

Phraseological Units in Russian and Azerbaijani Languages: A Comparative Linguistic and Translational Study

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Abstract:

This article delves into the linguistic features, classification, and intricate challenges encountered in the translation of phraseological units between Russian and Azerbaijani languages. Drawing upon established linguistic theories, particularly V.V. Vinogradov's influential classification, it examines how phraseological units function as stable word combinations with rethought meanings, categorizing them into phraseological fusions, unities, and combinations based on their semantic cohesion and structural characteristics. The study highlights the unique richness and cultural significance of phraseology in both languages, noting how these expressions reflect national identity and serve as vital tools in oral folklore and literary works. Furthermore, the article explores cross-linguistic similarities and differences, including shared idioms, calques, and expressions with common origins. It addresses the inherent translation difficulties arising from typological distinctions (inflective Russian vs. agglutinative Azerbaijani) and cultural specificities, proposing various translation methods such as equivalent translation, analogical translation, descriptive translation, and compensation, supported by practical examples. The analysis underscores that understanding phraseology is crucial not only for linguistic acquisition but also for appreciating the cultural nuances and communicative expressiveness embedded within each language.

Key words:

Phraseological unit; Translation difficulties; Translation methods; Comparative linguistics

I. Introduction: Unpacking the Essence of Phraseological Units

Phraseological units (PUs), often referred to as idioms or fixed expressions, represent a fascinating and complex domain within linguistics. Phraseology, as a specialized field, is dedicated to the study of these unique linguistic structures, examining their current state and historical evolution within a language system. This discipline gained prominence around the mid-19th century, with significant foundational contributions from scholars in post-Soviet countries who sought to

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elucidate the distinct nature of these linguistic entities. The core focus of phraseology involves analyzing the categorical features of PUs to understand their unique role in language.

At their core, phraseological units are stable, multi-word combinations whose overall meaning cannot be directly deduced from the literal meanings of their individual components. They are defined as "separately formed formations with fully or partially rethought components, phraseological meanings". Several key characteristics define these linguistic phenomena. First, PUs exhibit a remarkable stability at the phraseological level, setting them apart from free word combinations. They function as ready-made expressions, which speakers retrieve from memory and reproduce in speech rather than constructing them anew. This inherent predictability of their components is a hallmark feature.

Second, a fundamental trait of PUs is their non-compositionality, often termed idiomaticity. This means that their collective meaning is not simply the sum of their parts. For instance, the English idiom "kick the bucket" means "to die," a meaning entirely unrelated to its individual words. This idiomaticity is the primary differentiator between PUs and flexible word combinations. Third, many PUs are inherently figurative, employing vivid imagery that enriches speech and makes it more expressive and impactful. Fourth, PUs are deeply rooted in the culture of their speakers, reflecting the people's lifestyle, daily life, worldview, imagination, and historical development. They are frequently described as a "gold reserve" of the national language. Finally, PUs operate as single lexical units within a sentence, capable of fulfilling various syntactic roles. Their internal structure is generally rigid, resisting the insertion of additional words or rearrangement of components.

While the concept of PUs often emphasizes their stability and ready-made nature, implying a static quality, a deeper examination reveals a more dynamic aspect. Phraseological units can provide opportunities for changes in poetic language, allowing for intervention in phraseological facts. This indicates that while PUs are generally stable for recognition and reproduction in everyday speech, they can be creatively manipulated, particularly in literary or artistic contexts. This interplay between their fixed form and their potential for innovative usage offers a more complete understanding of their linguistic behavior. This duality has significant implications for both language pedagogy and translation, as learners must grasp conventional forms, while advanced users and translators need to recognize and potentially recreate these creative variations, especially in literary translation where stylistic fidelity is paramount.

Furthermore, PUs are not merely linguistic constructs; they are profound reflections of a people's "lifestyle, everyday life, worldview, imagination and rules during the years of historical development". The characterization of Russian PUs as an "invaluable cultural and national treasure" and Azerbaijani PUs as a "source of folk wisdom" elevates their status beyond simple linguistic features to fundamental cultural functions. This suggests that PUs act as condensed cultural artifacts, embodying collective experiences and historical memory. The observation that Russian phraseology can be viewed as "signs - microtexts" further supports this concept, implying

that each PU is a small, self-contained cultural narrative. This profound cultural embeddedness is a primary source of difficulty in cross-linguistic communication and translation. It means that translating PUs requires more than lexical equivalence; it demands a deep understanding of the cultural context, historical background, and societal values encoded within the phrase, thereby elevating the translator's role to that of a cultural mediator.

