

STRATEGIES FOR TRANSLATING IDIOMS

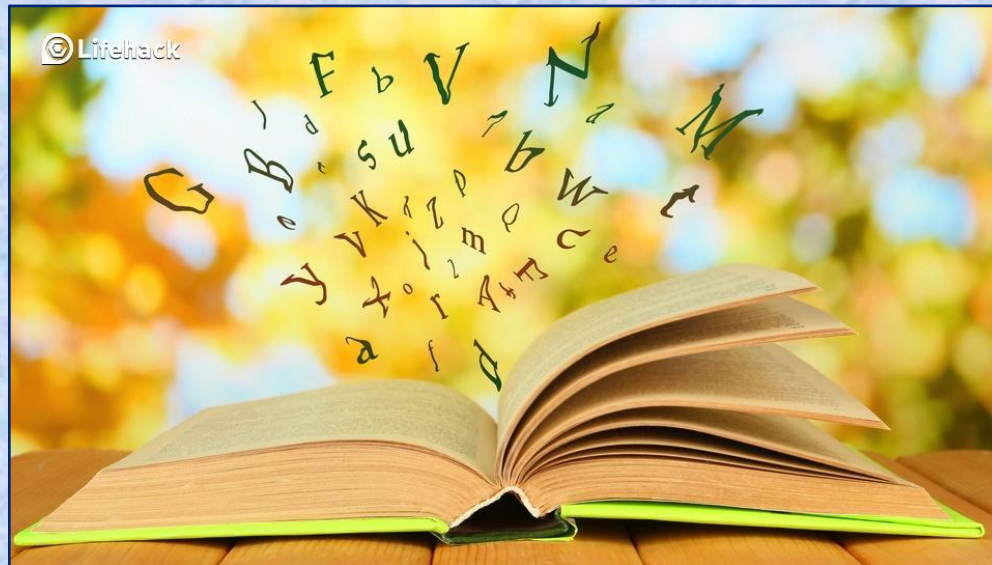


- ◎ **Idiomatic or phraseological expressions are structurally, lexically and semantically fixed phrases or sentences having mostly the meaning, which is not made up by the sum of meanings of their component parts.**

a hot potato -ЩЕКОТЛИВЫЙ, СПОРНЫЙ
вопрос

yellow streak -
трусость

- ⦿ He is a fair-haired, blue-eyed boy (appearance description).
- ⦿ Everyone thinks he'll be Director of the firm one day. He's the blue-eyed boy (a favourite child).



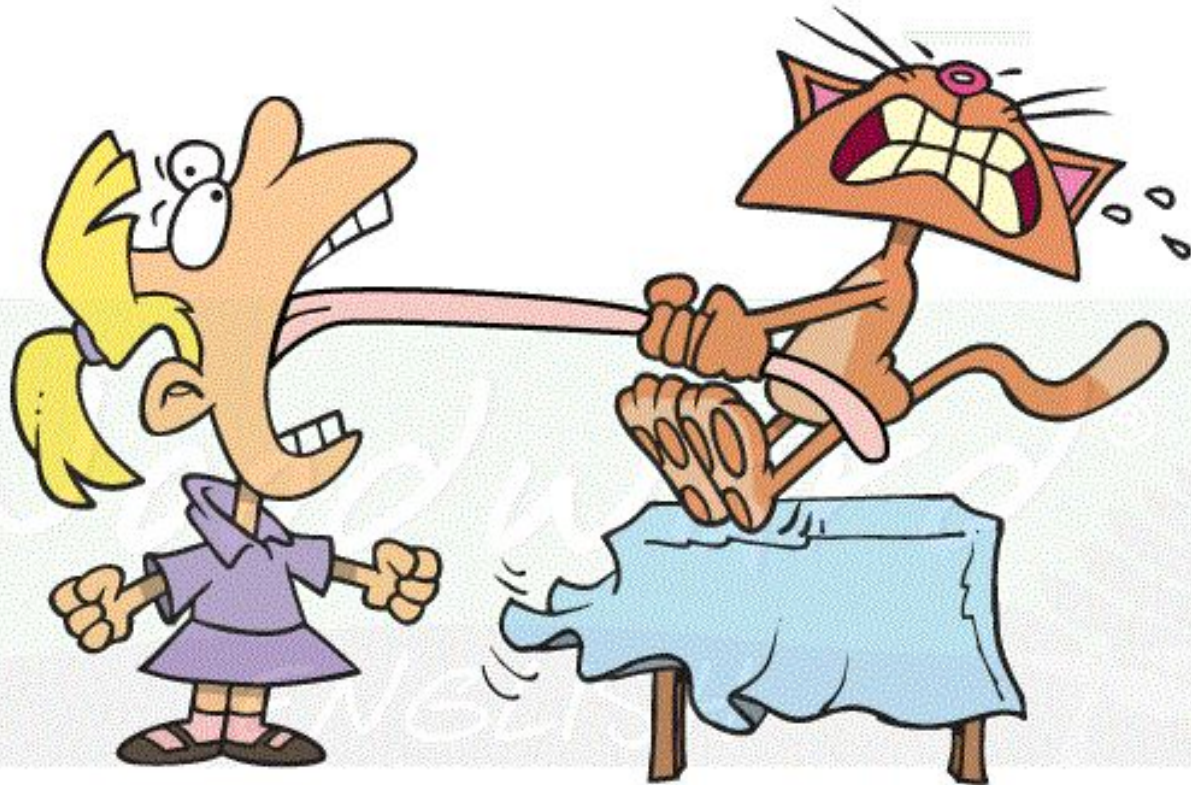


It's raining cats and dogs

= It is raining heavily

= There is a heavy downpour

Cat got your tongue?



