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TRANSLATION OF IDIOMATIC EXPRESSIONS FROM THE ENGLISH LANGUAGE INTO UKRAINIAN

The article describes how language reflects the worldview of its speakers and the way idioms serve as one of the most expressive means of conveying cultural and national peculiarities. Idiomatic expressions are complex lexical units whose meanings are shaped by historical, cultural, and cognitive factors, which often make their translation into other languages challenging. It is exactly the situation where the cover might be completely different from what is inside. The study aims to analyze the specific features of translating idiomatic expressions from English into Ukrainian and to determine effective strategies for their rendering. To analyze idioms and achieve the goal, it is necessary to use two methods: contrastive and descriptive. The contrastive method makes it possible to identify similarities and differences in the process of translation in both language systems. The descriptive method allows the characterization and presents the results. The object of the research is the process of translating idiomatic expressions from English into Ukrainian, while the subject of the study is the strategies for translating idiomatic units from English to Ukrainian. This involves a nuanced examination of linguistic, cultural, and contextual factors that impact the accurate conveyance of meaning and cultural features inherent in idioms. The material of the research includes idiomatic expressions selected from the British National Corpus. The topicality of research lies in the need to identify peculiarities of translation idioms addressing the growing demand for accurate cross-cultural communication and contributing to the enhancement of translation practices. The results of the research reveal the main difficulties in translating idiomatic units, which are connected with their figurative nature, cultural specificity, and contextual variability. The findings may be applied in further studies of phraseological translation, as well as in translation practice and teaching translation studies.

Key words: idioms, idiomatic expressions, translation strategies, idiom translation.

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ПЕРЕКЛАД ІДІОМАТИЧНИХ ВИРАЗІВ З АНГЛІЙСЬКОЇ МОВИ НА УКРАЇНСЬКУ

Метою статті є дослідження мови як дзеркала, що відображає світогляд її носіїв, а також те, як ідіоми слугують одним із найвиразніших засобів передачі культурних та національних особливостей. Ідіоматичні вирази – це складні лексичні одиниці, значення яких формуються історичними, культурними та когнітивними факторами, що часто ускладнює їх переклад іншими мовами. Це саме та ситуація, коли «обкладинка» може повністю відрізнятись від змісту. Метою дослідження є аналіз особливостей перекладу ідіоматичних виразів з англійської мови на українську та визначення ефективних стратегій їх передачі. Для аналізу ідіом та досягнення мети необхідно було використано два методи: зіставний та описовий. Зіставний метод дозволяє виявити поді-

бності та відмінності в процесі перекладу в обох мовних системах. Описовий метод дозволяє охарактеризувати та представити результати. Об'єктом дослідження є процес перекладу ідіоматичних виразів з англійської мови на українську, тоді як предметом дослідження є стратегії перекладу ідіоматичних одиниць з англійської на українську. Це передбачає комплексне вивчення низки факторів, зокрема лінгвістичних, культурних та контекстуальних, що безпосередньо впливають на точну передачу значення та культурних особливостей, властивих ідіомам. Матеріал дослідження включає ідіоматичні вирази, відібрані з Британського національного корпусу. Актуальність дослідження полягає в необхідності виявлення особливостей перекладацьких ідіом, що задовольняють зростаючий попит на міжкультурну комунікацію та сприяють удосконаленню перекладацької практики. Результати дослідження розкривають основні труднощі перекладу ідіоматичних одиниць, пов'язані з їхньою образною природою, культурною специфікою та контекстуальною мінливістю. Отримані результати можуть бути застосовані в подальших дослідженнях фразеологічного перекладу, а також у перекладацькій практиці та викладанні теорії та практики перекладу.

Ключові слова: ідіоми, ідіоматичні вирази, переклад ідіом, стратегії перекладу.

Relevance of the research topic. Before going directly to the translation matter, it is important to clarify what actually the idiom is. While specific scientists or linguists may not be universally associated with a single definition of idioms, various scholars have contributed to the understanding of idiomatic expressions. The very first idiomatic expressions were borrowed from the Bible and myth, as well as they came to the English language through other cultures (Celtic, Latin, Scandinavian, French, Germanic) (Герцовська, Шпенник, 2021). Nowadays, there are twenty-four thousand (give or take) idiomatic expressions in English only. Not taking into consideration the American linguists' approach that counts proverbs, aphorisms, and even slang to be idioms. In modern linguistics, there are many methods and ways of classifying idiomatic expressions.