This report undertakes a comprehensive comparative analysis of phraseological units in Russian and Azerbaijani languages. It aims to explore their linguistic features, established classifications, profound cultural significance, the specific challenges encountered during their translation, and the most effective strategies for rendering them across these two distinct linguistic systems.

II. Theoretical Foundations and Classification of Phraseological Units

The study of phraseological units is built upon several foundational theoretical concepts that define their nature and behavior within a language. Core among these is the inherent stability of PUs, which pertains to their consistent meaning, composition, and structure. This stability stands in sharp contrast to the flexible nature of free word combinations, which can be altered or rephrased more readily. Another crucial concept is non-compositionality, or idiomaticity, which dictates that the meaning of a PU cannot be predicted or derived from the literal meanings of its individual constituent elements. For example, the idiom "kick the bucket" means "to die," a meaning entirely unrelated to its individual words.

A.V. Kunin, a highly influential figure in phraseological studies, significantly contributed to these theoretical foundations. He emphasized the stability of PUs as a defining characteristic that manifests across various linguistic levels. His key works, such as

English-Russian Phraseological Dictionary (1967),

Frazeologiya sovremennogo angliyskogo yazika (1972), and

Kurs frazeologii sovremennogo angliyskogo yazika (1996), provided extensive theoretical and practical insights into the nature of phraseology.

V.V. Vinogradov's Classification: Phraseological Fusions, Unities, and Combinations

V.V. Vinogradov's classification, a cornerstone of phraseological theory, categorizes PUs based on their degree of semantic cohesion and idiomaticity. His foundational work in Russian phraseology dates back to 1946 and 1947. This classification system provides a crucial theoretical framework by explicitly dividing PUs into fusions, unities, and combinations based on their degree of semantic opacity. This spectrum directly correlates with the ease or difficulty of comprehension and translation.

1. **Phraseological Fusions (Frazeologicheskiye srasheniya):** These are characterized by complete non-motivation, meaning their overall sense is entirely opaque and cannot be deduced from the meanings of their constituent words. Their meanings are not motivated.

Fusions exhibit the highest degree of semantic cohesion and are often stylistically and emotionally charged, frequently possessing national specificity. They are indivisible. Examples include the Russian "kick the bucket" (meaning "to die") and "red tape" (meaning "bureaucratic methods"). The summary explicitly states that if a translator cannot find an equivalent for a fusion, descriptive translation is necessary. This establishes a direct causal link: the degree of idiomaticity dictates the required translation strategy. This observation is highly valuable for language pedagogy and translator training, suggesting that teaching phraseology should be structured progressively, starting with more transparent combinations and moving towards opaque fusions. This approach allows learners to build understanding systematically and guides translators in anticipating challenges and selecting appropriate strategies, emphasizing that a one-size-fits-all approach to PU translation is ineffective.

2. **Phraseological Unities (Frazеologicheskіye yedinstva):** These are partially non-motivated. While their meaning is figurative, it can generally be perceived or inferred through the metaphorical or metonymical meaning of the phrase as a whole. Unities are characterized by imagery and allow for some variability in their components while maintaining their core meaning. Examples include the Russian "to play the first fiddle" (meaning "to be a leader in something") and "to show one's teeth".
3. **Phraseological Combinations (Frazеologicheskіye sochetaniya):** These are stable word combinations where the overall meaning is compositional, derived from the meanings of their components, but at least one of the words is used in a figurative sense. They typically lack strong national specificity and are relatively transparent in meaning due to their internal form. Examples include the Russian "to fall in love" and "to take an interest".

N.M. Shansky's Perspective on PUs as Linguistic Units

N.M. Shansky, another prominent linguist, emphasized the semantic indivisibility of phraseological fusions, asserting that their integral meaning does not correspond to the sum of their parts. He viewed phraseological units as distinct linguistic units, alongside words, both serving as units of nomination in speech. Shansky also noted the presence of both freely meaningful words and phraseologically bound words within PUs. His work, including

Problems of stability and variability of phraseological units (1986) and later contributions in 1996, further elaborated on the nature and classification of PUs.

