THE CONCEPT OF "FRIENDSHIP" IN ENGLISH AND UZBEK: A LINGUOCULTURAL PERSPECTIVE

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Abstract. This article explores the concept of "friendship" in English and Uzbek from a linguocultural perspective, aiming to reveal how language reflects culturally embedded perceptions of social relationships. The study is based on a comprehensive analysis of semantic structures, etymological development, phraseological units, proverbs, and discourse patterns associated with the notion of friendship in both languages. Through comparative analysis, the research identifies both universal and culture-specific features of the concept. In English, friendship is represented as a flexible and broad social category encompassing relationships that range from informal acquaintances to emotionally close bonds. In contrast, the Uzbek concept of do'stlik is characterized by a more value-oriented and ethically grounded interpretation, emphasizing loyalty, sincerity, mutual support, and trust as core components. Linguistic evidence drawn from idioms, proverbs, and contextual usage demonstrates that while both cultures regard friendship as a fundamental moral and social value, they prioritize different aspects of interpersonal relations in accordance with their cultural worldviews. The findings of this study contribute to a deeper understanding of intercultural communication, conceptual linguistics, and translation studies by highlighting how culturally specific meanings are encoded and transmitted through language.

Key words: friendship, linguoculturology, concept, English, Uzbek, semantics, culture, proverbs.

Introduction: Language and culture are inseparable phenomena that mutually influence and shape each other, giving rise to linguoculturology as an interdisciplinary field of research.

Through language, people transmit not only information but also values, traditions, and collective worldviews. In this regard, every language preserves a system of culturally significant concepts that embody the mentality of its speakers. Such concepts serve as "cultural codes" through which universal human experiences are localized and interpreted in national contexts.

One of the most universal yet culturally specific concepts isfriendship. Throughout history, friendship has been regarded as a fundamental moral and social value. It has been praised in philosophical works, described in literature, celebrated in oral folklore, and practiced in everyday interactions.

Classical philosophers such as Aristotle emphasized the ethical dimension of friendship as reciprocal goodwill, while many cultures, including Uzbek, have traditionally considered friendship as loyalty, sincerity, and mutual support. Despite its universal nature, however, the ways in which friendship is defined, perceived, and linguistically expressed vary across societies.

In the English-speaking world, the concept of friendship has a broad semantic scope, ranging from casual acquaintances toclose personal relationships.

In contrast, in Uzbek culture, do'stlikconveys a more selective and profound bond, often emphasizingmoral duty, trust, and sacrifice. These distinctions are not merelylinguistic but reflect deeper cultural orientations: individualism in the Anglo-Saxon tradition versus collectivism in Uzbek society.

Consequently, the comparative study of the friendship concept offers insights not only into linguistic semantics but also into the underlying cultural values that shape communication.

Given the growing importance of intercultural interaction, translation studies, and foreign language education, exploring the linguocultural features of key concepts such as friendship becomes highly relevant. Misunderstandings in interpreting friendship across cultures may lead to distortions in communication, translation, or even social relations.

Therefore, a systematic study of friendship in English and Uzbek provides an opportunity to identify both universal and culture-specific features, as well as to clarify how these features manifest in semantics, phraseology, and discourse. This paper aims to analyze the linguocultural similaritiesand differences of the concept of friendship in English and Uzbek languages, with particular focus on its semantic core, phraseological expressions, and cultural connotations. The study intends to show how the universal idea of friendship is linguistically and culturally refracted in two distinct yet comparable traditions.

Methods: The research employs a multi-method approach that combinestools from linguistics, cultural studies, and comparative analysis. Such integration ensures a comprehensive understanding ofthe friendship concept in English and Uzbek languages. Thefollowing methodological procedures were applied: Semantic and etymological analysis: The first step consisted of tracing the origins, historical developments, and semantic shifts of the key lexical items friend (English) and do'st (Uzbek). Etymological dictionaries and historical sources were consulted to reconstruct the initial meanings and their subsequent extensions. This method makes it possible to uncover the semantic core of the concept and to show how universal notions of affection, loyalty, and companionship have been retained or transformed in each language over time. Semantic analysis also involved identifying the polysemy of these words in modern usage (e.g., close friend, family friend, just a friend in English vs. the nuanced difference between do'st and tanish in Uzbek). Comparative analysis: To reveal cross-linguistic similarities and differences, the data obtained from English and Uzbek were systematically compared. The comparative method helped determine both universal aspects of the friendship concept (trust, support, emotional closeness) and culture-specific features (the broader scope of friend in English vs. the moral depth of do'st in Uzbek). The analysis also considered sociocultural orientations such as collectivism and individualism, which shape how friendship is linguistically conceptualized.

