

THE CONCEPTUALIZATION OF FRIENDSHIP IN ENGLISH AND UZBEK LITERARY DISCOURSE: A COMPARATIVE LINGUOCULTURAL STUDY

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Abstract. This study aims to examine how friendship is conceptualized and represented in selected English and Uzbek literary texts from a comparative linguocultural perspective. It seeks to identify the linguistic expressions, narrative situations, and cultural values through which friendship is constructed in the two literary traditions. Particular attention will be paid to trust, loyalty, mutual support, sacrifice, and the boundaries of friendship. The study will adopt a qualitative comparative design, combining document analysis with thematic and contextual textual analysis. Passages concerning friendship will be examined in relation to characterization, interpersonal relationships, and their cultural contexts. The comparison will explore similarities and differences in the representation of friendship while considering the historical and social settings of the selected works. Rather than treating individual literary texts as representative of an entire culture, the study will interpret them as situated expressions of particular perspectives and values. The research aims to contribute to a deeper understanding of the relationship between language, culture, and literary representations of interpersonal bonds.

Keywords: friendship, conceptualization, linguocultural analysis, English literature, Uzbek literature, literary discourse, comparative study.

INGLIZ VA O'ZBEK ADABIY DISKURSIDA DO'STLIKNING KONSEPTUALLASHUVI: QIYOSIY LINGVOKULTUROLOGIK TADQIQOT

Annotatsiya. Ushbu tadqiqot tanlangan ingliz va o'zbek adabiy matnlarida do'stlikning konseptuallashuvi va ifodalanishini qiyosiy lingvokulturologik nuqtayi nazardan o'rganishga qaratilgan. Tadqiqotda ikki adabiy an'anada do'stlik haqidagi tasavvurlarni shakllantiruvchi til birliklari, voqeaviy vaziyatlar va madaniy qadriyatlarni aniqlash maqsad qilinadi. Ishonch, sadoqat, o'zaro qo'llab-quvvatlash, fidoyilik hamda do'stlik munosabatlarining chegaralariga alohida e'tibor qaratiladi. Tadqiqot sifatga asoslangan qiyosiy yondashuv doirasida olib borilib, hujjatlarni o'rganish, tematik tahlil va matnni kontekstual tahlil qilish usullarini birlashtiradi. Do'stlikka oid matn parchalari personajlarning tavsifi, shaxslararo munosabatlar va ularning madaniy konteksti bilan bog'liq holda o'rganiladi. Tanlangan asarlarning tarixiy va ijtimoiy sharoitlarini hisobga olgan holda, do'stlikning ifodalanishidagi o'xshashlik va farqlar tahlil qilinadi. Alohida adabiy matnlar butun bir madaniyatning umumiy ifodasi sifatida emas, balki muayyan qarash va qadriyatlarning aniq kontekstdagi ifodasi sifatida talqin etiladi. Tadqiqot til, madaniyat va shaxslararo aloqalarning adabiy ifodasi o'rtasidagi bog'liqlikni chuqurroq anglashga hissa qo'shishni maqsad qiladi.

Kalit so'zlar: do'stlik, konseptuallashuv, lingvokulturologik tahlil, ingliz adabiyoti, o'zbek adabiyoti, adabiy diskurs, qiyosiy tadqiqot.

КОНЦЕПТУАЛИЗАЦИЯ ДРУЖБЫ В АНГЛИЙСКОМ И УЗБЕКСКОМ ЛИТЕРАТУРНОМ ДИСКУРСЕ: СРАВНИТЕЛЬНОЕ ЛИНГВОКУЛЬТУРОЛОГИЧЕСКОЕ ИССЛЕДОВАНИЕ

Аннотация. Цель данного исследования - изучить концептуализацию и репрезентацию дружбы в избранных английских и узбекских литературных текстах в сравнительном лингвокультурологическом аспекте. Исследование направлено на выявление языковых выражений, повествовательных ситуаций и культурных ценностей, посредством которых формируется представление о дружбе в двух литературных традициях. Особое внимание будет уделено доверию, верности, взаимной поддержке, самопожертвованию и границам дружбы. Исследование будет проводиться в рамках качественного сравнительного подхода, сочетающего анализ документов с тематическим и контекстуальным анализом текстов. Фрагменты, посвящённые дружбе, будут рассматриваться с учётом характеристики персонажей, межличностных отношений и их культурного контекста. Сравнение позволит изучить сходства и различия в репрезентации дружбы с учётом исторических и социальных условий, представленных в избранных произведениях. Отдельные литературные тексты будут интерпретироваться как контекстуально обусловленные выражения определённых взглядов и ценностей, а не как репрезентации культуры в целом. Исследование призвано способствовать более

глубокому пониманию взаимосвязи языка, культуры и литературных репрезентаций межличностных связей.

