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Comparative Study of Idioms in Romance and Germanic Languages: Translation Nuances and Challenges

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ABSTRACT

BACKGROUND

Idioms form unique narratives within a speech community and define its linguistic identity. Translating idioms in Germanic and Romance languages poses significant challenges due to their figurative meanings and lack of direct correspondence with literal expressions. The study aims to conduct a comparative analysis of idioms in Germanic and Romance languages and to explore the specifics of their translation into Ukrainian.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

The research material consisted of 120 idioms selected from English (a Germanic language) and Spanish (a Romance language). Structural, grammatical, lexical, and semantic analyses were applied to identify similarities and differences in form, meaning, and translation adaptability. Quantitative analysis was employed to assess the frequency and efficiency of different translation strategies.

RESULTS

The structural and grammatical analysis revealed that idioms of comparison in English, Spanish, and Ukrainian exhibit a similar syntactic structure but differ in adaptability during practical use. English and Spanish maintain relatively fixed grammatical forms, whereas Ukrainian demonstrates greater flexibility in grammatical transformations. Lexical and semantic analysis identified both universal and culture-specific features of the studied idioms. Universal associations were generally translated without loss of meaning, while culturally bound images required additional adaptation to preserve stylistic and semantic authenticity. Quantitatively, 66% of idioms were translated through direct equivalence, 24% through semantic adaptation, and 10% through lexical replacement.

CONCLUSION

Idioms with comparative structures constitute an integral part of linguistic development, reflecting both universal cognitive patterns and distinctive cultural imagery. Effective translation of such idioms requires balancing equivalence and cultural adaptation to maintain the original style and meaning across languages.

Keywords: Germanic languages, Comparative analysis, Lexical equivalents, Linguistic features, Linguistic identity

Highlights

- The study compares 120 English and Spanish idioms translated into Ukrainian, revealing both universal and culturally specific linguistic features.
- Structural analysis shows similar syntactic patterns across languages, while Ukrainian demonstrates

greater grammatical flexibility and adaptability in phrase construction.

- Lexico-semantic analysis identifies universal idioms easily translated without meaning loss and culture-specific ones requiring stylistic and semantic adaptation.
- Quantitative results indicate that 66% of idioms use direct equivalence, 24% semantic adaptation, and 10% lexical substitution in translation.
- Effective translation of idioms requires balancing accuracy and cultural context to preserve authentic style, emotional imagery, and linguistic identity.

Introduction

The phenomenon of language is a dynamic complex phenomenon, determined by the specifics of the socio-cultural context. Possessing a whole complex of historical, cultural, social aspects and linguistic worldview, language complicates the translation process, forms the uniqueness of each language community and its linguistic identity. Of particular importance in this context is phraseology – a component of the language system that combines culturally significant encoded meanings along with semantically open meanings.

The above-mentioned specific coding does not manifest itself in a unit at once. It is a multi-component system that is in a state of constant transformation under the influence of a number of factors. The national-cultural component of phraseology can be reflected in all components of phraseological meaning (denotation, signification, connotation), or in one of them.

One of the most effective representative ways of describing a worldview is comparison – a stylistic device, synergistic with the process of cognition, which is the basis for metaphor. The study of comparative idioms in Romance and Germanic languages is becoming particularly relevant today, because they fully reflect the worldview, mentality and unique cultural specificity of each nation. The study of these units in a specific context will allow for a more detailed understanding of intercultural and interlingual connections, will contribute to the enrichment of translation practice and will stimulate expanded linguistic research.

The purpose of the article is a comparative analysis of idioms of Germanic and Romance languages, as well as consideration of the specifics of their translation into Ukrainian.

Literature Review

The conceptualization of phraseology research in the current conditions of the development of linguistics and translation activities is present in the publications

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All data supporting the findings are included within the article. Additional materials or examples used for analysis can be made available from the corresponding author upon reasonable request

of de Solás and Cristina,¹ Filatova et al.,² House,³ Schleiermacher,⁴ Su.⁵ The authors consider the phenomenon of idioms of Romance and Germanic languages in the context of translation difficulties, from which scientists have highlighted: the complexity of literal translation (the vast majority of idioms are not amenable to literal translation, since their meaning does not follow from the meaning of individual words); the selection of equivalents (the need to find a idiom in the target language that has a similar semantic load, even if it consists of completely different words); the belonging of Germanic and Romance languages to separate groups endowed with unique cultural and lexical features that are reflected in their idioms.

