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ON THE ISSUE OF TRANSLATING ADJECTIVAL SET EXPRESSIONS WITH A SPECIAL INTENSIFIER

This paper deals with the issue of translating English adjectival set expressions with a special intensifier into Armenian and Russian. The research is based upon the study of nearly 80 English collocations, which have been classified according to the degree of lexical and grammatical equivalence. The equivalents in the three languages are compared and alternative ways of translation are presented. The authors conclude that, dealing with adjectival set expressions with a special intensifier in English, Armenian and Russian, there cannot be any one particular approach to translating. The translator is to consider the target culture's customs and beliefs and choose the most effective method of conveying vivid foreign images into the target language using the expressive means available.

Key words: adjectival set expressions, special intensifiers, source language, target language, base of comparison, object of comparison, selective equivalent, grammatical equivalent, lexico-grammatical equivalent, lexical translation, description, loan translation

Translation is a complex linguistic phenomenon, a type of mediation between two languages, a means of inter-lingual transfer. The gist of the source language (SL) item is transferred to the target language (TL) through an item of an equal or similar communicative value. The objective of translation is to ensure that in the TL the translated item is a direct equivalent of the original in all aspects, including functional, structural and informative ones. Equivalent translation reproduces the full content of the original item in the TL by showing the notional similarity between the two items. If the source and target language items share a common meaning, the translator has good chances to establish relative, sometimes exact, correspondence between them, and translation can be effectively carried out.

Admittedly, one of the most challenging tasks of a translator is the process of recreation of phraseological units, including idioms, set phrases, proverbs, phrasal verbs, etc. in another language. This implies a deep awareness of both languages and cultures since, deriving from historical and geographical circumstances, cultural attitudes and beliefs, one and the same phenomenon and meaning can be expressed differently in different languages thus creating vagueness and ambiguity for mutual understanding. When translating phraseological units, a translator must

also seek to preserve the national spirit laid in the phrase. Undoubtedly, it would be ideal to convey both the meaning (denotational and connotational) and form of the original expression, but it is not always possible to achieve this goal. As a result, two issues arise: how to interpret the meaning of idiomatic expressions and how to convert them into units of an equal value in another language.

The paper considers the issue of translating English adjectival set expressions with special intensifiers into Armenian and Russian. The material under consideration contains about 80 English collocations. They are classified according to the degree of lexical and grammatical equivalence and discussed in terms of cultural connotations. A parallel is drawn between the equivalents in the three languages. In addition, some new translation equivalents are suggested.

According to N. L. Kolesnikova, the author of the training course "Теория и практика перевода профессиональных текстов" /Колесникова, 2016: 11/, the key to effective equivalent translation of phraseological units is to preserve the following components of their meaning: 1) the fundamental image of the set phrase – the object that the meaning is directly based on; 2) metaphorical or figurative element; 3) emotional element; 4) stylistic element; 5) national or ethnic element. The adjectival set expression *blind drunk*, for instance, consists of these informative components:

- 1) direct meaning of 'drunk' affected by alcohol;
- 2) figurative meaning of 'blind' to convey the idea of inability to see or understand anything;
- 3) negative attitude;
- 4) colloquial register;
- 5) distinct national mentality (the national belief that drinking too much of a type of alcohol like methanol found in mouthwash can do serious damage /https://www.urbandictionary.com/).

Certainly, not all of the English adjectival set phrases with a special intensifier bear such distinct national characteristics. In many cases we deal with phrases that derive from beliefs or customs similar to those in the TL(s), which facilitates the translator's task greatly. Moreover, an equivalent translation unavoidably replicates the metaphorical and emotive sense, and exhibits the same stylistic traits as the original expression. For example, in the following set phrases the image coincides in the three languages: corpse cold — uunp hūsuhu nhuh — холодный как труп, feather light — уньшпър щьи рыры — легкий как перо, госк hard — диур щьи щри — твердый как скала, pitch black — дпър щьи и и - черный как смоль, etc.

