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## TRANSLATION OF LEXICAL FIGURES OF SPEECH

*Iplina Antonina Aleksandovna*<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Turan International University Namangan, Uzbekistan

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### Abstract

The analysis of lexical figures of artistic speech and their English translations is the focus of this article. In order to explore key expressive devices including epithets, metaphors, analogies, litotes, and periphrases, the English translation of G. Dolgaya's novel "The Gods of Middle World" by R. Thompson is used as an example. The descriptive technique, literal translation, modification, and substitution are among the translation strategies that receive special attention. According to the study, maintaining artistic expressiveness necessitates taking into account cultural and stylistic context in addition to language accuracy. The examination of examples highlights the difficulty of capturing the vision of a literary work and shows both successful and contentious translation choices.

**Keywords:** *lexical figure of artistic speech, epithet, metaphor, simile, litotes, periphrasis*

### Introduction

Figures of speech, also known as rhetorical figures, are widely recognized for their ability to evoke imagery and expressiveness in a literary work. They generate a distinct narrative style, highlight significant facts, improve the impression, and assist the author in expressing emotions. The reader is able to perceive and interpret the author's aim more fully because of the complexity and ambiguity that figures of speech give literary works.

Figurative language translation is a challenging endeavor that calls for the translator to possess both linguistic and cultural proficiency. Since figures of speech like metaphors, allegories, hyperboles, and puns are frequently derived from the distinctive features of a language and culture, it can be

challenging to transmit them directly. Figurative language translation requires taking into account the original's emotional, stylistic, and cultural context in addition to its literal meaning. Numerous techniques are available to the translator, such as compensating for a difficult figure of speech with one that is easier for the new audience to understand, adapting the text to take into account cultural differences, or using equivalent expressive means in the target language, because the main objective of translation is to maintain the original's stylistic ambiance and artistic expression in order to maintain the work's aesthetic and emotional resonance for readers from different cultural backgrounds.

Numerous distinguished academics have studied lexical figures of speech and

how they are translated. I. R. Galperin, a Russian linguist, for instance, focused heavily on lexical figures of speech in his work “Essays on the Stylistics of the English Language” (1958), viewing them as essential components of text expressiveness. Metaphor, epithet, simile, hyperbole, pun, and other lexical figures, in his opinion, are ways to add imagery, expressiveness, and emotionality to a literary work’s discourse. When translating lexical figures of speech, I. R. Galperin asserts that it is important to take into account both the original’s stylistic purpose and lexical meaning. He underlined that in order to translate such figures accurately, one must consider the stylistic coloring (expressive load), the functional approach (the figure’s role in the text), compensation for losses (looking for equivalent expressive means in the target language), and cultural differences (specific idioms and metaphors) or adapt them.

The most significant components of creative speech, according to another Russian researcher, A. D. Schweitzer (2000), are lexical figures, which call for the translator to possess both linguistic and cultural competence. He therefore underlined the need for a thorough approach when translating lexical figures of speech. In other words, when translating lexical figures of speech, one should consider their function in the text (functional-semantic approach), maintain the original’s stylistic effect (adequacy and equivalency), preserve the text’s artistic impact (transformation and compensation), adapt imagery (cultural adaptation), and take the text’s dynamics into consideration (dynamic approach). A. D. Shveitser also underlined the significance of the translator’s imaginative approach, which aims to maintain the original text’s aesthetic and artistic impact on the intended audience.

In “Translation Theory: Basic Concepts and Problems,” modern Russian scholar M. Yu. Ilyushkina (2015) examines the role of figures of speech in literature and provides suggestions for translating them. She points out that the author’s perspective, feelings, and artistic goal are all communicated through the use of figures of speech. She also lists a number of methods for translating figures of speech, including omission,

compensation, substitution, and adaptation, which involves keeping the figures of speech intact. As with many translation experts, M. Yu. Ilyushkina stresses the significance of taking national-cultural links into account while analyzing figures of speech. She also offers guidelines for translators of lexical figures of speech, including the need to have a thorough understanding of the original text’s stylistic function, be highly competent in language and culture, and be willing to make concessions in order to preserve a balance between expressiveness and accuracy.

### Research methods

In order to fully investigate the characteristics of translating lexical figures of speech and evaluate their effect on how a literary work is perceived, we employed a number of methods. These included stylistic analysis, which identifies and categorizes lexical figures of artistic speech; comparative analysis, which compares the original text of the novel with its translation; descriptive analysis, which describes the methods of translating lexical figures of speech and examines their impact on the text’s stylistic and semantic structure; classification analysis, which organizes the different translation strategies employed by the translator; and contextual analysis, which ascertains the purpose and significance of expressive means in the original text and their analogue in the translation.

