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EMOTIONAL CONCEPTS TRANSLATION IN ENGLISH AND UZBEK: AN ANTHROPOCENTRIC AND COGNITIVE ANALYSIS

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Abstract: The translation of emotional concepts represents one of the most challenging areas in contemporary translation studies due to the intricate relationship between language, cognition, culture, and human perception. Within the anthropocentric paradigm, emotions are viewed as culturally and cognitively constructed phenomena that shape linguistic representation and intercultural communication. The present study investigates the translation of emotional concepts in English and Uzbek from anthropocentric and cognitive perspectives. Employing a mixed-methods research design, the study analyzes culturally marked emotional expressions, conceptual metaphors, and emotion-related lexical units extracted from literary and media texts. Quantitative analysis identifies the frequency of translation strategies, while qualitative analysis explores cognitive mechanisms underlying translators' choices. The findings reveal that successful translation depends on conceptual equivalence, cultural adaptation, and cognitive interpretation rather than formal linguistic correspondence. The study contributes to cognitive translation studies by demonstrating the interaction between emotional conceptualization, language, and culture in English-Uzbek translation practices.

Keywords: emotional concepts, translation studies, anthropocentric paradigm, cognitive linguistics, conceptual metaphor, emotion translation, intercultural communication, cultural adaptation, translator cognition, conceptual equivalence, linguistic worldview, semantic transformation, cognitive analysis

Introduction

The growing interest in cognitive linguistics and anthropocentric approaches has significantly influenced contemporary translation studies by emphasizing the role of human cognition, perception, and cultural experience in the construction and interpretation of meaning. Within this paradigm, emotions are no longer regarded merely as psychological states but as culturally embedded conceptual structures reflected through language (Lakoff & Johnson, 1980). Consequently, the translation of emotional concepts has become an important area of research due to its implications for intercultural communication and cross-cultural understanding.

The relevance of this study is determined by the increasing interaction between English-speaking and Uzbek-speaking communities in academic, literary, and professional contexts. Emotional concepts frequently embody national values, social norms, historical experiences, and culturally specific patterns of conceptualization. Therefore, difficulties often arise when translators attempt to transfer emotional meanings from one linguistic and cultural system into another. Literal translation may fail to convey emotional intensity, connotation, or pragmatic significance, thereby affecting communicative effectiveness (House, 2015).

The issue has attracted considerable scholarly attention. Researchers such as Lakoff and Johnson (1980), Bell (1991), Nida and Taber (2003), Pym (2014), and Risku (2017) have examined cognitive

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and cultural aspects of translation. Nevertheless, comparatively limited research has focused on the translation of emotional concepts between English and Uzbek within an integrated anthropocentric and cognitive framework.

The purpose of this study is to investigate the mechanisms involved in translating emotional concepts from English into Uzbek and vice versa, to identify the dominant translation strategies, and to determine how cognitive and cultural factors influence translators' decisions in achieving conceptual and communicative equivalence.

Materials and Methods

The present research employs a mixed-methods design combining qualitative and quantitative approaches to investigate the translation of emotional concepts in English and Uzbek. The use of a mixed-methods framework enables a comprehensive examination of both measurable translation tendencies and cognitive processes involved in emotional meaning reconstruction.

The research corpus consists of 100 emotional concepts extracted from contemporary English and Uzbek literary texts, journalistic materials, and public discourse. The selected units include emotion-related lexical items, idiomatic expressions, metaphors, phraseological units, and culturally specific emotional representations. The corpus was compiled through purposive sampling to ensure the inclusion of emotionally marked expressions characterized by semantic complexity and cultural specificity.

The study is grounded in the anthropocentric paradigm, which regards language as a manifestation of human cognition and cultural experience. Accordingly, translation is understood as a human-centered process in which translators interpret, conceptualize, and reconstruct meanings according to the cognitive and cultural expectations of target audiences (Risku, 2017).

