PROBLEMS OF WRITING IDIOMS AND PHRASEOLOGICAL EXPRESSIONS

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Annotation: T*his article discusses the main challenges in translating English idioms and phraseological expressions. Cultural connotations, contextual equivalence, transators competence and semantic transfer are examined. The study also provides practical examples of different translation , adaptation and calquing.*

Keywords: *idioms, phraeseological expressions, translaton strategies, cultural equivalence, semantic shift*

Annotatsiya: U*shbu maqolada ingliz tilidagi ibora va frazeologik birliklarni tarjima qilish jarayonida uchraydigan asosiy muommolar yoritilgan. Idiomlarning milliy-maaniy konnotatsiyasi, kontekstga mos keluvchi ekvivalent tanlash, tarjimon kompetensiyasi hamda ma'no ko'chish jarayoni tahlil qilinadi. Shuningdek, maqolada idiomlarnitarjima qilishning ekvivalent, tavsifiy , adaptiv va kalkalash usullari misollar orqali ko'rsatib berilgan.*

Kalit so'zlar: *Idiomalar, frazeologizmlar , tarjima usullari, madaniy ekvivalentlik , ma'no ko'chish.*

Аннотация: *В данной статье рассматриваются основные проблемы перевода английских идиом и фразеологических выражений. Анализируются культурная коннотация, выбор адекватного эквивалента, роль переводческой компетентности и особенности семантического переноса. Приводятся примеры и методы перевода: эквивалентный, описательный, адаптивный и калькирование.*

Ключевые слова: *идиомы, фразеологизмы, переводческие стратегии, культурная эквивалентность, семантический перенос.*

Language is not simply a system of grammar and vocabulary; it also contains eep cultural meanings embedded within idioms and phraseological expressions. Idioms are stable expressions whose meanings cannot be derived from the literal meanings of their components. For example, the English idiom "to kick the bucket" does not refer to kicking a physical bucket but means to die.

Translating such expressions is one of the most challenging tasks for translators, because idioms often reflect the history , humor , worldview, and national mentality of the people who use them.

Many idioms are rooted in cultural traditions , folklore, religion or geography. For example : Idiom Literal Meaning Cultural Note Break a leg ! It's raining cats and dogs .

 In uzbek culture , similar meanings may be conveyed with completely different imagery.

Thus, direct translation often fails to convey meaning .

Main Problems in Translating Idioms

1.Lack of Direct Equivalents

Not all idioms have ready –made equivalents in the target language. Example: To spill the beans- meaning " sirni oshkor qilish" There is no identical idiom in Uzbek , so a descriptive translation is required.

2. Cultural Differences

Idioms may refer to cultural symbols unfamiliar to the target audience . Example : A piece of cake –" juda oson ish". The metaphor is culinary and may not carry the same emotional color in another culture.

3. Polysemy and Context Sensitivity

Some idioms change meaning depending on context . Example : To break the ice may mean: Muzni sindirish(literal). Suhbatni boshlash (figurative)

4.Translator's Competence

A translator must know the idiom's figurative meaning. Choose appropriate translation method. Maintain emotional tone and stylistic register. Why idioms are hard to translate : core problems.

Why translating idioms are so difficult: Non-compositionality: The central difficulty is that the meaning of an idiom is not recoverable by a simple combination of constituent meanings.Word-for-word translation often fails.

Cultural specificity: Many idioms encode cultural knowledge , institutions, or historical references(e.g, white elephant in English refers to a burdensome possession). When SL cuture lacks an equivalent, literal translation may confuse.

Fixedness and syntactic constraints : Idioms often resist grammatical manipulation: kick the bucket cannot easily become the bucket was kicked without idiomatic loss. Some PU s have slots for variation- understanding which are fixed affects translation choice.

Polysemy and pragmatic uses: Idioms can have different senses depending on context(literal or figurative). A translator must determine whether the idiom is used metaphorically,sarcastically, humorously, or literally.

Register,connotation , and colloational patterns: Idioms carry register (formal /informal), affective tone , and collocational constraints. Choosing an equivalent mus preserve register and pragmatic force.

Intertextually and stylistic function: In literature , idioms contribute to voice , characterization , rhythm and style . Translating them affects authorial voice.

Multiple idioms and layered metaphors: Some utterances combine several idioms or metaphors, complicating analysis and translation.

Translation strategies – comprehensive discussion : Below is an extended taxonomy of strategies, each described with strengths, weaknesses, and guidance on when to use it.