Nevertheless, translating set phrases with special intensifiers poses some challenges, as it is not a very common technique in Armenian and Russian to qualify adjectives by emotional intensifiers, which attach an additional expressive nuance to the modified word. In fact, *dead quiet* is a more vivid expression than a plain *very quiet*, and *crystal clear* sounds even clearer than *totally clear*. The

emotional intensification function is carried out due to describing the quality of the basic component through a different class of objects, i.e. by comparing the two components of the phrase: the literal component is the *base of comparison*, and the intensifier, used figuratively, is *the object of comparison*. Instead, both Armenian and Russian heavily rely on similes to convey emotional nuances in describing qualities and compensate for the scarcity of expressive modifiers. Occasionally, these languages also make use of plain intensifiers such as *ulhwuquuluylu*, *pugundull*, *совершенно*, *абсолютно*.

Grouping the methods of translating the set expressions in question, we have drawn on the conventional classification system elaborated by A. Kunin /http://samlib.ru/w/wagapow_a_s/transl-book-kunin.shtml/ and favoured by other scholars /Колесникова, 2016; Ухтомский, 2007; Лаптинова А., Дюдяева, 2014/. We have somewhat modified it to adapt to our situation, as not all the methods are applicable here. It should also be pointed out that categorization of set expressions and their equivalents in two target languages simultaneously is a baffling task. Although Armenian and Russian cultures are somewhat close to each other due to some shared elements of culture and history, the two languages are rich in specific phraseological units which reflect the realities and peculiarities of each particular culture.

There are both phraseological and non-phraseological ways of translating set expressions and idioms. In fact, phraseological equivalents in the TL are all phraseological units themselves. Some of them use the same words, the same structure and have the same meaning as the source; some may contain different words, but have the same structure and meaning; still others are made of different words, have a different structure but preserve the same or similar meaning. Many peoples have described certain qualities with the help of mental images, and even if the image in one culture does not completely correspond to that in another culture, other images come to represent the same ideas. Thus, in *bat blind – pnn pni – cnenoŭ, κακ κροm* the focus of comparison is the 'blindness' of certain animals. Each nation has its own perception of the same phenomenon and, in this case, has associated the feature of blindness with a different animal – the English with the bat, Armenians with the owl and Russians with the mole. It is essential that the translator weigh his/her choice of words in order to retain the customary image for each particular culture.

Phraseological methods of translation

Phraseological equivalents can be permanent and selective. In case of *permanent equivalence*, the unit in the TL is the only possible, invariable parallel to the original. Kunin also refers to such expressions as mono-equivalents /http://samlib.ru/w/wagapow_a_s/transl-book-kunin.shtml/. At the same time, the meaning of some set expressions can be transferred with the help of various

equivalents, from which the translator can select the best one to match each particular situation. Here we deal with *selective equivalents*.

Whether permanent or selective, phraseological equivalents of adjectival set expressions with a special intensifier fall under two categories: grammatical and lexico-grammatical. It is noteworthy that absolute equivalence, common among other set expressions and idioms, is not typical of the given adjectival comparisons. There are virtually no absolute equivalents among them as, despite possessing the same denotational and connotational meanings, degree of idiomaticity, style and semantic structure of the original, they all have some kind of grammatical differences. In fact, the prevailing part of the English expressions in question is comprised of N+Adj, with the second dominant group represented by Adj+Adj structure, whereas neither Armenian nor Russian has adopted such structures for the purpose of comparison, at least on a large scale. The corresponding structures in these target languages are: Adj+kak+N and N+uhu/yuh+Adj/Participle, as well as two-word set phrases (mostly Adv+Adj), multi-word expressions and compound adjectives with figurative meanings.

The aforesaid grammatical differences between the adjectival comparisons in the SL and TLs place them in the category of partial grammatical equivalents, which are represented abundantly on our list. However, given the deficiency of absolutely equivalent translations, we shall refer to these merely as **grammatical equivalents**.

Grammatical equivalents encompass the expressions having the same meaning, semantic structure, figurativeness (they are based on the same image) and stylistic features, but varying in word order or grammatical composition. Compare feather light with ψhunnph whu phph and легкий как перо/перышко. The syntactic structure of the English expression (N+Adj) is different from those in the TLs. By contrast, the Russian translation of the simile as light as a feather can be viewed as its absolute equivalent, although there can be a stylistic divergence – the Russian image is often based on the diminutive variant of the object of comparison.

