APPLICATION OF MONA BAKER'S STRATEGIES IN TRANSLATING ENGLISH IDIOMS INTO UZBEK

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Annotation. *This article investigates the application of Mona Baker's strategies in translating English idioms into Uzbek. It explores how idiomatic expressions, as culturally and semantically complex units, challenge translators in maintaining both linguistic and cultural equivalence. Baker's framework, which includes strategies such as using an idiom of similar meaning and form, using an idiom of similar meaning but dissimilar form, paraphrasing, and omission, is analyzed in the context of Uzbek translation. The paper presents examples of idioms translated according to each strategy and evaluates their effectiveness in preserving meaning and communicative intent. The study concludes that Baker's model remains a practical and comprehensive approach for dealing with idioms, offering translators systematic methods to overcome cross-linguistic and cross-cultural barriers in the English-Uzbek translation process.*

Key words: *idioms, translation strategies, Mona Baker, cultural equivalence, paraphrasing, omission, adaptation, semantic transfer, figurative meaning, intercultural communication, equivalence theory, linguistic competence, Uzbek translation.*

INTRODUCTION

Idiomatic expressions are among the most challenging linguistic elements in translation because they often defy literal interpretation. They represent the unique cultural heritage, worldview, and historical experiences of a nation. Translating English idioms into Uzbek therefore requires not only linguistic accuracy but also cultural awareness. Mona Baker one of the most influential figures in modern translation studies, proposed a systematic classification of strategies for translating idioms (Mona Baker 1992). Her framework has become an essential reference for translators seeking to maintain meaning and naturalness when rendering idiomatic expressions across languages. Baker identified several strategies, including the use of an idiom of similar meaning and form, an idiom of similar meaning but dissimilar form, paraphrasing, and omission. These strategies provide translators with flexible options for dealing with the lack of equivalence between languages. In the English-Uzbek context, the cultural and metaphorical differences between the two linguistic systems make idiom translation particularly complex. Uzbek idioms often rely on agricultural and Islamic imagery, while English idioms reflect industrial, maritime, or biblical origins. Thus, the application of Baker's strategies helps translators navigate these differences while achieving

communicative and cultural equivalence. This article analyzes how Baker's model can be effectively applied in translating English idioms into Uzbek, highlighting its theoretical and practical implications.

MAIN PART

Mona Baker's theoretical contribution to translation studies provides one of the most systematic and practical approaches to solving idiom-related challenges. Her model identifies four main strategies for translating idiomatic expressions:

1. using an idiom of similar meaning and form,
2. using an idiom of similar meaning but dissimilar form,
3. paraphrasing,
4. omission.

Each of these strategies can be effectively applied in English-Uzbek translation, depending on the nature of the idiom, the context, and the cultural background of the target audience.

1. Using an idiom of similar meaning and form. This strategy is ideal when the target language contains an idiom that closely matches both the meaning and the structure of the source idiom. For example, the English idiom *"kill two birds with one stone"* has a nearly identical equivalent in Uzbek: *"bir o'q bilan ikki quyonni urmoq"*. Both expressions convey the idea of achieving two objectives simultaneously. The translator's task here is relatively simple, as the cultural and metaphorical foundations coincide. However, such cases are rare, and translators often have to seek alternative solutions when a perfect match does not exist.

2. Using an idiom of similar meaning but dissimilar form. In many cases, a direct formal equivalent cannot be found, but an idiom with a similar meaning exists in the target language. For example, the English idiom *"the last straw"* can be rendered as *"sabr kosasining to'lishi"* in Uzbek. Although the literal imagery differs, both idioms convey the concept of a final act that triggers an outburst or collapse. Here, Baker's strategy allows for cultural flexibility and naturalness, ensuring that the target expression evokes the same emotional response. This approach demonstrates how figurative equivalence takes precedence over formal or lexical similarity.