According to Moon,⁶ Pastor,⁷ the main problem of translating idioms is the differentiation of context: idioms related to certain realities may require additional translation adaptation, because these realities may be completely absent in another culture. At the same time, Bortfield,⁸ Marsili,⁹ Pollastri,¹⁰ highlight the difficulties of transmitting emotional shades, because in the process of translating idioms it is difficult to convey emotional meaning without partial or complete loss of content.

The expanded conceptual boundaries of this issue are highlighted by scientists Espinal and Mateu,¹¹ Grodska et al.,¹² Senkbeil,¹³ who studied idioms in a comparative method and identified common and unique features, which allows for a better understanding of linguistic specificity and cultural features. Researchers focus on the cultural functionality of idioms: a reflection of the national culture, values, and worldview of the language community.

The issue of translating idioms is the subject of active discussions among researchers,^{14–16} who investigate the cognitive mechanisms underlying the understanding of idioms, in particular the role of context, associations, and individual characteristics. At the same time, the publications of Mykhaylenko,¹⁷ Ruiz Gurillo¹⁸ emphasize the pragmatic dimension of idioms, and the idioms themselves are considered as a tool for intercultural understanding, a means of enriching the vocabulary. The authors position interlingual coincidences as a phraseological fact, the presence of which is due to the relevance of axiological attitudes in many cultures.

Scientific developments in the English version of the problem are particularly varied. Thus, the publications of a number of scientists^{19,20} analyze key aspects, challenges and subtleties of the translation of idioms, their significance in the development of the English-language lexical system. In Spanish phraseology, the subject of this study is not isolated into a group of stable units,^{21,22} they are localized in the general complex of free figurative combinations. Moreover, Spanish researchers position phraseology as a cultural method of decoding and presenting information in the form of a complex image, which often reproduces the context of the language, violating formalities.

Contemporary linguistics studies phraseology with regard to the problem of the interconnection between language and culture, which in scientific research has

gone from philosophical, sociological, and psychological ideas to linguistic and cultural ones. As a result of this scientific synergy, a culturally conditioned phraseological subsystem of natural language is formed, where any phraseological unit acquires the status of a “linguistic” sign of culture and begins to play a special role in it. Works on idiomatics and translation procedures by a number of scholars^{23–25} have gained particular importance. The fundamental works were laid down by authors,^{26–34} who formed the basic principles of idiomatics and translation procedures.

At the same time, the theoretical and practical aspects of translating idioms from English and Spanish into Ukrainian have certain gaps and shortcomings, and the lack of a comprehensive study of the mentioned issues adds relevance to the chosen topic.

Taking into account the gaps in research, our study aims to investigate some aspects of the translation of idiomatic expressions. For a correct, adequate, and equivalent translation of pragmatic idioms, it is important that translators have clear and specific knowledge of these expressions in order to identify them accurately and, importantly, avoid literal interpretation. Therefore, the main challenge in translating idioms lies in accurately recognizing them as indirect speech acts.

Methods

The research materials were a sample of 120 idioms in English, Spanish and Ukrainian with a comparison structure (Appendix 1). In English, the comparative idioms are fixed expressions with comparative structures like as...as or –er than that describe qualities in a vivid, figurative way. The meaning of comparative idioms in Spanish can be transmitted by patterns like tan...como or más...que creating expressive, non-literal comparisons. In Ukrainian, comparative idioms are the stable expressions based on comparison which highlight a characteristic in an indirect way, using the figurative imagery.

The selected Spanish idioms come primarily from Alberto Buitrago’s Diccionario de dichos y frases hechas and have been checked for modern usage in the Spanish press: El País, El Mundo, ABC. English idioms are taken from The Oxford Dictionary of English Proverbs and Webster’s Third New International Dictionary. Ukrainian idioms have been gathered from authoritative Ukrainian phraseological dictionaries. The sample frame was restricted to codified lexicographic sources and attested examples of current usage that had been published between 1990 and 2024 so that all the items would reflect contemporary linguistic norms.

The selection of phraseological units followed explicitly formulated and scientifically grounded criteria. Only idioms with a comparative structure were included, in order to guarantee structural homogeneity and cross-linguistic comparability. The inclusion criteria covered: (1) fixedness and idiomaticity; (2) presence of an explicit comparative model (as...as, –er than; tan...como, más...que; Ukrainian syntactic comparatives); (3) attestation in at least one authoritative

dictionary; and (4) relevance to the typological scope of the study (English–Germanic; Spanish–Romance; Ukrainian–Slavic). Units which didn't have idiomatic meaning, didn't contain comparison, or occurred only in obsolete sources were excluded. Thereby, this procedure guaranteed the representativeness, internal coherence, and analytical validity of the corpus.