### Analysis and results

Following that, we will present instances of lexical figures of artistic speech from the book “Боги срединного мира” by G. Dolgaya (2023), which is the subject of our study, and examine how they are expressed in R. Thompson’s English translation of the book, “The Gods of Middle World” (2013), as well as how they function in both the source and translated texts.

*Epithets* are recognized to help paint a vivid, lasting picture and frequently express the author’s attitude and feelings. Epithets make up the greatest number of lexical figures of artistic speech in the artistic work under study, which was originally written in Russian.

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подминая ржавыми водами правый  
берег... (p. 3)

sending *rust-colored water* seething up  
the right bank... (p. 11)

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A native speaker of the original language would find the unconventional author's way of describing the color of the mountain spring river's water to be quite realistic and intelligible. The translator used the technique of substituting "rust-colored" in place of "rusty" in order to produce an analogous semantic transmission of the river's color rather than its qualitative quality.

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Так и ласкала бы Жемчужная река свое  
сокровище... (p. 3)

And thus might the *Pearl River* have gone  
on caressing its treasure... (p. 12)

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It is a remarkable example of an equal translation because this Russian river's name, which conjures up images of purity and glistening water, was translated straight into English while maintaining the same figurative-descriptive meaning. Furthermore, its name can be a geographical allusion to China's Pearl River, which got its name from the pearl shells that were formerly discovered in its waters.

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Мягкое сияние ... привлекло внимание  
пролетающего мимо ворона (p. 3)

The attention of a passing crow was at-  
tracted to a *soft lustre*... (p. 12)

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The English epithet "soft lustre," which is frequently used to refer to a soft, muted, or diffused glow instead of a bright or dazzling one, was translated using the synonymic substitution technique (glow-lustre), which does not conflict with the original Russian epithet's semantic usage.

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Станным тягучим воздухом дохнуло  
в лицо...(p. 5)

An unfamiliar, *damp air* brushed against  
her cheek...(p. 14)

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The term that the original author used to describe the building's basement air suggests that the space had not been aired for a considerable amount of time, giving the impression that it was musty. However, this epithet loses its artistic quality in the English trans-

lation because the translator took the phrase to mean "damp air," a common expression in the target language that is frequently used to describe an atmosphere saturated with moisture, such as in rainy weather, damp rooms, or natural settings like forests. In order to make this lexical figure of speech sound natural in English, the translator modified it. But, in our opinion, a more equivalent option for translating this epithet would be "musty air," because the adjective "musty" more accurately conveys the image of the smell of dampness, mold, and a long-unventilated room.

The author's use of *metaphors*, which provide more imagery with less words, is also evident in the novel's text. In this way, they condense the meaning into a single image, which makes the text rich and concise.

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Светлая дорожка от окна заканчива-  
лась у приоткрытой двери сарая (p. 5)

*Light from the window lit up the way* as far  
as the half-opened door of the storeroom (p.  
14)

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"Light from the window lit up the way" was a descriptive translation technique used to better understand the text's intended audience. It communicated the main idea of the original, which is that the light from the window illuminates the space up to the door. As a result, in the English translation, the metaphor's role as a lexical figure of speech is diminished. Since a literal translation would be inaccurate in this situation, the translator opted for a description, which brings the text closer to English.

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...вы будете раскапывать старинные  
города, будете кропотливо, сантиметр за  
сантиметром, снимать пыль времен ...  
(с. 7)

...you will be unearthing ancient cities,  
*removing the dust of time* centimeter by  
painstaking centimeter, ... (с. 17)

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Since English closely resembles the original metaphor and conjures up comparable associations, the metaphorical description of the historical layers that archaeologists examine during excavations was translated literally. Both Russian and English literary and scientific works frequently use this colloquial term.

By connecting the features of the things and occurrences portrayed to something known and understandable, the author of the story also employs *similies*.

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Не утолив жажды разрушения, *рыча бешеным зверем*, река повернула...(p. 3)

Its thirst for destruction unquenched, the river changed course at this point... (p. 11)

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The example provided demonstrates how G. Dolgaya uses the sound of the flowing water to evoke the roar of a ferocious animal in order to paint a vivid and creative picture of the raging river. English translations of this lexical figure of artistic discourse are nonexistent. The translator apparently decided to use the tactic of omission because they believed that this phraseological turn of speech would overburden the semantic context in English.

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Два зелёных глаза *сияли как изумруды*, маня за собой. (p.4)

Two green eyes *gleamed there like emeralds*.(p.13)

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To assist the reader instantly picture the kitten's eyes' color and vibrancy, the original text's author likens them to emeralds. This lexical figure was translated literally into English and does not deviate from the target language's conventions.