3. Paraphrasing. Paraphrasing is the most frequently used strategy when there is no idiomatic equivalent in the target language. Translators reformulate the meaning of the idiom in a non-idiomatic way to preserve clarity and avoid confusion. For instance, the idiom *"bite the bullet,"* meaning *"to face a difficult situation with courage,"* can be paraphrased as *"qiyinchilikka bardosh bilan qaramoq"*. Although the vivid imagery of the source idiom is lost, the essential meaning and pragmatic force remain intact. Baker

emphasizes that paraphrasing prioritizes communicative accuracy over stylistic fidelity, making it a practical choice in educational and formal translations (Mona Baker 1992).

4. Omission. In some contexts, it may be impossible to convey the idiom's meaning naturally or appropriately in the target text. In such cases, translators may choose to omit the idiom entirely, replacing it with a simpler expression that fits the context. For example, in a sentence *like "He finally decided to face the music,"* a translator might omit the idiom and simply write *"u oxiri o'z xatosini tan oldi"* (he finally admitted his mistake). Omission should be used carefully, as excessive reliance on it can reduce the stylistic richness and expressive quality of the text. However, when the idiom adds no crucial meaning, omission may enhance overall readability.

Cultural and contextual considerations. The success of Baker's strategies in English-Uzbek translation depends heavily on the translator's ability to interpret idioms within their cultural and situational contexts. English idioms often rely on metaphors derived from seafaring, sports, or Christianity, while Uzbek idioms draw from nomadic life, agriculture, and Islamic traditions. For example, *"to turn the other cheek"* reflects Christian moral philosophy, whereas Uzbek culture may use *"sabr bilan javob bermoq"* to express a similar concept without religious reference. Hence, applying Baker's strategies requires cultural adaptation to ensure both naturalness and appropriateness in the target culture.

Idioms in literary translation. In literary works, idioms play a stylistic and emotional role that goes beyond their communicative meaning. Translators must preserve tone, rhythm, and expressiveness. Baker's framework helps translators decide when to use equivalent idioms, when to paraphrase, and when to omit, depending on the stylistic purpose. For instance, in translating Mark Twain's *"The Adventures of Tom Sawyer,"* the idiom *"to paint the town red"* can be rendered as *"shaharni bayramga aylantirmoq"* in Uzbek, maintaining both the idiomatic meaning and emotional liveliness.

Criticism and limitations of Baker's model. Although Baker's model is comprehensive, some scholars, such as Peter Newmark argue that it focuses too heavily on equivalence and does not fully address creative transformation. In the English-Uzbek context, idiom translation sometimes requires more than strategic substitution; it may demand the invention of new expressions that fit the target culture (Peter Newmark 1988). For example, some English idioms like *"skeleton in the closet"* have no cultural parallel in Uzbek. The translator might use *"yashirin sir"* or *"uyatli o'tgan voqea"* to approximate the meaning, demonstrating that creative adaptation can extend Baker's framework effectively.

Educational implications. Applying Baker's strategies also has pedagogical significance. Teaching these methods to translation students can enhance their awareness of idiomatic variation and intercultural competence. By analyzing idioms through Baker's lens, students learn to balance fidelity and fluency, understanding that translation is not mere linguistic conversion but a process of cultural negotiation.

Mona Baker's strategies remain essential for translating English idioms into Uzbek. Her model provides a clear methodological structure for approaching idiomatic expressions, accommodating linguistic diversity and cultural difference. While not all idioms can be translated using identical forms, Baker's emphasis on meaning and communicative intent ensures that translations remain accurate, natural, and culturally resonant. The success of these strategies, however, depends on the translator's interpretive ability and cultural sensitivity, which ultimately determine the quality and authenticity of the translated text.

CONCLUSION

The application of Mona Baker's strategies in translating English idioms into Uzbek demonstrates that systematic, theory-based approaches can significantly improve translation quality. By using idioms of similar meaning, paraphrasing, and occasionally omitting culturally untranslatable expressions, translators achieve linguistic and cultural equivalence between the two languages. The study reveals that idiom translation is not only a linguistic act but also a cultural interpretation that demands awareness of both source and target contexts. Baker's model provides practical tools for maintaining meaning, tone, and communicative effect across languages. However, its successful implementation depends on the translator's creative competence and sensitivity to cultural nuances. In conclusion, Baker's framework continues to serve as a cornerstone for idiom translation, bridging the gap between English and Uzbek cultures and promoting more authentic and effective intercultural communication.

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