Ключевые слова: дружба, концептуализация, лингвокультурологический анализ, английская литература, узбекская литература, литературный дискурс, сравнительное исследование.

Introduction. Friendship is a meaningful form of interpersonal connection through which people negotiate trust, belonging, responsibility, and emotional support. Although the term may appear familiar and readily understandable, its meaning cannot be reduced to a single, universally shared definition. What counts as a friend, what friends owe one another, and how friendship is maintained or challenged may differ across social settings and individual experiences. Friendship therefore offers a productive subject for examining the relationship between language, cultural values, and the interpretation of human relationships. Literary discourse provides a particularly valuable context for investigating these questions. In literary texts, friendship is not merely named; it is developed through dialogue, characterization, narrative events, and the consequences of characters' decisions. A promise kept, assistance offered during hardship, or a conflict between personal interests and loyalty can give friendship a meaning that extends beyond its dictionary definition. Equally, silence, disappointment, exclusion, and betrayal can reveal the expectations upon which a relationship depends. Studying friendship in literature consequently requires attention both to explicit references to friendship and to the actions and narrative circumstances through which it becomes recognizable [1].

From a linguocultural perspective, the representation of friendship involves the interaction of linguistic choices and culturally situated meanings. Words used to address or describe a friend, expressions of affection and obligation, figurative language, and evaluations of a character's conduct can indicate how a text constructs interpersonal closeness. These features do not operate independently of their context. The meaning of a particular expression may depend on who uses it, to whom it is addressed, and what social or narrative circumstances surround it. A comparative analysis must therefore move beyond identifying apparently equivalent words and examine the relationships between language, behavior, and interpretation. English and Uzbek literary texts offer a basis for such a comparison. Bringing selected works from these two literary traditions into dialogue can help clarify how friendship is expressed through different linguistic resources and narrative arrangements. However, comparison should not begin with the assumption that each tradition presents a single, stable understanding of friendship. Authors, genres, historical periods, and social environments may produce different representations within the same tradition. Similarities between individual works may also be as significant as differences. The analytical task is thus to identify patterns supported by the selected texts while preserving the particular conditions under which those patterns emerge.

A central methodological difficulty concerns the distinction between the presence of friendship as a literary theme and its conceptualization within a text. Identifying characters as friends does not, by itself, explain what friendship means in their relationship. This requires examining the qualities attributed to friendship, the obligations associated with it, and the circumstances in which it is affirmed or questioned. Trust, loyalty, mutual support, sacrifice, and the boundaries of friendship provide initial points of inquiry, rather than predetermined findings. Their relevance and interpretation must be established through close reading, with room for additional themes to emerge from the material. Against this background, the present study aims to examine how friendship is conceptualized in selected English and Uzbek literary texts through a qualitative comparative linguocultural analysis. It addresses three related questions: which linguistic and narrative resources construct friendship in the selected works; which values and expectations are associated with these representations; and what similarities and differences emerge when they are interpreted within their respective contexts. By connecting textual expression with characterization and narrative situations, the study seeks to offer a context-sensitive account of friendship as a literary concept. Its contribution lies in examining how interpersonal bonds acquire meaning through the interaction of language, cultural context, and literary representation, without extending observations from selected works to entire cultures [2].

Materials and methods. This study will employ a qualitative comparative research design to examine the conceptualization of friendship in selected English and Uzbek literary texts. Document analysis will provide the basis for collecting textual material, while close reading and thematic analysis will guide its interpretation. The comparison will focus on how linguistic expressions, character interactions, and narrative situations contribute to the meanings associated with friendship. The literary corpus will be selected through purposive sampling. Selection will be guided by three criteria: the presence of sustained relationships relevant to friendship; the availability of reliable original-language editions; and sufficient contextual information to interpret the relationships portrayed. Preference will be given to works with comparable genres and narrative settings where possible. Differences in publication period, social setting, and literary form will be recorded and considered during interpretation. The final corpus, including authors, titles, publication dates, and editions, will be specified before analysis begins.

