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CULTURAL AND NATIONAL CONCEPTS OF CRAFT DISCOURSE IN ENGLISH AND UZBEK: TRANSLATION STRATEGIES AND INTERCULTURAL CHALLENGES

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Abstract. The paper analyses the linguistic expression of cultural and national concepts of craft discourse – *mehnat* (labour), *usta* (master), *kasb* (trade), *mahorat* (skill), *an'ana* (tradition), *baraka* (blessing) and *halollik* (honesty) – in Uzbek and English and their rendering in translation. Collocations, conceptual metaphors, implicit evaluation, communicative intentions and multimodal units are examined from the perspective of intercultural pragmatics. Four translation strategies are identified: functional equivalent, descriptive translation, transliteration with a gloss and compensation. The study shows that concepts of a professional and technical nature are preserved almost fully, whereas concepts carrying religious, moral or social-hierarchical meaning inevitably undergo partial loss of meaning in translation.

Keywords: *craft discourse, cultural concept, cultural script, non-equivalent vocabulary, conceptual metaphor, implicit evaluation, translation strategy, compensation, transliteration, intercultural communication.*

Craft discourse is closely tied to professional experience, traditional knowledge and national values. When such discourse is translated from Uzbek into English, the translator has to reconcile not only two lexical and grammatical systems but also two systems of cultural and pragmatic meaning. Key words of Uzbek craft discourse do not merely name objects or activities; they activate a broad field of cultural evaluation. This makes the translation of craft-related texts – in tourism, museum guides, cultural heritage projects and the promotion of handicrafts abroad – a demanding task that cannot be solved by dictionary equivalents alone.

The theoretical basis of the study includes A. Wierzbicka's theory of cultural scripts, according to which the values and communicative norms of a culture are fixed in the meaning of its words [12]; the theory of conceptual metaphor [4] and J. Charteris-Black's critical metaphor analysis [1]; J. Martin and P. White's appraisal theory [6]; the classical approaches to realia and non-equivalent vocabulary [11]; and P. Newmark's typology of translation procedures [7]. The aim of the paper is to describe how central cultural concepts of craft discourse are expressed in Uzbek and English and to determine the degree to which they are preserved in translation. Contrastive, conceptual, contextual-pragmatic and translation-analytical methods were applied.

Central concepts and their linguistic expression

The analysis identified *mehnat* (labour), *usta* (master), *kasb* (trade), *mahorat* (skill), *an'ana* (tradition), *baraka* (blessing) and *halollik* (honesty) as the central concepts of Uzbek craft discourse. They function not only as nominative units but also as evaluative, legitimating and identity-forming centres. They are verbalised through stable collocations, metaphors and speech formulas. **Evaluative collocations** (*puxta ishlangan* "carefully made", *sifatli mahsulot* "quality product") dominate in customer-oriented speech; **legitimating collocations** (*halol mehnat* "honest labour", *qo'l bilan yasalgan* "made by hand") strengthen social trust; and **normative collocations** (*an'anaviy usulda*

"in the traditional way", *ustoz ko'rsatganidek* "as the master showed") prevail in master–apprentice communication.

Conceptual metaphors structure the discourse and serve persuasive purposes [1]. Three models are especially productive: LABOUR IS BLESSING (*mehnatning mevasi* "the fruit of labour", *barakali ish* "blessed work"), TRADE IS HERITAGE (*ota kasbi* "father's trade", *avloddan-avlodga o'tgan* "passed down from generation to generation") and THE MASTER IS A GUIDE (*ustozim yo'l ko'rsatdi* "my master showed me the way"). These metaphors link craft activity to moral and cultural values and create stable evaluative associations among participants.