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...одёрнула подол ситцевого платья, *похожего на перевёрнутую головку мака*, (с. 4)

...pulled down the hem of her cotton dress, *whose shape was like the upside-down head of a poppy*, (с.12)

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In the framework of describing the girl's outfit, the original author aimed to accomplish multiple objectives. In the first place, for dramatic imagery, a poppy's shape (an inverted head) highlights the dress's fluff, volume, or distinctive cut, and it is typically connected with red or brilliant orange hues. The second is to draw the reader's attention to the girl's beauty and youth, inspiring feelings of sympathy and admiration. The third is to produce a light, warm, summery atmosphere. This lexical figure is viewed as "technical" in the English translation, which prevents the reader from feeling the same feelings as in the original text. To augment the emotional

resonance, we believe it is essential to use additional descriptive nuances, rendering the language more artistic – "pulled down the hem of her cotton dress, which billowed like an inverted poppy head."

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Снова её рыдания зазвучали в подвале, *как надрывный тенор в зале оперного театра*. (p.5)

Now her wail redoubled through the basement *like that of an anguished operatic tenor*. (p.14)

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The translator in this instance maintained the comparison's primary conceptual structure while modifying it to make it sound more natural in English. His use of the more condensed phrase "an anguished operatic tenor," rather than a precise translation of this lexical figure, makes the material accessible to the English-speaking reader while still being brief.

G. Dolgaya also employs lexical figures of creative speech, such as *litotes*, in her book to contrast meanings, show character attributes, and set a certain atmosphere.

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Мяу! – снова раздался *тихий голосок*. (p. 4)

"Miaow!" Came *the soft voice* again. (p. 13)

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According to this example, the litote in the original language "тихий голосок" has a qualitative adjective ("тихий") and a diminutive form of the noun ("голосок"), which gives the impression of being soft and delicate. Although it no longer serves as a litote in the target language but rather as an epithet, the translator used the phrase "the soft voice," which indicates that they adopted a strategy of substitution and modification, in order to preserve the relaxing impact on the English reader.

In addition, the novel's author uses a lexical figure of artistic text, like a *periphrasis*, to describe an object or phenomenon through its characteristic features or associations rather than by name in order to create a unique narrative style, artistic expressiveness, avoid repetitions (tautology), or create an aesthetic effect of mystery and hidden meaning.

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Круживший неподалеку другой *чернокрылый охотник*... (p. 3)

Another *black-winged hunter*, circling nearby... (p. 12)

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The phrase “another black-winged hunter” should be interpreted as “another crow” in this Russian-speaking context. The original author employed this periphrasis to avoid tautology, as the novel’s storyline makes clear. This lexical figure was expressed in English by the use of direct equivalency, which means the translator did not corrupt it. Moreover, it gives the translation context more expressiveness.

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Первая лекция *ведущего археолога страны!* (p. 6)

For the first lecture *by the country’s top archaeologist*, of all things. (p. 17)

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This periphrase’s translation into English is perfectly acceptable and accomplishes the same goal in the text as the original language – that is, to prevent repetition. The translation is rather different in style, but it can be regarded as functionally equivalent. “The first lecture by the country’s leading archaeologist!” is an example of a more literal translation that might have been used, but the translator changed the phrase to keep the intended reader emotionally affected.

In light of this, the analysis revealed that the novel’s text is full of a variety of expressive speech techniques, including epithets, metaphors, similes, litotes, and periphrases, all of which demonstrate the author’s masterful command of the means of artistic language. When translating lexical figures of artistic speech, the translator must not only accurately translate the text but also preserve the original’s emotional and artis-

tic impact on the reader. In some cases, the translator was able to effectively convey the author’s expressive means, but in others, they modified them to conform to the English language’s rules, resulting in changes to the original text’s stylistic and semantic structure.

### Conclusion

The following conclusions are based on the previously mentioned study. The original fantasy book “Gods of the Middle World,” written by G. Dolgaya, contains a wealth of artistic speech and expressive devices, most of which are authorial epithets, metaphors, similes, litotes, and periphrases. Additionally, the lexical figures of artistic speech examples we looked at show that the translator used a variety of translation techniques to maintain the text’s expressiveness and imagery. When it came to interpreting lexical figures of creative speech, literal translation, modification, descriptive translation, and substitution were the most commonly employed techniques. Furthermore, these figures of speech did not always function as intended in the original language; for example, an epithet in the original took on the form of a simple phrase in the translation, or the original figure was changed into a different figure of speech in the translation (for example, an epithet became a periphrase). Consequently, it is imperative to underscore the diverse methods of translating lexical figures of artistic speech and the indisputable intricacy of this procedure.

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Contact: antipmoon@mail.ru