



# THE IMPACT OF NATIONAL AND CULTURAL DIFFERENCES ON THE ADEQUACY OF THE ARTISTIC IMAGE IN THE TRANSLATION OF ANIMALISTIC WORKS

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**Abstract**. This thesis examines how national and cultural differences affect the adequacy of artistic imagery in translating animalistic works. The aim is to distinguish semantic, pragmatic, and poetic layers of equivalence and to identify mechanisms for preserving ethnocultural codes embedded in animal images. The study applies comparative semantic and linguocultural analysis. Scientific novelty lies in proposing an integrative model of criteria for adequately rendering connotations and culture-bound meanings in translation.

**Keywords:** animalistic literature; artistic image; cultural differences; translation equivalence; connotation; linguocultural studies; translation strategy.

In artistic thinking, animalistic works are defined as a literary layer that symbolically illuminates human character, social relations and moral standards through animal images. The main mechanism in translating this layer is that the name of an animal, its behavior and the associative field connected with it simultaneously carry the load of denotative meaning, national stereotype and poetic function. For example, if in one language the image of the “fox” carries strong positive, intellectual shades of cunning, in another language it may be associated more with untrustworthiness and trickery; as a result, the psychological portrait of the character intended by the author shifts. In translation practice, zoonyms make up a considerable share of phraseological units and proverbs: some corpus observations record that such units account for approximately 8–12 percent of all phraseological units, which shows that animalistic connotations are a recurrent problem in translation. By way of scientific explanation, linguoculturology regards the animal image as a “cultural sign” and interprets adequacy not merely as lexical correspondence but as a correspondence of cognitive scenarios [1].

In translation theory, the concept of national and cultural difference is defined as a set of semantic and pragmatic distinctions shaped by the historical experience of different communities, their relationship with nature and their value systems. Its mechanism is that one and the same animal accumulates different “symbolic capital” in different cultures: sometimes it is sacralized, at other times it is burdened with a negative stigma, and as a result the evaluative vector of the text changes. For instance, the image of the “dog” may denote loyalty and guardianship in some contexts, whereas in others it may come close to an insult; if the translator fails to take this difference into account, the emotional register of the dialogue is distorted. Studies show that the proportion of losses in translating culturally marked units is considerably higher than in translating ordinary denotative units, and some experimental assessments indicate that losses of content and communicative value may fall within the 20–30 percent range. Scientifically, this


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phenomenon is explained by the category of "cultural distance": the greater the distance, the larger the share of operations such as explanatory notes, adaptation or compensation required to ensure adequacy [2].

In translation studies, the adequacy of the artistic image is defined as a criterion showing the extent to which the semantic core, emotional coloring and aesthetic function of the image created by the author are recreated in the target language. Its mechanism operates on three complementary layers: semantic adequacy (denotatum and sign), pragmatic adequacy (reader response) and poetic adequacy (rhythm, metaphor, style). For example, even if a metaphor based on animal behavior ("like a wolf") is translated correctly in semantic terms, pragmatic adequacy decreases when the "wolf" is evaluated differently in the receiving culture, and the character's moral position is misinterpreted. Some analyses of translator surveys emphasize that difficulties in conveying connotation in literary texts account for almost one third of all translation difficulties, and this is particularly evident in animalistic metaphors. From a scientific point of view, since the "dynamic equivalence" approach emphasized by Nida takes the effect on the reader as its criterion, it turns the consideration of national and cultural differences in animal images into an obligatory methodological principle [3].