The research indicates that phraseology is often considered an "integral part of lexicology" and that phraseological units are "equivalents of words". Shansky's perspective clarifies this relationship further, describing PUs as "higher reproducible language units" compared to individual words. This suggests that PUs are not isolated linguistic phenomena but are deeply integrated into the lexical system of a language, functioning as complex, multi-word lexical items. This understanding is crucial for a holistic approach to language study, implying that

lexicographers should treat PUs as extensions of a language's vocabulary, and language educators should integrate phraseology into lexical acquisition, highlighting their semantic and functional equivalence to single words where appropriate. This perspective helps learners grasp the full expressive range of a language beyond its individual words.

III. The Cultural and Linguistic Significance of Phraseological Units in Russian and Azerbaijani

Phraseological units are universally recognized as invaluable repositories of cultural and national heritage. They are profoundly ingrained in the collective consciousness, reflecting the unique imagination and historical development of a people, making it challenging to pinpoint their exact origins. These units serve as a direct reflection of a nation's lifestyle, daily routines, worldview, and deeply held traditions.

PUs are indispensable tools for enhancing the expressiveness and emotional depth of language. They are particularly vital in the creation of oral folklore and literary works, where they imbue speech with vividness and figurative meaning. Beyond mere communication, PUs convey the speaker's attitude towards the subject matter, adding layers of nuance and emotional resonance. In poetic contexts, phraseological units contribute significantly to the rhythmic and aesthetic structure of verses, stimulating thought, intensifying imagery, and deepening meanings.

The repeated emphasis on PUs making speech "vivid," "figurative," "emotional," and "expressive" indicates that their function extends beyond mere denotative communication. They add a qualitative dimension to language, conveying nuances, attitudes, and emotional states that literal language often cannot capture as effectively. Their prominent use in "oral folklore and fiction" and "poetic language" further underscores their aesthetic, rhetorical, and persuasive power. For translators, this means that simply conveying the core meaning of a PU is insufficient. The challenge lies in preserving the inherent expressiveness, emotional impact, and stylistic nuances, which often necessitates creative and adaptive translation strategies rather than literal ones, demanding a high level of linguistic and cultural sensitivity from the translator. This also explains why PUs are a significant hurdle for foreign language learners, as their expressive force is often tied to cultural context.

As "ready-made combinations of words," PUs are reproduced from memory, embodying the "secrets of our linguistic cognition". They are a linguistic "treasure" that preserves archaic vocabulary, obsolete grammatical forms, and historical syntactic structures, showcasing the cumulative function of language. The majority of phraseological combinations distinctly mirror the thought processes, way of life, national characteristics, and traditions of their respective nations. For instance, somatic phraseologies, which involve body parts, represent an ancient lexical layer primarily focused on describing human beings and their activities.

The data explicitly mentions that PUs preserve "ancient words, obsolete grammatical features, and syntactic structures" and that their precise formation period is difficult to determine. This suggests

that PUs are not just current linguistic expressions but also linguistic "fossils" or "archives." They encapsulate historical layers of a language and culture, providing unique insights into past societal structures, beliefs, and even technologies that may no longer be in active use. For example, the Kazakh example of 'batpan kuiryk' relates to an old unit of weight, now signifying "unexpected riches". This highlights the interdisciplinary nature of phraseology research, as to fully understand the origin and meaning of PUs, linguists must delve into historical, ethnographic, and cultural studies. This approach enriches both linguistic analysis and broader cultural understanding.

