

The Problem Of Translating Phraseological Synonyms From German Into Uzbek

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Abstract: Translation is a linguistic, literary, and aesthetic phenomenon — an art of words — and the translator is, by nature, a creative artist. The essence of translation lies in the creative process of recreating a work through the means of another language, which makes it a true art of words. For instance, ballet is also an art form, yet it is not an art of words, since speech plays no role in it. The author's intention, the idea of the work, and the dancer's mastery are all expressed through music, movement, and choreography. In the visual arts, the main instrument is color, and the artist's tool is the brush. Therefore, ballet, painting, musical compositions, sculpture, and similar art forms cannot be "translated" into another language. Translation can only be applied to those forms of art that are based on verbal expression and the power of words to convey thought and emotion.

Keywords: Translation, creativity, phraseology, equivalence, linguistic possibility, expressiveness, word.

Introduction: Literary translation is a branch of artistic creativity. Unlike other forms of translation, it possesses its own distinctive features, which arise from the very nature of literature itself. In science, the primary elements are evidence, analysis, and data, whereas in a literary work, the leading role is played by imagery, description, and the emotional impact of the narrated events. These same factors are also inherent in literary translation.

Translation serves as an important means of establishing mutual understanding and enriching national cultures. Through translation, representatives of different nations gain the opportunity to become acquainted with the history, culture, and literature of other peoples. The translation of political and literary works contributes to mutual understanding, friendship, and cultural exchange between nations, enabling the transmission of ideas and artistic concepts from one literature to another.

The art of translation is, in essence, the art of re-creation — the act of producing a work anew in another language. What is recreated can never be identical to the original, since there can be no true repetition in art. In this sense, G'. Salomov rightly noted:

"The possibilities of translation are limited, but the

capabilities of the translator are boundless. To be able to convey everything that can be translated is the translator's noble duty. Success in re-creation depends on the translator's talent and artistic perception. The creativity in translation lies in the ability to unite the 'translatable' and the 'untranslatable' elements of the original into a single artistic whole."

Literary translation not only strengthens the bonds of friendship between nations but also contributes to the enrichment of each nation's culture and literature. Thus, literary translation plays an important role not only in enhancing a people's cultural and aesthetic awareness but also in shaping their worldview. Through translation, readers gain the opportunity to become familiar with the customs, traditions, culture, and everyday life of other nations, as well as their oral and written creative heritage.

In particular, the translation of phraseological expressions serves as a means of revealing national identity and linguistic color. When translating phraseological units, the translator often replaces the original idiom with its national equivalent, thereby giving the text a local and culturally specific tone. For example, the German expression "Er bringt ihn auf die Palme" — literally "He brings him up the palm tree" —

is rendered into Uzbek as “U uni asabiylashtirdi” (“He made him angry”). This adaptation preserves the meaning and emotional intensity of the original while expressing it in a culturally natural and stylistically appropriate form.

Difficulties in Translating Phraseological Synonyms from German into Uzbek

Every translator, while reflecting the author’s style, inevitably introduces elements of their own individual expression. When translating phraseological units, it is especially important to preserve national character and to find an equivalent variant that matches the original both formally and semantically, accurately conveying its meaning. Depending on the context, the translator independently determines which phraseological expression best fits the situation and the stylistic tone of the source text.

Equivalent expressions can replace each other only within a specific context; even when meanings coincide, forms and especially cultural associations often differ. Therefore, translating phraseological synonyms from German into Uzbek presents certain difficulties.

When translating phraseological units through equivalents, it should be noted that idioms may carry ironic, figurative, or humorous meanings. Their sense does not derive directly from the literal meanings of the component words, but from an integrated figurative concept. Many translation errors occur precisely in this area: an incorrect rendering of phraseological expressions distorts the national color and may even lead to semantic contradictions.

Each phraseological unit contains a core word — the semantic nucleus — whose meaning should correspond to that of its equivalent in the target language. Idioms involving animals, birds, or objects vary across languages, and studying their equivalents and translation methods leads to important conclusions.

