



PROBLEMS OF TRANSLATING AND INTERPRETING PHRASEOLOGICAL UNITS

Nafisa Kubayeva

Teacher at Samarkand Branch of ISFT Institute, Uzbekistan

[*nafisaxon77777@gmail.com*](mailto:nafisaxon77777@gmail.com)

Abstract

This article examines the major problems associated with the translation and interpretation of phraseological units in intercultural communication. Phraseological expressions, including idioms, proverbs, and fixed collocations, represent one of the most culturally marked layers of language because their meanings are often figurative and cannot be understood literally. The study analyzes semantic, structural, and linguocultural difficulties that arise during translation and interpretation processes. Particular attention is given to equivalence, cultural adaptation, contextual interpretation, and the preservation of expressive meaning. The article also discusses the main translation strategies used to render phraseological units effectively from one language into another. Through comparative examples from English and Uzbek, the research demonstrates that successful translation of phraseological units requires not only linguistic competence but also deep cultural awareness.

Keywords: *phraseological units, idioms, translation, interpretation, equivalence, linguocultural analysis, semantic meaning, intercultural communication, English language, Uzbek language.*

Introduction

Language reflects the history, culture, and worldview of a nation [11]. Among its most expressive components are phraseological units, which enrich speech



through figurative and emotionally colored meanings. Phraseological units include idioms, proverbs, sayings, and stable expressions that are widely used in both spoken and written communication. Unlike ordinary lexical combinations, these expressions often possess meanings that cannot be understood directly from their individual words [1]. The translation and interpretation of phraseological units present a serious challenge in linguistics and translation studies. Since idiomatic expressions are deeply connected with national culture and collective experience, literal translation frequently leads to semantic distortion or misunderstanding [12]. A translator must therefore identify not only the linguistic meaning of a phraseological unit but also its emotional, stylistic, and cultural implications.

The issue becomes even more complex in translation between structurally and culturally different languages such as English and Uzbek [2]. While some phraseological units possess direct equivalents, many require contextual adaptation or descriptive interpretation. Consequently, the study of phraseological translation remains an important field in comparative linguistics and intercultural communication [13].

Phraseological units are stable combinations of words characterized by semantic unity and fixed structure [14]. Their meanings are usually metaphorical and culturally conditioned. Expressions such as *break the ice*, *spill the beans*, or *hit the nail on the head* in English cannot be interpreted literally because their actual meanings differ from the meanings of individual lexical components [3]. Similarly, Uzbek language contains numerous phraseological expressions such as *og'ziga talqon solmoq*, *boshi osmonga yetmoq*, and *ko'ngli joyiga tushmoq*. These expressions convey emotional states and social attitudes through figurative imagery rooted in national culture. Phraseological units perform several important functions in language [15]. They increase emotional expressiveness, make speech more vivid, and strengthen stylistic impact. At the same time, their figurative nature creates



difficulties during translation because equivalent expressions may not exist in another language [16].

One of the central problems in translating phraseological units is semantic incompatibility. The figurative meaning of an idiom is often impossible to derive directly from its lexical structure [4]. As a result, literal translation may produce meaningless or misleading interpretations. For example, the English idiom *kick the bucket* means “to die.” If translated word for word into another language, the phrase loses its idiomatic meaning entirely. Instead, the translator must identify an equivalent expression or interpret the meaning contextually. Uzbek language may use expressions such as *olamdan o'tmoq* or *jon bermoq* depending on stylistic context [17].

Semantic problems become particularly noticeable when phraseological units carry symbolic or historical associations unique to a culture. The English expression *carry coals to Newcastle* refers to performing an unnecessary action because Newcastle was historically famous for coal production [5]. Translating this expression literally into Uzbek would confuse readers unfamiliar with British history. Therefore, translators often replace it with a culturally understandable equivalent. Another challenge lies in polysemy and contextual variation. Some phraseological units can express different shades of meaning depending on communicative context [17]. Consequently, interpretation requires attention not only to dictionary definitions but also to pragmatic and stylistic factors.

Phraseological units are closely connected with national traditions, customs, and cultural mentality [6]. This cultural specificity creates serious difficulties in intercultural translation and interpretation. English idioms frequently reflect maritime traditions, industrial society, sports culture, and individualistic values. Expressions such as *all hands on deck* or *learn the ropes* originate from nautical vocabulary and preserve historical elements of British culture. Uzbek phraseology,



however, often reflects agricultural life, hospitality, family relationships, and collectivist traditions [7].