Analysis of research and publications. The issue of idiom translation has been extensively explored in modern linguistic and translation studies, with particular attention to semantic, cognitive, and cultural dimensions. Foundational works by scholars such as Charles Fillmore (Fillmore, 2003), George Lakoff, Mark Johnson (Lakoff, 2003), and Raymond W. Gibbs (Gibbs, 1994) emphasize the role of conceptual metaphor, frame semantics, and figurative thinking in the formation and interpretation of idiomatic expressions. These cognitive approaches are further developed in studies by S. Coulson (Coulson, 2001) and Z. Schnell (Schnell, 2007), who highlight the mechanisms of meaning construction and metaphor processing. From a translation perspective, Mona Baker (Baker, 2011) and G. Kovács (Kovács, 2016) provide comprehensive classifications of idioms and outline key strategies for their rendering, including equivalence, paraphrase, and omission.

Ukrainian scholars, including N. Hertsovska, T. Shpenyk, O. Moseychuk, and A. Synhaivska (Герцовська та ін., 2021), contribute to the understanding of idiom classification and cognitive aspects within the Ukrainian linguistic framework. Lexicographic sources, such as the Chambers Dictionary

of Idioms and major English dictionaries (Cambridge, Oxford, Merriam-Webster), alongside corpus resources like the British National Corpus, provide valuable empirical material for analyzing idiomatic usage.

Purpose of the research. This research aims to analyze the intricacies of translating idiomatic expressions, offering insights into the challenges faced during the process and proposing strategies to enhance the accuracy and cultural appropriateness of idiomatic translation between English and Ukrainian.

Presenting of the main material. One may assume that idiom is a piece of language that can be easily classified based on the already-existing rules and frames. Yet the field of linguistics still cannot offer only one explanation of what actually the term idiom stands for. Lakoff (Moseychuk, Synhaivska, 2007) and Johnson (Lakoff, Johnsen, 2003), cognitive linguists, argue that idioms often arise from underlying metaphorical concepts and that understanding these metaphors is crucial for understanding the meaning of idioms. Charles Fillmore (Fillmore, 2003), a prominent American linguist, is known for his work on frame semantics. He emphasizes that idioms often involve specific conceptual frames that govern their meaning. According to Fillmore, understanding these frames is crucial for comprehending the use of idioms in language. Wolfgang Mieder (Mieder, 1993), a renowned scholar in paremiology (the study of proverbs and idioms), has emphasized the cultural and historical aspects of idioms. He views idioms as cultural artifacts that reflect the values, beliefs, and experiences of a particular community or society.

According to Merriam-Webster Dictionary, an idiom is defined as «an expression in the usage of a language that is peculiar to itself either in having a meaning that cannot be derived from the conjoined meanings of its elements (such as up in the air for «undecided») or in its grammatically atypical use of words (such as give way).» The Oxford English Dictionary defines an idiom as «a group of words established by usage as having a meaning not deducible

from those of the individual words (e.g., rain cats and dogs, see the light).» As the Cambridge Dictionary states, idioms are considered «a group of words in a fixed order that has a particular meaning that is different from the meanings of each word on its own.»

In essence, these definitions highlight the unique nature of idioms, emphasizing that their meanings often go beyond the literal interpretations of individual words. Summing up all those definitions, one can say that idiom is a complex inseparable phrase, based on cultural and historical background that makes it difficult to translate.

As it was mentioned before, modern linguistics possesses a lot of methods and ways of classifying idiomatic expressions. The following methods of classifying idioms are the most common:

- by meaning. Idioms classified by meaning may fall into various categories such as expressions related to time, emotions, actions, or specific situations. To exemplify, such idioms as «fire on all cylinders» and «burn the midnight oil» may be grouped based on their shared theme of working hard.