The primary unit of analysis will be a passage in which friendship is explicitly mentioned or constructed through interaction. Such passages may include dialogue, descriptions of relationships, narrative commentary, and episodes involving assistance, conflict, loyalty, or betrayal. Each passage will be recorded together with its location in the source, the characters involved, and the surrounding narrative circumstances. Isolated words will not be interpreted independently of the episode in which they occur. Analysis will proceed in three stages. First, each work will be read as a whole to establish the development of the relevant relationships. Second, selected passages will be coded using an initial framework comprising trust, loyalty, mutual support, sacrifice, and the boundaries of friendship. These categories will serve as provisional analytical guides. Additional codes will be introduced when the material reveals meanings that the initial framework does not adequately capture. Passages that challenge an emerging interpretation will also be retained and

examined [3].

Third, the coded material will be compared within and across the two literary traditions. Linguistic analysis will consider terms of address, expressions of obligation and affection, figurative language, and evaluative descriptions. Narrative analysis will examine how characters' actions affirm, complicate, or undermine their expressed attitudes toward friendship. Comparisons will therefore address both what characters say about friendship and how relationships develop through their decisions and experiences. English and Uzbek passages will be examined in their original languages. Where Uzbek examples are presented in English, the original wording will accompany the translation when necessary to preserve culturally significant meanings. Translation choices will be explained whenever an English equivalent does not adequately convey the expression's contextual meaning. To support analytical transparency, the study will maintain a record of passage selection, coding decisions, and revisions to the thematic framework. Interpretations will be supported by identifiable textual examples and considered alongside contradictory evidence. The findings will be limited to the selected corpus; they will not be treated as general descriptions of English or Uzbek culture.

Friendship as a linguocultural concept in literary discourse. Friendship can be approached as a relational concept whose meaning develops through language, shared experiences, and expectations about appropriate conduct. In literary discourse, its significance emerges from the ways characters communicate, respond to difficulties, and negotiate their responsibilities toward one another. Calling someone a friend establishes a relationship verbally, but the narrative may confirm or question that designation through subsequent actions. The conceptualization of friendship therefore involves the relationship between linguistic expression and practical behavior. A linguocultural approach examines how these representations acquire meaning within the particular world of a literary text. Terms of address, promises, expressions of concern, and judgments about loyalty may communicate different degrees of closeness and obligation. Their interpretation requires attention to the speaker, the relationship between characters, and the circumstances of the interaction. An expression of affection, for example, may indicate sincere attachment, social politeness, or an attempt to influence another character. Its function cannot be determined from wording alone. For the comparison of selected English and Uzbek literary texts, friendship can be examined through several interconnected dimensions. The following framework identifies questions that will guide close reading; it does not present findings about either literary tradition [4].

Conceptual dimension	Linguistic and narrative indicators to examine	Guiding analytical question
Trust	Confidential conversations, disclosure of personal concerns, promises, and reliance on another character	How is trust established, maintained, or damaged?
Loyalty	Expressions of commitment, defense of a friend, and decisions made under competing pressures	Under what circumstances is loyalty affirmed or questioned?
Mutual support	Offers of assistance, reassurance, practical help, and responses to hardship	What forms of support are expected and provided?
Sacrifice	Acceptance of personal loss, risk, or inconvenience for another character	How does the narrative evaluate the costs of friendship?
Boundaries and conflict	Refusals, disagreements, unequal expectations, disappointment, and betrayal	What limits are placed on friendship and its obligations?

These dimensions should be interpreted together rather than treated as separate qualities. Support may strengthen trust, while a demand for loyalty may create conflict when it contradicts a character's moral judgment. Similarly, sacrifice may be represented as an expression of affection, but it may also reveal an unequal relationship. Attention to such tensions allows the analysis to consider how friendship is negotiated and contested. In comparing English and Uzbek literary texts, the central task is to establish how particular works organize these meanings through their linguistic and narrative choices. Similar expressions may perform different functions, while different expressions may convey comparable expectations. Interpretations must therefore remain grounded in identifiable passages and their contexts. This approach provides a basis for examining both shared patterns and differences without assuming that individual works express a uniform national understanding of friendship [5].