For instance, the Uzbek proverb *Mehmon otangdan ulug'* demonstrates the cultural importance of hospitality. Translating it literally into English may preserve the lexical meaning but fail to convey its social and emotional significance fully. In such situations, translators often use explanation or adaptation strategies to communicate the intended cultural message. Cultural differences may also influence emotional connotations. A phraseological unit that sounds humorous or expressive in one language may appear neutral or even inappropriate in another. Therefore, interpretation requires sensitivity to both linguistic meaning and cultural perception [8].

Structural differences between languages also affect phraseological translation. English belongs to the analytic language type, where grammatical relations are mainly expressed through word order and auxiliary elements [18]. Uzbek, in contrast, is an agglutinative language that relies heavily on suffixes and morphological changes. As a result, English phraseological units often maintain rigid syntactic structures, while Uzbek expressions may demonstrate greater grammatical flexibility. Translators must therefore adapt phraseological constructions according to the grammatical norms of the target language [19].

Another structural difficulty arises from the fixed nature of idioms. Phraseological units usually resist modification, and even small lexical changes may destroy their meaning. Translators must preserve the integrity of the expression while simultaneously making it understandable in another linguistic system.

To overcome these difficulties, translators employ various translation strategies. One of the most effective methods is the use of phraseological equivalence, where an idiom in the source language is replaced by a semantically and stylistically similar idiom in the target language [9]. For example, the English



proverb *Walls have ears* can be translated into Uzbek as *Devorning ham qulog 'i bor*. In this case, both meaning and metaphorical image are preserved successfully.

However, exact equivalents are not always available. In such situations, translators may use descriptive translation, paraphrasing, or contextual adaptation. Descriptive translation explains the meaning of the phraseological unit rather than reproducing its imagery directly.

This strategy is particularly useful when the original idiom contains culture-specific references unfamiliar to the target audience. Another important method is analogical translation, where translators replace the original idiom with a culturally appropriate expression carrying a similar communicative function. This approach helps maintain naturalness and stylistic impact within the target language [10]. In literary translation, interpretation becomes even more complex because phraseological units contribute not only to meaning but also to characterization, emotional atmosphere, and authorial style. Translators must therefore balance semantic accuracy with artistic expressiveness.

Interpretation of phraseological units is essential for successful intercultural communication. Misunderstanding idiomatic expressions may lead to communication barriers, pragmatic failure, or incorrect perception of cultural meaning [21].

Interpreters working in multilingual environments often encounter phraseological expressions that require immediate contextual understanding. Unlike written translators, interpreters have limited time to analyze cultural nuances. Therefore, they must possess extensive linguistic competence and strong background knowledge of both cultures.

Phraseological competence also plays an important role in foreign language learning. Students who understand idiomatic expressions can communicate more



naturally and interpret authentic speech more effectively [20]. Consequently, phraseology is increasingly recognized as an essential component of communicative competence.

Conclusion

The translation and interpretation of phraseological units represent one of the most challenging areas of linguistics and translation studies. Phraseological expressions are deeply connected with culture, history, and national mentality, which makes their translation far more complex than ordinary lexical translation.

The analysis of English and Uzbek phraseological units demonstrates that semantic incompatibility, cultural specificity, structural differences, and contextual variation are the main obstacles in phraseological translation. To overcome these difficulties, translators use various strategies such as equivalence, descriptive translation, adaptation, and contextual interpretation. Successful interpretation of phraseological units requires not only knowledge of language structure but also awareness of cultural values and communicative traditions. Therefore, the study of phraseological translation contributes significantly to comparative linguistics, intercultural communication, and modern translation theory.

References:

1. Ismailov A. R. The problem of the formation of pedagogical culture in modern methodics of teaching foreign languages //Актуальные научные исследования в современном мире. – 2021. – №. 4-8. – С. 46-49.
2. Ismailov, A. R. "Pragmatics of phraseology and its textual actualization (based on occasional transformations of phraseological units of the English language). Author's abstract. Diss. Cand. philol." Sciences. -Tashkent (2006): 28.
3. Kobiljonovna, K. M. (2023). PROJECT ACTIVITIES IN RUSSIAN LANGUAGE CLASSES. *INTERNATIONAL JOURNAL OF SOCIAL SCIENCE &*



INTERDISCIPLINARY RESEARCH ISSN: 2277-3630 Impact factor: 8.036, 12(12), 70-74.

4. Komilova, M. K., & Erkin o'gli, M. U. (2025). ONLAYN TA'LIMNING AFZALLIKLARI VA KAMCHILIKLARI. *INNOVATIONS IN TECHNOLOGY AND SCIENCE EDUCATION*, 3(31), 6-8.