Since patterns of human thought are similar across nations, phraseological expressions with related meanings may appear in structurally different languages. Considering that most idioms cannot be translated word-for-word, translators should instead search for phraseological equivalents in the target language that contain the same core meaning. For example: “Er spielt in der Fußballmannschaft die erste Geige” literally means “He plays the first violin in the football team,” but in Uzbek it is translated as “U futbol jamoasining asosiy o’yinchisi” (“He is the main player of the team”), not “U birinchi skripkani chaladi.”

Phraseological units, idioms, and fixed expressions are usually translated using analogous idiomatic phrases

existing in the target language. In some cases, however, a literal rendering may preserve the idiomatic sense if it does not distort the meaning of the text. The main difficulty in translating phraseological expressions lies in the fact that many languages express meaning through categories unique to that language, which cannot always be conveyed exactly in another.

In such cases, the translator must demonstrate skill and creativity, enhancing the natural expressiveness of the text by making broad use of phraseological synonyms. Of course, these synonyms must never contradict the overall meaning of the text; on the contrary, they should clarify it and make it more accessible to the reader.

Translating phraseological synonyms within a text is relatively easier because the translator can rely on contextual clues to select an appropriate equivalent. In most cases, the focus should be on conveying the underlying meaning rather than reproducing the literal image. However, excessive use of broad or loosely equivalent phraseological expressions can cause semantic shifts and distort the intended message.

For example, the Uzbek expressions “och qolmoq,” “o’lguday och bo’lmoq,” “qorni piyoz po’choq bo’lmoq,” “itday och bo’lmoq” correspond in German to the idioms “Hunger haben,” “hungrig sein,” “einen großen Bärenhunger haben,” “Hunger haben wie ein Hamster,” “Kohldampf schieben,” “jemandem hängt der Magen in der Kniekehle,” “am Hungertuch nagen.”

The Uzbek phrase “och qolmoq” (“to be hungry”) and its German counterparts both demonstrate that hunger-related idioms are represented by multiple phraseological expressions in each language.

When translating phraseological expressions between German and Uzbek, it is crucial to find equivalents that naturally fit the target language. The meanings of idioms generally unfold within their textual context. Some scholars even argue that literal translation is possible if it does not harm the semantic integrity of the text. As A.V. Kunin wrote: “Literal translation, if it does not distort the content of the text, may be acceptable, since replacing idioms with other figurative expressions can sometimes yield satisfactory results.”

The study of phraseological expressions, their equivalents and alternative variants across different languages, allows us to draw several conclusions. The fact that the laws of human thought are universal and that all nations share similar patterns of reasoning and imagination explains why phraseological expressions with identical or close meanings can emerge in structurally different languages.

Since phraseological units can rarely be translated

word-for-word, the translator must, during the translation process, select expressions in the target language that contain the same core word and convey the same semantic value. This requires the translator to possess clarity of thought and creative depth.

Translation theorist Ya. I. Retsker rightly observed that “a translator must be able to distinguish between different types of phraseological units and accurately reproduce their expressive and stylistic features in translation.” Throughout the entire translation process, the translator must adhere to one essential principle: while faithfully recreating the author’s thought in another language, they possess the freedom to choose words only within the limits of accurate re-expression. If the chosen word corresponds exactly to the original, the meaning embedded in the source will “come alive” in the target language; if it does not, the idea becomes vague or distorted.

In translating phraseological expressions, three types of correspondence are generally observed:

1. **Full equivalence**
2. **Partial equivalence**
3. **Non-equivalence**

The first type — full equivalence — occurs when a German phraseological unit can be rendered into Uzbek by another phraseological unit that matches it in both meaning and grammatical structure. In German linguistics, full phraseological equivalence refers to expressions that, in their lexical composition, imagery, stylistic coloring, and grammatical structure, correspond completely to their counterparts in Uzbek.

For example: “Nach vielen Jahren ging sein Wunsch in Erfüllung” — “Uzoq yillardan so‘ng uning orzusi amalga oshdi.”

