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PHRASEOLOGICAL EQUIVALENTS AND LITERARY TRANSLATION: CHINESE, ENGLISH AND THE SLAVONIC LANGUAGES

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SUMMARY

The objective of this paper is to outline phraseological units in Chinese, English and the Slavonic languages apt to be employed as equivalents proper in the aspect of translation. The results of the study were obtained according to the procedure comprising the following stages. 1. The detection of phrasemes with close or identical cultural semantics. 2. The determination of the unity/similarity of the prototypical situation behind the multi-lingual phrasemes compared. 3. The comparison of the lexical composition of phrasemes for the coincidence of the semantics of the vocabularies forming them in all the languages under analysis during the literal interpretation of the phrasemes. 4. The determination of the similarity/identity of the syntactic construction of phrasemes in the languages compared. 5. The modeling of common building patterns for phraseological units with a certain cultural and ideological load relevant for the cultures represented by Chinese, English and the Slavonic languages.

Keywords: literary translation, phraseme, structure, lexical semantics, prototypical situation, concept, discourse, native picture of the world.

Introduction. The methodological tools used in modern translation studies enable the effective handling of challenges related to the substitution of one system of cultural meanings for another. It is but natural that improving translation techniques requires thorough study of linguistic material over time. Hence, new translations are introduced into literary or scientific circulation, which often better reflect the original content compared to previously proposed translations.

The selection of phraseological equivalents presents a difficulty: even phrasemes with identical etymological composition and similar structure in the two related languages often have different meanings and therefore cannot be used interchangeably in translation. This situation may be illustrated not only by the phraseological units associated with cultural specificity or the historical background of nations, but also by the expressions, containing the body parts names. Cf., e.g., Russ. *ходит по головам*, Ukr. *ходить по головах* ‘rudely, assertively, oppress people’ VS Czech *chodit po hlavě* ‘to be naughty, to indulge; to do stupid things’ or Russ. *свалиться на голову*, Ukr. *впасти на голову* ‘happen accidentally’ VS *padá/padne co na či hlavu* fig. ‘someone has to be responsible for something’. As we can see, phraseological units that are almost identical in terms of expression do not coincide in terms of content, so they cannot be used as translation equivalents.

An important role in working with such cases, of course, is played by the sources of phraseology, where, with due attention and a sober assessment of the data of the source language (in a broader sense, the culture reflected in it) and the target language with its ideology, it is possible to find exactly the unit that most accurately conveys the meaning of a stable expression in the original text, covering the main contours of the prototypical situation behind it. The search for phrasemes-equivalents necessary for literary translation turns out to be a constant of the translator's work, therefore scientific support of the search process will always be **relevant**.

The proposed publication **aims** to address specific challenges in selecting equivalent phrases for translation between languages, which (a) have different grammatical systems, cardinal differences in word morphology, and semantic derivation, (b) are from different genetic families. The **tasks** are defined as follows:

- identification in languages of different systems (Chinese, English and Slavonic) of a group of phrasemes with identical (or close) ideological content, and therefore capable of acting as equivalents in the translation of texts into all these languages;

- the classification of these phraseological units according to the type of prototypical situation they implement (it implies an integral image existing in ethnic consciousness, a model of a situation, typical for the cultural experience of a particular people, which cognizes and conceptualizes the objects and relations of reality);

- typology of semantic schemes according to which phraseological units are built in these languages. In fact, these schemes reflect the logic of the prototypical situation at the level of language signs and the ways of their connection and combination.

The tasks are solved step by step, and the result is shown as a sum of models organizing phraseological semantics. These models are confirmed by a «cluster» of phraseological units, demonstrating a unified organizational principle across the observed languages.

Theoretical background. The study is based on the postulates of translation studies and comparative linguistics. Cf. reflection

of some of them in the works of J. Vlček «Úskalí ruské slovní zásoby. Slovník rusko-české homonymie a paronymie» (Praha : Svět sovětů, 1966), M. Hrdlička «Ještě k překladu frazeologizmů» (*ToP.* 1998. 9, pp. 17), «Frazeologie a frazeologizmy jako překladatelský problém» (*ToP.* 1997. 7, pp. 2–6), «Frazeologizmy a jejich translace» (*Eurolitteraria & eurolingua.* Liberec : TU Liberec, 2004, pp. 297–304), A. Duff «The third language: recurrent problems of translation into English» (Oxford : Pergamon Press, 1981), I. V. Korunets «Comparative Typology of English and Ukrainian Languages» (Kyiv : Lybid, 1995), N. D. Ignatieva «Interlingual Phraseological Homonymy as a Source of Interference» (2016).