The methodology is fully auditable. The sampling frame, sources, and selection rules were documented, and each idiom was coded with a reference to its source dictionary, date of attestation, and structural type. Continuous sampling ensured that all idioms fitting the criteria were included. All coding decisions were made in line with a pre-defined codebook describing the diagnostic features of each translation strategy. Strategy assignment did not depend on literature-screening procedures; therefore, sections resembling PRISMA protocols were removed as irrelevant to idiom selection.

Several linguistic methods were applied to analyze the corpus. The lexical-semantic method was used to examine the meaning, internal semantics, and component structure of idioms, which enabled the identification of semantic links within each expression. The comparative method allowed the cross-linguistic study of English, Spanish, and Ukrainian idioms and helped establish both universal tendencies and language-specific features shaped by cultural, historical, and social factors. The structural-grammatical method facilitated the analysis of syntactic models and morphological patterns underlying comparative idioms in the three languages.

Translation strategies were operationalised through clear, replicable decision rules. The strategy of direct equivalence called for the target idiom to retain the semantic content, functional load, and stylistic register of the source. Diagnostics included: identical conceptual metaphor, equivalent syntactic comparative structure, and stable usage in the target language. Semantic adaptation was assigned to cases where the target unit retained the meaning and communicative function of the source but required adjustments in metaphor,

imagery, or cultural framing to achieve naturalness and stylistic accuracy. Diagnostics included: partial metaphorical correspondence, functional alignment with the source text, and preservation of evaluative meaning. Lexical substitution was applied to cases where no idiomatic equivalent existed and the translator resorted to non-idiomatic means, i.e. to concretisation, generalisation, modulation, paraphrase, or grammatical transformation. Diagnostics included: absence of a codified idiomatic analogue, reliance on descriptive translation, and necessary restructuring to maintain pragmatic adequacy (Figure 1).

Coders worked with a structured codebook supplying definitions, decision rules, boundary cases, and examples of each strategy. The training sessions covered agreement among raters, as well as piloting the coding on a subset of idioms. Agreement was quantified using Cohen's kappa, which indicated stability in the consistency of coding decisions. Several fully worked examples were included to illustrate how the diagnostics work in practice and how strategy selection proceeds across languages.

Polysemy was resolved by first establishing the contextually relevant meaning of the idiom before translation. In this case, a semantic variant was selected by referring to appropriate lexicographic sources, after which translation transformations were applied where possible: modulation, generalisation, or paraphrasing to maintain pragmatic and stylistic adequacy.

Results and Discussion

Idioms with a comparative structure are common in written and spoken discourse and represent an important part of how speakers conceptualize and assess reality. Their translation is notoriously complicated because the global figurative meaning of the expression is not reducible to the sum of its component meanings. The semantic asymmetry intrinsic to idiomatic expressions brings to the fore the classic tension between adequacy and acceptability in translation: one has to preserve the semantic content and functional–stylistic load of the source idiom but, on the other hand, the

