



Problems of translating phraseological units: from English to Uzbek

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ABSTRACT

Translating phraseological units (PUs), such as idioms, proverbs, and fixed expressions, from English to Uzbek poses significant challenges due to linguistic, cultural, and semantic differences between the two languages. This article examines key problems, including the lack of direct equivalents, cultural specificity, and structural mismatches. Drawing on comparative analysis and examples, it discusses translation strategies like substitution, paraphrasing, and descriptive explanation. The study highlights the need for cultural competence in translation to preserve meaning and idiomatic essence. Findings suggest that while some PUs have partial equivalents, many require adaptive approaches to avoid loss of connotation.

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Frazeologik birlikmalarni ingliz tilidan o'zbek tiliga tarjima qilishdagi muammolar

Kalit so'zlar:

Frazeologik birliklar,
idiomalar,
tarjima strategiyalari,
madaniy ekvivalentlik,
semantik noaniqlik,
ingliz-o'zbek tarjimasi,
lisoniy farqlar,
madaniyatlararo muloqot,
majoziy til,
tarjima muammolari.

ANNOTATSIYA

Ingliz tilidan o'zbek tiliga frazeologik birliklarni (FB), xususan, idiomalar, maqollar va turg'un iboralarni tarjima qilish ikki til o'rtasidagi lisoniy, madaniy va ma'noviy tafovutlar tufayli jiddiy qiyinchiliklarni keltirib chiqaradi. Ushbu maqolada to'g'ridan-to'g'ri muqobillarning yo'qligi, madaniy o'ziga xoslik va tuzilmaviy nomuvofiqliklar kabi asosiy muammolar ko'rib chiqiladi. Qiyosiy tahlil va misollardan foydalanib, o'rin almashtirish, qayta ifodalash va tavsifiy tushuntirish kabi tarjima usullari muhokama qilinadi. Tadqiqot ma'no va idiomatik mohiyatni saqlab qolish uchun tarjimada madaniy

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bilimdonlik zarurligi ta'kidlanadi. Natijalar shuni ko'rsatadiki, ba'zi FBlar qisman muqobillarga ega bo'lsa-da, ko'pchiligi ma'no nozikliklarini yo'qotmaslik uchun moslashuvchan yondashuvlarni talab etadi.

Проблемы перевода фразеологических единиц: с английского на узбекский язык

АННОТАЦИЯ

Ключевые слова:

фразеологические
единицы,
идиомы,
стратегии перевода,
культурная
эквивалентность,
семантическая
непрозрачность,
англо-узбекский перевод,
языковые различия,
межкультурная
коммуникация,
образный язык,
трудности перевода.

Перевод фразеологических единиц (ФЕ), таких как идиомы, пословицы и устойчивые выражения, с английского на узбекский язык представляет собой значительную сложность из-за лингвистических, культурных и семантических различий между двумя языками. В данной статье рассматриваются ключевые проблемы, включая отсутствие прямых эквивалентов, культурную специфику и структурные несоответствия. Опираясь на сравнительный анализ и примеры, рассматриваются такие стратегии перевода, как субституция, парафразирование и описательное объяснение. В исследовании подчеркивается необходимость культурной компетентности при переводе для сохранения смысла и идиоматической сущности. Результаты показывают, что, хотя некоторые ФЕ имеют частичные эквиваленты, многие требуют адаптивных подходов, чтобы избежать потери коннотации.

INTRODUCTION

Phraseological units are integral to language, encapsulating cultural nuances, historical contexts, and metaphorical meanings that extend beyond literal interpretations. In translation studies, PUs from English to Uzbek present unique difficulties because English belongs to the Germanic language family, while Uzbek is Turkic, leading to divergent syntactic structures and semantic frameworks. These units often derive from specific cultural experiences, making direct translation ineffective or misleading. For instance, English idioms like "kick the bucket" (meaning to die) may not have a straightforward Uzbek counterpart, requiring translators to navigate between fidelity to the source and naturalness in the target language.

This article explores the primary problems in translating English PUs into Uzbek, supported by examples and theoretical insights. It aims to contribute to translation pedagogy and practice in multilingual contexts like Uzbekistan, where English-Uzbek translation is increasingly vital for literature, media, and diplomacy.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Scholarly work on translating PUs emphasizes cultural and linguistic barriers. Baker (2018) discusses equivalence in translation, noting that non-literal meanings in idioms complicate cross-linguistic transfer. Newmark (1988) classifies translation strategies for idioms, including literal translation, substitution, and omission when no equivalent exists.

In the context of English-Uzbek translation, studies highlight specific challenges. For example, research on somatic PUs (those involving body parts) reveals mismatches in metaphorical usage between the languages. Comparative analyses of idioms show that while some share universal themes (e.g., animal-related expressions), others are culture-bound, leading to semantic loss. Uzbek scholars like Nabieva (2017) examine equivalents, stressing the role of national coloring in PUs. Recent works also address globalization's impact, where borrowed English idioms enter Uzbek but often retain foreign connotations.