Methodology. The main methods used are *descriptive, comparative, the method of linguistic construction, the method of analyzing dictionary definitions.* The tasks in total, together with the methods and material used, predetermined the procedural **scheme of the study.**

1. The detection of phrasemes with similar or identical cultural semantics in the compared languages (Chinese, English, and Slavonic).

2. Establishing the unity/similarity of the prototypical situation behind the multi-lingual phrasemes compared.

3. The comparison of the lexical composition of phrasemes: to what extent does the semantics of the vocabulas that form them coincide in all the languages compared when reading the phraseme literally?

4. Determining the similarity/identity of the syntactic construction of phrasemes in the languages compared.

5. Modeling of building patterns common to the compared languages employed in phraseological units with a certain cultural and ideological load, relevant for the cultures represented by Chinese, English and the Slavonic languages.

The typology of schemes for constructing the semantics of phrasemes-equivalents in Chinese, English and the Slavonic languages

«Black heart»

Chinese 黑心肠 [hēi xīncháng] ‘villain’, ‘scoundrel’ (lit. – *Black heart*) : Russ. Чёрное сердце ‘Ibid.’ : Eng. *Dark heart* ‘Ibid’.

«Fresh blood»

Chinese 鲜血 [xiān xiě] (lit. — *Fresh blood*) : Eng. *Fresh blood* ‘new forces’ : Russ. *Свежая кровь* (figuratively — new people or the ideas, approaches they bring to an organization or group).

Despite the uniformity of the set of words (adj. *fresh* + subst. *blood*), which constitute this set expression in three languages, the Chinese phraseme has its own special ideological load, which is based on various cultural associations. For example, the red color, in Ancient China, is a symbol of imperial power, the rank color of the nobility, and in the People’s Republic of China it is the color of state attributes (the blood-red color is associated with the red color of the Revolution). Cf., e.g., in: (YuFeng 2018: 88).

«Until the head turns grey»

Chinese 白头到老 [bái tóu dào lǎo] ‘living together till hair turns grey’ (lit. — *Until the head turns white*) : Russ. *Пока голова не побелеет* : Ukr. *Доки голова не посивіє*.

However, despite the semantic identity of both phraseological units, they still have a different cultural background. For example, the Chinese one goes back to the legend of how one of the Jing rulers sent an ambassador to the kingdom of Lu, where he saw a gray-haired woman patiently caring for a gray-haired man who was working in the fields. The ambassador was deeply impressed with the touching relationship of the married couple and he thought that it would be great to grow old together and survive to gray/white hair in love and respect (中国成语大辞典, 1994).

«To do smth. after some doing»

Chinese 亡羊补牢 [wáng yáng bǔ láo] ‘making it all right after the come consequences’ (lit. — *Repair the pen after the sheep have died*) : Russ. *Махать кулаками после драки* : Ukr. *Після бійки кулаками не махають (не машуть); Повів коня кувати, як кузня згоріла* (Вирган, Пилинська 2000: 424, 465–466).

«To do smth. before animal»

Chinese 对牛弹琴 [duì niú tán qín] (lit. — *Playing the lute in front of the bull*) (Semenas 2005: 134) : Eng. *Cast pearls before swine* : Russ. *Метать бисер перед свиньями* : Ukr. *Метати (сипати) бісер перед свиньями (свиньми); Кидати (розсипати) перла перед*

свинями (свиньми) (Вирган, Пилинська 2000: 40) : Serb. *Просу́т бисер при́д пра́сца* (Hilferding 1868: 78) : Bulg. *Хвърлям бисер пред свините* (Анкова-Ничева 1993: 265).

«To fire a cannon at a mosquito/sparrows»

Chinese 高射炮打蚊子 [gāoshèpào dǎ wénzi] (lit. – *Shoot from anti-aircraft guns at mosquitoes*) (Semenas 2005: 139) : Eng. *To fire a cannon at sparrows* : Russ. *Бить из пушки по воробьям* : Ukr. *З гармати у горобців стріляти* (Вирган, Пилинська 2000: 740) : Serb. *Гађати врапце из топа*. Cf. in Eng. *Use a cannon to kill a mosquito*.

«Like slash with a knife» VS «Like a knife in the heart»

Chinese 心如刀割 [xīn rú dāo gē] ‘cause acute mental pain’ (lit. – *As if he had slashed with a knife*) (Semenas 2005: 135) : Russ. *Как ножом по сердцу (полоснуть); Как серпом по шее* : Ukr. *Як ніж у серце кому* (Вирган, Пилинська 2000: 557) : Eng. *Like a knife in the heart* («Each time that she had to leave me behind was *Like a knife in her heart*»).

