



## THE NECESSITY AND SIGNIFICANCE OF STUDYING LITERARY WORKS FROM A LINGUOCULTURAL PERSPECTIVE (BASED ON SIDNEY SHELDON'S *IF TOMORROW COMES*)

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### Abstract

This article examines the necessity and significance of studying literary works from a linguocultural perspective, with particular reference to Sidney Sheldon's novel *If Tomorrow Comes* and its Uzbek translation *Orziqib kutaman ertani*. The study focuses on the representation and transmission of linguocultural information through various linguistic and stylistic means in the English original, the Russian intermediary translation, and the Uzbek translation. Particular attention is paid to ethnographic units, social realia, religious expressions, metaphors, phraseological and slang units, and paremiological expressions as important carriers of national and cultural information. The analysis demonstrates that literary texts constitute complex conceptual spaces in which historical experience, cultural values, social relations, collective perceptions, and culturally specific patterns of thought are linguistically and artistically represented. The study also reveals that translation through an intermediary language may result in the preservation, transformation, generalization, adaptation, or partial neutralization of culturally marked units. The comparative analysis of the original and translated versions demonstrates that linguocultural units play an important role in representing the cultural environment of the source text, while their translation requires appropriate strategies for maintaining or compensating for their cultural and pragmatic meanings. The findings confirm that Sidney Sheldon's *If Tomorrow Comes* provides valuable empirical material for investigating the interaction of language and culture, as well as the mechanisms of intercultural transmission and linguocultural transformation in literary translation.

**Keywords:** linguocultural studies, literary text, linguocultural units, language and culture, cultural information, ethnographic units, social realia, religious units, metaphor, phraseological units, slang, paremiological units, literary translation, cultural adaptation, Sidney Sheldon, *If Tomorrow Comes*.

Contemporary linguistic research devoted to the study of the relationship between language and culture recognizes literary texts as one of the richest and



most complex sources of linguocultural information. This is attributable to the fact that a literary work embodies a nation's historical memory, social experience, national values, and cultural stereotypes not only through their direct nomination but also through the system of imagery, the author's viewpoint, the speech of characters, and various expressive means. From this perspective, a literary text is not merely an aggregate of linguistic units but rather manifests itself as a conceptual framework of a particular linguocultural space. V. A. Maslova emphasizes that one of the principal objectives of linguocultural studies is to identify the cultural content reflected in linguistic units, while noting that literary texts constitute one of the most appropriate sources for observing this process<sup>1</sup>. In global linguocultural studies, the scholarly value of literary texts is primarily associated with their capacity to preserve and transmit national culture. Every literary work embodies the social environment, cultural norms, and system of values characteristic of the period in which its author lived. Therefore, literary works are valuable for linguistic research not only as aesthetic phenomena but also as cultural and historical documents. As E. S. Kubryakova points out, "Language is the principal means through which human knowledge of the world is formed and preserved"<sup>2</sup>. From this perspective, a literary text can be regarded as a conceptual space reflecting how a particular people perceive, evaluate, and interpret the world.

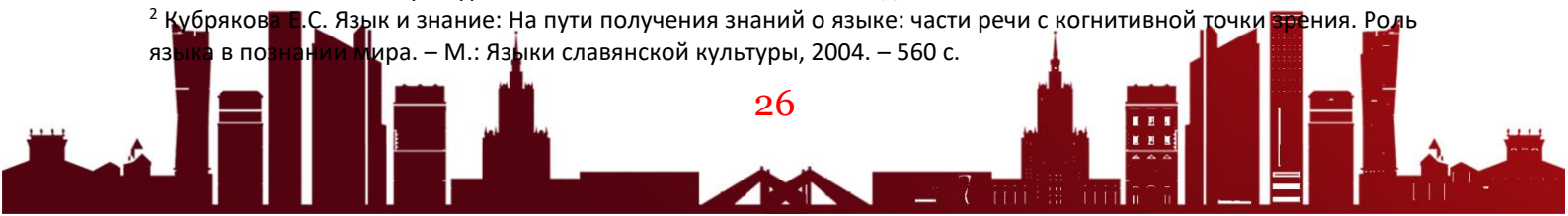
Another important factor determining the significance of contemporary English novels for linguocultural studies is their translation into numerous languages. In the process of translation, linguistic units belonging to one culture are transferred into another cultural environment. Consequently, original texts and their translated versions provide valuable opportunities for comparative linguocultural analysis. Such comparative analysis makes it possible to identify the degree to which cultural content is preserved, transformed, or neutralized. In particular, national realia, religious units, phraseological units, and metaphors constitute some of 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 explicitly expressed meaning conveyed by the author, literary texts also contain implicit cultural meanings. These meanings are frequently associated with historical realities, social experiences, religious beliefs, or collective memory. According to Sh. Safarov, the

