

## CHALLENGES IN TRANSLATING PHYTONOMIC IDIOMS BETWEEN ENGLISH AND UZBEK

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**Abstract.** This article analyzes the challenges involved in translating idiomatic expressions containing phytonyms (plant names) from English to Uzbek and vice versa. It discusses linguistic gaps, cultural symbolism, the abstract nature of idioms, and grammatical differences that make translation difficult. Using examples from both languages, the article identifies key issues in translation and proposes effective strategies to preserve semantic clarity and cultural meaning.

**Keywords:** phytonym, idiom, phraseologism, translation, intercultural communication, English language, Uzbek language, semantic differences, symbolism

**Аннотация.** В данной статье анализируются трудности, связанные с переводом идиоматических выражений, содержащих фитонимы (названия растений), с английского языка на узбекский и наоборот. Рассматриваются лингвистические пробелы, культурная символика, абстрактная природа идиом и грамматические различия, затрудняющие перевод. На основе примеров из обоих языков выявляются основные проблемы перевода и предлагаются эффективные стратегии для сохранения семантической ясности и культурного смысла.

**Ключевые слова:** фитоним, идиома, фразеологизм, перевод, межкультурная коммуникация, английский язык, узбекский язык, семантические различия, символизм.

Language and culture are closely interconnected, a relationship most clearly reflected in idiomatic expressions. Idioms express a society's values, worldview, and everyday experiences. Phytonymic expressions—those containing plant names—hold a special place as figurative language tools. This article explores the challenges in

translating phytonymic idioms between English and Uzbek and suggests solutions to overcome them.

Phytonymic idioms are expressions that include plant names and convey symbolic meanings. For example, the English idiom “to nip in the bud” means “to stop a problem at an early stage.” In Uzbek, the idiom “bodomday bo‘lib ketmoq” describes a person’s face becoming pale. These idioms reflect how people perceive nature and cultural values. The cultural representation of plants may vary. For instance, in English, “rose” symbolizes love and romance, while in Uzbek culture, “lola” (tulip) is more often associated with passionate love and patriotism. Such cultural differences play a significant role in idiomatic translation.

#### Major Translation Challenges

##### a) Lexical gaps

Some English idioms are based on plants unfamiliar in Uzbek culture. For instance, in “as fresh as a daisy,” the word “daisy” refers to a flower not commonly recognized in Uzbek, which may hinder proper understanding of the idiom’s meaning.

##### b) Cultural symbolism differences

Sometimes, the same plant has different cultural meanings. While “rose” is a love symbol in English, in Uzbek that role is played by “lola.” Hence, ensuring cultural relevance during translation is crucial.

##### c) Abstract nature of idioms

Many phytonymic idioms are not directly interpretable. For example, “to bark up the wrong tree” cannot be translated literally (“hurking at the wrong tree”) as it would sound nonsensical. This leads to misinterpretations.

##### d) Grammatical and syntactic differences

English is an analytical language, while Uzbek is agglutinative, relying heavily on suffixes. The word order also differs. Translating idioms naturally and grammatically requires a special approach.

#### 4. Translation Strategies

##### a) Finding equivalent idioms

When a meaning-equivalent idiom exists, it is best to use it.

English Idiom Meaning Uzbek Equivalent

To turn over a new leaf- To start a new life Yangi sahifani ochmoq

b) Literal translation with explanation

If the idiom appears in a cultural or academic context, it can be translated literally with a clarifying explanation.

Example: “To nip in the bud” → “Gulning g‘unchasidayoq to‘xtatmoq” (with an explanatory note)

c) Paraphrasing

When no equivalent idiom exists, conveying the meaning directly is necessary.

Example: “To beat around the bush” → “Gapni aylantirib aytmoq”

d) Creative adaptation

In literary or advertising texts, free translation aligned with cultural imagery is acceptable.

Example: “A thorn in one’s side” → “Ko‘ngilda xanjarday g‘am” (A sorrow like a dagger in the heart)

## 5. Practical Examples

English Idiom Literal Translation Meaning Uzbek Equivalent / Solution

Let the grass grow under one’s feet Grass growing under feet -To procrastinate  
Qo‘l qovushtirib o‘tirish

Go bananas Become a banana To lose one’s mind Aqlidan ozmoq

Pushing up daisies Growing under daisies To be dead Tuproqqa qo‘yilgan

To gild the lily To cover a lily with gold Overdecorating something beautiful  
Paraphrasing needed

## Conclusion

The grass is always greener on the other side .The grass on the other side is greener. People envy what they don't have- Boshqalar hayoti doim yaxshi ko‘rinadi

Translating phytonymic idioms from English to Uzbek (or vice versa) is not merely a linguistic task—it requires a deep understanding of cultural thinking. Cultural

representation of plants, semantic mismatches, grammatical structures, and the abstractness of idioms pose significant challenges. Therefore, intercultural competence, creative strategies, and contextual understanding play crucial roles in the translation process. This article highlights these challenges and offers practical strategies. Further research in paremiology and contrastive linguistics is recommended for future study.

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