Another example: “Nach jemandes Pfeife tanzen” (Grimm Brothers, *Kinder und Hausmärchen*: “Der kleine Schneider,” p. 40, Berlin: Neues Leben, 1984).

This phrase has synonyms such as “Sich nach jemandem richten” or “jemandem gehorchen”, yet the translator chose the Uzbek equivalent “nog‘orasiga o‘ynamoq” (“to dance to someone’s drum”) in Yetti oqqush. Sehrli qaychi va angishvona, p. 133 (translated by X. Rahimov and Sh. Salimova, Tashkent: Cho‘lpon, 1991), thereby preserving the expressive tone and improving the clarity and fluency of the translation.

Similarly, the idiom “Stumm wie ein Fisch bleiben” (Grimm Brothers, *Die sechs Schwäne*, p. 27, Berlin: Neues Leben, 1984) — literally “to remain silent like a fish” — may lose its figurative nuance if translated literally. The translator, considering the national-linguistic and stylistic factors, chose the Uzbek equivalent “og‘ziga talqon solmoq” (“to keep

completely silent”), which conveys the same expressive function in a culturally natural way.

Another example: “Zu Tode erschrecken” (Grimm Brothers, *Herr Kluck*, p. 154, Berlin: Neues Leben, 1984) — meaning “to be terrified to death.”

Although the phrase has several German synonyms (“Angst bekommen,” “kalte Füße bekommen,” “das Herz ist jemandem in die Hosen gefallen”), in Uzbek it is effectively translated as “o‘lguday qo‘rqmoq” (“to be scared to death”), achieving both semantic and grammatical equivalence.

Likewise, “in Wut geraten” (Grimm Brothers, *Der arme Junge im Grab*, p. 698, Berlin: Neues Leben, 1984) — with synonyms such as “wütend sein,” “jemandem platzt der Kragen,” “Gift und Galle speien” — is translated into Uzbek as “ko‘zlari qonga to‘lmoq” (“his eyes filled with rage”), again preserving both sense and emotional tone.

In all these cases, the Uzbek equivalents reflect complete semantic and grammatical correspondence with the German originals.

Partial and Non-equivalence

In literary translation, the value of a translation lies not in how individual words or sentences are rendered, but in how the overall interpretation — the translator’s artistic reconstruction — is achieved. This process unfolds in three stages:

1. The translator’s understanding of the original work.
2. The interpretation of the author’s ideas, intentions, and stylistic manner.
3. The recreation of the work’s artistic image in the target language through suitable linguistic means.

Often, however, the content or imagery of a phraseological expression cannot be fully conveyed; in such cases, partial equivalence occurs. The majority of phraseological translations fall within this category, where the translator strives to preserve the meaning and stylistic effect within the constraints of the target language.

For example: “Jemandem eine Wut im Bauch packen (geraten)” (Grimm Brothers, *Das Zwergermütchen*, p. 100, Berlin: Neues Leben, 1984) — an emotionally charged idiom with synonyms such as “einen Bauch voll Zorn haben,” “auf der Palme sein,” “da geht einem das Messer in der Tasche auf.” In Uzbek, based on the context, it is best rendered as “qattiq g‘azablanmoq” (“to become furious”), as found in Yetti oqqush. Mittivoyning qalpoqchasi, p. 95 (Rahimov & Salimova, Tashkent: Cho‘lpon, 1991).

Similarly, “Jemandem das Herz klopfen” (Grimm Brothers, *Das Zwergermütchen*, p. 100) is translated as

“yuragi dukullab urmoq” (“one’s heart is pounding”). The idiom’s other variants (“sein Herz an jemanden verlieren,” “jemandem zu tief in die Augen sehen”) are often used in colloquial German, while their expressive equivalents (“einen Narren an jemandem gefressen haben,” “in jemanden verknallt sein”) are found in literary contexts.

Another example is “Jemandem die helle Wut packen” (Grimm Brothers, Hans Dreizehn, p. 28, Berlin: Neues Leben, 1984), rendered in Uzbek as “behad darg’azab bo’lmoq” (“to become extremely angry”), which effectively conveys the emotional intensity of the original.

