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### IMPLICATIONS FOR TRANSLATION THEORY AND PRACTICE: A COMPARATIVE TRANSLATION-ORIENTED STUDY OF THE CONCEPT OF FRIENDSHIP

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#### Abstract

This study examines the concept of *friendship* as a culture-bound semantic and cognitive construct in Uzbek and English and explores its implications for comparative translation studies. Building on cognitive linguistics, linguoculturology, and functional approaches to translation, the research argues that apparent lexical equivalence (e.g., *do'st – friend*) often conceals conceptual asymmetry rooted in divergent value systems and communicative norms. The analysis focuses on four interrelated layers of the concept: emotional (affection, intimacy), axiological (loyalty, honesty, moral duty), cognitive-associative (conceptual networks and oppositions), and linguistic (lexical choices, collocations, phraseology, and paremiology). The findings show that Uzbek conceptualization of friendship tends to be “heart-centered,” foregrounding loyalty, devotion, and communal responsibility, while English conceptualization is more “choice-centered,” emphasizing voluntary affiliation, trust, and interpersonal boundaries. These differences create predictable translation risks—undertranslation of axiological force into English and overneutralization or pragmatic mismatch into Uzbek—especially in idioms and proverbs. The article proposes a translation-oriented framework that prioritizes conceptual and



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functional equivalence, supported by strategies such as axiological compensation, functional substitution, and selective explicitation. The results contribute to translation theory by strengthening the case for concept-based equivalence and offer practical guidance for translators and translation pedagogy in intercultural contexts.

**Keywords:** Friendship, do‘stlik, comparative translation studies, conceptual asymmetry, equivalence, linguoculturology, cognitive linguistics, metaphor, proverb translation.

### **Introduction**

The comparative analysis of the concept of friendship in Uzbek and English demonstrates that translation is not merely a process of lexical substitution, but a cognitively and culturally mediated operation. Friendship functions as a linguocultural construct integrating emotional, axiological, cognitive, and linguistic dimensions. Its translation therefore requires a multidimensional analytical framework that integrates semantic, cultural, and pragmatic considerations.

### **Conceptual Equivalence versus Formal Equivalence**

Traditional linguistic models of translation, such as Catford’s theory of formal correspondence (1965), assume structural replacement between languages. However, the lexical equivalents “do‘st” and “friend” illustrate that formal equivalence does not ensure conceptual equivalence. In Uzbek, “do‘st” carries strong moral and collectivist connotations, emphasizing loyalty, sacrifice, and duty. In English, “friend” typically reflects voluntary association, emotional compatibility, and personal choice.



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This confirms Nida's (1964) principle of dynamic equivalence, which prioritizes receptor response over structural similarity. Translators must therefore reconstruct conceptual meaning rather than rely on surface lexical correspondence. Baker (2018) further notes that equivalence at word level frequently fails when cultural connotations are embedded within lexical units.

### **Axiological Transfer and Cultural Value Systems**

Friendship encodes cultural value systems. In Uzbek discourse, friendship is morally charged and associated with fidelity and communal solidarity. Proverbs such as "Do'st og'ir kunda bilinadi" highlight loyalty under hardship. In English, friendship is more closely connected to emotional support and psychological comfort.

According to Hofstede (2010), collectivist cultures emphasize duty and group harmony, whereas individualist cultures prioritize autonomy and personal fulfillment. Translation between these frameworks requires axiological mediation. House (2015) argues that pragmatic equivalence depends on maintaining the relationship between linguistic form and sociocultural context.

### **Cognitive Framing and Metaphor Translation**

Metaphors structure conceptual systems (Lakoff & Johnson, 1980). Uzbek metaphors of friendship frequently invoke communal and moral imagery, while English metaphors emphasize journeys, mirrors, and emotional growth. Kövecses (2000) demonstrates that emotional concepts are culturally embodied through metaphorical model.

Schäffner (2004) stresses that metaphor translation requires identifying underlying conceptual mappings rather than reproducing linguistic form. When



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cognitive framings diverge, translators must apply adaptation or functional substitution.

### **Semantic Fields and Collocational Patterns**

Friendship occupies distinct semantic fields in Uzbek and English. Uzbek collocations cluster around loyalty and brotherhood; English collocations emphasize trust and companionship. Newmark (1988) highlights the importance of collocational compatibility in translation.

Popova and Sternin (2007) describe concepts as cognitive networks with core and peripheral components. Trust may function as a universal core, whereas loyalty or autonomy operate as culture-specific extensions. Translators must preserve conceptual cores while adapting peripheral elements.

### **Paremiological Translation and Functional Strategies**

Proverbs and idioms present the most complex translation challenges. Toury (1995) notes that translators often domesticate culturally marked expressions. Nord's (1997) functionalist model supports purpose-driven adaptation. Proverb translation must prioritize communicative function over structural similarity.

### **Discussion**

The findings confirm that friendship is universal in experience but culturally specific in conceptualization. Uzbek discourse frames friendship as moral commitment and collective solidarity. English discourse frames it as voluntary emotional connection.

These differences demonstrate systematic conceptual asymmetry. Translators must operate as intercultural mediators (Hatim & Mason, 1997), negotiating between value systems and cognitive frameworks. The study reinforces the



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necessity of interdisciplinary translation models integrating cognitive linguistics, linguoculturology, and functional translation theory.

### **Conclusion**

Translation of culturally embedded concepts such as friendship requires conceptual equivalence, pragmatic adequacy, and cultural sensitivity. The concept of friendship serves as a model case illustrating how language, culture, and cognition intersect in translation practice.

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