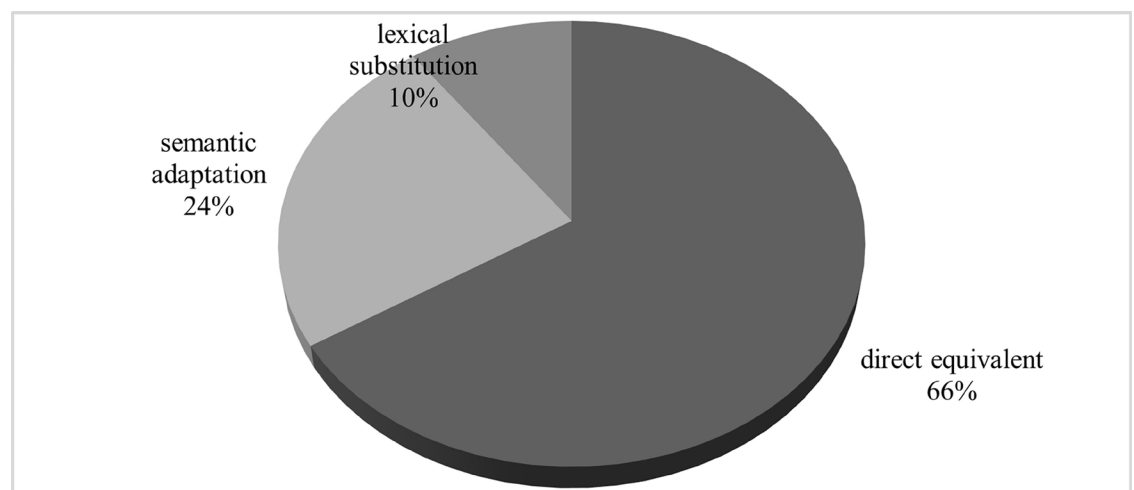


Fig 1 | Differentiation of translation strategies

target version must remain natural, intelligible, and culturally acceptable for the addressee. In the case of comparative idioms, this tension is sharpened by the strong cultural anchoring of many images and by the grammatical constraints of each language.

The present analysis is based on a closed, fully documented corpus of 120 comparative idioms, systematically aligned across English, Spanish, and Ukrainian (see List of comparative idioms, Appendix 1). All items have an explicit comparative structure (as/like in English, como in Spanish, як/мов/немов in Ukrainian) and are attested in authoritative lexicographic sources and contemporary usage. The list includes canonical similes such as as busy as a bee – tan ocupado como una abeja – зайнятий як бджілка, as stubborn as a mule – terco como una mula – упертий як осел/як мул, and run like the wind – correr como el viento – бігти як вітер. This sampling frame ensures structural homogeneity and cross-linguistic comparability, while the tripartite design (English–Spanish–Ukrainian) allows us to observe both universal tendencies and language-specific patterns at the interface of Germanic, Romance, and Slavic traditions.

From a lexical-semantic point of view, many idioms in the corpus are rooted in widely shared embodied experience and allow direct equivalence across the three languages. Images based on salient physical properties or behaviour of animals and natural objects (speed, size, strength, temperature, colour) tend to be preserved with minimal modification: as quick as lightning – rápido como un rayo – швидкий як блискавка; as white as snow – blanco como la nieve – білий як сніг; as hungry as a wolf – hambriento como un lobo – голодний як вовк; as slippery as an eel – escurridizo como una anguila – слизький як в'юн. Such cases represent what cognitive and phraseological research refers to as “near-universal” metaphorical mappings, where bodily and environmental experience underpins similar source domains across languages.

Besides these relatively universal patterns, the corpus also reveals systematic culture-specific divergences in the choice of the comparison base. Thus,

Spanish loco como una cabra activates a goat-based image of madness, while English prefers as mad as a hatter and Ukrainian may resort to божевільний як коза or colloquial швець; Spanish fresco como una lechuga contrasts with English as fresh as a daisy and Ukrainian свіжий як огірочок; as poor as a church mouse – pobre como una rata de iglesia – бідний як церковна миша illustrates close cultural alignment between English and Ukrainian in a religiously framed poverty metaphor, while Spanish opts for a rat rather than a mouse. Cases of lexical variation within the same conceptual frame include: lento como un caracol/lento como una tortuga versus as slow as a snail/as slow as molasses – повільний як равлик/як черепаха. Such a pattern corroborates that even though the underlying conceptual metaphors (e.g. SLOW IS SMALL/HEAVY/INERT) may be shared, their conventionalised phraseological realisations are often language- and culture-specific. The examples are presented in Table 1.

Structurally, the overwhelming majority of idioms in all three languages instantiate a simple comparative schema “Adjective + as/como/як + Noun”: as light as a feather – ligero como una pluma – легкий як пір'їнка; as cold as ice – frío como el hielo – холодний як лід; as smooth as silk – suave como la seda – гладенький як шовк. English and Spanish show a strong preference for preposed adjectives and relatively fixed word order, whereas Ukrainian displays greater grammatical flexibility: component order can be inverted (холодний як лід/як лід холодний), intensifiers can be inserted, and multiple conventional variants frequently coexist (упертий як осел/як вілюк/як мул). Furthermore, only Ukrainian requires full agreement of adjectives with nouns in gender and number, which occasionally leads to formal divergence from the English and Spanish patterns while preserving the same conceptual image. These features confirm that Ukrainian comparative idioms allow a wider range of structurally acceptable realisations, although this flexibility is bounded by phraseological norms rather than being entirely free.