Other expressions with grammatical equivalents include:

paper thin rock hard corpse cold razor sharp razor thin crystal clear sky high bone cold dead drunk damn lucky snow white	թղթի պես բարակ ժայրի պես պինդ սառը ինչպես դիակ շեղբի պես սուր սրիչի պես բարակ բյուրեղի պես մաքուր մինչն երկինք lexicogram. eq. Type I lexicogram. eq. Type I	тонкий, как бумага твердый, как скала холодный, как труп острый, как лезвие тонкий, как лезвие кристально чистый доходящий до мозга костей мертвецки пьяный чертовски везучий белоснежный
snow white	lexicogram. eq. Type I	белоснежный

The category of **lexico-grammatical equivalents** can, in turn, be subdivided into two types. Type I encompasses expressions in the source and target language(s) that share the lexical and figurative meaning and stylistic orientation, but, along with a dissimilar grammatical structure, have a different lexical composition and are based on a different image.

needle sharp	դանակի / շեղբի պես սուր	острый, как лезвие / бритва
snail slow wafer thin dead straight daisy fresh bone hard/hardy dog deaf dead / damn lucky	կրիայի պես դանդաղ թղթի պես բարակ ուղիդ` նետի պես վարդի պես ծաղկող քարի պես պինդ ձկան/խխունջի պես խուլ շան բախտ ունեցող	медленный, как черепаха тонкий, как бумага прямой, как стрела свежий, как роза твердый, как камень глухой, как тетерев gram. eq./lexicogram. eq. Type II
dead/ stinking drunk	խոզի պես հարբած / շան պես լակած	gram. eq.

Even though the equivalence between English and Armenian/Russian set expressions is only partial, the list above demonstrates the absolute correspondence between most of the Armenian and Russian ones. However, occasionally the three languages may rely on three different images which clearly reflect the uniqueness of national mentality and cultural beliefs.

Lexico-grammatical equivalents of Type II only share the lexical meaning and stylistic characteristics, but differ in the degree of idiomaticity, emotional strength and, radically, in grammar. In this case, most of the TL equivalents are idioms proper.

flat broke	դատարկ գրպանով	совсем на мели; без гроша в кармане
wringing wet stone rich	թրջված մուկ ոսկու մեջ թաղված	промокший насквозь денег куры не клюют
dirt cheap	ջրի գնով, շան մսի գնով	дешевле пареной репы
bone cold	ցրտից քար կտրած	gram. eq.
corpse pale	գույնը գցած	gram. eq.
brand new	non-phraseological	с иголочки
	translation	
hopping mad	non-phraseological	вне себя от ярости
	translation	
damn lucky	Type I	везет как утопленнику

Selective equivalents

As can be observed in the above examples, adjectival set expressions with a special intensifier may have more than one equivalent translation in Armenian and Russian. The translator has an opportunity to select from various equivalents to fit in each particular context. It may be expedient to choose the equivalent that conveys the original mental image despite not preserving the ethnic, emotional, stylistic or other components. For example, depending on the context some expressions may sound rude or inappropriate in the TL, and hence it would be right to replace them with milder ones. Cf. dead right vs coвершенно прав/ прав как никогда/ точно/ стопудово/ стопудняк. It is clearly evident that the last two equivalents belong to the informal register or slang (e.g., Озвучки стопудняк не будет, да и не надо! /http://teenslang.su/). Let us also consider in more detail the synonymous set of Russian equivalents for roaring drunk: буянящий с пьяных глаз/мертвецки пьяный/пьяный в стельку /пьяный до беспамятства. Although the expression буянящий с пьяных глаз seems to be the closest lexico-grammatical equivalent, each of the sentences below can be translated differently.

• They came back from the bars roaring drunk.

/https://dictionary.cambridge.org/.

Они возвращались из баров мертвецки пьяными.

Նրանք հաձախ գալիս էին պանդոկներից **շան պես լակած**։

• The lord's son and his friends got roaring drunk and rode into town. https://en.oxforddictionaries.com/.

Сын лорда и его друзья напились до беспамятства и поехали в город.

Լորդի որդին և նրա ընկերները **խոզի պես հարբեցին** և դուրս եկան քաղաք մեքենայով զբոսնելու։

• He rolled home roaring drunk at 3 o'clock in the morning /Ibid/.

Он заявился домой в 3 часа ночи, пьяный в стельку.