Several research methods were employed. The descriptive method was used to classify emotional concepts according to their semantic and pragmatic characteristics. Comparative analysis facilitated the examination of similarities and differences between English and Uzbek emotional conceptualizations. Contextual analysis enabled the investigation of emotional meanings within broader communicative environments, while conceptual analysis was applied to identify cognitive structures underlying emotion-related expressions.

The quantitative component involved statistical analysis of translation strategies used in the corpus. Emotional concepts were categorized according to four major translation strategies: direct equivalence, cultural adaptation, explicitation, and substitution. Frequency counts and percentage distributions were calculated to determine dominant tendencies. Microsoft Excel was used to process and visualize the data.

The qualitative component focused on detailed examination of representative examples. Particular attention was given to cases involving conceptual metaphors and culturally specific emotional expressions that lacked direct equivalents in the target language. Such examples provided valuable insights into translators' cognitive decision-making processes and intercultural mediation strategies.

To ensure reliability, methodological triangulation was employed. Quantitative findings were compared with qualitative interpretations and existing theoretical perspectives in cognitive linguistics and translation studies. The analysis was conducted according to four criteria: semantic accuracy, cultural appropriateness, emotional equivalence, and communicative effectiveness.

Results and Discussion

The analysis of 100 emotional concepts revealed that translators frequently encounter challenges associated with differences in emotional conceptualization between English and Uzbek linguistic worldviews. The findings indicate that successful translation requires not only linguistic competence

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but also cognitive flexibility and intercultural awareness. Emotional concepts are often deeply embedded in cultural traditions, social values, and collective experiences, making direct linguistic correspondence insufficient in many cases (Nida & Taber, 2003).

The quantitative analysis identified four dominant translation strategies. Their distribution is presented in Table 1.

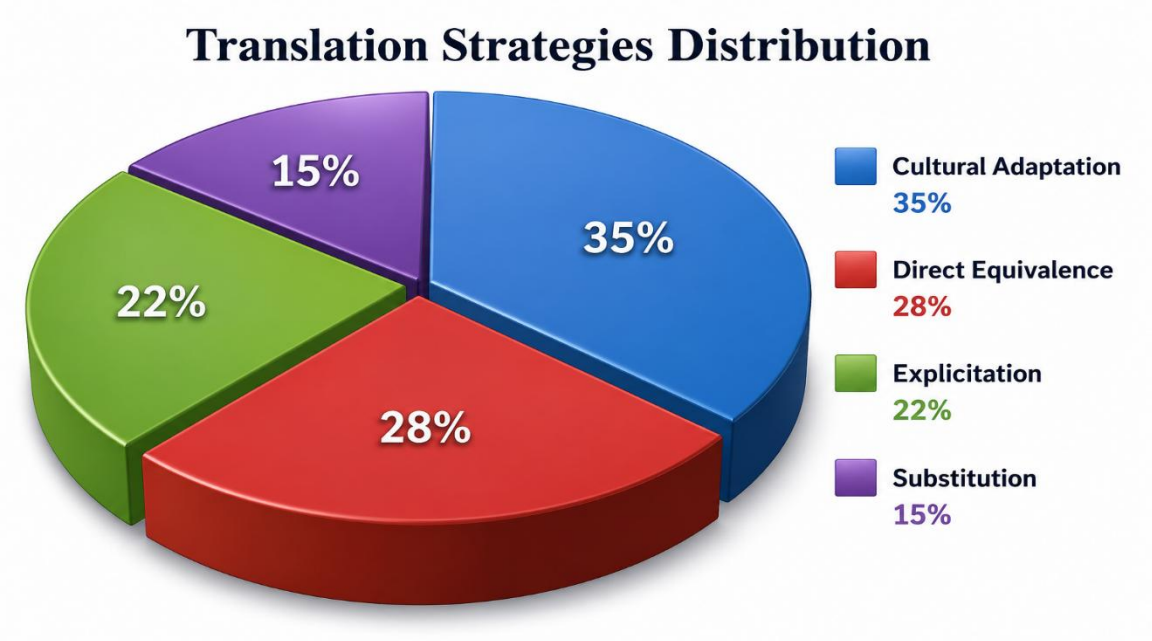
Table 1. Distribution of Translation Strategies in Emotional Concept Translation

Translation Strategy	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Cultural Adaptation	35	35
Direct Equivalence	28	28
Explicitation	22	22
Substitution	15	15
Total	**100**	**100**

Source: Author's corpus analysis (2026).