Phraseological and paremiological analysis: Proverbs, idioms, and set expressions related to friendship were collected from both languages and analyzed. Examples include Uzbek proverbs such as Do'st do'stni kulfatda sinar ("A friend is tested in hardship") and English proverbs like A friend in need is a friend indeed. The analysis of these fixed expressions allows us to reconstruct the evaluative and axiological dimensions of the concept, since proverbs often encode cultural wisdom and normative expectations regarding social behavior. Phraseological units also reveal metaphorical patterns that reflect cultural models of friendship. Discourse analysis: Literary works, folklore, and contemporary discourse were studied to identify how friendship is represented in authentic communicative contexts. In Uzbek literature, for instance, the works of Alisher Navoi frequently depict friendship as a spiritual and ethical bond, whereas in English literature and philosophy (e.g., Shakespeare, Aristotle, and modern novels) friendship is framed in terms of reciprocity, loyalty, and shared values. This approach provides insights into how friendship is not only lexically represented but also culturally narrated and symbolized across genres and historical periods.

Linguocultural approach: Finally, the study integrates the linguocultural method, which focuses on the interplay between language and culture. Friendship is treated as a key cultural concept that forms part of the national conceptual worldview (konseptosfera). By mapping the links between. linguistic units and cultural values, this approach highlightshow each language encodes moral and ethical dimensions ofsocial relations. It also allows us to see how friendship as a.

Results and discussion: The etymological investigation reveals that the English wordfriend originates from Old English frēond, itself related to Proto-Germanic frijōnd- derived from the verb frijōjan meaning "tolove, to favor, to be attached to." This etymology reflects an earlyconceptualization of friendship as an emotional and affectivebond grounded in love and goodwill. Over time, the English friendexpanded its semantic scope to cover a wide spectrum of socialrelations, ranging from strong emotional intimacy (best friend, close friend) to more casual and situational relationships (family friend, work friend, just a friend). This semantic elasticity is a distinctive feature of the English conceptualization of friendship. In contrast, the Uzbek term do'st is a loan from Persian dūst, which initially denoted "beloved person, companion, ally." In Uzbek, however, the meaning has acquired a stronger moral dimension, signaling trustworthiness, sincerity, and loyalty. Unlike English, Uzbek linguistic usage does not extend do'st to describe loose or casual ties. Instead, there is a clear differentiation between do'st (close, loyal companion) and tanish (acquaintance), which marks a semantic boundary between true friendship and superficial familiarity. Thus, while both lexical items stem from notions of affection and attachment, the English concept emphasizes breadth and inclusivity, whereas the Uzbek concept emphasizes depth, exclusivity, and moral seriousness.

The paremiological analysis confirms that friendship occupiesa central position in the proverbial wisdom of both languages.In Uzbek folklore and oral tradition, proverbs such as Do'stboshidan bilinadi ("A true friend is known in hardship") and Do'st do'stga qalqon ("A friend is a shield to a friend") highlight the testing and protective aspects of friendship. They emphasizethat friendship must be proven under difficult circumstances andthat a genuine friend is one who sacrifices personal comfort foranother's well-being. Other Uzbek expressions, such as Yaxshido'st baxt keltirar ("A good friend brings happiness"), underline the positive consequences of loyal companionship.

English proverbs, meanwhile, display partially overlappingbut also distinctive emphases.

The widely known A friend in need is a friend indeed resonates closely with the Uzbek idea of friendship being tested by adversity. At the same time, sayings such as Old friends and old wine are best or Better an open enemy than a false friend highlight continuity, familiarity, and the danger of insincere companionship. These examples suggest that English paremiology associates friendship not only with loyalty in hardship but also with stability over time and the importance of distinguishing true from false ties.

The comparative view reveals a shared universal understanding that friendship must withstand trials, but cultural emphases differ: Uzbek proverbs foreground loyalty, sacrifice, and protection, while English proverbs often stress constancy, experience, and sincerity. Beyond individual words and proverbs, broader discourse patterns in literature and philosophy further enrich the picture of how friendship is conceptualized in both traditions.

In Uzbek classical literature, particularly in the works of Alisher Navoi, friendship (do'stlik) is portrayed as a deeply moral and spiritual category.

In his poetry and prose, the true friend is not merely a companion but a mirror of one's soul, a source of ethical guidance, and a partner in both joy and suffering. This idealization reflects the collectivist orientation of Uzbek culture, where interpersonal bonds are closely tied to moral values and social responsibility. In the English intellectual tradition, friendship is extensively discussed in philosophical discourse.