Առավոտյան կողմ, ժամը 3-ին, նա **ոտքի վրա հազիվհազ գլորվելով** տուն մտավ։

• They were all roaring drunk and kept singing bawdy songs /https://www.ldoceonline.com/.

Все **буянили с пьяных глаз** и не прекращали петь свои вульгарные песенки.

Նրանք բոլորն էլ **սոսկալի հարբած էին** և շարունակ գոեհիկ երգեր էին երգում։

• In some of the villages, apparently, vampire hunters get roaring drunk first /Ibid/.

Видимо, в некоторых деревнях охотники на вампиров сначала напиваются вдребезги.

Որոշ գյուղերում, ամենայն հավանականությամբ, վամպիրներ որսացողները նախ և առաջ **մի լավ հարբում էին** քաջությամբ գինվելու համար։

As a matter of fact, many of the adjectival set expressions with a special intensifier have their phraseological synonyms. Mostly, these are just alternative set expressions with the same lexical invariant (which is usually the base of comparison) and a variable component, such as razor/needle sharp, rock/stone hard, shiny/brand new, wafer/paper thin, dead/snail slow, pitch black/dark and others. These examples demonstrate the semantic variability of the individual components, but in rare cases we can also find full variants, i.e. synonymous expressions that have a completely different lexical and/or grammatical structure. One such synonymous pair is bone weary and dead tired. Although both variants show absolute exhaustion, they may differ in picturesqueness and emotiveness. Similarly, Armenian and Russian as TLs allow lexical and even stylistic variability and synonymy as can be seen in, for instance, dead drunk - huhum hunpub, խոցի պես հարբած or շան պես լակած; pitch dark – անթափանց խավար or մատդ աչքր մտցնես, չի տեսնի; snail slow – մահու/կրիայի պես դանդաղ; bone cold – gpunhg փшишдшб/ршр ишршб – замерзший насквозь/до мозга как тетерев/пень or глухая тетеря; plain stupid – hш/h шbu hhишр/hhишр hшվ – тупой как пробка/сибирский валенок/швабра от глупый как пень/баран ог баранья голова.

The translator's choice depends not only on the context but also on the nature of the both SL and TL expressions; hence it is vital to take into account all their characteristics, stylistic and syntactic functions. In the absence of a phraseological equivalent compatible with the context, a good translator can adopt a creative approach. For example, in order to preserve the figurative meaning of the SL item when the TL does not seem to have a lexico-grammatical equivalent, the translator is expected to provide a different metaphorical image or sacrifice the form to idiomaticity.

Cf. Loved the location as it was dead quiet at nights so we had a great sleep in the comfortable bed... /https://www.urbandictionary.com/. — Местоположение мне очень понравилось, так как по ночам было тихо как в раю. — Рид гии плір віші шур ішурр, рийір фргриврр пришишур тийір тийір тийір тийір пришишур ривдрир тушиний шинхпій: / Это место, где ночи были тихие как сон/мечтание, мне полюбилось. — Рид гии плір відір шур ішурр, привір фргиври вірифири шіпіг інтір тійір ті

On my third pause for air I realized that everything was dead quiet again. /Ibid/. — Остановившись в третий раз, чтобы глотнуть воздуха, я осознал, что вокруг опять царит мертвая тишина. — Ерр цийц штш Еррпрп шйдши, пр оп гизын, hшицшдш, пр гпгруп ршр гтпгруп ут пррпци: (The translators have used a noun phrase, an equivalent of a different grammatical structure).

Non-phraseological methods of translation

Some of the adjectival set expressions with an intensifying component do not have idiomatic equivalence in Armenian or Russian and are merely translated as ordinary words or word-combinations. In this case, we deal with non-phraseological methods of translation. They can also be used when none of the phraseological equivalents fits in the sentence perfectly due to the full or partial loss of expressiveness, idiomaticity, register or other elements of meaning.

To illustrate the point, the compound adjective *brand-new*, despite having some phraseological equivalents, has an amazing variety of non-phraseological translations to fit in a great variety of contexts, where an idiomatic phrase would appear utterly irrelevant.