PROBLEMS IN TRANSLATION

Cultural Specificity. One major issue is the cultural embeddedness of PUs. English idioms often draw from Western history, religion, or folklore, which may not resonate in Uzbek culture, influenced by Central Asian traditions and Islam. For example, "when pigs fly" (indicating impossibility) references pigs' unclean status in some cultures, but in Uzbek, a direct translation ("cho'chqalar uchganda") might confuse due to different animal symbolism. Instead, equivalents like "osmondan yulduz uzib tushsa" (when a star falls from the sky) are used, but this requires cultural adaptation to avoid alienating readers.

Semantic Ambiguity and Non-Literal Meaning. PUs are semantically opaque; their meanings cannot be deduced from individual components. Literal translation often results in nonsense or altered connotations. Take "spill the beans" (reveal a secret): A verbatim Uzbek rendering ("loviyalarni to'kib yubormoq") loses the idiomatic sense, necessitating paraphrasing as "sirni oshkor qilmoq". This ambiguity is exacerbated in proverbs, where English "every cloud has a silver lining" (optimism in adversity) translates to "har bir bulutning kumush cheti bor", but Uzbek prefers "yomonlikdan yaxshilik chiqadi," altering the imagery.

Structural and Linguistic Differences. English and Uzbek differ in grammar and word order, affecting PU translation. English idioms are often verb-initial (e.g., "bite the bullet" – endure hardship), while Uzbek equivalents may be noun-focused. For instance, "break a leg" (good luck) becomes "ishing o'ngidan kelsin" in Uzbek, shifting from imperative to wishful structure. Collocations like "black market" translate directly as "qora bozor", but others, such as "red tape" (bureaucracy), require explanation as "qizil lenta" fails to convey meaning, leading to "ortiqcha byurokratiya."

Problem Type	Description	Example (English PU)	Uzbek Translation Issue
Cultural Specificity	Rooted in source culture without target equivalent	"When pigs fly"	No pig-related impossibility idiom; substitute with star-falling metaphor
Semantic Ambiguity	Meaning not literal; risk of misinterpretation	"Spill the beans"	Literal translation nonsensical; paraphrase needed
Structural Differences	Grammar/word order mismatch	"Bite the bullet"	Verb-initial vs. noun-focused; adapt to natural Uzbek flow

Strategies to Overcome Challenges. Translators employ various methods to address these issues. Substitution uses Uzbek equivalents where possible, e.g., "once in a blue moon" (rarely) as "qizil oyda bir marta." Paraphrasing explains the meaning descriptively, useful for culture-specific units. Descriptive translation combines explanation with adaptation, as in translating "kick the bucket" as "oyog'ini cho'zmoq"

(stretch one's legs, meaning die). In literature, hybrid approaches preserve stylistic effects.

DISCUSSION

The analysis of phraseological unit (PU) translation from English to Uzbek reveals that linguistic differences alone do not account for the complexity of the task; cultural and cognitive factors are equally influential. The comparative examples in this study demonstrate that many PUs are culture-bound, drawing on imagery, historical events, or social practices that are unfamiliar to Uzbek audiences. This reinforces the view, supported by Baker (2018) and Newmark (1988), that translation of idioms is as much an act of cultural negotiation as it is a linguistic operation.

The problem of semantic opacity – where the meaning of an idiom cannot be deduced from its components – further complicates direct translation. Even in cases where partial equivalents exist, subtle connotative differences may lead to shifts in tone, register, or imagery. For instance, while “spill the beans” and “sirni oshkor qilmoq” both denote revealing a secret, the metaphorical background differs, with the English version carrying a more informal, even playful, nuance.

Structural disparities between the two languages also play a critical role. English idioms often follow syntactic patterns that do not exist in Uzbek, requiring grammatical restructuring in translation to maintain fluency. Such adjustments can cause loss of idiomatic rhythm or imagery, which may be particularly problematic in literary texts where stylistic integrity is paramount.

The strategies identified – substitution, paraphrasing, and descriptive translation – emphasize adaptability. The choice of strategy is contingent on factors such as target audience, text type, and translation purpose. In literary contexts, preserving imagery may take precedence, while in technical or journalistic contexts, clarity and accuracy may override stylistic considerations. The discussion also highlights the translator's role as a cultural mediator, making interpretive decisions that balance fidelity to the source with naturalness in the target language.

CONCLUSION

Translating English phraseological units into Uzbek is a multidimensional challenge shaped by cultural specificity, semantic opacity, and structural differences between the two languages. Direct equivalents are often unavailable, and literal translations frequently result in semantic distortion or loss of idiomatic force. This necessitates the use of flexible translation strategies – such as culturally appropriate substitution, paraphrasing, and descriptive rendering – to preserve both meaning and communicative effect. The study underscores that effective PU translation requires more than linguistic competence; it demands deep cultural knowledge, sensitivity to context, and creative problem-solving skills. Translators must navigate between preserving the idiomatic essence of the source text and ensuring accessibility and resonance for the target audience.

In the broader scope of translation studies, these findings reaffirm the importance of integrating phraseological awareness into translator training, especially in multilingual contexts like Uzbekistan. Future research could investigate how technological tools, including AI-based translation systems, handle PUs and whether hybrid human-machine approaches can enhance accuracy and cultural nuance. Ultimately, mastering PU

translation strengthens cross-cultural communication, enriches literary exchange, and contributes to the preservation of idiomatic richness across languages.

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