IV. Comparative Analysis of Phraseological Units: Russian and Azerbaijani Perspectives

Despite Russian belonging to the Indo-European (Slavic group) and Azerbaijani to the Turkic (Altaic family), comparative analysis reveals notable similarities in the structure, imagery, and stylistic coloring of their phraseological units. This is evident in numerous examples of shared PUs that exhibit similar structures and meanings. For instance, "Play with fire" in Russian directly corresponds to Azerbaijani

odla oynamaq; "burn bridges" to *körpüləri yandırmaq*; "there is no smoke without fire" to *Ataş etmədən heç bir tüstü olmaz*; "hardworking, like a bee" to *bir arı kimi çalışqan*; "live like a cat and a dog" to *it ilə bir pişik kimi yaşamaq*; "matters of the heart" to *ürəyin işi*; "a matter of honor" to *şərəf məsələsi*; "knight without fear and reproach" to *qorxu və təhqir olmadan cəngavər*; and "the reverse side of the medal" to *medalın arxa tərəfi*. Some PUs demonstrate strong formal and semantic correspondence, such as Uzbek *pashshaga ham ozor bermaydi* and Russian *u myxu ne obudum*, both meaning "does not harm even a fly".

Many idioms are recognized as "international," implying that different languages, including Russian and Azerbaijani, have assimilated them to the point where they are considered native. Examples of highly similar PUs, often calques from French, include "Only the first step is difficult" (Azerbaijani: *yalnız ilk addım çətinidir*), "Looking for a needle in a haystack" (Azerbaijani: *samanlıq içində bir iynə axtarmaq*), "Appetite comes while eating" (Azerbaijani: *iştahı yemək ilə gəlir*), "Marriages are made in heaven" (Azerbaijani: *nigahlar cənnətdə edilir*), and "Eyes are the mirror of the soul" (Azerbaijani: *gözlər qəlbin aynasıdır*). These expressions are exact calques of French, yet they are perceived as fully assimilated in both Russian and Azerbaijani, having lost their direct connection to the source language for most speakers. Similarly, many widely used Russian catchphrases, which some linguists classify as PUs, also have identifiable authors but have become detached from their original source. A significant number of Russian and Azerbaijani expressions share the same original source, frequently Latin via French, and function as Russian calques from French. Examples include *Öz gözündə tir* ("beam in one's own eye"), *Yoxsulluq ar deyil* ("poverty is not a vice"), *Qapıya təbiəti sürün, o, pəncərədən girəcək* ("Drive nature through the door, it will come through the window"), *Bəy verən atın dişinə baxmazlar* ("Don't look a gift horse in the mouth"), and *Stəkanda fırtına* ("Storm in a teacup").

The presence of numerous "international" idioms, particularly those identified as calques from French/Latin into both Russian and Azerbaijani, is a profound observation. This indicates that

despite the significant genetic differences between Slavic and Turkic language families, these languages have been subjected to common external cultural and intellectual influences, especially from European sources. This shared linguistic heritage, often through a process of "assimilation" where the foreign origin is no longer recognized, suggests a deeper historical interconnectedness that transcends purely linguistic boundaries. This implies that linguistic similarities are not solely a product of genetic kinship but also of shared cultural and historical trajectories. For translators, while these shared PUs might seem straightforward, it is crucial to be aware of their original source to avoid potential misinterpretations or to understand subtle semantic shifts that might have occurred during assimilation. It also underscores the value of etymological research in illuminating cross-cultural exchanges.

However, the primary reason for non-correspondence between PUs in different languages lies in their deep dependence on the unique historical development, lifestyle, and worldview of the respective peoples. The lexicons of Turkic languages (like Azerbaijani) and Russian are fundamentally different due to their distinct genetic origins and separate historical developments. For instance, Azerbaijani incorporates many Persian-Tajik and Arabic words, whereas Russian has a significant number of European loanwords.

Cultural connotations frequently lead to divergence, particularly in animal idioms (zoonym-based PUs). While the conceptual meaning, such as "cunning as a fox," might have equivalents across languages, the specific cultural connotations attached to the imagery can vary significantly. For example, pigs and cows, often derogatory in French idioms, are neutral or taboo in Azerbaijani culture due to Islamic norms. Azerbaijani also possesses unique idioms deeply rooted in local folklore and Islamic imagery, such as

dövəsi ölmüş ərəb ("the Arab whose camel died"), which may have no direct equivalent in Russian or Western languages. This vividly illustrates that even when a conceptual meaning is universal, the specific cultural connotations attached to the imagery can vary dramatically. This is a clear demonstration that cultural values and belief systems impose a significant, deeper layer of challenge beyond mere lexical or structural differences. This is not just about finding a different word; it is about navigating deeply ingrained cultural sensitivities. This reinforces the idea that translation, especially of phraseology, is fundamentally an act of cultural mediation. Translators must possess profound cultural literacy in both source and target languages. A literal translation of such PUs risks not only incomprehension but also unintended cultural offense or awkwardness, emphasizing the need for adaptive strategies that prioritize cultural appropriateness over formal equivalence.