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<sup>1</sup> Маслова В.А. Лингвокультуроология: Учебное пособие. – М.: Академия, 2001. – 208 с.

<sup>2</sup> Кубрякова Е.С. Язык и знание: На пути получения знаний о языке: части речи с когнитивной точки зрения. Роль языка в познании мира. – М.: Языки славянской культуры, 2004. – 560 с.





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semantic dimension of speech activity often relies on a system of knowledge extending beyond the text itself<sup>3</sup>. Therefore, a linguocultural analysis of a literary text is not limited to describing linguistic units but also involves reconstructing the cultural information underlying them. It can thus be concluded that contemporary English literature constitutes a multilayered and multifaceted source for linguocultural research. Through linguistic means, it artistically represents the historical experience, cultural values, social relations, and conceptual perspectives of a particular society. These characteristics make novels written in English important scholarly material for linguocultural analysis and enable them to be considered an effective source for investigating the interaction between language and culture.

Within the global literary process, works widely read by the general public are often regarded as examples of popular literature. However, contemporary philological research demonstrates that the popularity of such works does not diminish their scholarly value. On the contrary, literary texts read and appreciated by millions of readers constitute important sources reflecting the social attitudes, cultural stereotypes, value systems, and collective mentality of particular societies. In this respect, the creative work 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 artistic interpretations of the lives of people belonging to various strata of American society, systems of social relations, economic and political realities, as well as values characteristic of contemporary Western culture. The distinctive nature of Sidney Sheldon's literary oeuvre is manifested primarily in the fact that his works portray not only the external aspects of reality but also the internal principles governing a particular cultural environment<sup>4</sup>. In the fictional world created by the author, relations between the individual and society, the conflict between the individual and power, and issues of law and justice emerge as central themes. Such themes may be encountered in the works of many writers; however, in Sheldon's novels they are represented in close interaction with the cultural perceptions characteristic of American social life and Western civilization<sup>5</sup>. Therefore, the writer's works are distinguished not

<sup>3</sup> Сафаров Ш.С. Прагмалингвистика. – Тошкент: Ўзбекистон миллий энциклопедияси давлат илмий нашриёти, 2008. – 320 б.

<sup>4</sup> 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

<sup>5</sup> Purnamasari L.A. The Absurdity of Tracy Whitney's Life in *If Tomorrow Comes* by Sidney Sheldon: Undergraduate Thesis. – Yogyakarta: Sanata Dharma University, 2017. – 62 p.



only by their plot construction or predominance of detective elements but also by the richness of their linguocultural layer.

Another factor that makes Sidney Sheldon's literary oeuvre significant from a linguocultural perspective is the expression of national and cultural content through a variety of linguistic means. His novels actively employ ethnographic units, social realia, religious nominations, metaphorical expressions, phraseological units, and other linguistic devices possessing cultural connotations. These units not only enhance the artistic and aesthetic value of the text but also transmit information associated with a particular culture. Consequently, the author's works provide abundant empirical material for linguocultural analysis. It can be concluded that the linguocultural potential of Sidney Sheldon's oeuvre is determined by the extensive representation of the sociocultural realities of American society, contemporary Western values, the speech characteristics of various social groups, and linguistic units conveying national and cultural content. These features make the writer's novels significant not only as literary works but also as important scholarly sources for linguocultural research.