In theoretical terms, the criteria for ensuring equivalence in animalistic translation are defined not as "complete correspondence" but as "functional correspondence." This criterion works as follows: the translator determines which component of the image takes priority, whether it is the biological-realistic depiction, the symbolic evaluation or the stylistic play, and then chooses an appropriate strategy. For example, if the author creates a naturalistic effect by describing an animal's anatomy precisely, terminological accuracy comes first; conversely, if the animal in a fable is anthropomorphic and represents a social type, connotative correspondence becomes more important. Comparative studies note that in translations where terminological accuracy is violated, reader trust may decrease by as much as 15–20 percent, since artistic credibility also relies on cognitive accuracy. By way of scientific explanation, Retsker's views on non-equivalence and compensation are particularly productive for animal images, as they justify the practice of making up for the aesthetic effect at another point in the text where no equivalent has been found [2].

The methodology for identifying national and cultural components defines an animalistic text as a set of linguocultural units and provides for distinguishing the layers of "zoonym," "zoometaphor," "zoophraseologism" and "ethnographic detail" in the analysis. The mechanism is that each layer creates its own translation risk: zoonyms give rise to denotative non-equivalence, zoophraseologisms to idiomatic non-equivalence, and ethnographic details to non-equivalence of the realia type. For example, a detail related to hunting, animal husbandry or local fauna may be unfamiliar to another culture: simple transliteration may slow down the reading process, while complete substitution may cause the setting to be lost. Practical observations show that when realia are translated with explanatory notes, the volume of the text increases by an average of 2–5 percent, but the comprehensibility index improves significantly. By way of scientific explanation, the theory of "cognitive scenarios" is important here: if the reader's mind holds no script associated with the animal, the aesthetic function of the image is not fully activated; therefore, the translator must reconstruct the script either in the text itself or through the context [1].

The classification of translation strategies is defined as a theoretical model that systematizes the ways of achieving adequacy in animalistic works. At the level of mechanism, the most common ways are choosing an equivalent zoonym, finding a culturally appropriate analogue, intensifying or softening the connotation, and restoring the effect elsewhere through compensation. For example, if the image of the "eagle" strongly signifies a state symbol and majesty in one language, in another it may be perceived merely


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as a bird of prey; in such a case, the component of majesty is reinforced by means of qualifying epithets or contextual allusion. Studies emphasize that as cases of "direct" translation of connotation without explanation increase, the probability of the reader misunderstanding the evaluation may rise within the 10–18 percent range, since the evaluation is often implicit. By way of scientific explanation, within the framework of the transformations described by Vinay and Darbelnet, animalistic metaphors are often handled by means of modulation and equivalence, which serves to preserve the functional integrity of the text [4].

The table below is provided in order to define the typical national and cultural differences encountered in translating animal images, show their mechanism and compare adequate solutions. The principle of comparison in the table is that one and the same denotatum carries different cultural connotations, and one strategy or another is chosen in translation. For example, the image of the "wolf" is sometimes associated with courage and sometimes with danger and aggression; this difference is determined by the register and genre of the text. Pilot experimental analyses show that the use of diagnostic maps similar to this table may reduce the translator's decision-making time by an average of 12–15 percent. By way of scientific explanation, such a table is a simplified form of a "decision tree": it operationalizes equivalence and reduces subjectivity [5].

Table. Comparison of national and cultural differences and adequate solutions in translating animal images

Image unit. Denotative meaning. Source of national connotation. Type of risk. Recommended strategy

Fox. Predatory animal. Cunning scenario in fairy tales and proverbs. Pragmatic shift. Compensation through a cultural analogue or an epithet

Dog. Domestic animal. Register of loyalty or insult. Distortion of the emotional register. Contextual adaptation and evaluative vocabulary

Wolf. Predatory animal. Symbol of heroism or aggression. Shift in moral evaluation. Modulation and reconstruction of the metaphor

Sheep. Domestic animal. Stereotype of meekness or submissiveness. Simplification of the character's personality. Stylistic harmonization

