be regarded as a significant literary source that is linguoculturally multilayered and multicultural and that demonstrates the mechanisms through which cultural information is preserved and transformed in the process of translation.

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