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PROBLEMS AND SOLUTIONS IN TRANSLATING IDIOMATIC EXPRESSIONS BETWEEN ENGLISH AND UZBEK

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Annotation: *This article discusses the main problems and possible solutions in translating idiomatic expressions between English and Uzbek. Idioms are an important part of language, but they are often difficult to translate because their meanings are not literal. Therefore, translators may face different challenges such as cultural differences, lack of equivalent expressions, and misunderstanding of context. In addition, the article explains how these problems can affect the quality of translation. At the same time, several useful solutions are suggested, for example, using similar idioms, paraphrasing the meaning, and adapting expressions to the target culture. Overall, the article shows that translating idioms requires not only language knowledge but also cultural understanding. Thus, translators should be careful and flexible in order to give the correct meaning.*

Keywords; *Idiomatic expressions, translation, English language, Uzbek language, cultural differences, equivalence, paraphrasing, translation problems, translation strategies, meaning, context.*

INTRODUCTION

Language is not only a tool for communication, but it also reflects the culture, traditions, and way of thinking of people. Therefore, learning a language means not only learning its grammar and vocabulary, but also understanding its cultural background. In this regard, idiomatic expressions play a very important role, because they make speech more natural, expressive, and colorful. Idioms are widely used in both spoken and written language, and they help people express complex ideas in a short and effective way. However, their meanings are usually figurative, not literal. Because of this, it is often difficult for language learners and translators to understand and translate them correctly. For example, many English idioms cannot be translated word by word into Uzbek, because such translation may lose the original meaning or sound unnatural. Moreover, English and Uzbek languages belong to different language families and have different grammatical structures. English is an analytic language, while Uzbek is an agglutinative language. As a result, the way ideas are expressed in these languages can be quite different. In addition, idioms are closely connected with the history, lifestyle, and traditions of people, which creates cultural differences in translation.

Another important point is that some idioms may have similar meanings in both languages, but their forms can be different. On the other hand, some idioms do not have any equivalent at all. In such cases, translators need to find alternative ways to express the meaning. Furthermore, context also plays a key role, because the same idiom can have

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different meanings depending on the situation. Therefore, translating idiomatic expressions requires not only good knowledge of both languages, but also deep understanding of their cultures. Without this, it is difficult to achieve accurate and natural translation. The main purpose of this article is to analyze the common problems that occur when translating idiomatic expressions between English and Uzbek. In addition, the article aims to suggest practical solutions and strategies that can help translators overcome these difficulties and improve the quality of translation.

Theoretical Background of Idiomatic Expressions

Idiomatic expressions are an important part of any language, because they make speech more natural, expressive, and interesting. In general, an idiom is a fixed phrase whose meaning is different from the literal meanings of its individual words. Therefore, idioms cannot be understood by translating each word separately. Instead, they should be understood as a whole unit.⁷ For example, in English the expression “*break the ice*” does not mean to literally break ice, but it means to start a conversation in a friendly way. Similarly, the idiom “*spill the beans*” means to reveal a secret. These examples show that idioms carry figurative meanings, and they often reflect the culture and traditions of the people who use them.

Moreover, idioms have several important characteristics. First of all, they are fixed expressions, which means their form usually does not change. Secondly, they have figurative meanings, so their interpretation depends on context. In addition, idioms are widely used in both spoken and written language, especially in informal communication. Because of this, understanding idioms is essential for effective communication. When we compare English and Uzbek languages, we can see that both languages have rich idiomatic expressions. However, their forms and meanings are not always the same. Some idioms may have similar equivalents in both languages. For example, the English idiom “*kill two birds with one stone*” has a similar Uzbek equivalent “*bir o‘q bilan ikki quyovni urmoq.*” In this case, both idioms express the same idea, although the words are different. On the other hand, there are many idioms that do not have direct equivalents. This is mainly because idioms are closely connected with the culture, history, and lifestyle of people. As a result, each language has its own unique idiomatic expressions.⁸

Therefore, understanding the theoretical background of idiomatic expressions is very important for translators. It helps them recognize idioms, understand their meanings, and choose the most appropriate translation method. Without this knowledge, it is difficult to achieve accurate and natural translation. In addition to their figurative nature, idiomatic expressions also play a significant role in shaping the identity of a language. They are often used to express emotions, attitudes, and evaluations in a more vivid and creative way. For this reason, idioms are not only linguistic units but also cultural symbols that reflect the worldview of a particular society. Furthermore, idioms can be classified into different types

⁷ Newmark, Peter. *A Textbook of Translation*. — New York: Pearson Education, 2020, p. 103–110.