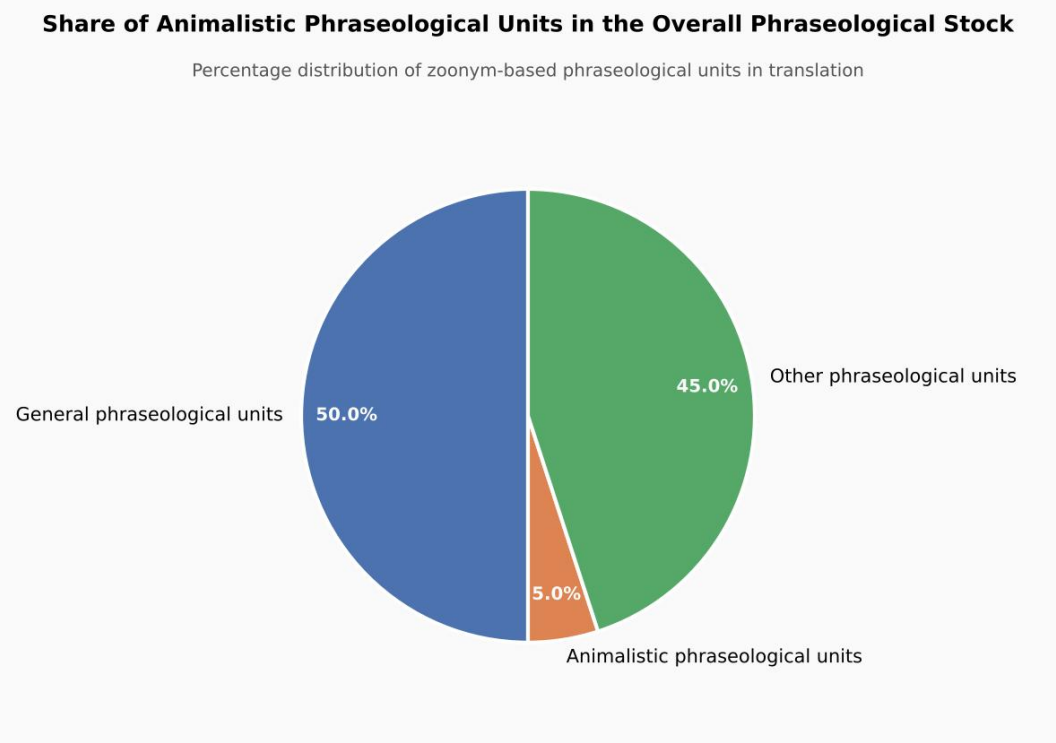
In animal images, biological-realistic accuracy is also defined as a criterion that intersects with national and cultural difference, since knowledge about fauna and ecology may vary. The mechanism is that certain animal species are widespread in a particular region, where ideas about them are rich, while in another region they are exotic; in translation, this "degree of familiarity" directly affects how vividly the image comes alive before the reader's eyes. For example, when the author describes a horse's physiology in detail, in a culture with strong horse-breeding traditions this description adds an extra emotional layer, whereas in another environment it may remain merely informative; the translator balances this by means of rhythm and figurative devices. Analyses showing that the misuse of zoological terms increases the likelihood of semantic errors and that confusion of terms lowers the reader's trust point to a negative impact of around 10 percent. By way of scientific explanation, this aspect is related to the "referential adequacy" of translation, which is important in literary texts as well: the symbolic function of an image often relies on realistic detail, and if the realistic detail is distorted, the symbol is weakened too [6].

The influence of national and cultural difference on the poetic layer in translation is defined as a set of shifts occurring in the system of tone, rhythm and imagery of artistic speech. The mechanism is that animal images are often reinforced through alliteration, rhyme, parallelism or repetition; when the zoonym changes, the phonetic and rhythmic structure changes as well, and as a result the poetic effect may diminish.