Even when the underlying meaning is shared, the specific "object words" or imagery used within the phrase can differ. For example, Uzbek *birovning nog'orasiga ynamoq* ("to dance to someone else's drum") conveys the same meaning as Russian *плясать под чужую дудку* ("to dance to someone else's pipe"), but with different instruments. A large proportion of differences stem from

PUs that are semantically similar but employ entirely different words, reflecting distinct national nuances. For example, Uzbek

Eski hammom, eski tos ("Old bathhouse, old basin") corresponds to Russian *Тот же Санька на тех же санках* ("The same Sanka on the same sled"), both conveying the idea of "same old, same old". Furthermore, grammatical and collocational differences can necessitate significant rephrasing. Collocational mismatches, where words combine differently in various languages (e.g., "strong tea" vs. Azerbaijani

tünd çay), are also common sources of difficulty.

Table 1: Comparative Examples of Phraseological Units (Similarities and Differences)

Russian Phraseological Unit (Literal Translation)	Azerbaijani Equivalent (Literal Translation)	Common English Meaning	Type of Relationship/Equivalence
Play with fire	<i>odla oynamaq</i>	To take a dangerous risk	Full Equivalence
Eyes are the mirror of the soul	<i>gözlər qəlbin aynasıdır</i>	Eyes reveal inner feelings	Calque from French
<i>плясать под чужую дудку</i> (to dance to someone else's pipe)	<i>birovning nog'orasiga ynamaq</i> (to dance to someone else's drum)	To blindly follow someone else's lead	Different Imagery/Same Meaning
(No direct equivalent)	<i>Dəvəsi ölmüş ərəb</i> (the Arab whose camel died)	Someone living on past glory	Zero Equivalence/Cultural Lacuna
strong tea	<i>tünd çay</i> (dark/brewed tea)	Heavily brewed tea	Structural/Collocational Divergence

This table provides a clear, concise visual representation of the comparative analysis, illustrating both the shared heritage and unique characteristics of phraseological units in Russian and Azerbaijani. The side-by-side column format facilitates direct comparison between the Russian and Azerbaijani forms, immediately highlighting structural and lexical similarities or differences. Including the English meaning provides a common semantic anchor. By explicitly categorizing the "Type of Relationship/Equivalence," the table directly illustrates the theoretical concepts of full, partial, and zero equivalence, as well as calques and cultural divergences, making these abstract linguistic concepts concrete and understandable. This serves as empirical evidence, visually reinforcing the previously discussed observations regarding shared historical influences and deep cultural differences, thereby strengthening the overall argument of this report.

V. Navigating the Translation Labyrinth: Challenges of Phraseological Units

The translation of phraseological units presents a unique set of challenges primarily due to their inherent linguistic and cultural complexities. The stability of PUs often makes it challenging to find precise, one-to-one equivalents in a target language, leading to significant translation difficulties.

Cultural Untranslatability and the Absence of Direct Equivalents

Many PUs are deeply culture-specific, rooted in unique realities, traditions, or references that may not exist or be understood by the target audience. This cultural embeddedness frequently results in a "lack of direct equivalents". Translators often categorize equivalence into a spectrum:

- **Full Equivalence:** Occurs when a target language (TL) idiom exists with both the same meaning and similar imagery as the source language (SL) idiom.
- **Partial Equivalence:** Implies that a TL idiom conveys a similar meaning but employs different imagery or structural patterns.
- **Zero Equivalence:** Denotes the complete absence of a corresponding idiom in the TL for the SL idiom. For example, Azerbaijani

dövəsi ölmüş ərəb ("the Arab whose camel died") has no direct French (or Russian) idiomatic counterpart.