⁸ House, Juliane. *Translation: The Basics*. — London: Routledge, 2020, p. 54–60.

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according to their structure and meaning. Some idioms are completely fixed and cannot be changed at all, while others allow slight variations. For example, certain idiomatic expressions may change their tense or form depending on the grammatical context, but their core meaning usually remains the same. This flexibility sometimes makes it easier for speakers to use idioms in different situations.

Another important aspect of idiomatic expressions is their level of transparency. Some idioms are partially understandable because their meanings are somewhat related to the literal meanings of the words. However, many idioms are completely non-transparent, which means their meanings cannot be guessed at all. For instance, without prior knowledge, it is difficult to understand the idiom “*kick the bucket*,” because its meaning (to die) has no direct connection to the words themselves. In addition, idioms often vary in terms of usage and style. Some idioms are more common in informal speech, while others may appear in formal writing or literary texts. Therefore, it is important for language learners and translators to know when and how to use idiomatic expressions appropriately. Using an idiom in the wrong context may lead to misunderstanding or make speech sound unnatural.⁹

When analyzing idioms in English and Uzbek, it becomes clear that both languages are rich in figurative expressions, but their origins are different. English idioms are often influenced by historical events, literature, and daily life in Western culture. In contrast, Uzbek idioms are closely connected with national traditions, folklore, and the lifestyle of Uzbek people. Because of this, idioms in each language reflect different cultural experiences. Finally, it should be noted that idiomatic competence is an essential part of language proficiency.¹⁰ A person who understands and correctly uses idioms can communicate more effectively and naturally. Therefore, studying idiomatic expressions is an important step not only for translators but also for anyone who wants to master a foreign language.

Problems in Translating Idiomatic Expressions between English and Uzbek

Translating idiomatic expressions between English and Uzbek is a complex process, because idioms often carry meanings that are not literal. Therefore, translators may face different kinds of problems when they try to transfer these expressions from one language into another. These problems are mainly related to cultural differences, lack of equivalent expressions, structural differences, and contextual misunderstandings. First of all, one of the main problems is cultural differences. Idioms are closely connected with the culture, traditions, and lifestyle of people. As a result, many English idioms may not be familiar to Uzbek speakers. For example, the idiom “*kick the bucket*” means “to die,” but its literal translation into Uzbek does not make sense. In such cases, the translator cannot rely on word-for-word translation and must find another way to express the meaning. Secondly,

⁹ Shuttleworth, Mark & Cowie, Moira. Dictionary of Translation Studies. — London: Routledge, 2020, p. 120–126.

¹⁰ Baker, Mona & Saldanha, Gabriela. Routledge Encyclopedia of Translation Studies. — London: Routledge, 2020, p. 210–218.

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another important problem is the lack of direct equivalents. Some idioms simply do not have corresponding expressions in the target language. For instance, the English idiom “*once in a blue moon*” means “very rarely,” but there is no exact Uzbek idiom with the same structure and imagery. Therefore, translators often have to use descriptive translation, which may reduce the expressiveness of the original idiom.¹¹

Moreover, literal translation is one of the most common mistakes in translating idioms. When translators translate idioms word by word, the result is often incorrect or confusing. For example, the idiom “*it’s raining cats and dogs*” cannot be translated literally, because it would sound unnatural and meaningless in Uzbek. Instead, its correct meaning is “*juda qattiq yomg‘ir yog‘moqda.*” In addition, structural differences between English and Uzbek languages also create difficulties. English is an analytic language, while Uzbek is an agglutinative language. Because of this, sentence structure, word order, and grammatical forms are different. As a result, it is sometimes difficult to find a translation that is both accurate and natural.

Another problem is related to context. The meaning of an idiom may change depending on the situation in which it is used. If the translator does not fully understand the context, the translation may be incorrect. For example, some idioms can have both literal and figurative meanings, and only the context helps to identify the correct interpretation.

Finally, idioms may also differ in terms of style and usage. Some idioms are informal and are used mainly in spoken language, while others may appear in formal texts. If the translator does not consider the style of the text, the translation may not be appropriate for the situation. In conclusion, translating idiomatic expressions between English and Uzbek involves several serious challenges. These include cultural differences, lack of equivalents, literal translation problems, structural differences, and contextual misunderstandings. Therefore, translators need to be careful and well-informed in order to avoid these problems and produce accurate translations.