This is a shortened form of: **Has the cat got your tongue?**

This idiom is used to compel someone to speak, say something or give a response when they are (unusually) quiet.

It is similar to saying: **Have you nothing to say?**

To have your head in the clouds

MEANING:

1. To be daydreaming and not paying attention to what is happening or being said.
2. To be out of touch with the everyday world and to be unrealistic because of it.
3. To have impractical ideas or dreams.



Ways of rendering the idiomatic / phraseological expressions:

◎ 1. By Choosing Absolute/Complete Equivalents

This is the method of translating by which every componential part of the source language idiom is retained in the target language unchanged.

Examples:

Time is money – Время – деньги;

my house is my castle – мой дом – моя крепость;

the game is worth the candle – игра стоит свеч;

blue blood – голубая кровь;

to play with fire – играть с огнем;

to read between lines – читать между строк;

**In the seventh heaven –
на седьмом небе.**

2. Translation of Idioms by Choosing Near Equivalents

The meaning of a considerable number of phrase idioms and sentence idioms originating in both languages from a common source may sometimes have, unlike absolute equivalents, one or even most of their components different, than in the target language. Hence, the quality of their images is not identical either, though not necessarily their picturesqueness and expressiveness.

Examples:

- ✓ a lot of water had run under the bridge since then –
- ✓ as pale as paper –
- ✓ to know smth. as one knows his ten fingers –
- ✓ to buy a pig in a poke –
- ✓ to cry on smb's shoulder –

Examples:

- ✓ a lot of water had run under the bridge since then – много воды утекло с тех пор;
- ✓ as pale as paper – бледный как стена;
- ✓ to know smth. as one knows his ten fingers – знать как свои пять пальцев;
- ✓ to buy a pig in a poke – купить кота в мешке;
- ✓ to cry on smb's shoulder – плакаться кому-либо в жилетку.

3. Translation by Choosing Genuine Idiomatic Analogies

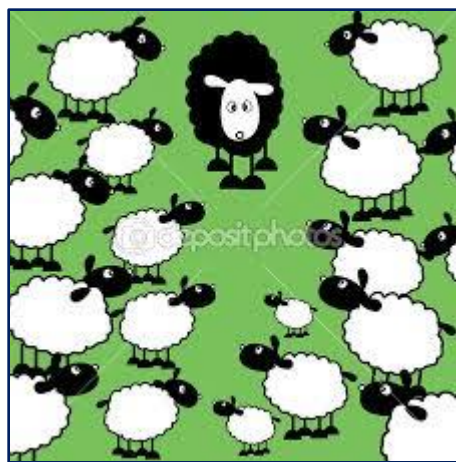
An overwhelming majority of English idiomatic expressions have similar in sense units in Russian. These idiomatic expressions, naturally, are in most cases easily given corresponding analogies in the target language. As a matter of fact, such expressions are sometimes very close in their connotative (metaphorical) meaning in English and Russian as well. Any common or similar traits of idiomatic expression are the main proof of their being genuine analogies.

Examples:

Be born with a silver spoon in one's mouth – родиться в сорочке

Kill the goose that lays the golden eggs – срубить сук, на котором сидишь

a black sheep – белая ворона



Examples:

a lot of water had run under the bridge since then – много воды утекло с тех пор;

as pale as paper – бледный как стена;

to know smth. as one knows his ten fingers – знать как свои пять пальцев;

to buy a pig in a poke – купить кота в мешке;

to cry on smb's shoulder – плакаться кому-либо в жилетку.

More examples:

to carry coals to Newcastle –
ездить в Тулу со своим самоваром
when pigs fly – когда рак на горе
свистнет



4. Translating Idioms by Choosing Approximate Analogies:

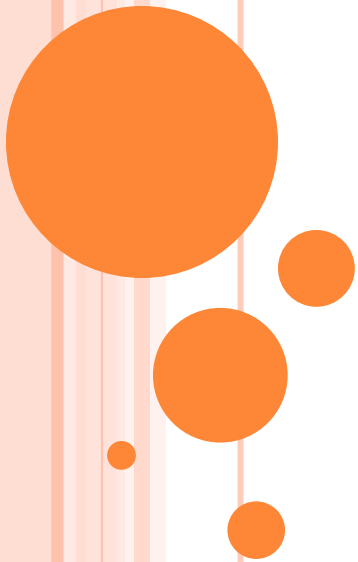
Some source language idiomatic and stable expressions may have a peculiar nature of their componental parts or a peculiar combination of them and thus form nationally peculiar expressiveness and picturesqueness of componental images. The latter constitute some hidden meaning, which is mostly not quite explicit and comprehensible, not transient enough for the foreigner to catch it. As a result, there exist no genuine phraseological analogies for the units in the target language. Since it is so, their lexical meaning can be expressed by means of only approximate analogies or through explication, i.e., in a descriptive way

Examples:

Foam at the Mouth – быть в бешенстве;

to make a cat's paw of something – чужими руками жар выгрибать;

more power to your elbow – ни пуха, ни пера!



