



TYPOLOGICAL ANALYSIS OF PHRASEOLOGICAL UNITS AS THE LINGUOCULTUREMES IN FILIPINO (TAGALOG) AND ENGLISH LANGUAGES

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Abstract: Phraseological units, such as idioms, proverbs, and fixed expressions, serve as represent linguistic knowledge structures and carry the cultural meaning within any language. When these linguistic units are examined as linguoculturemes—language elements that encapsulate both linguistic and cultural information—reflect the values, beliefs, and social practices of a given culture. This study undertakes a typological and linguacultural analysis of phraseological units in Filipino and English to explore the cultural values embedded in each language. Results reveal that, while some phraseological units share universal human experiences, each language's unique phraseology reflects distinct cultural norms and worldview differences.

Introduction

Phraseological units are widely recognized as expressions that reflect cultural insights, often carrying layers of meaning that go beyond their literal interpretation (Arora, 2001; Wierzbicka, 1997). These expressions act as "cultural mirrors," revealing aspects of a society's worldview, moral values, and social practices. In typological linguistics, the comparison of such units across languages allows for a nuanced understanding of both universal and culturally specific motifs.

This study focuses on Filipino and English, two languages with differing linguistic roots—Austronesian and Germanic, respectively—and distinct cultural backgrounds. Filipino, as the national language of the Philippines, is marked by collectivist values, strong familial ties, and resilience in the face of adversity (Garcia, 2006). English, on the other hand, often emphasizes individualism, personal achievement, and a pragmatic outlook (Hofstede, 2001).

Through a typological and linguacultural analysis of phraseological units in Filipino and English, this research aims to shed light on the cultural values and social paradigms expressed through these languages' phraseologies.

Literature review

The typological analysis of phraseological units, often defined as stable expressions with figurative meanings, is crucial for understanding the linguocultural dimensions of languages. In the context of Filipino (Tagalog) and English, these units not only represent linguistic structures but also serve as "linguoculturemes," capturing unique aspects of each culture. This literature review will examine the theoretical foundations of phraseology, typology, and linguoculturemes, along with specific studies comparing Tagalog and English phraseology.

Phraseology, the study of phraseological units or idiomatic expressions, has been a significant area of linguistic research since the mid-20th century. Scholars like



Vinogradov (1947) and Kunin (1970) emphasized that phraseological units—idioms, proverbs, and other fixed expressions—differ from free combinations due to their idiomatic and culturally loaded meanings. Further studies, such as those by Fernando (1996) and Gläser (1984), argue that phraseological units serve communicative functions that extend beyond their literal meanings, embedding cultural values, norms, and worldviews.

Typology in linguistics aims to classify languages and their structures by common features, which can be especially insightful when comparing phraseological units. Typological research, as seen in the works of Croft (1990) and Comrie (1989), provides tools to compare cross-linguistic similarities and differences systematically. In the context of phraseological units, typological analysis investigates structural, functional, and semantic patterns across languages, highlighting how phraseology differs or aligns culturally. This comparative approach has been applied in diverse language pairs, emphasizing both universal and unique phraseological tendencies.

The concept of linguoculturemes was developed within cultural linguistics to represent units of language that embody cultural meanings and values. Karasik and Krasnykh (2006) define linguoculturemes as linguistic phenomena that reveal a speaker's cultural identity, including idioms, metaphors, and symbols deeply rooted in a language community's experiences. For example, linguoculturemes reflect cultural realities, historical backgrounds, social norms, and worldviews, making them essential in cross-cultural communication and translation. In phraseology, linguoculturemes are particularly significant because they convey culturally specific meanings that may not have direct equivalents in other languages.

Comparative studies on Tagalog and English have largely focused on vocabulary, syntax, and pragmatics, with limited research on phraseology. Some studies, however, such as Santiago (2011) and Bautista (2017), highlight Tagalog's rich idiomatic expressions, which frequently draw from indigenous, religious, and colonial influences. English phraseology, on the other hand, reflects a blend of idiomatic expressions derived from historical events, literary works, and social contexts, often heavily influenced by Anglo-Saxon, Norman, and Latin sources.

Tagalog idioms and expressions often embody values such as respect for elders, communal unity, and resilience, while English phraseology includes expressions with themes of individualism, humor, and rationality. While certain themes like family, morality, and perseverance are shared across Tagalog and English phraseologies, the manner in which they are expressed varies greatly. This underscores the importance of studying phraseological units within a linguocultural framework, as each phrase reveals a different worldview shaped by historical, social, and religious contexts.

Comparative research on phraseology in Tagalog and English is still developing, with scholars advocating for more cross-cultural studies to understand how idioms and fixed expressions function as linguoculturemes. Studies by Cowie (1998) and Moon (1998) emphasize the importance of such comparative analyses in revealing both universal cognitive patterns and culture-specific meanings. This approach is particularly relevant to the study of Tagalog and English phraseological units, as both

languages have developed unique expressions reflecting their respective histories and cultures.

The analysis of phraseological units as linguocultemes in Tagalog and English is essential for gaining insight into the cultural values, norms, and cognitive patterns embedded in each language. While existing literature on phraseology and linguocultemes provides a robust framework for such an analysis, there is a need for more empirical studies specifically comparing Tagalog and English phraseological units. This study aims to address this gap by examining the typological and linguocultural aspects of phraseological units in both languages, contributing to a deeper understanding of how language and culture intersect in phraseology.

