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LINGUISTIC IDENTITY AND CULTURAL VALUES IN THE CONCEPT OF FRIENDSHIP: ENGLISH AND UZBEK PERSPECTIVES

Abstract. The concept of friendship reflects cultural values, social norms, and linguistic identity within a society. This study explores how friendship is represented in English and Uzbek linguistic cultures through paremiological units and culturally significant expressions. Using a comparative linguocultural approach, the research analyzes proverbs and idiomatic expressions related to friendship in both languages. The findings reveal that while English linguistic culture tends to emphasize individual choice and emotional trust in friendship, Uzbek linguistic culture highlights loyalty, moral responsibility, and social solidarity. The study also demonstrates how linguistic identity is constructed through culturally embedded metaphors and proverbs. The results contribute to cognitive linguistics and intercultural communication studies by showing that friendship functions not only as a social relationship but also as a reflection of cultural identity and value systems.

Keywords: friendship, linguistic identity, cultural values, paremiology, English, Uzbek, globalization

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DO‘STLIK KONSEPTIDA LINGVISTIK IDENTIFIKATSIYA VA MADANIY QADRIYATLAR: INGLIZ VA O‘ZBEK NUQTAI NAZARI

Annotatsiya. Do‘stlik tushunchasi jamiyatdagi madaniy qadriyatlar, ijtimoiy me’yorlar va lingvistik identitetni aks ettiradi. Ushbu tadqiqot ingliz va o‘zbek lingvomadaniyatlarida do‘stlikning qanday ifodalanishini paremiologik birliklar hamda madaniy ahamiyatga ega iboralar orqali o‘rganadi. Qiyosiy lingvomadaniy yondashuv asosida tadqiqotda har ikki tilda do‘stlikka oid maqollar va idiomatik ifodalar tahlil qilinadi. Natijalar shuni ko‘rsatadiki, ingliz lingvistik madaniyatida do‘stlik ko‘proq shaxsiy tanlov va hissiy ishonchga urg‘u berar ekan, o‘zbek lingvistik madaniyatida esa sadoqat, axloqiy mas’uliyat va ijtimoiy birdamlik alohida ta’kidlanadi. Shuningdek, tadqiqot lingvistik identitet madaniyatga singib ketgan metaforalar va maqollar orqali shakllanishini ham namoyon etadi. Olingan natijalar kognitiv lingvistika va madaniyatlararo kommunikatsiya tadqiqotlariga hissa qo‘shadi, chunki ular do‘stlik nafaqat ijtimoiy munosabat, balki madaniy identitet va qadriyatlar tizimining aksidir ekanligini ko‘rsatadi.

Kalit so‘zlar: do‘stlik, lingvistik identitet, madaniy qadriyatlar, paremiologiya, ingliz tili, o‘zbek tili, globalizatsiya.

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ЛИНГВИСТИЧЕСКАЯ ИДЕНТИЧНОСТЬ И КУЛЬТУРНЫЕ ЦЕННОСТИ В КОНЦЕПТЕ ДРУЖБЫ: АНГЛИЙСКАЯ И УЗБЕКСКАЯ ПЕРСПЕКТИВЫ

Аннотация. Концепт дружбы отражает культурные ценности, социальные нормы и лингвистическую идентичность общества. Данное исследование рассматривает, как дружба представлена в английской и узбекской лингвокультурах через паремиологические единицы и культурно значимые выражения. Используя сравнительно-лингвокультурный подход, работа анализирует пословицы и идиоматические выражения, связанные с дружбой, в обоих языках. Результаты показывают, что в английской лингвокультуре большее внимание уделяется индивидуальному выбору и эмоциональному доверию в дружбе, тогда как в узбекской лингвокультуре подчеркиваются верность, нравственная ответственность и социальная солидарность. Исследование также демонстрирует, как лингвистическая идентичность формируется через культурно обусловленные метафоры и пословицы. Полученные результаты вносят вклад в когнитивную лингвистику и межкультурную коммуникацию, показывая, что дружба выступает не только как социальное отношение, но и как отражение культурной идентичности и системы ценностей.

Ключевые слова: дружба, лингвистическая идентичность, культурные ценности, паремиология, английский язык, узбекский язык, глобализация.