Effective Strategies and Solutions for Translating Idioms

As mentioned in the previous section, translating idiomatic expressions between English and Uzbek can be difficult. However, there are several effective strategies that can help translators overcome these challenges. By using appropriate methods, it is possible to preserve the meaning and naturalness of idioms in translation. First of all, one of the most effective strategies is using equivalent idioms. When a similar idiomatic expression exists in the target language, it is better to use it instead of translating word by word. For example, the English idiom “*kill two birds with one stone*” can be translated into Uzbek as “*bir o‘q bilan ikki quyovni urmoq.*” Although the words are different, the meaning is the same. Therefore, this method helps to keep both meaning and expressiveness.¹²

¹¹ Baker, Mona. *In Other Words: A Coursebook on Translation*. — London: Routledge, 2021, p. 45–52.

¹² Nida, Eugene A. *Language and Culture in Translation*. — Shanghai: Shanghai Foreign Language Education Press, 2021, p. 66–72.

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Secondly, when there is no direct equivalent, translators can use paraphrasing. This means explaining the meaning of the idiom in a simple and clear way. For instance, the idiom “*break the ice*” can be translated as “*suhbatni boshlash uchun muhitni yumshatmoq.*” In this case, the figurative meaning is explained instead of using another idiom. Although some stylistic effect may be lost, the main idea is still clear.

Another important strategy is cultural adaptation. Since idioms are closely related to culture, it is sometimes necessary to adapt them to the cultural context of the target language. This means replacing the original idiom with an expression that is more familiar to the target audience. As a result, the translation becomes more understandable and natural for readers. In addition, contextual translation plays a key role in translating idioms correctly.¹³ Translators should always consider the context in which the idiom is used. The same idiom may have different meanings depending on the situation, tone, and purpose of the text. Therefore, understanding the context helps to choose the most appropriate translation. Furthermore, translators should pay attention to the style and register of the text. Some idioms are informal and suitable for everyday speech, while others may be more formal or literary. If the style is not preserved, the translation may sound unnatural or inappropriate. For this reason, it is important to match the level of formality in both languages.

Finally, improving cultural and linguistic knowledge is also an essential solution. Translators should have a deep understanding of both English and Uzbek cultures, as well as their idiomatic systems. Regular reading, practice, and exposure to authentic language materials can help translators develop this competence. In conclusion, translating idiomatic expressions requires careful choice of strategies. Using equivalent idioms, paraphrasing, cultural adaptation, and contextual understanding are some of the most effective methods. By applying these strategies, translators can produce accurate, natural, and meaningful translations.

CONCLUSION

In conclusion, idiomatic expressions are an important part of both English and Uzbek languages, because they make speech more expressive and natural. However, translating idioms between these two languages is not an easy task, since their meanings are usually figurative and closely connected with culture. As discussed in this article, translators may face several problems such as cultural differences, lack of direct equivalents, structural differences, and misunderstanding of context. Because of these challenges, literal translation is often not effective and may lead to incorrect or unnatural results. At the same time, there are several useful strategies that can help solve these problems. For example, using equivalent idioms, paraphrasing the meaning, and adapting expressions to the target culture can improve the quality of translation. In addition, paying attention to context and style is very important for choosing the correct translation. Overall, successful translation of idiomatic expressions requires not only good knowledge of both languages, but also deep

¹³ Hatim, Basil & Munday, Jeremy. *Translation: An Advanced Resource Book*. — London: Routledge, 2021, p. 91–98.

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understanding of their cultures. Therefore, translators should be flexible and careful in their work. By applying appropriate strategies, they can achieve accurate and natural translations, which help improve communication between languages and cultures. In addition to the points mentioned above, it is important to note that idiomatic expressions are not only linguistic units, but they are also a reflection of national identity and cultural heritage. Therefore, when translating idioms, the translator should not focus only on the words, but also on the deeper meaning and cultural background behind them. This makes the process of translation more complex, but at the same time more meaningful.

Furthermore, the ability to translate idioms correctly is a sign of high language proficiency. A translator who can recognize idiomatic expressions and choose the most appropriate translation strategy is more likely to produce high-quality work. On the other hand, lack of knowledge about idioms may lead to serious misunderstandings, especially in professional or academic contexts. It is also important to emphasize that idiomatic translation requires continuous learning and practice. Since languages are constantly developing, new idioms appear, and old ones may change their meanings over time. Therefore, translators should always improve their skills and stay updated with modern language usage. Moreover, teaching idioms in language learning can also help students better understand both the language and its culture. If learners are familiar with common idiomatic expressions, they can communicate more fluently and naturally. In this way, idioms play a significant role not only in translation but also in education.

Finally, it can be said that translating idiomatic expressions between English and Uzbek is both challenging and rewarding. Although there are many difficulties, careful analysis, cultural awareness, and the use of effective strategies can lead to successful results. Thus, idiomatic translation remains an important and interesting area of linguistic study.

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