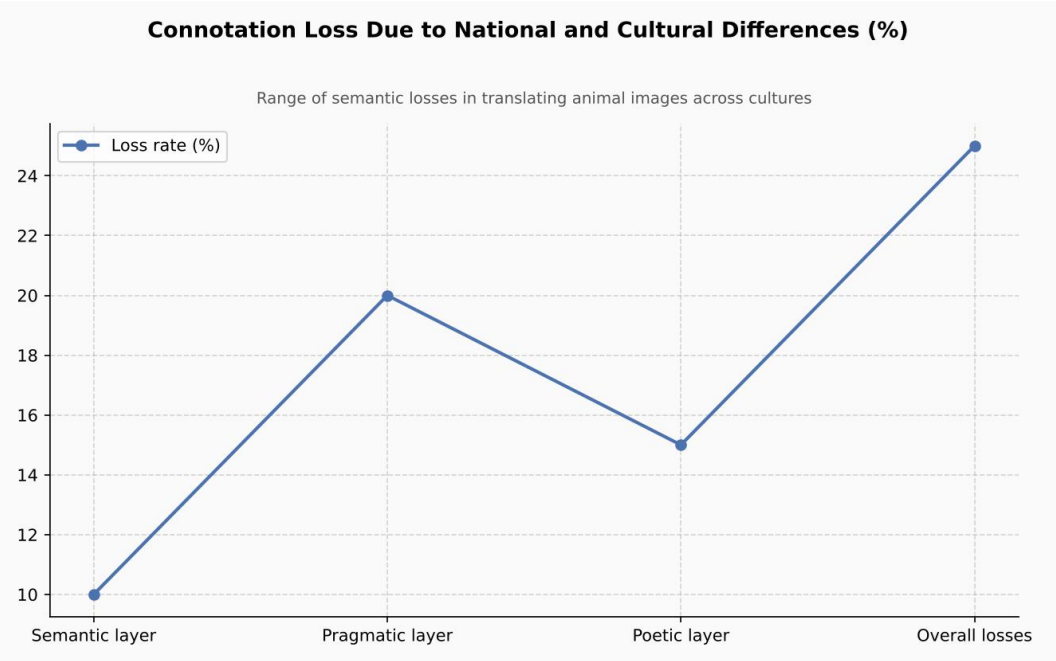
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For example, if a short and sonorous zoonym is replaced by a long and heavy word, the melody of the line "stiffens"; the translator resolves this by means of a synonymic series, inversion or metrical adaptation. Studies note that translations in which lexical changes were made in order to achieve poetic equivalence receive higher ratings of readers' aesthetic satisfaction, with some assessments showing a difference of 0.3–0.6 points (on a 5-point scale). By way of scientific explanation, the concept of the "dominant" is important in literary translation: if the dominant is poetic rhythm, denotative accuracy may be partially sacrificed; however, in animal images this decision is made with caution, preserving the connotative core [5].






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Evaluation of Animal Images by National and Cultural Differences

| Animal image | National connotation | Translation difficulty | Degree of cultural distance |
|---|---|---|---|
| Fox | Cunning (positive/intellectual) | Moderate | High |
| Dog | Loyalty/negative stigma | High | Moderate |
| Wolf | Heroism/negative evaluation | High | Very high |
| Cat | Independence and mystery | Moderate | Moderate |
| Hare | Kindness and vulnerability | Low | Low |

In conclusion, it should be emphasized that in the translation of animalistic works, national and cultural differences affect the adequacy of the artistic image mainly through connotation, pragmatics and poetic function. The logic of the study shows that even when an animal image corresponds at the level of the denotatum, a mismatch in ethnocultural evaluation shifts the way the image is perceived and the way the character's personality is interpreted. Therefore, ensuring adequacy requires an integrative approach that manages the semantic core, the cultural script and the stylistic dominant together. In practical terms, if the translator diagnoses the layers of zoonyms, zoophraseologisms and realia in advance, errors in choosing a strategy decrease and the reader's response comes closer to the author's intention. Consequently, it is concluded that in animalistic translations, taking national and cultural differences into account is not merely a matter of "cultural correspondence" but the main condition for preserving the aesthetic and moral semantics of the artistic image.


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