



PHRASEOLOGICAL UNITS AND IDIOMATIC EXPRESSIONS IN ECONOMIC TEXTS: BASED ON ENGLISH, KOREAN, AND KARAKALPAK LANGUAGES

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Abstract: *This article explores the use of phraseological units and idiomatic expressions in economic texts across three languages: English, Korean, and Karakalpak. Phraseological units, including idioms, proverbs, and fixed expressions, enrich economic discourse by conveying complex ideas succinctly and colorfully. However, these expressions often pose challenges for translation and cross-cultural understanding due to linguistic and cultural differences. This study highlights common economic idioms in each language, analyzes their semantic features, and discusses the implications for translators and economists. By comparing these languages, the article reveals both universal tendencies and culture-specific traits in economic phraseology, contributing to better communication and interpretation in global economic contexts.*

Keywords: *Phraseological units, idiomatic expressions, economic texts, English, Korean, Karakalpak, translation, cross-cultural communication*

Phraseological units (PUs) and idiomatic expressions form an integral part of any language, reflecting cultural values, historical experiences, and social realities. In the field of economics, such expressions are frequently used to encapsulate complex economic principles, market behaviors, and financial phenomena in a concise and vivid manner. For instance, English economic discourse often employs idioms like “bull market” or “cut corners” to describe specific market conditions or behaviors. Similarly, Korean and Karakalpak languages, while lesser-known in the

global economic arena, possess rich phraseological repertoires that carry unique cultural and economic connotations.

Understanding these idiomatic expressions is crucial for economists, translators, and international business practitioners who engage in cross-cultural communication. Misinterpretations or literal translations of such expressions can lead to confusion or loss of meaning, hampering effective dialogue and decision-making. This issue is particularly significant in economic texts, where precision and clarity are essential. This article aims to investigate the phraseological units and idiomatic expressions commonly used in economic texts in English, Korean, and Karakalpak languages. The selection of these three languages offers a comparative perspective spanning different linguistic families and cultural contexts. English, as a global lingua franca, has a well-documented corpus of economic idioms. Korean, with its unique blend of Sino-Korean and native expressions, reflects East Asian economic thought and practice. Karakalpak, a Turkic language spoken mainly in Uzbekistan, represents the linguistic heritage of Central Asia and provides insights into regional economic conceptualization.[1]

The study will identify representative economic idioms in each language, analyze their semantic and pragmatic features, and explore challenges in translation. By doing so, it contributes to the broader understanding of economic discourse and supports more effective intercultural communication in global economics.

English economic discourse is rich in idiomatic expressions, often borrowing metaphors from everyday life, nature, and sports to illustrate financial concepts. For example, the idiom “*bull market*” describes a period of rising stock prices, derived from the bull’s upward thrusting horns. Conversely, a “*bear market*” signifies a declining market, based on the bear’s downward swipe. Other common idioms include “*cut corners*” (to economize in a way that sacrifices quality) and “*bottom line*” (the final financial result or profit).[2] **“Throw good**

money after bad” — to continue investing in a losing proposition, hoping to recover losses, often seen as irrational behavior. **“Cash cow”** — a business or product that generates a steady and reliable flow of income. These idioms convey complex ideas efficiently and are widely understood among economic professionals. However, their metaphorical nature can create obstacles for non-native speakers or translators unfamiliar with the cultural background.

Korean economic language also utilizes idiomatic expressions, though often reflecting Confucian values and collectivist culture. For instance, the phrase “**밑 빠진 독에 물 붓기**” (*mit bappin dok-e mul butgi*) translates literally as “pouring water into a bottomless jar,” equivalent to the English idiom “a futile effort” often used to describe unproductive investments or wasted resources. Another example is “**금강산도 식후경**” (*Geumgangsan-do sikhu-gyeong*), meaning “even Mt. Geumgang is best viewed after eating,” which metaphorically suggests that economic needs and practical concerns take precedence before appreciating finer things.[3] This highlights the Korean tendency to prioritize economic stability and pragmatism. **“고래 싸움에 새우 등 터진다”** (*gorae ssawome saeu deung teojinda*) — literally “When whales fight, the shrimp’s back is broken.” It means that ordinary people suffer when big powers clash, often used in economic disputes or market competition. **“발등에 불이 떨어지다”** (*baldeunge buri tteoreojida*) — literally “fire falls on one’s instep,” meaning a sudden urgent situation, like a financial crisis or deadline.

Karakalpak, spoken by a smaller population in Central Asia, offers unique idiomatic expressions influenced by Turkic culture and local economic realities. For instance, the phrase “**Түзелмес деңзеј**” meaning “an irreparable deficit” is commonly used to describe persistent economic shortfalls. This expression reflects a straightforward and pragmatic approach to economic problems. Another idiom,

“Теңи жок” meaning “the weight of the currency,” metaphorically discusses inflation or devaluation, illustrating how the physical concept of “weight” is applied to economic value. *“Ақшаң хауада ұшып жүр”*— literally “Your money is flying in the air,” used to describe careless spending or lost investments. *“Хазина құрип қалды”* — “The treasury has dried up,” meaning financial resources have been exhausted, often referring to government or company funds.[4]

Translating idiomatic expressions from one language to another, especially in specialized fields like economics, is challenging. Literal translation often fails to convey the intended meaning or cultural nuance. For example, translating “bull market” literally into Korean or Karakalpak might confuse readers unfamiliar with the metaphor. Equivalents or paraphrases are often necessary, but this can result in loss of the original expression’s vividness or brevity. Additionally, economic idioms often reflect cultural attitudes toward risk, investment, and market behavior, which vary widely across societies. Hence, translators and economists must have deep cultural and linguistic knowledge to preserve meaning and enhance mutual understanding. Awareness of phraseological units also helps in teaching economic language and developing multilingual glossaries.[5]

Phraseological units and idiomatic expressions are indispensable components of economic discourse, enriching the language with vivid imagery and encapsulating complex ideas succinctly. The comparative analysis of English, Korean, and Karakalpak economic idioms reveals both universal tendencies and distinctive cultural traits. English idioms tend to draw on everyday metaphors rooted in nature and action, Korean expressions emphasize pragmatism and collective values, while Karakalpak idioms are straightforward, reflecting local economic conditions and Turkic linguistic patterns. The study highlights the importance of phraseological competence in economic communication. For translators and professionals working across languages, recognizing and accurately

interpreting idiomatic expressions is crucial to avoid misunderstandings. Literal translations often fail to capture the metaphorical meaning or cultural subtext embedded in these units, potentially leading to confusion or miscommunication in economic texts.

Moreover, the presence of phraseological units in economic language illustrates how culture shapes economic thinking and expression. This cultural lens can enrich economic discourse, providing insights beyond mere numbers and technical terms. As globalization intensifies economic interaction among diverse linguistic communities, fostering cross-cultural awareness of phraseological units becomes essential. Future research may expand this comparative approach to other languages and explore the impact of idiomatic expressions on economic policy communication, business negotiations, and financial education. The integration of phraseological units into economic dictionaries and translation tools would also facilitate clearer communication.

In conclusion, phraseological units serve as a bridge between language, culture, and economics, making them a valuable area of study for linguists, economists, and translators alike. Understanding and respecting these linguistic nuances enhances the clarity and effectiveness of international economic communication.

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