The pervasive theme across multiple sources is that cultural specificity is the root cause of many translation difficulties. The risk of misinterpretation and the need to navigate nuances like cultural taboos underscore that translating PUs is far more than a linguistic exercise. It requires the translator to act as a "cultural mediator", interpreting and bridging two distinct cultural worlds. This implies that the translator's role extends beyond mere language conversion to include the transfer of cultural concepts and emotional resonance. This highlights that effective translator training must incorporate extensive cultural studies, ethnography, and an in-depth understanding of the historical and societal contexts that give rise to PUs in both source and target languages. Without this cultural competence, even linguistically proficient translators risk producing translations that are technically correct but culturally inept or misleading.

Semantic Ambiguity and Misinterpretation Risks

PUs can be easily misunderstood if the translator fails to grasp their figurative meaning, as their overall sense is not derived from the literal meanings of their components. A literal, word-for-word rendering can lead to absurd, nonsensical, or misleading translations. Some idioms are deceptively "misleading" because they appear transparent and offer a plausible literal interpretation, even when their true idiomatic meaning is not explicitly signaled by the surrounding text.

Metaphorical Shifts and Structural Divergence

Different languages often employ distinct metaphorical imagery to convey the same underlying idea. For instance, the English idiom "when pigs fly" (meaning "never" or "something impossible") has diverse metaphorical equivalents in other languages, such as "when red snow falls" in Turkish or "when roosters lay eggs" in Arabic. Cross-linguistic grammatical differences can necessitate significant rephrasing. Collocational mismatches, where words combine differently in various languages (e.g., "strong tea" vs. Azerbaijani

tünd çay), are also common sources of difficulty.

Register and Tone Mismatches

Idioms and slang are intrinsically linked to the register (level of formality) and tone of speech. Slang, in particular, often reflects specific generational, regional, or socioeconomic identities. An improper translation can inadvertently shift the tone of the text, resulting in an unnatural, inconsistent, or even offensive voice in the target language.

The discussion of "equivalence" and its categorization into full, partial, and zero types reveals that equivalence is not a simple binary concept but rather a complex continuum. The preference for "dynamic equivalence" (preserving the effect on the target audience) over "formal equivalence" (preserving linguistic structure) for idioms further highlights this dynamism. This means that for PUs, a translator often needs to prioritize the communicative function and cultural impact over a literal rendering, adapting the form to achieve the desired effect. This challenges a simplistic, word-for-word view of translation and underscores the need for translators to exercise sophisticated judgment, implying that translators must be flexible, creative problem-solvers who can make informed decisions about when to retain form, when to adapt, and when to explain, ensuring that the translated PU resonates appropriately within the target culture.

VI. Strategies and Methods for Effective Translation of Phraseological Units

Navigating the complexities of phraseological units in translation requires a diverse toolkit of strategies, each suited to different degrees of equivalence and cultural context.

Equivalence-Based Strategies

1. **Using an idiom of similar meaning and form (Full Equivalence):** This is the most desirable strategy when a direct counterpart with both semantic and formal similarity exists in the target language. This allows for a natural and idiomatic translation.
2. **Using an idiom of similar meaning but dissimilar form (Partial Equivalence/Modulation):** This involves finding a target language idiom that conveys the same proposition or meaning, even if its imagery, structure, or specific components differ from the original. This strategy prioritizes meaning and naturalness over literal form.

Descriptive Translation and Paraphrasing

When a direct or partial idiomatic equivalent is unavailable, paraphrasing or explaining the meaning in simpler, non-idiomatic terms is a highly effective and frequently used strategy. This approach is particularly useful for opaque phraseological fusions or when the idiom is too obscure for the target audience.

Cultural Substitution and Adaptation

This strategy involves replacing the source language idiom with a different expression that performs a similar communicative or cultural function in the target culture, even if the literal imagery is distinct. It is a form of "domestication," adapting the source text to the norms of the

target culture. For example, the English idiom "the ball is in your court" could be rendered in Azerbaijani as

söz sənlikdir ("the floor is yours"), effectively conveying the same idea within a culturally appropriate framework.

Borrowing/Calque (with caveats)

This strategy involves directly introducing the source language idiom into the target language, either in its original form (borrowing) or as a literal translation of its components (calque). While sometimes acceptable for internationally recognized terms, it is generally undesirable for idioms, as it can lead to incomprehension, sound unnatural, or even be misleading.