The findings demonstrate that cultural adaptation is the most frequently employed strategy (35%). This result indicates that translators often modify emotional expressions to ensure their comprehensibility and cultural relevance within the target audience. Direct equivalence accounts for 28% of the corpus, suggesting that certain emotional concepts possess comparable representations across English and Uzbek cultures.

Figure 1. Frequency of Translation Strategies



Source: Author's statistical calculations based on corpus data.

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The qualitative analysis revealed significant differences in the conceptualization of emotions. For example, the English expression “heartbroken” is frequently translated as “qalbi chil-chil bo‘lgan” rather than through literal equivalence. Such transformation preserves emotional intensity while adapting the expression to culturally familiar imagery. Similarly, the phrase “butterflies in my stomach,” which denotes nervous excitement, often requires descriptive translation because the metaphor lacks a direct equivalent in Uzbek.

Another noteworthy example concerns the concept of “pride.” In English discourse, pride may carry positive connotations associated with self-confidence and achievement. In certain Uzbek contexts, however, excessive pride may evoke negative associations related to arrogance. Consequently, translators must carefully evaluate contextual and cultural factors before selecting an equivalent expression.

The findings support anthropocentric theories emphasizing the active role of translators in meaning construction. Translators do not merely transfer words; they reconstruct emotional experiences according to culturally specific conceptual systems. This process involves cognitive operations such as categorization, inference, conceptual mapping, and contextual interpretation (Lakoff & Johnson, 1980).

Furthermore, the analysis revealed that emotional metaphors constitute one of the most problematic categories in translation. Because metaphorical representations of emotions differ across cultures, translators frequently employ adaptation or explicitation to preserve communicative effectiveness. These findings are consistent with previous studies highlighting the importance of conceptual equivalence in emotion translation (Pym, 2014).

Overall, the results indicate that cultural adaptation contributes significantly to successful emotional communication across languages. The predominance of adaptive strategies confirms that emotional concepts are culturally mediated phenomena rather than universal linguistic categories. Future research should investigate larger multilingual corpora and explore experimental methods capable of revealing cognitive processes involved in emotion translation.

Conclusion

The present study examined the translation of emotional concepts in English and Uzbek from anthropocentric and cognitive perspectives. The findings demonstrate that emotional concepts are closely connected with cultural experience, cognitive structures, and linguistic worldviews, making their translation a complex intercultural activity. Both quantitative and qualitative analyses revealed that cultural adaptation constitutes the most frequently employed translation strategy, highlighting the importance of preserving conceptual meaning and emotional impact rather than formal linguistic correspondence.

The study confirms that translators function as intercultural mediators who actively reconstruct emotional meanings according to the expectations and cognitive frameworks of target audiences. Successful translation depends on semantic accuracy, cultural appropriateness, emotional equivalence, and communicative effectiveness. Particular difficulties arise in the translation of metaphorical and culturally specific emotional expressions, which often require adaptive strategies.

The research contributes to contemporary cognitive translation studies by demonstrating the interaction between language, culture, cognition, and emotion in English-Uzbek translation contexts. Future investigations may employ larger corpora, psycholinguistic experiments, and eye-tracking technologies to explore translators’ cognitive behavior more comprehensively. Such studies would enhance theoretical understanding and practical approaches to translating emotional concepts in multicultural communication environments.

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