Table 1 | Lexico-semantic types of correspondences in comparative idioms

Type of Correspondence	English	Spanish	Ukrainian	Comment
Full image equivalence	as white as snow	blanco como la nieve	білий як сніг	All three languages use the same natural object as a reference point.
Full equivalence with animal imagery	as hungry as a wolf	hambriento como un lobo	голодний як вовк	Shared zoological metaphor of hunger.
Full equivalence (physical property)	as slippery as an eel	escurridizo como una anguila	слизький як в'юн	Universal metaphor of slipperiness.
Partial equivalence (different plant)	as fresh as a daisy	fresco como una margarita	свіжий як огірочок/як ромашка	Same concept of freshness but different prototypes.
Partial equivalence (different entity)	as fit as a fiddle	sano como una rosa/una pera	здоровий як огірок	Different culturally fixed images but same evaluation.
Culture-specific madness metaphor	as mad as a hatter	loco como una cabra	божевільний як коза/як швець	Different cultural images of madness.
Culture-specific poverty metaphor	as poor as a church mouse	pobre como una rata de iglesia	бідний як церковна миша	English and Ukrainian align closely; Spanish uses “rat”.
Variable realisations of slowness	as slow as a snail/as slow as molasses	lento como un caracol/una tortuga	повільний як равлик/як черепаха/як смола	Shared conceptual frame but different images.
Universal natural phenomenon	as quick as lightning	rápido como un rayo	швидкий як блискавка	Full cross-linguistic equivalence.

Source: Summarized by the author.

Table 2 | Distribution of translation strategies for comparative idioms (n = 120)

Strategy	Operational Definition	Example (EN–ES–UKR)	Count	Percentage (%)	95% Confidence Interval
Direct equivalence	A Ukrainian idiom with the same image and similar meaning; preserves comparative structure and style.	as strong as an ox – fuerte como un toro – сильний як віл	79	65.8	57%–74%
Semantic adaptation	Same evaluative meaning but image modified to fit target-language norms.	as fit as a fiddle – sano como una rosa – здоровий як огірок	29	24.2	16%–32%
Lexical substitution	No idiomatic equivalent; descriptive, neutral, or combined translation.	as sure as death and taxes – seguro como la muerte y los impuestos – певно як смерть і податки	12	10.0	5%–15%
Total			120	100	–

Source: Summarized by the author.

At the level of translation strategies, each idiom in the corpus was coded independently using a detailed protocol that distinguished direct equivalence, semantic adaptation, and lexical substitution. Direct equivalence was assigned where a codified Ukrainian idiom exists with the same comparison base and comparable figurative meaning and is stylistically appropriate to the context (e.g. as strong as an ox – fuerte como un toro/buey – сильний як віл; as clear as crystal – claro como el cristal – ясний/прозорий як кришталь). Semantic adaptation was used where the target idiom preserved overall evaluation and pragmatic function but enacted a different image or slightly different metaphor (as fit as a fiddle – sano como una rosa/como una pera – здоровий як огірок; as pleased as Punch – contento como unas castañuelas – задоволений як слон/як дитина). Lexical substitution was reserved for cases in which no idiomatic Ukrainian equivalent was available or acceptable, and the translator relied on non-idiomatic or weakly idiomatic means such as periphrasis, explicitation, or neutral descriptive equivalents (e.g. as sure as death and taxes – seguro como la muerte y los impuestos – певно як смерть і податки; like a fish out of water – como pez fuera del agua – як риба без води, which in some registers may be rendered more descriptively). The results are presented in Table 2.

Quantitatively, out of the 120 idioms analysed, 79 instances (approximately 66%) were classified as direct equivalence, 29 (24%) as semantic adaptation, and 12 (10%) as lexical substitution. Binomial 95% confidence intervals for these proportions are relatively narrow (for direct equivalence roughly 57%–74%, for semantic adaptation 16%–32%, for lexical substitution 5%–15%), which means that the overall pattern is robust for a corpus of this size. Sensitivity checks, in which borderline cases were reclassified, did not affect the qualitative picture: direct equivalence always remained the dominant strategy, with semantic adaptation as the second most frequent option and lexical substitution clearly marginal. This distribution is in line with previous findings in phraseological translation, which show a strong tendency to preserve idiomaticity wherever a conventional target-language unit is available.