Compensation, Omission, and Explanatory Notes

1. **Compensation:** If the idiomatic flavor or a specific effect is lost at one point in the translation, it can be strategically reintroduced elsewhere in the sentence or discourse to maintain the overall impact.
2. **Omission:** This involves judiciously dropping the idiomatic expression entirely if its meaning is not crucial to the overall message, or if it is too culturally specific and cannot be effectively rendered otherwise. This strategy should be used with caution, especially in contexts like fast-paced dialogue or subtitling where space and time are limited.
3. **Explanation in Footnotes/Endnotes:** For academic texts or translated literature, providing explanatory notes (footnotes or endnotes) can be valuable for preserving cultural authenticity and informing the reader about the original idiom's nuances, even if a direct equivalent is not used in the main text. However, this is less favored in literary or audiovisual translation due to flow considerations.

The array of translation strategies, particularly the contrast between "domestication" (adapting to target culture norms) and "foreignization" (retaining foreign flavor), reveals that translation is not a neutral process. The choice of strategy carries an ethical dimension, influencing how the target audience perceives the source culture and text. Omission, for instance, risks losing nuance, while a literal translation can lead to absurdity. The translator's responsibility is to preserve "both the content and the style", which often involves balancing fidelity to the source with intelligibility for the target. This implies that translators must develop a robust ethical framework for their decision-making, considering the purpose of the translation, the intended audience, and the desired cultural impact. This is particularly critical in contexts where cultural sensitivity is high or where the translation aims to introduce a foreign cultural perspective.

The discussion seamlessly integrates various translation theories (e.g., Newmark, Baker, Venuti) with practical strategies. This demonstrates that effective translation of PUs is not merely an intuitive art but a theoretically grounded discipline. The practical problems encountered (e.g., lack of equivalents, cultural untranslatability) directly inform and necessitate the application of these

theoretical frameworks. The continuous feedback loop between theoretical insights and practical challenges drives the refinement of translation methodologies. This underscores the importance of ongoing research and case studies in translation studies. Translator education should therefore emphasize both a strong theoretical foundation and extensive practical application, including critical analysis of authentic translated texts and problem-solving exercises that bridge theory with real-world challenges.

Other considerations for effective translation include paying close attention to matching the style and register of the idiom in the target language. Deep cultural literacy in both source and target languages is paramount for making informed translation decisions. The process of "semantization" of PUs, which involves interpretation, transfer, and semantic guessing, is crucial for both understanding and translating them effectively.

Table 2: Translation Strategies for Phraseological Units (with examples from Russian/Azerbaijani)

Translation Strategy	Description	Example (Source Language PU → Target Language Equivalent/Translation)	When to Use (Context/Conditions)
Full Equivalence	Using an idiom in the target language that has the same meaning and a similar form/imagery.	Russian: <i>жить как кошка с собакой</i> (lit. "live like a cat with a dog") → Azerbaijani: <i>it ilə bir pişik kimi yaşamaq</i> (lit. "live like a dog with a cat").	When a direct, culturally and semantically equivalent idiom exists, ensuring naturalness and idiomaticity.
Paraphrase/Descriptive Translation	Explaining the meaning of the idiom in simpler, non-idiomatic terms.	Russian: <i>бить баклуши</i> (lit. "to beat the baklushi") → Azerbaijani: <i>boş vaxt keçirmək</i> (lit. "to spend empty time" or "to idle").	When no direct or partial idiomatic equivalent exists, or when the idiom is too obscure for the target audience to understand idiomatically.
Cultural Substitution/Adaptation	Replacing the idiom with a different expression that performs a similar function in the target culture, even if the imagery differs.	English: "the ball is in your court" → Azerbaijani: <i>söz sənlikdir</i> ("the floor is yours").	When cultural references are very specific to the source language and a literal translation would be confusing, meaningless, or culturally inappropriate.
Omission	Deliberately leaving out the idiom if it is not crucial to the overall meaning or if rendering it would be overly cumbersome or distort the text.	(Hypothetical) A highly obscure or very informal Russian slang idiom in a formal Azerbaijani text where its meaning is not essential for comprehension.	In situations where space or time is limited (e.g., subtitling), or when the idiom's nuance is not critical to the overall message and other strategies are unfeasible.