Non-equivalence, though rare, occurs when a phraseological unit is omitted or adapted entirely. For instance, “Der beste Mensch unter der Sonne sein” (Grimm Brothers, Das Kröpflein, p. 62, Berlin: Neues Leben, 1984) is rendered as “Kelangin qanday yaxshi bo’ldi-ya!” (“How wonderful that you have come!”), which substitutes a culturally appropriate expression for the idiom’s literal meaning.

Similarly, “Zum Lachen bringen” or “Sich einen Ast lachen” are not directly translated in Uzbek texts, though equivalent verbs such as “kuldirish” or “quvontirish” (“to make someone laugh”) could be used for stylistic balance.

At times, translators omit certain words or entire idioms. For example:

“Sich den Kopf zerbrechen” (Grimm Brothers, Die Prinzessinnen im Felsenriff, p. 76, Berlin: Neues Leben, 1984) — meaning “to rack one’s brains” — has synonyms like “sich das Hirn zermartern.” In Uzbek, this expression was omitted, though it could be effectively rendered as “boshini qotirmoq” or “qattiq o’ylanmoq.”

Finally, translators often employ synonymic variation to avoid repetition. In the tale “Guzallar guzali” (“The Most Beautiful of the Beautiful”), the word “Unglück” (“misfortune”) appears multiple times. The translator replaced it with several contextually appropriate Uzbek equivalents — “sho’rpeshona” (“ill-fated”), “badbaxt” (“unfortunate”), or “esini yo’qotgan” (“has lost his mind”) — thereby enriching the text and maintaining stylistic diversity.

The issue of choosing equivalent variants for phraseological expressions constitutes one of the fundamental structural components of translation. When discussing any language, the first aspect that comes to mind is its lexical richness. The expressive potential of a language is largely determined by the diversity and nuance of its vocabulary.

A word, in addition to its primary lexical meaning, may also acquire figurative or secondary meanings when

used within a fixed expression or in a particular contextual environment. This phenomenon is known as polysemy. The Danish linguist Otto Jespersen once remarked: “A language deprived of polysemy would become a linguistic hell.”

Polysemy, therefore, enriches the semantic structure of a language and allows words to convey multiple shades of meaning depending on context. In translation, especially when dealing with phraseological synonyms, recognizing and preserving this semantic multiplicity is essential. The translator must not only identify the core meaning but also select the most contextually and culturally appropriate equivalent in the target language. When these features are compared across languages, it becomes evident that closely related languages display a higher degree of similarity and polysemantic harmony. In contrast, distant and unrelated languages share only about ten percent of polysemantic overlap, indicating that semantic correspondence diminishes as linguistic kinship decreases.

The phenomenon of polysemy develops not only through the borrowing of foreign words but also as a result of a language’s internal potential and natural evolution. While some words gradually become obsolete and fall out of use, many others undergo semantic change — their meanings expand, shift, or acquire new shades over time.

For the translator, however, the task of selecting the right equivalent becomes even more challenging. Unlike the author of the original work, the translator cannot freely choose any expression they wish; their lexical choice is bound by the framework of the source text and cannot extend beyond its semantic and stylistic limits. The translator’s creativity lies precisely in re-creating the original meaning within the expressive possibilities of their own language.

For example, in Uzbek there exist the synonymous words “bosh” and “kalla” (“head”). Each is used in distinct stylistic and contextual situations. In Russian, however, both are generally expressed by the single word “golova.” The Russian idiom “Он всему делу голова” cannot be translated into Uzbek as “u hamma ishga kalla”, because “kalla” in Uzbek carries a negative, ironic connotation. Therefore, the appropriate equivalent is “bosh”, producing the correct and stylistically natural translation “u hamma ishga bosh.”