5. Translating by means of Literal (word-for-word) translation

Literal translation of phraseological units can be applied only in the case if the result of word-for-word translation turns to be the expression the imagery of which is easily perceived Russian reader and does not create the impression of unnatural and unusual for the generally accepted norms of the Russian language.

Such literal translations have certain advantages and are widely used in the practice of translation as they allow you to save the figurativeness of the original, which is especially important in literary translation.

Examples:

He needs a long spoon that sups with the devil.
– *Тому, кто собрался поужинать с дьяволом, нужна ложка подлиннее.*

People who live in glass houses should not throw stones. – *Люди, живущие в стеклянных домах, не должны бросаться камнями.*

No news is good news. — *Отсутствие новостей — хорошая новость;*

keep a dog and bark oneself – *держатъ, собаку, а лаять самому.*

6. *Descriptive translation*

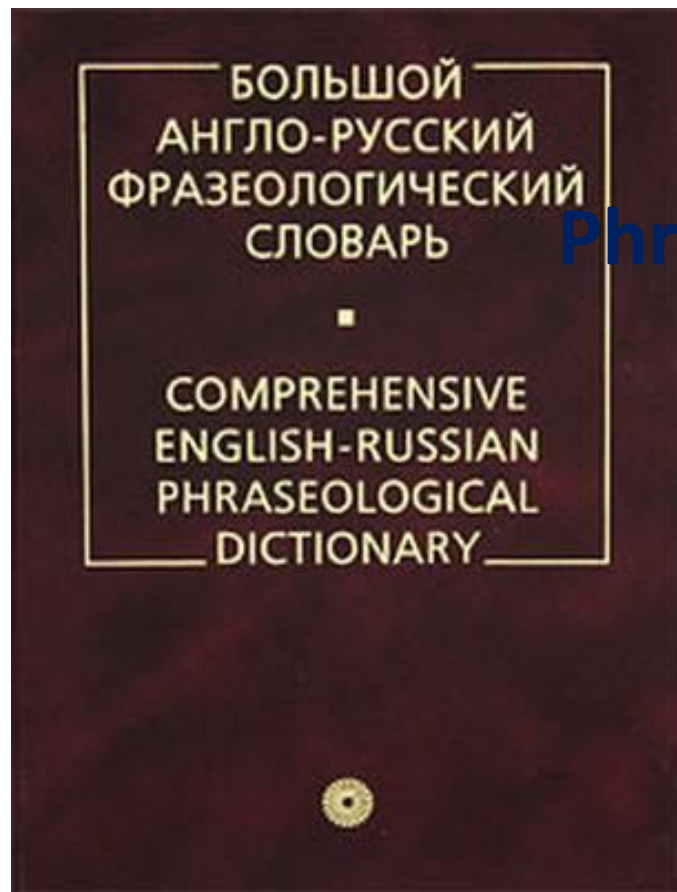
The meaning of a considerable number of idiomatic as well as stable/ set expressions can be rendered through explication only, i.e., in a descriptive way. Depending on the complexity of meaning contained in the source language idiom, it can be expressed in the target language in some ways:

1) by a single word: **out of a clear blue of the sky** – вдруг, откуда не возьмись

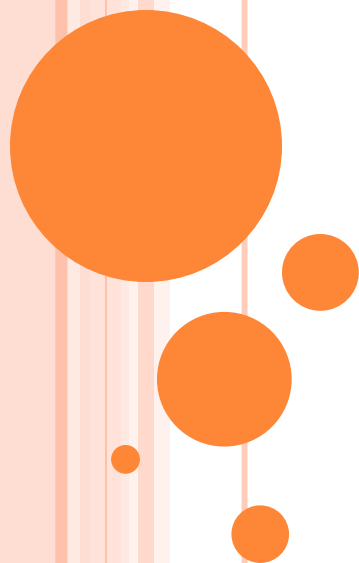
2) with the help of free combinations of words (the most frequent): **to run amock** – неожиданно нападать на первого встречного человека; **red herring** – ложная информация (отвлекающая от основной проблемы); ложный след, отвлекающий маневр

3) when the lexical meaning of an original idiomatic expression is condensed or when it is based on a nationally specific notion/structural form alien to the target language, the idiomatic expression may be conveyed by a sentence or a longer explanation: **white elephant** – подарок, от которого трудно избавиться (то, что приносит больше хлопот, чем пользы); **yes man** – человек, который со всеми соглашается, поддакивает всем.

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**THANK YOU
FOR
ATTENTION!
ANY QUESTIONS?**