The observed strategy preferences also correlate with register and speech situation. In general, neutral and formal registers (e.g. general expository prose,

institutional communication, pedagogical materials) favour direct equivalents or restrained semantic adaptations which do not introduce additional colloquial or highly expressive colouring, as in as steady as a rock – firme como una roca – стійкий/надійний як скеля. More colloquial or vividly expressive idioms such as drink like a fish – beber como un pez – пити як риба/як кінь and work like a dog – trabajar como un perro – працювати як віл/як кінь are particularly sensitive to the stylistic profile of the target text: in informal narrative or dialogue, idiomatic Ukrainian equivalents are generally preferred, while in more neutral or technical contexts translators may prefer attenuated or partially de-idiomatized renderings. In texts addressed at heterogeneous or non-specialist audiences – e.g. pedagogical or popularising discourse – descriptive or combined strategies, sometimes supplemented by footnotes or glosses, may be justified with a view to lightening the interpretive load while still signalling the evaluative and imagistic component of the original.

From the cognitive and phraseological viewpoint, such findings confirm that the comparative idioms function as conventionalised sets of mappings between salient source domains-animals, natural phenomena, and everyday objects-and evaluative characterizations of human traits or situations. Their cross-linguistic behavior is determined by the interplay between universal bodily experience, culturally entrenched imagery, and structural resources of each particular language. In many core metaphors, for example, toughness, clarity, and poverty, English and Spanish tend to converge, whereas Ukrainian often offers a more varied set of near-synonymous variants or alternative images within the same evaluative frame, thus increasing translator's choice and imposing a more careful stylistic calibration. The predominance of direct equivalence would indicate that in a substantial proportion of cases, such mappings can indeed be preserved with relatively little semantic cost; in those cases where this is not possible, semantic adaptation provides a flexible mechanism for maintaining functional and pragmatic equivalence without forcing unnatural calques.

Conclusion

A comparative analysis of comparative idioms in English, Spanish, and Ukrainian shows that these units represent a very productive and culturally sensitive part of phraseology, in which linguistic form, cognitive

motivation, and cultural symbolism merge. The apparent structural simplicity of comparative idioms conceals the complexity of meaning-construction mechanisms, which are rooted in embodied experience, shared perceptual schemas, and culturally specific metaphoric models. The study has confirmed that many idioms in the languages of the Germanic, Romance, and Slavic types are based on almost universal experiential domains—animal behavior, natural phenomena, bodily properties—which permits the use of direct equivalence when translating. However, culturally entrenched differences in imagery, lexical variability, and metaphoric preferences confirm the necessity of consideration of national-specific cognitive models and discourse traditions.

The structural and grammatical analysis reveals that while the core comparative schema remains stable across the three languages, Ukrainian offers greater morphological and syntactic flexibility, allowing multiple surface realizations of the same evaluative concept. This structural variability expands the translator's repertoire but also requires heightened attention to stylistic appropriateness and phraseological norms. The distribution of translation strategies confirms that direct equivalence is the predominant option (~66%), supported by the relative stability of universal metaphorical mappings. Semantic adaptation (~24%) functions as an effective tool for reconciling cross-linguistic differences in those cases where the source imagery lacks a conventionalized counterpart, whereas lexical substitution (~10%) is used only sparingly and mainly in those cases where neither idiomatic nor metaphorical symmetry can be maintained.

The findings also make it clear that register, communicative intent, and target-language stylistic constraints play a decisive role in the translator's choice. Thus, in formal or neutral discourse, idiomatic stability and semantic precision are prioritized; in colloquial or expressive contexts, preserving figurativeness and emotional resonance becomes paramount; while clarity and accessibility justify descriptive or hybrid solutions in pedagogical or cross-cultural communication. Viewed from within the cognitive-linguistic framework, the results support the hypothesis that comparative idioms are not arbitrary lexicalised units but conventionalised instantiations of deeper conceptual metaphors whose variation across languages reflects both universal cognitive patterns and culturally conditioned imagery.

The research altogether shows that a systematic, corpus-based, and theoretically informed approach to comparative idioms provides the researchers with a more detailed understanding of semantic structure, cultural load, and translational behaviour. By combining phraseological theory, cognitive linguistics, and translation studies, this work contributes to the enhancement of methodological tools that translators and linguists need in dealing with figurative language. Future research will have to extend the corpus to other genres, include contextualised usage data, and investigate psycholinguistic aspects of idiom processing in

multilingual settings, further refining our understanding of intercultural equivalence and figurative competence.

