

THE PROBLEM OF EQUIVALENCE IN THE TRANSLATION OF PHRASEOLOGICAL UNITS

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Abstract: *This article mainly discusses the issue of translating phraseological units, some of the problems that one has to face when choosing an equivalent, and other factors such as culture that should be taken into account in the translation process, other than language. In this case, the process of translation can be difficult for whom is translating because every language has their own version of phraseological unit to describe context. Idioms can be a good example for this. Some main problems which translator face, will be discussed in the following paragraphs.*

Keywords: *translation, equivalency, different metaphoric base, polysemy/context dependence, source language, target language, figurative meaning, structural differences.*

INTRODUCTION.

Translation is an essential part of cross-cultural interaction and communication between different nations. By translating some books, we can explore the world of literature, art, history, culture and other national symbols of different countries. However, there are some parts of the language that create certain difficulties in the translation process, in this case phraseological units may be one of them. Since phraseological units are ready-made expressions such as idioms and proverbs that maintain a stable structure and composition as a single semantic unit, the idea and common meaning cannot be derived from individual words within them. This would be the main reason for finding the right equivalence between the source and target languages. But there are other factors that make this process so difficult. V.I. Dal defines that translating phraseological units from one language into another presents significant difficulties. In the process of translation, it is important not only to convey the meaning of phraseology, but also to display its imagery, stylistic function, and context features. [2; 684].

There are several problems and challenges that can arise during the process of finding equivalence, including;

As there is lack of equivalence, many idioms and set expressions are considered as unique to one language. As a result there is no exact equivalent in another language. M. Baker says that one language may express a given meaning by means of a single word, another may express it by means of a transparent fixed expression, third may express it by means of an idiom and so on. It is therefore unrealistic to expect to find equivalent idioms and expressions in the target language as a matter of course. [2; 71]. For example, the English idiom “spell the beans” (to reveal a secret) has no literal equivalent in many languages. In that case, a translator must find a functional equivalent. For instance, “to be on the ninth cloud” (be happy) can be translated as “do’ppisini osmonga otdi” (xursand bo’ldi).

Many idioms and fixed expressions are rooted in the culture and traditions of the nation M. Baker states that idioms and fixed expressions which contain culture-specific items are not necessarily untranslatable.

It is not the specific items an expression contains but rather the meaning it conveys and its association with culture-specific contexts which can make it untranslatable or difficult to translate. [1; 71-72]. Their imagery is often based on myths, values, and landmarks specific to a particular culture. Here it is example: have kissed the Blarney stone – to be a flatterer (according to tradition, everyone who kissed a stone located in Blarney Castle in Ireland received the gift of flattering speech). [5; 9].

Since there is polysemy and context dependence, there are some idiomatic expressions that have multiple meanings depending on the context, which can be a major obstacle to proper translation. Phraseological units rarely have the same meaning, and their interpretation depends on the context, such as the context of use, tone, phrases, and cultural affiliation of the listener and speaker. As M.Baker mentioned, an idiom may be used in the source text in both its literal and idiomatic senses at the same time. Unless the target-language idiom corresponds to the source-language idiom both in form and in meaning, the play on idiom cannot be successfully reproduced in the target text. [1; 72]. If we do not identify whether the context is figurative or literal, the equivalence will be used wrongly. For example, “piece of cake” means a slice of a cake literally and something easy in figuratively. According to V.N.Komissarov, some phraseological units can belong to the “translator’s false friends” due to the fact that analyzed phraseological units have a similar form which makes it difficult to choose an adequate equivalent in the other language [3; 14]

According to structural point of view, languages differ in their syntax, morphology, and word order, which makes it difficult to preserve both the form and the idiomatic meaning of phraseological units. Even if there are similar ideas in two languages, their structural implementation (the way words are combined) may be completely different. For example, in English “pull someone’s leg” means to joke or tease someone cannot be translated with its literal meaning and its structure (verb+ object + noun) should completely change, because in some languages, such as Uzbek, the verb should be at the end. First of all, since English idioms often follow fixed syntactic patterns (for example, verb + object), when translating phraseological units, due to syntactic features, it is necessary to use a different word order or one verb instead of a phrase and omit articles and particles. When the figurative meaning of idioms depends on the structure, changing the order can destroy the effect of the idiom. Secondly, the morphology may differ in different languages. In English, many idioms depend on the tense or aspect (for example, has seen better days). Languages with rich morphology (for example, Russian or Uzbek) express the tense or type of the verb in different ways. This can change the rhythm or idiomatic conciseness. Sometimes grammatical categories such as articles or prepositions in idioms should be omitted in the target languages due to their absence. For example, get away with murder (English phrasal verb) → other languages might not have prepositions like with that carry this meaning. In this case, it requires structural reformulation. Nida proposed dynamic equivalence: the translator should aim for the same effect on the reader, even if structure changes [4;16]

Let’s look at some other examples which can prove this discussion from the book called "Adventures of Tom Sawyer" by M.Twain and its translation in Uzbek.

1. Get one’s dander up (become angry) - jahli chiqmoq

He ‘pears to know how long he can torment me before I get my dander up [7;19] - U jahlim chiqqan choqda dumini xoda qiladi [6;5]

2. Drop down dead (dead suddenly and unexpectedly) - kutilmaganda o’lmoq

We’d drop down dead-don’t you know that. [7;96]-Xuddi shu yerning o’zida o’lamizku [6;95].

From these examples we can see that prepositions do not keep their literal meaning in translation.

To summarize, phraseological units reflect the culture, history, and traditions of one country, so the process of translating phraseological units is important. Therefore, every linguist who wants to translate a phraseological unit should know how to choose the right equivalent in the language being studied.

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