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IDIOMATICITY AND TRANSLATION IN THE CONTEXT OF CONTEMPORARY APPLIED LINGUISTICS

The problem of English idioms, idiomaticity and their translation in the context of applied linguistics a part of the English vocabulary studied during the last years of the XX century in details remains still uninvestigated. The central problem one comes up against in attempting to define idiom is identifying the property (or properties) which can adequately capture all the idioms in a language while excluding all the non – idioms.

The term "idiom" entered the English language in the XVI century as a part of great surge of the linguistic selfawareness that transformed the vernacular languages of Europe during the Renaissance.

In Russia we find the first attempts to include into the dictionaries the "фразесов и идиоматизмов" that are like words in the works of M.V. Lomonosov [10].

Both "idiom" and the Latin equivalent "idioma" derived from the Greek word "idios" meaning "private , peculiar to oneself". Idioms represent what can probably be described as the most picturesque, colourful and expressive part of the language vocabulary. The necessity and the desire to study thoroughly the usage of idioms, their interpretation, functions and, of course their role in the English and other languages is demonstrated by the bulk of literature devoted to the problem beginning with the fifties of the precedent century.

The term "idiomaticity" comes from the Greek word "idiomatikos" which means "related to an idiom" from Greek "idiwma" which means "idiom", thus "idiomatic+ity" expresses the quality of being idiomatic.

If one narrowed down the consideration of idiomaticity to the specific problem of definition it is possible to identify two approaches to what idiomaticity is:

1. Some scholars consider idiomaticity as the manifestation of the specific character of genius of a language. Their investigations of idiomaticity are directed towards revealing this specific character that is, in effect, a part of the underlying conceptual design of the language. Such an approach ultimately leads to the nature of cognition itself and therefore has strong psycholinguistic implications. The chief supporter of this approach to idiomaticity in the Anglo – American tradition of linguistics Smith Logan does not carry his investigation to these depths. His work simply outlines the cultural preoccupations, the "world view" implicit in the idioms of English together with the peculiarities of the phrasing and other distinguishing features (e. g. non – literalness), that distinguish such expressions as idioms. But the main emphasis in his work is on the conceptual design of the language in so far as it emerges through a consideration of idiomaticity rather than on the structural properties of idioms [3].

2. Other scolars who adopt the second approach are more structurally oriented and seek to define idiomaticity in terms of one or more structural properties. They are therefore more selective in their identification of idioms. This approach enables the linguist to make topological classifications of such idioms on the basis of the properties he adopts as criteria. So though different approaches are presented by the scholars in this connection one thing is made clear: idioms are peculiar forms of speech used in language the meaning of which can be understood only by taking into account the meaning of the whole expression, and not of each word separately.

Both "idiom" and "idiomaticity" are regarded as the essence of phraseology and the major focus of interest in the phraseological research.

According to S. Ojegov [13], A. Koonin [9], Ch. Hockett [7], W. Chafe [4], the word "idiomaticity" fuses with the word "phraseology".

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The most frequently used definitions of idioms of the foreign and Russian scientists are:

- a form of expression, grammatical construction, phrase etc., peculiar to a language; a peculiarity of phraseology approved by the usage of a language, and often having a significance other than its grammatical or logical one [11]
- a phraseological unit involving at least two polysemous constituents, and in which there is a reciprocal contextual selection of subsenses [14], [15],[19].
- a constituent or a series of constituents for which the semantic interpretation is not a compositional function of the formatives of which it is composed [6].
- peculiar uses of particular words, and also particular phrases or expressions which, from long usage, have become stereotyped in English [12].
- a combination of two or more words which function as a unit of meaning [9].
- a concatenation of more than one lexeme whose meaning is not derived from the meaning of its constituents and which does not consist of a verb plus an adverbial particle or preposition, a lexeme… [17].

All these definitions may be summarized by another one that is given by the Oxford Dictionary [20]. "a group of words whose meaning is different from the meanings of the individual words".

V.V. Vinogradov gives idioms another name-fusion. A fusion is a unit which is completely non-motivated [18].

A.I. Smirnitsky [16] considers that idioms proper are such combinations of words which occur in metaphorical use and possess a special stylistic colouring or expressiveness [1].

As it is seen from the above-mentioned the term "idiom" generally implies that the essential feature of the linguistic units under consideration is idiomaticity or lack of motivation.

Idioms and idiomaticity while closely related are not identical. The basis of both is the habitual and, therefore, predictable cooccurrence of specific words, but with idioms signifying a narrower range of word combinations than idiomaticity. Idioms are indivisible units whose components cannot be varies or varied only within definable limits. No other words can be substituted for those comprising, for example, *smell a rat or seize/grasp the nettle,* which take either of these two verbs but no others: thus grab is unacceptable. Nor are the words of an idiom usually recombinable. All idioms, of course, show idiomaticity. Idiomaticity is exemplified not only in idioms and conventional ad hoc collocations but also in conventional lexico-grammatical sequences most apparent in longer text fragments: *those smooth, plump, rosy cheeks* will one day be shrunken, shriveled and withered. These ad hoc collocations of adjectival modifiers preceeding and following the word "cheeks" exemplifies idiomaticity in both selection and sequencing, bit there are no combinations within the sequence qualifying as idioms.

The meaning of fixed expressions, so to say, idioms covers a multitude of multiword expressions.