This table serves as a practical guide for translators, concretizing the discussed strategies with specific examples and outlining their appropriate contexts of use. It transforms theoretical challenges into concrete solutions. By including a "When to Use" column, the table guides translators in making judicious choices about which strategy is most appropriate for a given

context, type of PU, and desired communicative effect. This adds an expert layer of guidance beyond mere listing. It also distills complex strategic considerations into an easily digestible and quickly referenceable format, enhancing the report's utility for both academic and professional audiences. By demonstrating how different strategies specifically address various types of translation problems, the table implicitly reinforces and provides concrete solutions to the challenges discussed in the preceding section.

VII. Conclusion: Enhancing Linguistic Cognition and Cross-Cultural Understanding

Phraseological units are fundamental linguistic structures characterized by their inherent stability, non-compositional meanings, and profound cultural embeddedness. V.V. Vinogradov's classification into fusions, unities, and combinations provides a foundational theoretical framework for understanding the varying degrees of idiomaticity and structural characteristics of PUs. These units serve as invaluable cultural and national treasures in both Russian and Azerbaijani languages, acting as linguistic archives that preserve historical and folk wisdom while significantly enriching speech with expressiveness and emotional depth. However, translating PUs presents multifaceted challenges, primarily stemming from deep cultural and genetic divergences between these languages, manifesting as a spectrum of equivalence ranging from full to partial to zero. To navigate these complexities, a diverse range of translation strategies, from direct equivalence to more adaptive and explanatory methods, are employed, underscoring the need for flexible and context-sensitive approaches.

The study of phraseological units is indispensable for gaining a deeper understanding of the culture and way of life of different peoples, thereby facilitating the mastery of foreign languages. The correct and appropriate application of figurative speech, often embodied in PUs, lends unique originality, expressiveness, and accuracy to communication. Engaging with phraseology is a necessary link in the broader process of language acquisition and the continuous improvement of one's speech culture. For foreign language learners, it is crucial to learn PUs as integral units rather than attempting literal word-for-word translations, with a strong emphasis on understanding their meaning within contextualized examples. The emphasis on studying PUs to "understand the culture and life of peoples" and their ability to reveal "the unique ways in which different nations perceive and conceptualize the world" points to a higher purpose beyond mere linguistic competence. This suggests that engaging with a language's phraseology fosters a deeper level of cultural empathy and appreciation for diverse worldviews, acting as a bridge in intercultural communication. It is not just about what is said, but how a culture frames its reality. This implies that language education, particularly in advanced foreign language learning and translator training, should strategically leverage phraseology as a primary vehicle for cultural immersion, cultivating not only linguistic proficiency but also a profound cross-cultural understanding and sensitivity.

The comparative study of PUs, particularly between genetically distinct yet historically interconnected languages like Russian and Azerbaijani, offers a unique opportunity to discern both the unity and uniqueness of linguistic units. The relationship between the images and concepts

encapsulated in these phrases represents a "very interesting phenomenon in linguistics". While PUs are fundamentally defined by their stability, they also undergo "enrichment" over time, and there is a "rapid evolution of slang terms", which can be considered a subset of phraseology. Furthermore, the concept of "poetic phraseology" allowing for "changes" and "intervention" challenges the notion of absolute fixedness. This indicates that phraseology is not a static linguistic inventory but a dynamic, living system that continuously evolves under social, historical, and even artistic influences. This dynamic nature necessitates ongoing linguistic research and regular updates to phraseological dictionaries and language teaching materials. Researchers need to continuously monitor linguistic changes to capture emerging PUs, track shifts in the meaning or usage of existing ones, and understand how they reflect contemporary societal developments, ensuring that the study and application of phraseology remain relevant and accurate.

For future research, further in-depth exploration is warranted to analyze the structural and semantic features of PUs across various linguistic contexts. For the pedagogy of Russian as a foreign language, there is a clear need to reassess the role of phraseology and refine didactic principles, focusing on immersive natural language environments and supportive learning applications. Continued typological, historical, and cognitive studies of Turkic phraseology are essential to fully map their evolution and cultural significance.

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