Literal translation : Description: Translate each word or morpheme directly. When to use: Rarely — when the idiom is transparent and compositionally interpretable in TL, or when a literal rendering is acceptable for stylistic reasons (e.g., deliberate foreignness). Pros: Preserves SL imagery and form; can be useful in poetic or didactic contexts. Cons: Risk of incomprehension or unintended meaning shift. Idiomatic equivalent (naturalization) : Description: Replace SL idiom with a TL idiom that conveys the same pragmatic function and connotation. When to use: Preferred when a close TL idiom exists and preserves register and effect. Calque (loan translation): Description: Translate the components literally but keep the structure; i.e., borrow the expression as a transparent compound in TL (e.g., skyscraper calqued into other languages historically). When to use: If TL readers can easily parse the calque or when introducing a new term. Pros: Preserves SL conceptual metaphor. Cons: Can be awkward or unintelligible; may feel foreign. Modulation: Description: Change the semantic point of view, focus, or category to express the same idea differently (Vinay &Darbelnet). Example: SL He has a green thumb → TL He is good at gardening (modulating to ability). When to use: When no idiomatic equivalent exists and literal translation fails; especially useful in technical or explanatory texts. Pros: Conveys intended meaning clearly.

Substitution / Cultural substitution: Description: Replace a culturally specific referent with a culturally equivalent referent in TL (e.g., Thanksgiving dinner may become a locally analogous festival meal if context allows). When to use: When cultural equivalence preserves communicative effect and readers lack SL cultural knowledge. Pros: Enhances reader relevance and comprehension. Cons: Risks altering historical or geographical specificity.Paraphrase / Explicitation: Description: Explain the idiom's meaning in more words instead of rendering it idiomatically. When to use: When accuracy is paramount and no concise equivalent exists (legal, technical, explanatory translation). Pros: Ensures understanding. Cons: Disrupts rhythm and may reduce stylistic density.

Omission: Description: Omit the idiom if it is redundant or its sense can be inferred from context. When to use: Rare and risky — useful when compression is necessary and the idiom adds little. Pros: Concise. Cons: Loss of nuance or humour. Addition / Compensation: Description: Add information elsewhere in the text to compensate for loss of meaning when a direct equivalent is infeasible. When to use: When necessary to preserve meaning, tone, or cultural reference across that text. Pros: Restores balance across the translation. Cons: Can be intrusive if overused. Borrowing: Description: Keep the SL idiom in the TL (possibly italicized) and provide gloss or explanation. When to use: When the idiom is iconic, untranslatable, or when foreign flavor is desirable.

Pros: Preserves SL identity and cultural reference. Cons: May confuse readers unfamiliar with SL. Creative adaptation / Transcreation: Description: Recreate the effect, humor, or imagery using a fresh TL expression that captures the same function,

sometimes inventing a new idiom-like phrasing. When to use: Advertising, literary translation, or when preserving impact is more important than literal equivalence. Pros: Preserves rhetorical and emotional effect. Syntactic transformation: Description: Modify sentence structure to accommodate TL idiomatic patterns (e.g., changing active to passive or altering word order). When to use: When structural differences between languages hinder idiomatic rendering.

Pros: Improves fluency and readability. Cons: Risk of losing focus or emphasis. Worked examples and comparative analyses. Below are examples showing analysis and strategy choice. Each example includes SL sentence, literal rendering, recommended TL rendering, and justification.

Example1

SL (English): She finally bit the bullet and applied for the job. Literal word-for-word (bad). (Uzbek literal translation keeps the image but confuses.) Recommended strategy: Idiomatic equivalent or Paraphrase. TL (Uzbek) idiomatic equivalent: ("took courage") Justification: Preserves pragmatic force (reluctant decision) without confusing the TL reader.

Example2

SL (English): He felt like a fish out of water at the wedding. Literal (bad). Justification: Focuses on the feeling rather than preserving fish image.

Example3

SL: When in Rome, do as the Romans do. Strategy: Equivalent proverb if exists in TL; else Paraphrase. (If exact proverb absent, paraphrase the advice.)

Example4

SL: "He spilled the beans and let the cat out of the bag." (two idioms for same meaning: reveal secrets) Strategy: Condense into one idiom or paraphrase; use compensation. TL example: ("revealed the secret") Justification: Keeps meaning without awkward double metaphors.

Example5

SL (English): He kept his cards close to his chest. (implies strategic silence) Strategy: Find TL idiom with same connotation or use transcreation. Potential TL: Justification: Preserves register and implied secrecy.

Idioms and phraseological expressions pose translation challenges across semantics, culture, syntax, and pragmatics. No single strategy fits all cases. Translators must combine linguistic analysis, cultural knowledge, and creative problem-solving. The taxonomy presented here helps decide among literal translation, idiomatic equivalents, calque, modulation, paraphrase, borrowing, omission, and transcreation. Good practice includes careful context analysis, corpus support, and documentation of translation choices.

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