Sidney Sheldon's novel *If Tomorrow Comes*, which reached Uzbek readers under the title *Orziqib kutaman ertani*, is particularly significant for linguocultural research because it simultaneously exists within three linguistic and cultural layers: the English original, the Russian intermediary translation, and the Uzbek translation. The fact that the work was translated into Uzbek not directly from English but through Russian is of particular importance for linguocultural analysis. In such a situation, cultural content undergoes a two-stage transformation: first, a unit characteristic of Anglo-American culture is re-expressed in Russian; subsequently, the Russian text is artistically interpreted in Uzbek. During this process, the cultural load of certain units is preserved, some are adapted, while others are rendered through descriptive explanations or generalization. In translation theory, such a phenomenon may be viewed as the recoding of cultural content through an intermediary language<sup>6</sup>. In this respect, *Orziqib kutaman ertani* represents not merely a literary text but also a complex research material through which processes of intercultural transmission, semantic shift, and linguocultural adaptation can be examined.

The linguocultural potential of the work is manifested, first and foremost, in the extensive use of ethnographic units. Ethnographisms function in literary texts as units denoting the everyday life, clothing culture, dietary practices, social

<sup>6</sup> Власов С., Флорин С. Непереводимое в переводе. – Москва: Международные отношения, 1980. – 352 с.



rituals, and domestic environment of a particular people, thereby conveying national and cultural information<sup>7</sup>. Units such as “negligee”, “cheese steaks”, “cassoulet”, “Mardi Gras”, “café au lait”, “beignets”, “shrimp gumbo” and “Irish stew,” occurring in the novel, introduce into the text elements associated with American, French, Italian, Irish, and other cultural traditions. For example, the English passage “She selected a bright red negligee to wear so that the blood would not show” is rendered in Russian as “яркую красную ночную рубашку” and in Uzbek as “qirmizi rangli ichki ko‘ylak”<sup>8</sup>. Here, negligee represents a domestic ethnographism associated with Western clothing culture, whereas the Russian and Uzbek translations employ more general terms denoting an item of clothing. Thus, ethnographic units in the work not only indicate 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 *Café Royal* convey elements of American urban culture, eating establishments, and indicators of social status, whereas in the Uzbek translation they are rendered as “pishloqdan tayyorlangan kotletlar” and “Filodelfiyaning eng qimmatbaho restoranlaridan biri” respectively<sup>9</sup>. In this case, rather than preserving the cultural name in its original form, the translator employs a descriptive expression that is more accessible to Uzbek readers. A similar phenomenon can be observed in the rendering of *cassoulet*: while the English text retains the specific name of a French dish, the Uzbek translation describes it as “loviya solib go’sht qovurmoq” thus providing a description of its ingredients and preparation<sup>10</sup>. Such examples demonstrate that gastronomic ethnographisms constitute a substantial part of the linguocultural content of the work and are frequently rendered in translation through cultural compensation.

The second important 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 banking, courts, prisons, the police, mass media, intelligence agencies, and international organized crime. Units such as “district attorney”, “Criminal Court of the State of Louisiana”,

<sup>7</sup> Маслова В.А. Лингвокультурология: учеб. пособие. – Москва: Академия, 2001. – 208 с.

<sup>8</sup> Sheldon S. If Tomorrow Comes. – New York: William Morrow and Company, 1985. – 501 p.

<sup>9</sup> Шелдон С. Если наступит завтра. Пер. с англ. – Москва: АСТ, 2004. – 432 с.

<sup>10</sup> Шелдон С. Орзиқиб кутаман эртани: роман / русчадан Шоир Усмонхўжаев таржимаси. – Тошкент: Янги аср авлоди, 2018. – 368 б.



“Southern Louisiana Penitentiary for Women”, “CIA”, “FBI”, “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 judicial and legal terminology and in Uzbek as “Luiziana shtati Jinoyat sudining ... qaroriga binoan”<sup>11</sup>. These units create the sociocultural background of the text and reveal the legal system and institutional structure of the society in which the characters operate. Therefore, the novel provides abundant material for the linguocultural analysis of social realia.