INTRODUCTION

Language reflects cultural values and social identities embedded within a community. Concepts such as friendship often reveal how societies interpret interpersonal relationships and moral responsibilities. In linguocultural studies, concepts are considered cognitive structures that combine language, culture, and worldview (Wierzbicka, 1997). It refers to an individual who perceives and constructs an understanding of the world through their sensory organs, formimg a system of mental representations based on these perceptions. After processing and interpreting these perceptions through consciousness, the individual communicates them to other members of society using language. Language, in this context, also functions as a regulator of relationships between the individual, the law, and the community, acting both as a "defender" and "prosecutor" (Zerkina et al., 2015) From this perspective, friendship is not merely a personal relationship but a cultural construct shaped by social norms and traditions.

Globalization has increased intercultural communication, making it important to understand how cultural concepts differ across languages. Scholars argue that linguistic identity emerges through culturally significant words, metaphors, and proverbs that express shared values within a speech community (Kramsch, 1998). In my view, this perspective highlights how language functions as a cultural memory system: expressions about friendship often preserve moral ideals passed from one generation to another.

According to Cheng Chen, "Friend" is a product of interpersonal relationships within society and therefore represents a broad human experience shared across different cultures. In cross-cultural communication, the concept of "friendship" extends to various fields such as politics, economics, translation, business, and others. However, numerous cases of misunderstanding have arisen due to differences in the interpretation of the concept of "friendship". Differences in how the term "friend" is understood across cultures create significant challenges for researchers who aim to analyze the cultural dimensions of such close relationships.

In Uzbek culture, friendship is closely associated with loyalty, trust, and moral responsibility. Uzbek proverbs frequently portray friendship as a lifelong bond requiring honesty and sacrifice. For instance, the proverb *"Do'stlik-barcha boylikdan afzal"* (Friendship is better than other values) emphasizes reliability in relationships. In contrast, English expressions often emphasize

emotional closeness and personal choice, as in the proverb *"A friend in need is a friend indeed"*

The present study investigates how linguistic identity and cultural values are reflected in the concept of friendship in English and Uzbek. By analyzing paremiological units and linguistic expressions, the research aims to identify similarities and differences in how friendship is conceptualized across the two linguistic cultures.

METHODS

This research adopts a comparative linguocultural approach to analyze the concept of friendship in English and Uzbek. The data for this study consist of proverbs and idiomatic expressions related to friendship collected from English and Uzbek paremiological dictionaries and linguistic sources. Approximately 30 expressions from each language were analyzed. Paremiological units were chosen because proverbs reflect collective cultural knowledge and moral norms within a society (Mieder, 2004). I agree with this view because proverbs often function as condensed cultural narratives that communicate ethical expectations regarding social relationships. Therefore, a deeper examination of the proverbs reveals the cultural norms and beliefs, as they are the culmination of accumulated experiences over the years by the community.

The study applies concepts from cognitive linguistics and linguocultural analysis. Cognitive linguistics suggests that abstract concepts are structured through metaphors and cultural models (Lakoff & Johnson, 1980). In our opinion, this framework is particularly useful because friendship is not directly observable; instead, it is conceptualized through symbolic language such as metaphors and proverbs.

The analysis focuses on three aspects such as linguistic representation of friendship, cultural values reflected in proverbs and linguistic identity expressed through conceptual metaphors. The selected proverbs were categorized according to semantic themes such as trust, loyalty, support, and social responsibility.

RESULTS

The analysis revealed both similarities and differences in how friendship is conceptualized in the English and the Uzbek language.

3.1 Friendship as Loyalty and Trust

Both linguistic cultures emphasize loyalty as a fundamental element of friendship.

English proverb: *1. "A friend in need is a friend indeed."*

Uzbek proverb: *"Do'st kulfatda bilinadi."* (A friend is known in hardship.)

English

2. "A faithful friend is a strong defense. "

Uzbek

Sodiq do'st - katta tayanch.

(A loyal friend is a great support.)

These expressions show that true friendship is revealed during difficult situations. Proverbs often highlight moral values that societies consider essential for social harmony. In my view, the similarity between these proverbs demonstrates that loyalty is a universal cultural value across societies.