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Appendix**Appendix 1: List of Comparative Idioms (English–Spanish–Ukrainian)**

1. as busy as a bee – tan ocupado como una abeja – зайнятий як бджілка
2. as blind as a bat – ciego como un murciélago – сліпий як кріт/як кажан
3. as proud as a peacock – orgulloso como un pavo real – гордий як павич
4. as cool as a cucumber – tranquilo como un pepino – спокійний як огірок
5. as stubborn as a mule – terco como una mula – упертий як осел/як мул
6. as free as a bird – libre como un pájaro – вільний як птах
7. as light as a feather – ligero como una pluma – легкий як пір'їнка
8. as gentle as a lamb – manso como un cordero – лагідний як ягня
9. as quiet as a mouse – silencioso como un ratón – тихий як миша
10. as white as snow – blanco como la nieve – білий як сніг
11. as black as coal – negro como el carbón – чорний як вугілля
12. as red as a beetroot – rojo como una remolacha – червоний як буряк
13. as hard as nails – duro como un clavo/como las uñas – твердий як цвях
14. as tough as old boots – duro como una bota vieja – міцний як старий чобіт/як кремій
15. as good as gold – bueno como el oro – слухняний/чемний як золото
16. as fit as a fiddle – sano como una rosa/como una pera – здоровий як огірок
17. as sharp as a knife – afilado como un cuchillo – гострий як ніж
18. as cold as ice – frío como el hielo – холодний як лід
19. as clear as crystal – claro como el cristal – прозорий/ясний як кришталь
20. as safe as houses – seguro como en casa – безпечний як у домі/як за муром
21. as old as the hills – viejo como las colinas – старий як світ/як гори
22. as fresh as a daisy – fresco como una margarita – свіжий як ромашка/як огірочок
23. as quick as lightning – rápido como un rayo – швидкий як блискавка
24. as slow as a snail – lento como un caracol – повільний як равлик
25. as easy as pie – fácil como un pastel – легкий як двічі два/як пиріг
26. as flat as a pancake – plano como una tortilla – плаский як млинець
27. as strong as an ox – fuerte como un toro/buey – сильний як віл
28. as weak as a kitten – débil como un gatito – слабкий як кошени
29. as hungry as a wolf – hambriento como un lobo – голодний як вовк
30. as busy as a beaver – ocupado como un castor – працюючий як бобер
31. as happy as a lark – feliz como una alondra – щасливий як жайворонок
32. as mad as a hatter – loco como una cabra – божевільний як швець/як коза
33. as drunk as a lord – borracho como una cuba – п'яний як чіп
34. as wise as an owl – sabio como un búho – мудрий як сова
35. as sly as a fox – astuto como un zorro – хитрий як лис
36. as brave as a lion – valiente como un león – хоробрий як лев
37. as quiet as the grave – silencioso como una tumba – тихий як могила
38. as dead as a dodo – muerto como un dodo – мертвий як дронт/цілком мертвий
39. as slippery as an eel – escurridizo como una anguila – слизький як в'юн
40. as smooth as silk – suave como la seda – гладенький як шовк
41. as thin as a rake – delgado como un rastrillo – худий як тріска/як рейка
42. as bright as a button – despierto como un lince/listo como un rayo – кмітливий як біс/як кнопочка
43. as good as new – como nuevo – як новенький
44. as clear as day – claro como el día – ясно як день
45. as different as night and day – tan diferentes como la noche y el día – різні як ніч і день
46. as easy as ABC – fácil como el abecedario – легко як абетка
47. as poor as a church mouse – pobre como una rata de iglesia – бідний як церковна миша
48. as rich as Croesus – rico como Creso – багатий як Крез
49. as steady as a rock – firme como una roca – стійкий/надійний як скеля
50. as green as grass – verde como la hierba – зелений як трава/як огірок
51. as brown as a berry – moreno como una baya – засмаглий як ягідка
52. as cool as ice – frío/tranquilo como el hielo – холоднокровний як лід
53. as neat as a pin – ordenado como un pincel – охайний як з голочки
54. as right as rain – bien como la lluvia – здоровий/у порядку як годинник
55. as sound as a bell – sano como una campana – міцний/здоровий як дзвін
56. as silent as the grave – silencioso como la tumba – мовчазний як могила
57. as dark as night – oscuro como la noche – темний як ніч
58. as white as a sheet – blanco como una sábana – білий як полотно
59. as big as a house – grande como una casa – великий як дім