«Like smth. after smth.»

Chinese 雨后春笋 [yǔ hòu chūn sǔn] (lit. – *Like spring bamboo after rain*) : Russ. *Как грибы после дождя* (Semenas 2005: 133) : Ukr. *Ростуть як гриби після дощу (по дощеві)* (Вирган, Пилинська 2000: 234) : Serb. *Расте као печурка после кише* : Bulg. *Никнат като гъби [след дъжд]* (Анкова-Ничева 1993: 182) : Kashub. *Rosc jak grzybë po dešču* (Ermola 2011: 41) : Eng. *Like mushrooms (after a rain)*.

«[Like] smth. in smth.»

Chinese 沧海一粟 [cāng hǎi yī sù] (lit. – *Like millet in the ocean*) : Eng. *A drop in the bucket; A drop in the ocean* : Russ. *Капля в море* : Ukr. *Крапля (краплина) в морі* (Вирган, Пилинська 2000: 394) : Serb. *Кап у мору* (Оташевих 2007: 240) : Bulg. *Капка в морето* (Ничева, Спасова-Михайлова, Чолакова 1974, I: 475).

«[Like] smth. out/from/in green/blue/clear smth.»

Chinese 青天霹雳 [qīngtiān pīlì] (lit. – *Lightning strike in a green sky*) : Eng. *Like a thunder-clap out of a clear sky; Like thunder*

out of a clear sky; Like a bolt from the blue : Russ. *Как гром среди ясного неба* ; Ukr. *Як грім з (серед) ясного (чистого, безхмарного) неба* (Вирган, Пилинська 2000: 235) : Serb. *Kao гром из ведра неба* (Оташевић 2007: 328), Croat. *Kao grom iz vedra neba* (lit. – *Like a bolt from the blue*) ‘like snow on the head’ : Bulg. *Като гръм от ясно небе* (Ничева, Спасова-Михайлова, Чолакова 1974, I: 482).

«Not + card. numer. & not + card. numer.»

Chinese 不三不四 [bù sān bù sì] ‘neither this nor that; neither fish, flesh nor fowl’ (lit. – *Neither three nor four*) (Semenas 2005: 133) : Russ. *Ни три, ни четыре*. Cf. synonymous Bulg. *Ни [мо] риба, ни [мо] рак* (Ничева, Спасова-Михайлова, Чолакова 1974, I: 743) : Eng. *Neither fish nor flesh; Neither fish nor fowl; Neither one thing nor the other* different in lexical composition.

«Honey in the mouth but razor behind the bosom» VS «Honey in the mouth and razor at the girdle»

Chinese 口蜜腹剑 [kǒumì-fùjiàn] ‘honey on his lips, and a sword in his bosom’ (lit. – *Honey lips, a sword in the stomach*) : Russ. *На устах мед, а в сердце лед* (Semenas 2005: 133); *На словах медок, а на сердце ледок; На языке-то мед, а под языком-то лед; На речи мягок да тих, а на сердце злобен да лих* : Serb. *Méd na jeziku, a břitva na pásu* (Hilferding 1868: 52) : Eng. *He has honey in the mouth and razor at the girdle*. An ideologically close, but structurally different idiom is noted in Serbian, cf. the old expression *Мач медом помазан* (Hilferding 1868: 48) = ‘the sword is anointed with honey’.

It is interesting to note the special typological similarity of Serbian and English phraseological units that use the image «sword on the belt» as the antithesis of «honey on the tongue/lips».

«To do two smb. with a single smth.»

Chinese 一箭双雕 [yījiàn-shuāngdiāo] (lit. – *With one arrow [kill] two hawks*) : Russ. *Одним выстрелом [убить] двух зайцев* : Ukr. *Одним пострілом (відразу) двох зайців убити* (Вирган, Пилинська 2000: 829) : Serb. *Једним ударцем [убити] две муве* (Оташевић 2007: 564) : Czech *Zabít dvěouchy jednou ranou* : Eng. *To shoot two rabbits with a single bullet*.

«Smth. falls from the ...» VS «Smth. does not fall from the ...»

Chinese 喜从天降 [xiāng tiān jiàng] ‘to fall’ [xiāng tiān jiàng] (lit. — *Happiness has fallen from the sky*) : Eng. *Happiness does not fall from the sky; it is in your hands.*

«Smth. do smth.», «Smth. is done by smth.»