Translation strategies

Four strategies were identified in the rendering of craft-related units into English, each involving a specific gain and loss. (1) **Functional equivalent**: *usta → craftsman / master*. The translation is natural, but the social respect and hierarchical meaning of the Uzbek word are partly lost. (2) **Descriptive translation**: *baraka → blessing brought by honest work*. The religious and cultural depth is partly preserved, but the text becomes longer. (3) **Transliteration with a gloss**: *suzani → suzani (an embroidered wall-hanging)*. The original cultural name is retained, but the reader needs an additional explanation. (4) **Compensation**: *halol ish → honestly made, high-quality work*. The meaning becomes accessible, but the implicitness of the original is lost because the evaluation is made explicit.

None of these strategies preserves the full meaning of the original. The choice therefore depends on the purpose of the text (scholarly description, advertising, museum guide) and on the target audience. Translation of craft discourse has no universal formula; it is a creative and analytical process that requires context-sensitive decision-making.

Degree of preservation of the concepts

Comparing the concepts with their closest English equivalents reveals two clear patterns. Concepts of a professional and technical nature are preserved almost fully, i.e. isomorphically: *mahorat, ustalik → skill, mastery*; *ota kasbi, avloddan-avlodga o'tgan → family trade, passed down*. Their content rests on universal human experience – the transmission of a trade across generations, levels of competence – which is familiar to English-speaking culture as well.

By contrast, concepts carrying religious, moral or social-hierarchical meaning undergo allomorphic shifts. In *mehnat – baraka*, rendered by the functional equivalent *hard work pays off*, the religious notion of divine grace disappears; a literal *labour brings blessing* would not evoke the same associations for an English reader. In *usta, ustoz yo'li → master, mentor's way*, the hierarchical respect inherent in the master–apprentice relationship is weakened. In *halol mehnat → honest work, quality craftsmanship*, the moral and religious notion of purity shifts towards the idea of product quality. These concepts are condensed into single words in Uzbek but have no equally dense counterparts in English, so they are inevitably simplified or generalised in translation.

Implicit evaluation, communicative intention and multimodality

Much of the evaluation in Uzbek craft discourse is implicit. Units such as *halol mehnat* (honest labour), *qo'l mehnati* (handwork) and *ustoz yo'li* (the master's way) evoke strong positive judgement without any explicit evaluative adjective. The translator faces a dilemma: either preserve the implicitness through literal translation, at the risk that the

reader will miss the meaning, or make the evaluation explicit, at the cost of the original's subtlety. In practice, a legitimating collocation such as *qo'l bilan yasalgan* is better rendered as *handcrafted with care* or *authentic handmade* than as a neutral *made by hand*, since this preserves its persuasive force.

Communicative intentions must also be preserved. The Uzbek explanatory formula *qanday qilish kerak, shunday bajariladi* ("this is how it is done") often becomes a sequence of explicit step-by-step imperatives in English (*do this, then that*). Conversely, a blunt Uzbek imperative that performs an explanatory rather than directive function may be better rendered with softened constructions such as *you should…* or *it's best to…*, in line with English politeness norms [5]. Finally, craft discourse is often multimodal: deictic expressions such as *mana bu yerga* ("right here") or *shunday qil* ("do it like this") are fully meaningful only together with gestures, the product itself or a video demonstration. In written translation, such units require additional descriptive comments; otherwise their indexical precision is lost.

Conclusion

The central concepts of craft discourse – labour, master, trade, skill, tradition, blessing and honesty – act in Uzbek as cultural and linguistic centres verbalised through collocations, metaphors and implicit evaluation. Their fate in translation depends directly on their nature: professional and technical concepts are preserved isomorphically, whereas religious, moral and social-hierarchical concepts inevitably suffer partial loss of meaning, i.e. an allomorphic shift. The main difficulty in translating craft discourse therefore lies not at the purely linguistic level but at the linguocultural level. The four strategies identified – functional equivalent, descriptive translation, transliteration with a gloss and compensation – should be chosen consciously according to the text's purpose and audience. The results support the compilation of an English–Uzbek explanatory-contrastive dictionary of craft terminology, in which each key concept is presented with its cultural context, its isomorphic or allomorphic status and its degree of preservation in translation. They can also be used in translator training, cultural tourism and museum practice.

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