



THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN PHRASEOLOGY AND TRANSLATION: COMPARING ENGLISH AND UZBEK

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Abstract *This article investigates the challenges of translating phraseological units between English and Uzbek. It outlines how idioms, fixed expressions, and metaphorical language complicate direct translation due to cultural and structural differences. The study proposes strategies—such as finding equivalent expressions, paraphrasing, and cultural adaptation—to preserve meaning and fluency, offering insights valuable for translators and language educators.*

Keywords: *Phraseology, translation, idiomatic expressions, cultural adaptation, English phraseology, Uzbek phraseology, fixed expressions, collocations, metaphorical language, translation strategies*

INTRODUCTION

Phraseology plays a crucial role in shaping how languages convey meaning. It encompasses a rich tapestry of fixed expressions, idioms, collocations, and proverbs that native speakers use naturally (Cowie, 1998). However, translating these phraseological units between languages—especially between English and Uzbek—presents significant challenges. Many of these expressions carry cultural, historical, and structural nuances that do not easily transfer from one language to another (Baker, 2011). This article examines the complexities of phraseological translation by discussing the difficulties of transferring meaning from English to Uzbek, analyzing key linguistic differences, and exploring strategies that translators use to preserve both accuracy and expressive depth.

One of the most significant obstacles in translating phraseological units is the disparity between literal meaning and idiomatic meaning. Many fixed expressions in English are highly figurative and cannot be translated word-for-word without losing their intended meaning. For instance, the common English idiom "kick the bucket," meaning to die, makes no logical sense if translated directly into Uzbek as "tuxumni tepish." Instead, an equivalent phrase such as "olamdan o'tmoq" (to depart from the world) is used to convey the correct meaning.

Another challenge arises due to *cultural relevance*, as phraseological units often reflect the historical and social values of the language community. Certain idioms and fixed expressions exist only in specific cultures, making direct translation impossible. For example, the English phrase "bite the bullet," meaning to endure pain or hardship





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bravely, has no exact counterpart in Uzbek. Instead, a more culturally relevant equivalent, such as "sabir qil" (be patient), may be used to reflect a similar concept.

Additionally, English and Uzbek differ in their structural composition of phraseological units. English relies heavily on phrasal verbs—such as "put off," "bring up," and "take over"—which do not have direct equivalents in Uzbek. Uzbek typically expresses these concepts with single verbs or descriptive phrases rather than verb-preposition combinations. For instance, the English phrase "look up to someone" (meaning to respect or admire) is not expressed through a similar grammatical structure in Uzbek. Instead, the phrase "hurmat qilmoq" or "e'zozlamoq" would be used to convey the same meaning.

Comparing English and Uzbek Phraseology

Phraseology encompasses a wide range of fixed linguistic patterns that shape fluency and naturalness in both languages. One major category is collocations, which consist of words that naturally pair together in a given language. In English, the phrase "heavy rain" sounds natural, while "strong rain" does not. In Uzbek, however, the direct translation "og'ir yomg'ir" would sound unnatural, whereas "kuchli yomg'ir" (strong rain) would be preferred. This contrast highlights the importance of collocational accuracy in translation.

Similarly, fixed expressions and proverbs present unique translation difficulties. Every language has culturally significant proverbs that impart wisdom, yet their wording and imagery often differ. In English, the saying "The early bird catches the worm" emphasizes the advantages of acting early. Uzbek has a similar proverb, "Ertalabning yog'i shirin," which conveys the idea that morning efforts are more productive. While these two expressions share the same underlying wisdom, they do not mirror each other word-for-word, requiring adaptation in translation.

Another key area of phraseological comparison is the use of *metaphorical expressions*. English and Uzbek frequently rely on figurative language, yet the imagery used in metaphors varies significantly. For example, the English expression "at the drop of a hat" (meaning immediately, without hesitation) has no direct counterpart in Uzbek. Instead, Uzbek speakers might say "ko'zni ochib yumguncha" (as fast as opening and closing one's eyes) to express a similar idea. This difference underscores the need for translators to adapt metaphorical phraseology rather than translating literally.

Strategies for Translating Phraseological Units

Given the complexities of phraseology, translators employ several key strategies to ensure meaning is preserved while adapting expressions appropriately. First, when possible, they seek out closest equivalents in the target language. If a phraseological unit has a culturally and linguistically similar expression, translators use it to maintain fluency. For instance, the English idiom "Actions speak louder than words" has a natural equivalent in Uzbek: "Ish so'zdan kuchliroq."





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However, if no direct equivalent exists, paraphrasing is a common strategy. Translators rephrase the meaning to ensure clarity without attempting a word-for-word translation. For example, the English phrase "spill the beans" (meaning to reveal a secret) has no identical structure in Uzbek, so it may be rewritten as "sirni oshkor qilish" (to disclose a secret).

Another technique is *cultural adaptation*, where translators adjust an expression to match the historical and social context of the target language. Proverbs are often adapted in this way, as their deeper meanings remain the same even if their wording changes.

Finally, translators must carefully preserve the nuance of an expression. Some phraseological units carry specific emotional or stylistic undertones that may not be apparent in direct translation. A phrase such as "walking on thin ice" (meaning being in a risky situation) should not only be translated literally but also maintain its sense of danger and uncertainty in Uzbek, perhaps as "tiz cho'kib yurish" (walking cautiously).

Case Study: Literary Phraseology in English and Uzbek

One of the most intriguing aspects of phraseological translation is its impact on literary texts. Writers frequently rely on fixed expressions, idioms, and metaphorical language to enhance storytelling. Comparing English and Uzbek literature reveals how phraseology adapts across languages while retaining stylistic depth.

For instance, Shakespeare's works contain countless idioms and expressions that translators must handle carefully. The famous line "All that glitters is not gold" from *The Merchant of Venice* conveys the idea that appearances can be deceptive. In Uzbek, an equivalent proverb such as "Tashqi chiroy har doim haqiqatni ifodalamaydi" (outer beauty does not always reflect truth) might serve as a more natural adaptation.

Similarly, Uzbek poetry frequently employs metaphorical phraseology that does not always have direct English equivalents. The poetic phrase "quyoshdek porlash" (shine like the sun) expresses vibrant energy and beauty, yet in English, a simple "radiant" or "glowing" might be used instead.

CONCLUSION

Translating phraseology is a complex yet essential aspect of cross-linguistic communication. While English and Uzbek share some overlapping phraseological concepts, their structural differences, cultural nuances, and metaphorical imagery often require adaptation rather than direct translation. By employing techniques such as finding equivalents, paraphrasing, and cultural adaptation, translators can preserve the expressive depth of both languages while ensuring natural fluency.

Future research could explore how bilingual speakers navigate phraseology in both languages, or examine how phraseological translation affects language learning. Understanding these complexities not only improves linguistic proficiency but also deepens appreciation for the richness of both English and Uzbek phraseology.





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