Phraseological equivalents:

His clothes looked brand-new. — Его одежда выглядела, будто только что с полки магазина. / Его одежда выглядела так, как будто на нее и муха не садилась. — Նш шуйршй կпկիկ էր, пр йрш hшаплипр **կшрови ишипгрнд ипр айшо** јիйեр:

He would wear a brand-new suit. — Он носил **новый с иголочки** костюм. — Նրш կпиилийи hpp и hpun **упир фрий** thu:

Non-phraseological equivalents:

The author remembers the first time he was left with his first, brand-new child.

— Автор вспоминает первый раз, когда его оставили наедине со своим первенцем, новорожденным малышом/ новоявленным крохой. — Հեղինшկը ишишенпий է, թե ինչպես иրши шпшори шидши рппьдри иви ивищи рппьдри иви иприври, ширишири прппи ньи:

Even brand new clothes aren't necessarily clean. — Даже **неношеная** одежда может быть нечистой. — Ийаши **рпіпрпуній ітр** hшапі цшрпп Ļ урпіпрі і урпіпрі і

There is absolutely no point in owning a brand-new car. — Какой смысл держать совершенно новую машину? / Что толку иметь неподержанную тачку? — **Նոփ-նոր** մեքենш գնելու իմшиտը ո՞րն է:

What makes a home feel brand-new? — Что делает атмосферу в доме **непривычной**? — F изи ξ илийр **шиипир ршрипирупи** hшиприпии:

This brand-new comedy series is all about what happens to a couple after one of them has an affair. — **Недавно снятый** комедийный сериал рассказывает о том, что происходит в жизни пары, когда один заводит роман на стороне. — **Чեргери иниринийшю** ишпии инириний напличий рашри ишпии и инириний инириний:

Against the recommendation of our advisory board, I decided to tackle a tough job in a brand-new field. — Вопреки рекомендации консультативного комитета, я решил попробовать свои силы в неизведанной области. — Մեր խпրիրդшиվши hшидишдпղпվին hшишпши, եи прп2ьдр підьри фпрды þид рпрппифи шидшпр прппиши:

This will give consumers a choice between buying brand new cartridges and reusing old ones. — Это предоставит потребителям возможность выбора между покупкой совершенно нового/не бывшего в употреблении картриджа и повторным использованием старого. — Иш игр ищипприврий припрпируши humpunlpnupnin lynu npnzelni шрпупр quel pnlpnpnlhu unp pшppphouep, pe humpunlpnupgumpnbouep.

As can be seen from the examples above, one efficient method of nonphraseological translation is a lexical translation, in which the idiomatic SL expression is rendered in the TL either through a single word or a free phrase. The translator has to resort to lexical translation in the absence of an adequate phraseological equivalent in order to explicate the semantic meaning of the original expression. But occasionally the lexical translation manages to transfer the vividness of the SL phrase, like, for example, the words новехонький/ новоявленный/ новоиспеченный. Other examples of one-word lexical translations are: scorching/ scalding/ burning hot — шрпп — знойный/палящий/раскаленный, squeaky clean – ширрь/шийн – безупречный/безгрешный, wide awake – шппца/ушишп – бодрствующий. The most productive constituents of twoword lexical translations in Armenian are *uhwuquuuuu* and *pugupauu(uuytu)*, while in Russian совершенно and абсолютно are used most frequently (dead right/wrong – ридирдицици бэдррил/ брибашбий ирин – совершенно/ абсолютно прав/неправ, stone sober – иршидшиши ирши – совершенно трезвый, dog deaf – rugup dul huni – совершенно глухой, dead certain –

Another non-phraseological method of translation is *descriptive* or *explanatory* translation. It can be put into use when the idiom or set phrase does not have a phraseological equivalent or cannot be translated as a single word or word-combination. It is generally not a preferred way of translation since, for one thing, it is too wordy and, for another, it loses the picturesqueness of the original expression. With the adjectival comparisons in question it is disputable whether the translation should be considered as lexical or descriptive because they are a unique type of phraseological units. The phrase *dirt cheap*, for example, which can also be translated lexically as *coocem demessióno demesse*, seems to have

descriptive equivalents ничего нестоящий, почти даром, although some would argue that these are also lexical rather than descriptive translations. These translations successfully explicate the meaning of the original expression; however, the figurativeness is somewhat lost here. Hence, it would be more appropriate to use a Type II lexico-grammatical equivalent (дешевле пареной репы) ог even apply a loan translation method (дешевле грязи; дешевый, как дорожная грязь cf. nuph ghlup չшрдh). Similarly, depending on the context, the set phrase squeaky clean can be translated as வாவிய மியூறாழ and скрипящий от чистоты (Cf. Кожа лица теперь скрипит от чистоты. Посуда скрипит от чистоты, и в доме не сыщется ни пылинки). Loan translation, which is very common among idioms and proverbs, allows maintaining the expressive nature of the original expression and making the right emotional impact on the reader/listener.