Aristotle, in his Nicomachean Ethics, distinguished between friendships of utility, pleasure, and virtue, with the highest form being friendship grounded in mutual recognition of moral goodness. Modern English ethical philosophy has maintained this interest, often linking friendship with reciprocity, shared values, and the cultivation of moral character. In literature, authors from Shakespeare to contemporary novelists depict friendship as a multifaceted phenomenon encompassing intimacy, loyalty, betrayal, and reconciliation. In contemporary discourse, the divergence between the two cultures becomes even more pronounced. In Uzbek society, do'stlik remains a morally charged term, associated with enduring loyalty, duty, and readiness to help even at personal cost. It is not used lightly and implies strong, enduring bonds.

In English, friendship is still valued but is more flexible in usage, frequently extending to looser connections, such as Facebook friends, work friends, or even temporary companions. This semantic and pragmatic flexibility reflects the individualistic orientation of English-speaking societies, where personal choice and social networking expand the boundaries of what is considered "friendship."

In conclusion, the study confirms that the concept of friendship serves as a valuable lens for exploring the interplay between language and culture. It illustrates how universal human values are shaped and refracted through cultural traditions and

linguistic structures. The results contribute to linguoculturology, comparative linguistics, and translation studies by offering insights into the similarities and divergences in English and Uzbek worldviews. Future research may extend this analysis to other cultural contexts, such as comparing friendship in Eastern and Western traditions more broadly, or exploring how digital communication reshapes the conceptual boundaries of friendship in both Uzbek and English societies. Such studies would further illuminate the dynamic relationship between language, culture, and human values.

Conclusion: The comparative analysis of the concept of friendship in English and Uzbek languages demonstrates that although this notion is universal, its linguistic realization and cultural interpretation differ significantly. Both languages preserve the semantic nucleus of affection, trust, and support, which indicates the common human understanding of friendship as a vital social and ethical value. However, the ways in which this concept is represented in vocabulary, proverbs, literature, and discourse reveal clear culture-specific orientations.

The etymological analysis showed that while the English friend and the Uzbek do'st both originate from terms denoting "beloved" or "companion," their semantic evolution diverged.

English usage expanded to cover a wide range of relationships, from close intimacy to casual acquaintances, reflecting the individualistic and network-oriented nature of English-speaking societies. Uzbek usage, in contrast, preserved a narrower but deeper meaning, where do'st implies moral loyalty, sincerity, and a readiness to sacrifice for another, aligning with the collectivist traditions of Uzbek culture. Phraseological and paremiological analysis further highlighted these differences. Uzbek proverbs emphasize friendship as tested in hardship, underlining protection, loyalty, and sacrifice as central values. English proverbs, while acknowledging the role of adversity, also stress continuity, sincerity, and the need to distinguish

true friends from false ones. These proverbial expressions reflect the cultural attitudes embedded in each society's collective wisdom.

Linguocultural and discourse analysis revealed that Uzbek literature, particularly in classical works like those of Alisher Navoi, idealizes friendship as a moral and spiritual bond intertwined with ethical responsibility. English philosophical and literary traditions, from Aristotle to Shakespeare and modern authors, portray friendship as a multifaceted phenomenon encompassing utility, pleasure, virtue, reciprocity, and personal growth. In modern discourse, the Uzbek do'stlik still functions as a morally charged category, while English friendship often extends to broader and more casual social contexts, including digital communication and professional networks. The findings underscore that friendship, while universally acknowledged, acquires its specific cultural "coloring" in each language community. For intercultural communication, this means that translation and interpretation of friendship-related terms must carefully consider these cultural nuances to avoid misrepresentation. For instance, rendering do'st simply as friend may understate its depth in Uzbek, while translating friend as do'st may exaggerate closeness in contexts where only casual relations are implied. In conclusion, the study confirms that the concept of friendship serves as a valuable lens for exploring the interplay between language and culture. It illustrates how universal human values are shaped and refracted through cultural traditions and linguistic structures. The results contribute to linguoculturology, comparative linguistics, and translation studies by offering insights into the similarities and divergences in English and Uzbek worldviews. Future research may extend this analysis to other cultural contexts, such as comparing friendship in Eastern and Western traditions more broadly, or exploring how digital communication reshapes the conceptual boundaries of friendship in both Uzbek and English societies. Such studies would further illuminate the dynamic relationship between language, culture, and human values.

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