- by emotional saturation. Idioms can be classified as emotionally charged, neutral, or even humorous. For instance, expressions like «hit the roof» or «tickled pink» could be classified as emotionally saturated, representing anger and happiness, respectively. In some dictionaries, one can also see a tag near the expression that may say «offensive» or «vulgar». Depending on the relationship, tags such as «formal» and «informal» could also be implemented.

There is also a distinction between authentic (own) idioms that arose in the process of historical development and borrowed ones. According to the thematic orientation, idioms are divided depending on the profession, and the specifics of human activity. There are a large number of idioms related to weather, finance, music, sports, cooking, housekeeping, sewing, farming, fishing, hunting, etc.

Prominent linguists have left a lot more classifications to ease the study of idioms, such as classification depending of the size of idiomatic expression, historical background, or they can be categorized by taking into account a part of the speech (Kovács, 2016). But the research is leading toward the translation methods which are the key to clear cross-cultural communication.

The main thing in the translation of idioms is to be sure of having this tricky group of words in a text. Coping with translation can be a challenging task because idiomatic expressions often have culturally specific meanings that may not directly be conveyed in other languages. Thus, there are numerous strate-

gies the key aim of which is to provide a proper and clear translation.

The most common methods of translation include the following (Abdelaal, Alazzawie, 2019):

- **searching for a phraseological equivalent with the same meaning and form in the Target Language, hereafter referred to as TL**, – this means that TL may have the same idiomatic expression as the Source Language, hereafter referred to as SL, (for example, «there is no smoke without fire» – «нема диму без вогню»). Some examples of such method are offered further, all vital information is underlined and explained in detail below the table:

Okay, well, since <i>actions speak louder than words</i> , I think we should consider a one-day strike.	Ну що ж, оскільки <i>вчинки говорять голосніше ніж слова</i> , ми повинні обдумати <i>одноденний протест</i> .
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Table 1. Example 1

An English «Actions speak louder than words» has a full equivalent in Ukrainian, as could be seen from the example. This proverb means that what a person does is more significant than being a talker. Depending on the context, this expression may be also conveyed as «не по словах судять, а по ділах». In the process of finding a better equivalent, it was discovered that both Ukrainian variants are used to the same extent.

In the annual <i>battle of wits</i> between these two grand masters of chess, <i>nothing is left to chance</i> .	У щорічній <i>«бумві умів»</i> між двома гросмейстерами шахів <i>потрібно бути готовим до всього</i> .
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Table 2. Example 2

«Battle of wits» can be also conveyed as «запекла дискусія» or «запальна суперечка», but in the sentence above such translation will not be suitable. Here one can see another idiom «Nothing is left to chance». The Merriam-Webster Dictionary explains it as being prepared for random or unpredictable obstacles. In Ukrainian, there is no equivalent at all. This idiom is conveyed in TL but without a play of idiom. So, in general, the target reader will get the point of what the author meant to say, but it was shown without a cover.

- **searching for an idiom with the same meaning yet different form** – TL may hold another expression that differs a bit but conveys the same meaning as Source Language («speak of the Devil» – «про вовка промовка»):

He came <i>within a whisker</i> of losing his job.	Він був <i>на волосинці</i> від втрати роботи.
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Table 3. Example 3

This idiom means something would be very close to happening, but in the end, it would not. One more Ukrainian alternative is «бути за крок від».

Can I pay you next week? I'm afraid I'm <i>stone broke</i> now	Чи можу я тобі заплатити наступного тижня? У мене в кишнях вітер гуляє
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Table 4. Example 4

One is *stone broke* (sometimes can be «*stony broke*» or «*flat broke*» (Chambers Essential English Dictionary, 2007)) when one has no money or little sum left. In Ukrainian it can be replaced by unit «в кишнях вітер гуляє.»

• **paraphrasing** – this method is often used when there is no correspondence between idiomatic expressions in both languages. Compared with omitting a play on an idiom, paraphrasing is not an «intended» approach. It is applied when an interpreter does not have any equivalent to choose from. This method requires a full understanding of the idiom and how it should be «dressed» in a TL without losing of meaning. An example of this can be the old English idiom «as the crow flies» which in Ukrainian means «прямо/по прямій.»