5. Komilova, M. Q. (2025). RAQAMLI MARKETINGNING ZAMONAVIY BIZNESDAGI O'RNI. *INNOVATIONS IN TECHNOLOGY AND SCIENCE EDUCATION*, 3(31), 9-11.

6. Nafisa, K., & Kamola, A. (2024). The problem of teaching students lexical and phraseological features in translation studies of phrasal verbs in English and Uzbek languages. *Eurasian journal of academic research*, 4(10), 39-42.

7. Nafisa, K., & Matluba, D. (2023). PSYCHOLOGICAL AND PEDAGOGICAL ASPECTS OF RESEARCH INTO THE PROBLEM OF BILINGUAL FOREIGN LANGUAGE TEACHING. *Conferencea*, 31-34.

8. Qobiljonova, K. M. (2025). BLOKCHEYN TEXNOLOGIYASI VA UNDAN FOYDALANISH YO'LLARI. *TADQIQOTLAR*, 76(4), 137-144.

9. Rustamovich D. I. A. et al. The role of verbal and non-verbal communication in learning foreign language //World Bulletin of Social Sciences. – 2022. – T. 9. – C. 10-11.

10. Rustamovich, I. A., & Qizi, K. N. A. (2025). INGLIZ VA O'ZBEK HIKOYALARIDAGI FRAZEMALARNING INTERTEKSTUAL HUSUSIYATLARI VA EKSPRESSIV FUNKSIYALARI. *Eurasian Journal of Academic Research*, 5(8), 56-59.

11. Tasheva, D. S., & Kubaeva, N. A. (2022). Modern educational technologies in the aspect of a student-centered approach in teaching foreign languages. *Eurasian Journal of Learning and Academic Teaching*, 12, 35.



12. Tasheva, D., Kubayeva, N., & Djanzakova, M. (2025). TILSHUNOSLIKDA LINGVISTIK TADQIQOTLAR MUHITINI O'RGANISH TAHLILLARI. *JOURNAL OF NEW CENTURY INNOVATIONS*, 90(1), 71-73.

13. Tasheva, D., Kubayeva, N., & Djanzakova, M. (2026). LINGUODIDACTICS-THEORY AND PRACTICE OF LANGUAGE ACQUISITION IN LANGUAGE LEARNING CONDITIONS. *GLOBAL TRENDS IN SCIENCE AND INNOVATION*, 3(1), 113-119.

14. Tasheva, D., Kubayeva, N., & Djanzakova, M. (2026). LINGUODIDACTICS-THEORY AND PRACTICE OF LANGUAGE ACQUISITION IN LANGUAGE LEARNING CONDITIONS. *GLOBAL TRENDS IN SCIENCE AND INNOVATION*, 3(1), 113-119.

15. Tasheva Dilorom, Djanzakova Matluba. The role of literary text in teaching the Russian language. International Multidisciplinary Conference. Manchester, England. 25th December 2023. -p.19. <https://conferencea.org>

16. Tasheva, D. (2022). Methods Of Using Didactic Materials To Enhance Activities In The Russian Language Lessons. *Ta'lim Va Rivojlanish Tahlili Onlayn Ilmiy Jurnal*, 2(1), 325-328.

17. Tasheva, D. INTERACTIVE LEARNING FORMS IN RUSSIAN LESSONS. *Zbiór artykułów naukowych recenzowanych.*, 211.

18. Kholbaeva D.D., Tasheva D.S. Pedagogical techniques and methods of forming interest in the lessons of the Russian language. *Web of scientist: international scientific research journal*, ISSN: 2776-0979, Volume 3, Issue 3, Mar., 2022. -p.238

19. Kholbaeva, D., & Tasheva, D. (2022). Theoretical And Practical Aspects Of Monitoring The Acquisition Of Knowledge, Skills And Abilities By Students In The Russian Language In Universities. *Евразийский журнал социальных наук, философии и культуры*, 2(11), 115-118.



20. Klichevna, A. D., & Salimovna, T. D. (2023). Practical Aspects of the Formation of a Communicative Approach in the Development of a Linguistic Personality in Teaching the Russian Language. *Periodica Journal of Modern Philosophy, Social Sciences and Humanities*, 18, 180-183.

21. Mukhtarovna, K. D. (2023). Modern Approaches to Teaching A Foreign Language Based On The Use Of Multimedia Programs. *Conferencea*, 13-17.