Different scientists exemplify different features most frequently invoked in identifying multiword expressions as idioms:

1. Collocational restriction
   a) Unrestricted, e.g. *run a business*;
   b) Semi-restricted, e.g. *harbor doubt* (suspicion), grudge (uncertainty);
   c) familiar, e.g. *lukewarm reception;*
   d) *restricted*, e.g. pitch black.
2. Lexicogrammatical structure
   a. flexible, e.g. *break smb's heart;*
   b. regular with certain constrains, e.g. *smell a rat;*
   c. irregular, e.g. *the more the merrier;*
3. Semantic opacity
   a. Semi-idioms, e.g. *a fat salary;*
   b. Semi-transparent, e.g. *a watched pot never boils;*

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c. Opaque (i) overt, e.g. *OK;*
(ii) covert, e.g. *kick the bucket;*

4. Stability [5].
Unchangeability, e.g. *red rag to a bull.*

The distinctive feature of idioms is that though they are multiword expressions they are also lexicalized; they have the semantic unity of single words even if they are used in varying degrees, of phrases and semi clauses.

Taking into consideration mainly the degree of idiomaticity phraseological units may be classified into three big groups: phraseological fusions, phraseological unities, and phraseological collocations. But the criterion of idiomaticity is found to be an inadequate guide in singling out phraseological units from other word-groups. A word-group which defies word by word translation is consequently described as idiomatic.

Phraseology is regarded as a self-contained branch of linguistics and is concerned with all types of set expressions. Phraseological units are not elements of individual style of speech but language units, lexical stability means that the components of set expressions are either irreplaceable or partly replaceable within the bound of phraseological or phraseomatic variance, stability if use means that the set expressions are reproduced ready-made and not created in speech.

Phraseological units are irreplaceable or partly replaceable, so they are characterized by stability of the lexical components. Hence in phraseological units with the words which are not independent, the meaning of the elements is dependent on the other, irrespective of the structure and properties of the units. It proves the fact that the majority of them belong to endocentric constructions, where the central component is clearly the dominant member of the head to which all the other members of the group are subordinated. According to the scheme of subordination in phraseological units, Arnold's and Koonin's classifications are the most successful concerning the head-word and the dependent word between the components of phraseological units. Arnold suggested that phraseological units can be classified as parts of speech. Koonin classified them in accordance with the head-word.

Despite the fact concerning the difficulties of phraseological units' classification, there is one greater difficulty regarding phraseological units - their translation. This difficulty may be solved by creating dictionaries containing appropriate examples of each unit. One should note that this would not solve the translational problems that might occur, making it a necessity to consider the creative aspects of phraseology, the complicated semantic and syntactic structure and the relations between the literal and metaphoric meaning of many idioms surrounded by the same context. For the sake of maximum fidelity various types of translations are used concerning the rendering of phraseological units: equivalent, analogue, descriptive translation, antonymic translation, calque or loan translation, combined translation.

With its great wealth and variety of form and meaning English phraseology presents formidably difficulties both for students of the language and for translators. Its numerous phraseological units are often both figurative and diverse in styling colouring. As far as phraseological units are concerned in translation, the first difficulty that a translator comes across is being able to recognize that he is dealing with a phraseological unit. This is not always so obvious. There are various types of phraseological units, some more easily recognizable, other not so easily. In this case a translator or a student may have access to good reference works and monolingual dictionaries of phraseological units, or, better is able to consult native speakers of the language.

A translator of a language learner sooner or later will come across any of phraseological units, because they dominate practically all spheres of human life: advertising, marketing, jokes, business, banking, commerce, literature, journalism; people use phraseological units for different reasons: in sheer high spirits, as an exercise either in wit and ingenuity or in

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humour, to be 'different', to be 'novel', to be 'picturesque', to give additional point to a refusal or a rejection.

Phraseological units are used in both spoken and written English, and often appear in newspaper articles. They are frequently utilized by native speakers, who feel the language at inborn genetic language level. Even serious newspaper and journals use phraseological units in political articles, because one of the main functions of a phraseological unit is the function of a powerful linguistic discourse.

Phraseological units are frequent not only in colloquial style but in the spheres of business, and some adjoining fields as well. A number of English phraseological units serve as specialized terms in the following domains: advertising, accounting, business, banking, buying and selling, commerce, economics, finance, stock exchange.

Phraseological units pervade English with a peculiar flavor and give it astounding variety, bright character and colour. To help language learners in understanding the English culture, they penetrate into the customs and lifestyle of the English people, and make a deeper insight into the English history.

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ABSTRACT

The article is dedicated to the analysis of idioms, idiomaticity and their translation in the context of applied linguistics. This part of the vacabulary had been studied in the last years in details but nevertheless there is still something to be investigated, namely, the multiword expressions categorised as the idioms of the English language, their features; the phenomenon of idiomaticity; the relation between idiomaticity and translation.The investigation implies different definitions of idioms, idiomaticity and translation; the connection between idioms and idiomaticity; relation between idiomaticity, translation and contemporary applied linguistics; the functions of the idioms in the sentence; possibility and impossibility of changes of the idiom components.The classifications of idioms was treated from different points of view of Russian linguistis, foreign linguists and machine translation linguists. Translation as cross- cultural communication is human and machine centered.Difficulties of translating idioms are based on examples taken from different books and dictionaries.

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