Who wants tea? Toby, will you <i>be mother</i> ?	Хто хоче чаю? Тобі, налиєш чаю?
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Table 5. Example 5

The SL «*be mother*» has no more alternatives in Ukrainian. This expression is used only when one asks someone to pour the tea (or is doing it oneself).

A fantastic holiday, with the chance to eat the very best available in the shops, try out the local wines and generally <i>go native</i> !	Фантастичний відпочинок, з можливістю поласувати найкращим, що пропонують магазини, спробувати місцеві вина та загалом <i>перейняти звичай місцевого населення</i> !
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Table 6. Example 6

Besides the meaning conveyed above, «*Go native*» also refers to living the same way as people from a foreign country one is staying in.

He could've got out of prison in a couple of months if he'd <i>kept his nose clean</i> .	Він міг би вийти з в'язниці за пару місяців, якби не <i>наражався на гнів начальства</i> .
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Table 7. Example 7

Besides paraphrasing, one could notice the appearance of the negative component in the Ukrainian translation – «не». Thus, one may say there are two techniques combined – paraphrasing and antonymic translation.

• **omission of a play on the idiom** – it involves not attempting to recreate the wordplay or pun in the TL. Here are some examples provided of such professional tricks:

<i>The ball is in your court now</i> , and it's time to make a decision.	Тепер все залежить від тебе – прийшов час приймати рішення
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<i>He had a lot on his plate, but instead of feeling overwhelmed, he just dug in with a fork.</i>	У нього було багато справ, але замість того, щоб відчувати перевантаження, він просто <i>взявся за роботу</i> .
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Table 7. Example 7 and 8

In the English text, there is a play on the idiom «a lot on his plate,» using the literal image of having a plate of food and then extending it with the action of «digging in with a fork.» In the Ukrainian translation, the wordplay is omitted, and a straightforward translation is provided to convey the general sense of having a lot of work without attempting to replicate the specific play on words. The same scheme can be seen in the first example – the translation mentions nothing about balls or courts, it just shows direct meaning without sugarcoating.

He was all <i>milk and water</i> . He lacked the fire to take a firm hand with the woman.	Він був настільки <i>безхарактерний</i> . Йому не вистачало хоробрості щоб контролювати жінку.
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Table 8. Example 9

«*Milk and water*» means not being able to defend oneself, to have a weak spirit. Ukrainian phraseology offers another alternative – «*безхребетний*» (literally «without a spine»). It has a point. The spine is a vital part of the body that holds it. So, without it, a person has no «rod.»

• **omission of the entire idiom** – this technique appears when the translator decides not to include the idiom at all due to linguistic or cultural differences. Sometimes it can be done due to stylistic purposes.

After the setback, he decided to <i>turn over a new leaf</i> and approach his work with a fresh perspective.	Після невдачі він вирішив глянути на свою роботу під іншим кутом.
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Table 9. Example 10

In this sentence, the English idiom «turn over a new leaf» is completely omitted in the Ukrainian translation. Even though this idiom can be easily conveyed by means of the TL, the interpreter decides to throw it away.

• **antonymic translation** – this method involves replacing an idiom in the SL with its opposite or a contrasting expression in the TL. Such an approach can be used when a direct translation of the idiom might not convey the intended meaning effectively, and an antonymic expression better captures the opposite sense. For example, «Take it easy» is translated into Ukrainian as «Не переймайся», where «не» appears to be a negative element.

To exemplify, in the English language, «Nothing if not» works as an emphasis of something:

The farmhouse was <i>nothing if not practical</i> .	Ферма була <i>вкрай</i> практично обладнана.
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Table 10. Example 11

In the Ukrainian interpretation cases, there is another version – «у вищій мірі» (Chambers Dictionary of Idioms, 2002). Both Ukrainian options do not have a negation in construction.

'He's a mean so-and-so.' 'He gave me a pair of socks for my birthday.' 'I rest my case!'	«Він такий скупердяй.» «Він подарував мені на день народження пару шкарпеток.» «Мені більше нічого додати!»
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Table 11. Example 12

In the English language, this idiom is used in a court of law when a lawyer has finished one's statement. It means that everything has been said before and there is no need to dwell upon the matter.