To sum up, dealing with such a unique form of phraseological units as adjectival set expressions with a special intensifier in English, Armenian and Russian, we have identified the following phraseological and non-phraseological methods of translation modeled on the classical theory of A. Kunin /http://samlib.ru/w/wagapowas/transl-book-kunin.shtml/: 1) selective grammatical equivalents, 2) selective lexico-grammatical equivalents, 3) loan translation, 4) lexical translation and 5) descriptive translation. All in all, there cannot be a single approach to translating idioms and set expressions. The translator's task is to consider the target culture's customs and beliefs and adopt a vibrant method of transferring the colourful, striking foreign images into the TL using the expressive means available.

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Մ. ԿԱՐԱՊԵՏՅԱՆ, Գ. ՀՈՎՀԱՆՆԻՍՅԱՆ - Ուժգնացնող բաղադրիչով կազմված ածականակերտ կայուն արտահայտությունների թարգմանության **հիմնախնդիրը.** – Հոդվածը վերաբերում է անգլերեն ուժգնագնող բաղադրիչով ածականակերտ կալուն արտահալտությունների հայերեն և ռուսերեն թարգմանելու հիմնախնդրին։ Նյութը հիմնված է գրեթե 80 անգլերեն արփահայփությունների ուսումնասիրության վրա, որոնք դասակարգվել են ըստ բառային և քերականական համարժեքության աստիճանի։ Համարժեքները դիտարկվել են երեք լեզուների շրջանակներում. ներկայացվել են թարգմանության այլընտրանքային եղանակներ։ Հեղինակներն եկել են այն համոզման, որ ուժգնացնող բաղադրիչով ածականակերտ կալուն արտահալտությունների անգլերեն, հայերեն և ռուսերեն թարգմանության պարագայում չի կարող լինել մեկ որոշակի մուրեցում։ Ինչպես և այլ դարձվածաբանական արտահայտությունների դեպքում, թարգմանիչը պետք է հաշվի առնի թիրախ լեզվի կրողների ավանդույթները և որդեգրի արդյունավետ եղանակ, որպեսզի, օգտագործելով այդ լեզվում առկա արտահայտչական հնարները, կարողանա փոխանցել օտար, գունեղ ու ազդեցիկ պատկերները թիրախ լեզվում։

Բանալի բառեր. ածականակերտ կայուն արտահայտություններ, ուժեղացուցիչ բաղադրիչ, ելակետային լեզու, թարգմանվող լեզու, համեմատության հիմքը, համեմատության առարկան, ընտրովի համարժեք, քերականական համարժեք, բառաքերականական համարժեք, բառային թարգմանություն, նկարագրական թարգմանություն, պատճենավորում М. КАРАПЕТЯН, Г. ОВАНИСЯН – К вопросу о переводе адъективных устойчивых выражений с усилительным компонентом. – В статье рассматривается вопрос перевода адъективных устойчивых выражений с усилительным компонентом с английского на армянский и русский. Исследуемый материал содержит около 80 английских выражений. Они классифицируются по степени лексической и грамматической эквивалентности в обоих языках перевода. Также предлагаются альтернативные (как фразеологические, так и нефразеологические) варианты перевода: необходимо использовать разносторонний подход к переводу адъективных устойчивых выражений с усилительным компонентом. При этом следует учитывать обычаи и верования носителей языка перевода и выбрать соответствующие методы передачи ярких иноязычных образов на языке перевода.

Ключевые слова: адъективные устойчивые выражения, усилительный компонент, исходящий язык, переводящий язык, основа сравнения, объект сравнения, выборочный эквивалент, грамматический эквивалент, лексикограмматический эквивалент, лексический перевод, описательный перевод, калькирование