Methods

This study is carried out by combining the typological and linguacultural methods to analyze phraseological units in Filipino and English. The methods were designed to categorize and interpret these units as linguocultemes, focusing on their structure, meaning, and cultural implications. The different aspects of phraseological units of Tagalog has been studied by researchers Kroeger, Paul R. 1993, Schachter, Paul and Otones, Fay T. 1972, and the phraseology was studied mostly by Russian linguists as Smirnitsky, A.I. 1956, Amosova N.N 1989, A.V. Kunin 1990, Savitsky, V.M. 1993, Amosova, N.N. 2013 and others.

A dual approach combining typological and linguacultural methods was applied to this study. Typological analysis allowed for the categorization of phraseological units based on structural types, such as idioms, proverbs, and collocations. The linguacultural method then facilitated an examination of the underlying cultural meanings embedded within these units, focusing on metaphors, symbolism, and associated values.

The analysis involved three phases:

1. Categorization by Type: Phraseological units were classified into idioms, proverbs, and collocations based on their form and function within each language.
2. Cultural Interpretation: Using linguacultural analysis, we examined each unit for culturally significant imagery, symbols, and values.
3. Comparative Typological Analysis: Filipino and English units were then compared to identify convergences and divergences in cultural themes, motifs, and social functions.

Results

Phraseological units were selected from Filipino and English bilingual dictionaries, phraseology-specific resources, and authentic literary texts. Each selected phraseological unit was evaluated for its frequency, cultural salience, and presence in everyday discourse.

Structural Types of Phraseological Units

The structural classification revealed three main types of phraseological units in both Filipino and English: idioms, proverbs, and collocations. Below are examples for each type, showing structural differences and their cultural implications:



1. Idioms: In English, idioms such as "break the ice" and "spill the beans" are widely used to communicate specific social actions. In Filipino, idioms like "kapit sa patalim" (literally "hold onto the knife") reflect resilience and willingness to face danger or hardship, often for the sake of family. Another Filipino idiom, "magtanim ng galit" (literally, "to plant anger"), expresses holding a grudge, suggesting a natural metaphor that captures a slow, deep-seated resentment.

2. Proverbs: Proverbs are prominent in both languages, encapsulating moral values and social guidelines. In English, "Time is money" reflects a pragmatic and individualistic orientation, highlighting the economic value of time. The Filipino equivalent, "Ang oras ay ginto" (Time is gold), mirrors a similar value but with a metaphor more reflective of preciousness rather than exchange value. Another example is "Kung walang tiyaga, walang nilaga" (If there's no perseverance, there's no stew), a Filipino proverb that underscores the value of patience and hard work for collective prosperity, while in English, "No pain, no gain" conveys similar values but emphasizes personal reward.

3. Collocations: English collocations like "take responsibility" and "show interest" reflect values of individual accountability and assertiveness. In Filipino, collocations like "utang na loob" (literally, "debt of gratitude") reflect a strong sense of relational obligations, implying deep gratitude that must be repaid. Similarly, "malaking bagay" (literally, "a big thing") expresses importance, but with a softer, collective tone than the English "a big deal."

Cultural Themes and Symbolism

Several cultural themes emerged from the typological analysis, with each language embodying unique aspects of its sociocultural landscape:

1. Family and Community Orientation: Filipino phraseology heavily reflects collectivist values, particularly in idioms and proverbs. Expressions like "magdilang anghel" (may you speak like an angel) are used to wish good fortune upon others, revealing an outwardly focused hopefulness. This contrasts with English phrases like "knock on wood," which, while also superstitious, focuses more on individual luck than communal good.

2. Resilience and Endurance: Filipino culture values resilience in difficult situations, often expressed in idioms like "isang kahig, isang tuka" (one scratch, one peck), meaning living day-to-day with limited means. This image of survival contrasts with the English phrase "making ends meet," which also conveys economic struggle but lacks the specific cultural imagery found in Filipino.

3. Individualism vs. Collectivism: English phraseology often conveys individualistic values. For example, "pull yourself up by your bootstraps" reflects personal responsibility and self-reliance. In contrast, Filipino expressions like "bayanihan" (community spirit or communal unity) reveal a strong sense of interdependence, showing the emphasis on working together rather than individually to achieve goals.

Linguacultural Comparisons

The comparative analysis reveals both shared and divergent values in Filipino and English phraseological units:



- Shared Themes: Both languages convey themes of hard work and the value of time, but the expressions differ in tone and cultural context. For instance, while both “Time is gold” (Filipino) and “Time is money” (English) express the value of time, the Filipino metaphor suggests a deep-seated appreciation of time rather than a transactional view.

- Distinct Cultural Symbols: English frequently uses sports and adventure metaphors, such as “in the same boat” or “hit the ground running.” Filipino phraseology, in contrast, uses agricultural and nature imagery, reflecting a historical connection to rural life and community.

Discussion

This analysis highlights how phraseological units in Filipino and English serve as linguocultemes, revealing shared human experiences and unique cultural distinctions. Filipino phraseology, for instance, emphasizes community values, resilience, and interdependence. English, however, often conveys individualistic ideals, practical approaches to life, and economic values.

Implications for Language and Culture Studies

The findings suggest that understanding phraseological units as linguocultemes can enhance language learning by providing learners with insights into the cultural values encoded in the target language. This perspective is particularly useful for ESL learners, who may benefit from culturally contextualized language instruction.

Furthermore, for translation studies, recognizing the cultural implications of phraseological units can improve translation accuracy and the cultural resonance of translated texts. Translators must consider these cultural nuances to avoid misinterpretation and ensure the cultural authenticity of the target language.

Conclusion

The typological and linguacultural analysis of phraseological units in Filipino and English illustrates the intricate relationship between language and culture. While both languages share universal themes, they each reflect distinct cultural perspectives. By examining these units as linguocultemes, this study contributes to cross-cultural linguistics and emphasizes the importance of cultural awareness in language learning and translation.

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