Chinese 天道酬勤 [tiān dào chóu qín] (lit. — *Heaven rewards hard work*) : Eng. *Hard work is rewarded by heaven.*

«To change black to white» VS «To say that black is white»

Chinese 颠倒黑白 [diāndǎo-hēibái] ‘to twist the facts’ (lit. — *To swap black and white*) : Eng. *Say/pretend/swear/argue (that) black is white* : Russ. *Он из белого сделает черное (или: из черного белое).*

Another model and lexical material are implemented in Kashub. *Potrafic z prostego zrobic křevè* (lit. — *To be able to make a curve out of a straight line*) ‘to be able to make white out of black’ (Ermola 2011: 91).

«To fall from the ...»

Chinese 从天而降 [cóngtiān’érjiàng] ‘appear out of nowhere’ (lit. — *Fall out of the sky*) : Eng. *Fell out of the sky; Dropped out of the sky* : Russ. *С луны свалился* : Ukr. *З місяця (з неба) впав* (Вирган, Пилинська 2000: 453) : Bulg. *Падам/падна от небето* (Ничева, Спасова-Михайлова, Чолакова 1975, II: 105). Cf. Ukr. dial. [Як] *з неба впав (звалився)* with a wider range of meanings, namely: ‘knows nothing, does not understand’, ‘stupid’, ‘clueless’, ‘unintelligent’, ‘who suddenly appeared, arrived’ (Ужченко 2013: 349).

«Looking for smth. in somewhere»

Chinese 海底捞针 [hǎidǐ lāo zhēn] (lit. — *To catch (fish) a needle at the bottom of the sea*) : Russ. *Искать иголку в стоге сена* (Semenas 2005: 134: *Catch a mace at the bottom of the sea*) : Serb. *Тражити иглу у пласту (стогу) сена* (Оташевић 2007: 196) : Bulg. *Търся игла в сламеница* (Анкова-Ничева 1993: 433) (lit. — *To look for a needle in a straw hat*) : Kashub. *Šëkac jigłë v moŕu* (lit. — *To look for a needle in the sea*) ‘to look for a needle in a haystack’ (Ermola 2011: 47) : Eng. *Looking for a needle in a haystack; Search a needle in a haystack*. Cf. Ukr. *Як голка в сіні (у соломі)* (Вирган, Пилинська 2000: 360).

The typological convergence of Chinese and Kashubian fixed expressions in the use of the image of the search for «a needle in the sea/on the seabed» against the background of the Slavonic and English equivalents, where the motif of the search for «a needle in a haystack/straw» is realized.

«[Reflex.] to slip out of mouth/tongue»

Chinese 脱口而出 [tuōkǒu'érchū] ‘blurt out without thinking, say’ (lit. – *Slip out of the mouth*) : Eng. *Slip out of mouth* : Russ. *Сорваться с языка*.

«[Subst.] verb. imperat. + [subst.] verb. imperat.»

Chinese 活到老, 学到老 [huó dào lǎo, xué dào lǎo] (lit. – *Live to old age, study to old age*) : Eng. *Live and learn* (= *Live forever, learn forever*; Kuskovskaya 1987: 8) : Russ. *Век живи – век учись* : Ukr. *Вік живи – вік учись* [*і вік трудись*] (Вирган, Пилинська 2000: 79). Cf. Russ. *Век живи, век учись, дураком помрешь* : Ukr. *Цілий вік учись, цілий вік живи, а все дурний умреш* (Номис 1993: 285).

«Smth. + caritive group [...]» VS

«Caritive group BUT possessive group»

Chinese 情义无价 [qíngyì wújià] (lit. – *Friendship has no price*) : Eng. *Friendship has no price but it's worth more than anything* : Russ. *Не имей сто рублей, а имей сто друзей*. Equivalents from European languages carry a more complex ideological load.

«Caritive group + smth. do not do» VS

«Caritive group + Caritive group»

Chinese 无风不起浪 [wúfēng bù qǐ làng] (lit. – *Without wind, the wave does not grow*) : Eng. *There is no smoke without fire* : Russ. *Нет дыма без огня* : Ukr. *Диму без вогню не буває* (Вирган, Пилинська 2000: 296) : Serb. *Нема дима без ватре*, as well as synonymous *Нема топлоте без пламена*.

«Smth. + verb. reflex.» VS

«The more do the more smth. come to ...»

Chinese 善有善报 [shàn yǒu shànbào] (lit. – *Good returns with good*) : Eng. *The more you give the more good come to you*.