60. as small as a pea – pequeño como un guisante – малий як горошина
61. as busy as a squirrel – ocupado como una ardilla – меткий/зайнятий як білка
62. as changeable as the weather – cambiante como el tiempo – мінливий як погода
63. as clean as a whistle – limpio como una patena – чистий як сльоза
64. as clear as mud – claro como el barro – «ясно» як бруд/як болотяна вода
65. as common as dirt – común como la tierra – поширений як бруд
66. as dry as dust – seco como el polvo – сухий як порошок
67. as dull as ditchwater – aburrido como el agua de un charco – нудний як помій/як стояча вода
68. as easy as falling off a log – fácil como caerse de un tronco – легко як з колоди впасти
69. as fit as a flea – sano como una pulga – жвавий/моторний як блоха
70. as good as dead – tan bueno como muerto – майже мертвий/як мертвий
71. as hard as a rock – duro como una roca – твердий як скеля
72. as high as a kite – colocado como una cometa – п'яний/дурний як чіп
73. as light as air – ligero como el aire – легкий як повітря
74. as old as time – viejo como el tiempo – старий як час
75. as pale as a ghost – pálido como un fantasma – блідий як привид
76. as pleased as Punch – contento como unas castañuelas – задоволений як слон/як дитина
77. as quick as a flash – rápido como un relámpago – швидкий як спалах
78. as safe as a bank – seguro como un banco – надійний як банк
79. as soft as butter – suave como la mantequilla – м'який як масло
80. as stubborn as a donkey – terco como un burro – упертий як вісюк
81. as sure as death and taxes – seguro como la muerte y los impuestos – певно як смерть і податки
82. as tricky as a monkey – travieso como un mono – верткий/хитрий як мавпа
83. as warm as toast – calentito como una tostada – теплий як тост/як піч
84. as weak as water – débil como el agua – слабкий як вода
85. as welcome as rain in May – bienvenido como la lluvia en mayo – бажаний як дощ у травні
86. like a fish out of water – como pez fuera del agua – як риба без води
87. like a bull in a china shop – como un elefante en una cacharrería – як слон у посудній крамниці
88. like a cat on hot bricks – como gato sobre brasas – як на голках/як кіт на розпеченому даху
89. like a needle in a haystack – como una aguja en un pajar – як голка в копиці сіна
90. like water off a duck's back – como agua que resbala por un pato – як з гусака вода
91. like two peas in a pod – como dos gotas de agua – як дві краплі води
92. run like the wind – correr como el viento – бігти як вітер
93. sleep like a log – dormir como un tronco – спати як убитий/як колода
94. fight like cat and dog – pelear como perros y gatos – сваритися/битися як кіт з собакою
95. shake like a leaf – temblar como una hoja – тремтіти як листок
96. work like a dog – trabajar como un perro – працювати як віл/як кінь
97. spread like wildfire – extenderse como un reguero de pólvora – поширюватися як лісова пожежа
98. stick out like a sore thumb – destacar como un pulgar dolorido – стирчати як болячка/кидатися в очі
99. swim like a fish – nadar como un pez – плавати як риба
100. sing like a nightingale – cantar como un ruiseñor – співати як соловейко
101. fall like a stone – caer como una piedra – падати як камінь
102. fit together like a puzzle – encajar como un rompecabezas – підходити одне до одного як пазл
103. multiply like rabbits – multiplicarse como conejos – розмножуватися як кролі
104. follow someone like a shadow – seguir a alguien como una sombra – ходити за кимось як тінь
105. eat like a horse – comer como un caballo – їсти як кінь/як вовк
106. drink like a fish – beber como un pez – пити як риба/як кінь
107. cry like a baby – llorar como un niño – плакати як дитина
108. tremble like jelly – temblar como gelatina – тремтіти як желе
109. move like lightning – moverse como un relámpago – рухатися як блискавка
110. as nervous as a cat – nervioso como un gato – нервовий як кішка
111. as brown as toast – moreno como una tostada – засмаглий як тост/як циган
112. as thin as paper – delgado como el papel – тонкий як папір
113. as slow as molasses – lento como la melaza – повільний як смола/як черепаха
114. as busy as Grand Central Station – tan concurrido como la estación central – людно як на вокзалі/як на базарі
115. as bright as day – claro como el día – світло як удень
116. as cool as the other side of the pillow – tranquilo como el lado frío de la almohada – спокійний як інша сторона подушки/геть спокійний

117. as dead as a doornail – muerto como un clavo de puerta – мертвий як дверний цвях
118. as easy as taking candy from a baby – fácil como quitarle un caramelo a un niño – легко як у дитини цукерку відібрати
119. as gentle as a dove – manso como una paloma – лагідний як голуб
120. as noisy as a market – ruidoso como un mercado – галасливий як базар