

TRANSLATION PROBLEMS OF SOME IDIOMS RELATED TO BUSINESS

Urinova Tursunoy Urinovna
Termez State University
tursunoy.urinova1997@gmail.com, +998915869997

This article aims to investigate what difficulties arise in the two processes of interpreting and translating idioms and fixed expressions from one language into another. An attempt has been made to exemplify the difficulties and strategies regarding this phenomenon so that a pseudo-descriptive list of existing difficulties might be declared for the readers and translators of such expressions.

Keywords: equivalent, fixed expression, inter-lingual, phraseological unit, metaphorical or figurative element.

The process of translating idioms and fixed expressions from one language into another is a fine work which obliges a translator to have a good knowledge of both languages and cultures being shared or transferred as well as being able to identify and cope with the contingent problems in the process of finding an efficient equivalent for the inter-lingual idiomatic pairs.

People of different languages use completely different expressions to convey a similar meaning, in a way that while an expression might be completely tangible and easy-to-understand for the interlocutors of a specific language, the same set of words and expressions may seem fully vague and dim and even in some cases nonsense to the speakers of the other. This originates in the fact that each language has got some culture-specific items that are completely different from the corresponding items in another language. Besides, there are some differences in such factors as religion, geographical locations, different ideologies, and social classes of languages and societies that harden the process of understanding and translating idiomatic pairs from one language into another. Hence, there are two main problems in this case:

- 1) How to understand the meaning of idioms and fixed expressions of a specific language; and
- 2) How to recreate the same sets of idioms and fixed expressions of one language in another language in a way that they might convey exactly the same ideas of the original language.[1, p.120]

Firstly, the difficulties in the processes of understanding the meanings of idioms will be analyzed, then the possible ways of solving those difficulties will be mentioned mainly through applying those strategies proposed by Baker (1992) in her book, *In other Words*, alongside some other experimental findings mentioned by a number of experienced translators and scholars. Besides, a number of suggestions, regarding idiomatic translation, made by such scholars as Newmark (1988), Fernando (1994) and Gottlieb (1997) will be taken into consideration.

According to N. L. Kolesnikova, the author of the training course “Теория и практика перевода профессиональных текстов”, the key to effective equivalent translation of phraseological units is to preserve the following components of their meaning: 1) the fundamental image of the set phrase – the object that the meaning is directly based on; 2) metaphorical or figurative element; 3) emotional element; 4) stylistic element; 5) national or ethnic element. [2, p.100]

A major difficulty is raised by the metaphorical nature of proverbs, due to the multiplicity of connotations it conveys, to the fact that many of its connotations are cultural-bound and because it infringes many grammatical rules. Many linguists consider that the complexity of proverbs derives mainly from this particular characteristic. Peter Newmark says that metaphors are used to “describe an

entity, event or quality more comprehensively and concisely and in a more complex way than is possible by using literal languages.”[2, p.102]

1. Водить за нос [vudit' za nos]

Another idiom is about noses. This means “to lead (someone) grabbing at their nose”, to fool around with someone.

Now it’s time to explain the etymology of this idiom. In the past, during bazaars and outside fairs, gypsies would bring tame bears with them and make them perform. The animals had their noses pierced, and the owners would lead the bears holding on to a ring through their noses. Thus, animals had no chance but to obey.

2. Где раки зимуют [gde raki zimuyut]

This idiom is translated as “where crawfish hibernates” and is usually used in the following context: “I will show you where crawfish hibernates”. What a Russian person means by saying this is that they want to punish you cruelly for something or teach you a lesson.

Originally, Russian landlords considered shellfish to be a delicacy, especially when caught in winter. Because crawfish are hard to catch (the water was freezing), they sent peasants who had committed a crime to catch them. That’s how the idiom came about. [5, p.49]

3. Когда рак на горе свистнет [kagda rak na gare svisnit]

Another idiom’s featuring crawfish. This means “when a crawfish whistles on the mountain” and means it’s never going to happen. The English equivalent is “in a pig’s eye”.

4. Дать зуб [dat' zub]

This one means “to give a tooth”: you swear your words are true, and you are even ready to sacrifice your tooth as proof.

5. Спустя рукава [spustya rukava]

This idiom translates in English to “with sleeves rolled down”. It means that a job or atask was done carelessly or badly, without giving it proper attention. The opposite English idiom is “to roll up your sleeves”.

6. В шоколаде [v shekalade]

This phrase is usually used in the context “everything is in chocolate” or “everything will be in chocolate”. As you might have guessed, this means to have a comfortable life without any hardships. Work is not a wolf, it won’t escape into the forest.

Plainly put, take a break from work! It’ll be there when you come back. What I want to know is: how many wolves were Russians letting escape into the forest? Were Russians really that bad at keeping wolves?

Table 1 Translation of some idioms from English into Russian

English	Russian
To make mountains out of molehills	Делать из мухи слона
to be like a fish out of water	Не в своей тарелке
get the better of sb	Заткнуть (кого-то) за пояс
be left holding the bag	Остаться с носом
to lead (someone) grabbing at their nose	Водить за нос
where crawfish hibernates	Где раки зимуют
in a pig's eye	Когда рак на горе свистнет
to give a tooth	Дать зуб

Equivalence is the central strategy in any process of translation, and, more than in any other case, in the translation of proverbs. According to Vinay and Darbelnet it is a procedure which “replicates the same situation as in the original, whilst using completely different wording” (they obviously refer only to the case when the equivalent resembles only the sense, but not the form of the original). So, the first step in the translation of proverbs would be a bibliographic investigation, in order to find an equivalent in the target language. [6, p.51] The most fortunate case is that of total equivalence, when the proverb found is of similar meaning and form. The target language equivalent proverb should cover the same denotative and connotative meaning as the original one and consists of equivalent lexical items.[7,p.354] Furthermore, it should also have roughly the same communicative function, stylistic features, emotional impact and similar metaphoric image on which the proverb is based. This case, however, is not very frequent.

When the cat is away, the mouse will play.

Sulaymonning o'limi, Devlarning bazmi.

Безкотамышамраздолье.

But even in the case that the equivalent proverb has similar meaning and form, in one language there might be nuances of meaning that the other lacks. Less demanding strategy is that of partial equivalence, when the proverb has the similar meaning, but dissimilar form, consisting of different lexical items, morpho-syntactic structures and stylistic features.

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