The League's commercial director is <i>playing his cards close to his chest</i> .	Комерційний директор League не розказує детально про свої справи.
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Table 12. Example 13

«Play one's cards close to one's chest» (also can be «Keep one's cards close to one's chest») means not to tell other people much information about how things are going.

The whole affair has been <i>a chapter of accidents</i> from start to finish. We must accept some share of the blame ourselves, of course.	Від початку до кінця вся ця справа була <i>непередбаченим збігом обставин</i> . Певну частку провини ми, звичайно, повинні взяти на себе.
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Table 13. Example 14

The phrase above describes a series of mishaps that occur to one person within a short time.

Thus, even the understanding of the meaning of the idiom is quite sophisticated task, not to mention the translation process which offers challenges to interpreters or translators. The challenges in idiom translation have been explored and discussed by various scholars in the field of translation studies. These challenges include:

- cultural perspective. Mona Baker's work (Baker, 2011) in translation studies, including «In Other Words,» highlights the intricate challenge of preserving cultural nuances during translation, especially when dealing with idioms. Idioms often carry culturally specific meanings that might not have direct equivalents in another language. The translator faces the task of not only finding equivalent expressions but also ensuring that the cultural connotations and implications are accurately conveyed.

- semantic equivalence. Peter Newmark's contributions to translation studies emphasize the pursuit of semantic equivalence. Idioms, being culturally embedded and context-dependent, pose challenges in achieving correct meaning transfer (Mubarak, 2017).

Newmark argues that a successful translation of idioms requires not only linguistic equivalency but also an understanding of the cultural and situational contexts in which the idioms are used (Kovács, 2016).

- contextual adaptation. Lawrence Venuti's (Venuti, 1995) theories on translation often center around the concept of domestication and foreignization, highlighting the challenge of adapting texts to the cultural context of the target language. When it comes to idioms, literal translation may fail to capture the cultural context effectively. Venuti suggests that a more contextually adapted approach is necessary to convey the idiomatic expressions appropriately in the target language.

- idiomatic variations. Susan Bassnett's exploration of idiomatic variations across languages (Baker, 2011) contributes to the understanding of the challenges in idiom translation. Idioms may have different forms or variations in different cultures, and translators need to be attuned to these variations to choose the most appropriate expressions in the target language. Bassnett underscores the importance of understanding idioms in their cultural and linguistic diversity.

- creativity in translation. Eugene Nida (Baker, 2011) emphasizes the creative aspect of translation, particularly relevant when dealing with idioms. Idiomatic expressions may not have direct equivalents, and the translator needs to exercise creativity to convey the intended meaning effectively. Nida's perspective underscores the dynamic and interpretative nature of translation, encouraging translators to be creative in finding suitable expressions that resonate with the target audience.

All these scholars collectively contribute to the understanding that idiom translation involves more than linguistic equivalency. Indeed, it requires a nuanced approach that considers cultural, contextual, and creative elements to faithfully convey the intended meaning in the target language.

Conclusions. After conducting the research, one could say that the idiom is a language trick that depending on the context and translator's desire might be conveyed in different ways. No matter how many classifications of idiomatic units already exist, they would not be able to cover all the plethora.

The equivalent translation method is quite exciting from a cultural point of view. It is helpful in defining what two (or more) cultures have in common. English and Ukrainian cultures share many idiomatic units, from short ones to proverbs. There are also a lot of so-called semi-equivalents (when internal form corresponds, but «the cover» differs), and sometimes idioms differ only with a single concept. In other

cases, the concept in SL was blurred when in the TL it looked more precisely, and vice versa.

The antonymic translation approach is a bit more difficult to perform. It could not be applied each time one sees the idiom. But still, many idiomatic units from English to Ukrainian might be easily transferred thanks to this one.

The omitting of a play on an idiom is quite beneficial when the context looks formal and leaving an idiom in the sentence would not correspond to the style.

And the last, paraphrasing, is the harsh one. It requires being absorbed by the idiom – from the meaning to finding other words that would bear the same sense. The interpreter may face difficulties with avoiding too-wordy constructions – a short English idiom could turn into a long Ukrainian description.

To be aware of the power of idioms, it is vital to learn how to read between the lines and how to understand the author without the need to see something more.

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