Language and narrative in the construction of friendship. The literary meaning of friendship develops through the interaction of what characters say, what they do, and how their relationships are presented by the narrator. A declaration of friendship may express emotional closeness, but its significance depends on whether subsequent behavior supports that declaration. When a character offers assistance, protects another person's confidence, or remains present during hardship, the narrative provides grounds for interpreting the relationship as dependable. Conversely, a gap between affectionate language and harmful conduct can expose uncertainty about the sincerity or limits of friendship. Dialogue provides an important point of access to these meanings. Terms of address, requests, promises, and expressions of reassurance can indicate how characters understand their relationship. However, linguistic familiarity should not automatically be interpreted as evidence of genuine attachment. A friendly expression may convey politeness, conceal self-interest, or establish an expectation that the other character does not share. Close reading must therefore consider the purpose of an utterance and the response it receives, alongside its wording.

Narrative perspective also influences the interpretation of friendship. Readers may encounter a relationship through a character's personal account, an external narrator's description, or several competing perspectives. These

presentations can produce different evaluations of the same interaction. An action understood by one character as loyal assistance may be experienced by another as interference. Examining whose interpretation receives emphasis helps clarify how the text invites readers to assess interpersonal responsibility. The accompanying illustration brings together five provisional dimensions for examining these relationships: trust, loyalty, mutual support, sacrifice, and boundaries. It serves as a conceptual aid rather than a presentation of research findings [6].

Figure 1. Stages of the comparative linguocultural analysis of friendship.



These dimensions acquire analytical value when connected to particular narrative situations. Trust concerns how characters manage vulnerability and confidential knowledge. Loyalty becomes significant when a relationship encounters competing commitments. Mutual support directs attention to the exchange of emotional or practical assistance, while sacrifice raises questions about the personal costs of maintaining a bond. Boundaries concern the conditions under which characters disagree, refuse a request, or reconsider their obligations. None of these dimensions should be assumed to characterize every friendship represented in the selected texts. For the comparative examination of English and Uzbek literary discourse, this approach directs attention to contextual meanings rather than simple word equivalence. The analysis will consider how linguistic choices and narrative developments work together in each selected work. Cultural interpretation will be grounded in the circumstances represented by the text and supported by relevant contextual evidence. This allows friendship to be examined as a developing relationship whose meaning may be affirmed, challenged, or transformed throughout a narrative [7].

Conclusion and recommendations. The framework developed for this study approaches friendship as a literary concept constructed through the interaction of language, character behavior, and narrative context. It establishes a basis for examining how interpersonal closeness is expressed, which obligations characters associate with friendship, and how those obligations are maintained or challenged. Trust, loyalty, mutual support, sacrifice, and boundaries provide provisional dimensions for this examination, while allowing additional meanings to emerge through close reading. A comparative linguocultural analysis requires attention to both the wording of a passage and its function within the wider narrative. Expressions of affection or commitment cannot be interpreted adequately without considering the speaker's intentions, the other character's response, and the subsequent development of the relationship. Similarly, acts of assistance or sacrifice require contextual interpretation because their meaning may depend on whether they are voluntary, reciprocal, or expected. This framework consequently directs the study toward the relationship between expressed values and enacted behavior.

At this stage, no conclusions can be drawn about similarities or differences between the selected English and Uzbek works, as the corpus has not yet been finalized and analyzed. Such conclusions must be supported by identifiable passages and interpreted within the historical, social, and literary circumstances of each work. The eventual contribution of the study will depend on its ability to explain these textual patterns without treating individual narratives as representations of an entire culture. For the implementation of the research, a clearly defined and manageable corpus is recommended. The selected works should contain sufficiently developed relationships to support sustained analysis, and their editions should be documented consistently. Where texts differ substantially in genre or historical period, those differences should be incorporated into the interpretation rather than attributed automatically to cultural background.

The analysis should preserve original-language expressions and provide transparent translations of Uzbek passages presented in English. Culturally significant terms should be accompanied by brief contextual explanations where direct equivalents are insufficient. Coding decisions should also be documented, and examples that contradict an emerging interpretation should receive explicit attention. These procedures will help make the comparison traceable and open to critical evaluation. Further research could extend the comparison to additional authors, genres, and periods after the initial analysis is completed. Classroom applications could use contextualized passages to encourage discussion of how literary language conveys closeness, responsibility, and disagreement. Such activities should invite students to justify their interpretations with textual evidence and consider alternative readings. This would connect literary analysis with intercultural reflection while preserving the complexity of the relationships portrayed.

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