Religious units in the novel also perform a specific cultural function. Such units are primarily associated with Christian culture, religious rituals, and beliefs. Expressions such as “Mardi Gras,” “Lent,” “Dear God,” “For God’s sake,” and “angel of mercy” serve to characterize the psychological state of the characters, their cultural environment, and their speech habits. 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”<sup>12</sup>. In this example, Lent functions as a theological and cultural concept associated with the Christian religious calendar and contributes to the ethnoreligious layer of the text. The use of the expression “Buyuk ro‘za” in the Uzbek translation enables the religious concept to be conveyed through a lexical pattern more familiar to Uzbek readers.

Metaphorical representations in the novel constitute another major means of enhancing its linguocultural potential. In a literary text, metaphor not only creates imagery but also reveals culturally specific patterns of evaluation, perception, and associative thinking<sup>13</sup>. Metaphorical units such as “He was a bulldog, with a computer for a brain,” “The penitentiary had a music all its own,” and “I have butterflies the size of dinosaurs” serve to express the characters’ psychological states, the intensity of situations, and the psychological pressure of the social environment<sup>14</sup>. For instance, the representation 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 image presents the penitentiary not merely as a physical location but as a closed

<sup>11</sup> Комиссаров В.Н. Современное переводоведение. – Москва: ЭТС, 2004. – 424 с

<sup>12</sup> Шелдон С. Орзиқиб кутаман эртани: роман / русчадан Шоир Усмонхўжаев таржимаси. – Тошкент: Янги аср авлоди, 2018. – 368 б.

<sup>13</sup> Йўлдошев М. Бадий матн ва унинг лингвопоэтик таҳлили. – Тошкент: Фан, 2007. – 123 б.

<sup>14</sup> 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.



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social space possessing its own internal rules and distinctive acoustic markers. Thus, metaphors in the novel deepen the representation of the cultural environment from psychological and emotional perspectives.

Phraseological units and colloquial patterns in the novel constitute another distinct linguocultural layer. In particular, expressions associated with the criminal world, prison environment, and informal communication demonstrate a strong presence of slang and expressiveness characteristic of American English. Units such as “got busted,” “fresh meat,” “big house,” “cop,” “John,” “grand,” and “stickin’ our necks out” are significant not merely for their lexical meanings but also as markers of membership in particular social groups<sup>15</sup>. For example, in the sentence “If you’re headin’ for the big house...,” big house is a slang expression meaning “prison,” which is rendered in the Uzbek translation as “davlat uyi”<sup>16</sup>. In this case, the informal connotation of the original expression associated with prison culture is partially retained in Uzbek; however, its social coloring characteristic of American slang undergoes a transformation. In this respect, the novel also represents an important source for examining the cultural transformation of phraseological and slang units.

Paremiological devices and sentential speech units in the novel serve to express the characters' life experience, evaluative criteria, and social conclusions. Such units do not always occur in the form of conventional proverbs but may be realized as proverbial statements, aphoristic expressions, or formulations of practical life principles. For example, the sentence “The world’s full of pricks, but you don’t spend your life goin’ round cuttin’ off their balls” is rendered in Russian in a highly expressive form and in Uzbek as “дунё бунақа аблаҳлар билан тўлиб кетганки, уларнинг уруғини қуритишинг учун бутун умринг ҳам етмайди”<sup>17</sup> [17]. This passage possesses the character of a folk-like generalization and expresses the character's attitude toward life and a conclusion based on personal experience. Similar units function in the text as expressions of social evaluation, moral attitudes, and practical life experience.

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 of paremiological content, and national-cultural markers. The fact that the work was translated from the English original into Uzbek

<sup>15</sup> Кунин А.В. Фразеология современного английского языка. – Москва: Высшая школа, 1996. – 380 с.

<sup>16</sup> Красных В.В. Этнопсихоллингвистика и лингвокультурология. – М.: Гнозис, 2002. – 284 с.

<sup>17</sup> Воробьев В.В. Лингвокультурология: теория и методы. – М.: Изд-во РУДН, 1997. – 331 с., Махмудов Н.М. Тилнинг мукаммал тадқиқи йўлларини излаб... // Ўзбек тили ва адабиёти. – Тошкент, 2012. – №5. – Б.3–16.



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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. In this respect, the work may be regarded as a multilayered and multicultural literary source that reveals the mechanisms through which cultural information is preserved and transformed in the process of translation.

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