3.2 Friendship as Moral Responsibility in Uzbek Culture

Uzbek linguistic culture places strong emphasis on responsibility and social solidarity within friendship. For example: *"Do'st achitib gapirar, dushman kuldirib."* (A friend tells the bitter truth; an enemy makes you laugh). This proverb suggests that a true friend offers honest advice even if it is unpleasant. Wierzbicka argues that cultural concepts are often embedded in moral discourse within language (Wierzbicka, 1997). We agree with this observation because Uzbek proverbs frequently portray friendship as an ethical duty rather than merely a personal relationship. Traditional Uzbek society places great importance on collective harmony, trust, and social responsibility. Proverbs function as a means of transmitting these values from one generation to another. Through concise and memorable expressions, they teach people how they should behave toward others, particularly toward their friends. Friendship is therefore portrayed not only as an emotional connection but also as a moral obligation to stand by one another in both good and difficult times.

In this way, Uzbek proverbs shape social expectations about how friends should act. They encourage individuals to prioritize loyalty, sincerity, and responsibility, thereby strengthening

interpersonal relationships and social cohesion. Consequently, friendship in Uzbek proverbial wisdom is not merely a private relationship based on personal feelings; rather, it is presented as a moral commitment that contributes to the stability and harmony of the community.

3.3 Friendship as Personal Choice in English Linguistic Culture

English expressions often highlight personal autonomy and emotional connection in friendship. For example:

"Choose your friends wisely."

This expression emphasizes individual decision-making in relationships. Language reflects cultural attitudes toward identity and individualism. From my perspective, English linguistic culture tends to frame friendship as a voluntary relationship based on shared interests and emotional compatibility (Kramsch, 1998).

3.4 Conceptual Metaphors of Friendship

Both languages use metaphors to conceptualize friendship.

English metaphor: *Friendship is a treasure."*

Uzbek metaphor: *"Do'st oltindan qimmat."* (A friend is more valuable than gold). Metaphors structure how people understand abstract concepts (Lakoff and Johnson, 1980). We believe these metaphors illustrate how societies perceive friendship as a valuable social resource that cannot be easily replaced. By comparing friendship to something precious or irreplaceable, these metaphors convey the idea that genuine companionship is rare and should be carefully preserved.

Therefore, these metaphors reveal how different cultures interpret friendship as a valuable and enduring form of social capital. They emphasize that genuine friendship is not only emotionally meaningful but also socially beneficial, contributing to cooperation, trust, and cohesion within a community.

DISCUSSION

The findings show that linguistic identity strongly influences how friendship is conceptualized in different cultures.

English linguistic culture reflects individualism and emotional closeness, while Uzbek linguistic culture emphasizes loyalty, social responsibility, and moral guidance. These differences correspond to broader cultural values within Western and Central Asian societies.

Globalization has increased intercultural interaction, which may influence how friendship is expressed in modern communication. Digital communication platforms, for example, have introduced new meanings to the word "friend," especially in social media contexts. Technological changes can reshape linguistic meanings and social relationships (Crystal, 2003). In my opinion, this transformation highlights the dynamic nature of linguistic identity: traditional concepts coexist with modern interpretations influenced by digital culture.

Despite cultural differences, the analysis also shows strong universal similarities. Both English and Uzbek languages portray friendship as a valuable and supportive relationship essential for social life. This suggests that while linguistic identity shapes cultural expression, certain human values remain consistent across cultures.

CONCLUSION

This study examined linguistic identity and cultural values in the concept of friendship in English and Uzbek languages through a comparative analysis of proverbs and idiomatic expressions.

The results demonstrate that friendship is conceptualized through culturally embedded linguistic forms that reflect social norms and values. Uzbek linguistic culture emphasizes loyalty, honesty, and moral responsibility in friendship, whereas English linguistic culture highlights individual choice and emotional connection.

At the same time, both languages share universal representations of friendship as trust, support, and mutual respect. These findings indicate that linguistic identity influences the way cultural concepts are expressed, but fundamental human values remain similar across societies. Future research could explore how globalization and digital communication influence the linguistic representation of friendship in modern discourse.

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