Interestingly, in German, as in Uzbek, the distinction between “bosh” and “kalla” is also preserved through the use of separate lexical items:

1. **Haupt des Menschen** – “the head of a human being”;
2. **Der Kopf des edlen Tieres** – “the head of a noble

animal”;

3. Oberhaupt – “the one who stands at the head of a group of people; a leader.”

This comparison illustrates how linguistic nuance and cultural perception determine word choice in translation. A successful translator must be attentive not only to literal meaning but also to connotation, stylistic value, and the semantic range of each word in both the source and target languages.

It is mistaken to assume that the formal features of a literary work are unimportant or can be ignored in translation. In a good translation, the essence lies not in the mere reproduction of formal, logical, or grammatical indicators — such as word categories, tense, mood, or gender — but in the accurate transmission of the ideas and meanings expressed through them. However, this does not mean that the form of the original can be disregarded altogether. Since every grammatical form serves as the linguistic garment of a certain artistic and aesthetic meaning, neglecting it in translation would impoverish the work’s expressive value.

For instance, in German, the word “Mutter” may appear in various forms such as “Mama,” “Mamsell,” “Maman,” “Mütterchen,” “Mutti,” “Mamachen,” and so on. It would be incorrect to render all of these simply as “ona” (“mother”) in Uzbek, since Uzbek also distinguishes between emotional and stylistic variants — “ona,” “oyi,” “valida,” “onajon,” “onaginam,” “onajonginam,” each carrying its own nuance of respect, affection, or intimacy. Similarly, for “father,” Uzbek offers alternatives such as “ota,” “padar,” “buzruk,” “padari buzrukvor,” “qiblagoh,” and others. Even the smallest grammatical elements and suffixes — (-gina, -kina, -vachcha, -jon, -xon, -voy, -oy) — contribute meaning and emotional tone, and must be carefully preserved in translation.

For example, the lion in Uzbek culture symbolizes courage, bravery, and nobility. Throughout Eastern traditions, it represents dignity and valor — qualities reflected even in the poetic pseudonym of the great scholar and ruler Zahiriddin Muhammad Babur, whose name “Babur” (from Arabic *babr*) means “tiger.” In the German title of Fritz Würthle’s work “Babur, der Tiger,” the word “Tiger” metaphorically conveys the same heroic image. The Uzbek translator Yanglish Egamova chose to render it as “Andijon shahzodasi” (“The Prince of Andijan”), an interpretive decision that strengthens the hero’s positive portrayal and emotional resonance for the Uzbek reader.

Similarly, in ancient Greek, the expression “ox-eyed” was a poetic epithet denoting beauty and wide, expressive eyes. In Kazakh and Kyrgyz, the word

“botako’z” (derived from “bota,” meaning “camel calf”) also signifies beauty and tenderness, though it is culturally specific and cannot be translated literally. In Indian culture, the cow symbolizes grace, generosity, and maternal affection, and in literature it can represent feminine beauty — much as the lion symbolizes courage in Eastern tradition. Conversely, in German culture, the pig often symbolizes luck or prosperity, a notion that would sound absurd if translated literally into another language.

Such natural, social, and historical associations, deeply rooted in each nation’s collective consciousness, demand exceptional sensitivity from the translator. Successfully transferring these culturally embedded concepts from one language to another requires not only linguistic knowledge but also artistic intuition.

A good example of this can be seen in the following translation: “In Andijan werden sie zu dem Geschenk ihren feigen König an die Stange knüpfen, damit er ihnen nicht mehr entlaufe.” (Würthle, F. Babur, der Tiger, p. 110.)

Translated as: “Andijonda quyon yurak podshohlari endi qochib ketmasligi uchun sovgani ustunga ilib qo’yishdi.” (Fritz Würthle, Andijon shahzodasi, trans. by Yanglish Egamova, p. 110.)

Here, the translator not only reproduces the sense but also conveys the national and stylistic coloring of the original text, creating a translation that feels natural, expressive, and culturally authentic.