«[If] Smbd. + is/are smth.»

Chinese 家有一老人, 如有一宝 [jiā yǒu yī lǎorén, rú yǒu yī bǎo] (lit. – *If there is an old person in the house, then there is a jewel in the house*) : Eng. *Grandparents are a family's greatest treasure.*

«[If] smb. sleeps/lies with smb. [will] rises/gets up with smth.»

Chinese 近朱者赤, 近墨者黑 [Jìn zhū zhě chì, jìn mò zhě hēi] ‘Whoever you hang out with, you will gain from him’ (lit. – *Go to bed with a dog, wake up with fleas*) : Eng. *Those who sleep with dogs will rise with fleas; He that lies down with dogs gets up with fleas* (Br.); *If you lie down with dogs, you'll get up with fleas* (Am.) : Ukr. *Хто з псами лягає, той з блохами встає* (Вирган, Пилинська 2000: 503).

«There is no smth.»

Chinese 天下没白吃的午餐 [tiānxià méi báichīde niú cān] ‘There is no such thing as free food’ : Eng. *There's no such thing as a free lunch* (= There is no free lunch), cf. synonymous (but with a different syntactic structure) Eng. *Free cheese happens only in a mousetrap* or *free cheese is only in a mousetrap* : Russ. *бесплатный сыр только в мышеловке.*

«Smth. is better to ... than to...»

Chinese 坐而言, 不如起而行 [zuò ér yán, bùrú qǐ ér xíng] ‘It is better to act than to speak’ : Eng. *It is better to act than to speak.* Cf. synonymous Russ. *Под лежащий камень вода не течет* (with a different composition and syntactic structure).

«Feel like ...» VS «To be on ...»

Chinese 如坐针毡 [rú zuò zhēn zhān] (lit. – *Feel like you're sitting on pins and needles*) : Eng. *To be (sit, stand, walk) on thorns; To be on hot coals; To be on pins and needles* : Russ. *Сидеть как на иголках* : Ukr. *Як на терню (як на голках, як на шпичках) сидіти* (Вирган, Пилинська 2000: 360) : Serb. *седети (бити, стајати)* [као] *на иглама* (Оташевић 2007: 530) : Kashub. *Seżęc jak na jigłax* (lit. – *to be on pins and needles*) (Ermola 2011: 47).

Conclusions. The results of the analysis in accordance with the above procedure allow us to draw several preliminary conclusions.

1. The different structures of languages (amorphous (isolating), analytical, and synthetic (inflectional)) are not an obstacle to modeling the schemes of phrase construction common to Chinese, English, and Slavonic phraseology. 2. Even a relatively small sample of fixed expressions in the material of the languages under study indicates the presence in them of a sum of phrases that are either identical or very close in the cultural and ideological sense and therefore can be used as translation equivalents. 3. Behind this group of phrases there are prototypical situations common to speakers of the listed languages, which also makes it possible and desirable to use such fixed phrases in the practice of translation studies. 4–5. Syntactic and lexico-semantic characteristics common to all modeled schemes enhance the possibilities of multilingual phrases as equivalents in the process of literary translation.

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ФРАЗЕОЛОГІЧНІ ЕКВІВАЛЕНТИ І ЛІТЕРАТУРНИЙ ПЕРЕКЛАД: КИТАЙСЬКА, АНГЛІЙСЬКА ТА СЛОВ'ЯНСЬКІ МОВИ

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АНОТАЦІЯ

Мета пропонованої статті — виокремити в китайській, англійській та слов'янських мовах фразеологізми, які можна використовувати як дуже близькі еквіваленти в процесі перекладу. Результати студії отримано в процесі процедури, яка зумовлює кілька етапів. 1. Віднайдення фразем із близькою чи ідентичною культурною семантикою. 2. Визначення єдності/подібності прототипової ситуації, яка криється за різномовними фраземами, що порівнюються під час аналізу. 3. Порівняння лексичного складу фразем на предмет збігу семантики їхніх складників-вокабул у всіх порівнюваних мовах при дослівному

читанні фраземи. 4. Визначення подібності/ідентичності синтаксичної конструкції фразем у порівнюваних мовах. 5. Моделювання спільних для порівнюваних мов схем побудови фразеологізмів із певним культурно-ідеологічним навантаженням, актуальним для культур, представлених китайською, англійською та слов'янськими мовами.

Ключові слова: літературний переклад, фразема, структура, лексична семантика, прототипова ситуація, концепт, дискурс, наївна картина світу.

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