The phraseological unit discussed here — expressing cowardice rather than bravery — has several German synonyms such as “feige sein,” “ein Hasenfuß sein,” and “ein Hasenherz haben.” The translator’s skill is revealed in how clearly and naturally the meaning is conveyed to the reader. The phrase “quyon yurak” (“rabbit-hearted”) instantly communicates that the king acted out of fear and cowardice. For instance: “Viele strecken schon die Glieder im Todesschlaf.” (Würthle F. Babur, der Tiger, p. 115) was translated as: “Ko’plari allaqachon ajal uyqusiga ketishgan edi.” (Fritz Würthle, Andijon shahzodasi, trans. by Yanglish Egamova, p. 115) Here, the German expression “Todesschlaf strecken” (“to stretch out in the sleep of death”) is idiomatically rendered in Uzbek as “ajal uyqusiga ketishgan edi” (“had gone to the sleep of death”), which fully preserves both the semantic content and the poetic tone of the original.

Other synonymous German expressions with similar meanings include:

“sterben – gestorben,” “in die ewigen Jagdgründe eingehen,” “zur großen Armee abgehen,” “seine letzte Reise antreten,” “in die Grube fahren,” “das Gras von

unten betrachten.”

Another example: “...aber auch mit einem gepanzerten Bein hat noch niemand einem Feinde den Kopf vom Rumpf getrennt.” (Würthle F. Babur, der Tiger, p. 125)

was translated as: “Ammo sovut kiygan oyoq bilan hali hech kim dushmanning boshini tanasidan judo qilgan emas.” (Fritz Würthle, Andijon shahzodasi, trans. by Yanglish Egamova, p. 125)

Here, expressions like “jemandem den Kopf vom Rumpf trennen,” “jemanden einen Kopf kürzer machen,” “jemandem den Garaus machen,” “jemandem den Hals umdrehen” all imply “to kill” or “to execute.” The translator’s success lies in maintaining both syntactic coherence and stylistic harmony while adapting them to Uzbek linguistic norms.

Syntactic precision in translation is a delicate matter: overemphasis on structure may distort meaning, yet ignoring grammatical balance risks losing the original’s unity and rhythm. Since German and Uzbek differ fundamentally in grammatical structure, translators often divide long German sentences into shorter, more natural Uzbek clauses. This has become a common practice in Uzbek translation, but it can weaken the coherence and tonal weight of the text. Experienced translators therefore strive to preserve the syntactic integrity and compositional flow of the source wherever possible.

For example: “Den siehe, dieses kleine Stückchen afrikanisches Rohr, das leicht ist wie eine Feder, trug sie, fest angebunden, an ihrem Fuß.” (Würthle F. Babur, der Tiger, p. 125) → “Buni qara, mana bu patdek engil bambuk tayoqchasini oyog’iga mahkam bog’langan holda olib yurardi.”

or: “Tief gebückt, tragen sie auf ihren Schultern schweres, harziges Holz in gewaltigen Bündeln.” (Würthle F. Babur, der Tiger, p. 30)

→ “Ular burunlari yerga tegkuncha katta-katta bog’lamlardagi og’ir o’tinlarni yelkalariga ko’tarib tashishardi.” (p. 31) and: “Aber er fühlte einen Stachel im Herzen.” (Würthle F. Babur, der Tiger, p. 39) → “Lekin yuragida go’yo tikan sanchilgandek edi.” (p. 39)

These examples show that exact correspondence between word order, idioms, and syntactic patterns across languages is extremely rare. Consequently, translators often prioritize semantic integrity over syntactic imitation. However, dividing a sentence may slightly reduce its stylistic rhythm and emotional force. Skilled Uzbek translators are mindful of this and attempt to maintain both meaning and stylistic completeness in their renderings.

CONCLUSION

In conclusion, every language possesses not only its

own lexical system with a network of synonymous series but also a unique phraseological inventory that plays a crucial role in translation. The ability to select appropriate equivalents from these phraseological and synonymous resources determines the success of the translator’s work.

Thus, careful attention to context, semantic nuance, and cultural imagery is essential. Phraseological synonymy in translation is not a matter of mechanical substitution but of thoughtful, contextually aware re-creation — a process that unites linguistic precision with artistic sensitivity.

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