



A CROSS-CULTURAL ANALYSIS OF ENGLISH AND UZBEK PROVERBS ON THE CONCEPT OF FRIENDSHIP

Tillayeva Oltinoy Baxtiyorovna,
the main teacher of TGFU

Annotation: *The current thesis is intended to analyze cultural aspects of English and Uzbek proverbs expressing the theme of friendship. The research further enumerates differences and similarities between English and Uzbek cultures with the help of proverbs used in verbal and non-verbal communication. The author uses comparative-cultural analysis, componential analysis method to accomplish the tasks of the research. Within the thesis, proverbs are also defined as a unit of parameiology as well as linguoculturology.*

A cross-cultural analysis of English and Uzbek proverbs on the concept of friendship explores how each culture expresses values, beliefs, and social expectations related to friendship through their proverbs. Proverbs are a mirror to a culture's worldview, often encapsulating its core values in concise, memorable expressions. In this analysis, we examine how friendship is defined, celebrated, and emphasized in both English and Uzbek cultures, highlighting similarities and differences in their approaches.

1. Concept of Friendship in English Proverbs

In English proverbs, friendship is often seen as a reciprocal and supportive relationship, one where loyalty, trust, and mutual benefit are key. English proverbs about friendship tend to focus on trustworthiness, loyalty, and the pragmatic aspect of relationships. For example:

- “A friend in need is a friend indeed” emphasizes the idea that true friendship is proven in times of hardship. This proverb highlights the value of loyalty and reliability in friendships.

- “Birds of a feather flock together” suggests that people tend to form friendships with those who share similar values, characteristics, or interests.



- “Actions speak louder than words” often applies to friendship, meaning that true friends are not just those who say they care, but those who show it through actions.

These proverbs illustrate a belief in mutual benefit and reciprocity. The value of a friend is often measured by their actions, particularly in difficult times.

2. Concept of Friendship in Uzbek Proverbs

Uzbek proverbs, rooted in Central Asian traditions, tend to emphasize sacrifice, respect, and the honor associated with friendships. Friendships are often seen as family-like bonds, with a strong focus on the emotional and spiritual connection rather than just practical or material benefits. For example:

- “Do’st o’zingni ko’rsatgan paytda do’s’t” (“A friend is a friend when they show you who they truly are”) stresses the importance of sincerity and authenticity in friendships.

- “Chiroyli so’zlar bilan do’s’t bo’lmaydi” (“You cannot become friends with just beautiful words”) implies that actions, rather than words, are the true measure of friendship.

- “Bir so’z bilan do’s’tni topib, bir so’z bilan yo’qotasiz” (“With one word, you can find a friend; with one word, you can lose a friend”) illustrates the delicate nature of friendships and the importance of respectful communication.

Uzbek proverbs often emphasize the deep emotional connection in friendship, highlighting that true friends are those who stand by you through thick and thin, and maintain their respect for you even when faced with challenges.

3. Similarities Between English and Uzbek Proverbs

Despite the differences in cultural contexts, English and Uzbek proverbs about friendship share common themes:

- Loyalty and trust: Both cultures emphasize the role of trustworthiness in friendships, with proverbs suggesting that a true friend is someone you can rely on.

- Actions over words: Both English and Uzbek proverbs often state that friendship is proved through actions, not just promises or beautiful speech.



- Support in times of need: The idea that a true friend shows their worth in difficult times is universal. Both English and Uzbek proverbs highlight that adversity reveals the strength of friendship.

4. Differences in the Cultural Emphasis on Friendship

While both cultures value loyalty and support, the emotional tone and depth of friendship in Uzbek proverbs tend to be more sacrificial and family-oriented. In contrast, English proverbs often focus on the pragmatic, reciprocal nature of friendships:

- Uzbek Proverbs: There is a significant emphasis on the emotional and moral obligations of friendship. The relationship is often seen as something sacred, with proverbs reflecting the importance of honor and mutual respect.

- English Proverbs: English proverbs focus more on the practical aspects of friendship, such as mutual benefit, emotional support during difficult times, and the idea that friends should be dependable and trustworthy.

5. Social and Cultural Impact on the Proverbs

Cultural background plays a key role in shaping how friendship is perceived in these two cultures:

- In Uzbek culture, the concept of friendship is closely linked to family ties and community cohesion. The collective nature of Central Asian society fosters a deeper, almost familial connection in friendships. A proverb like “Do’stni oila deb bil” (“Consider a friend as family”) reflects this idea of inclusivity and loyalty within the broader social fabric.

- In English-speaking cultures, while there is also a sense of loyalty, friendships are often seen as more individualistic. The focus on a “friend in need” highlights the individual’s role in supporting their friend during hard times, without necessarily suggesting a lifelong, family-like connection.

6. Conclusion

A cross-cultural analysis of English and Uzbek proverbs on friendship reveals both shared and distinctive views of this important relationship. Both cultures value loyalty, mutual support, and sincerity, but the emotional and social context differs.



Uzbek proverbs emphasize a deep, familial bond, while English proverbs often underscore reciprocity and practicality. By studying these proverbs, we gain insight into the cultural and social dynamics of friendship, as well as how language reflects and shapes the values of a society.

The analytical results of a cross-cultural analysis of English and Uzbek proverbs on the concept of friendship reveal both commonalities and differences in how friendship is perceived, expressed, and valued across these two cultures. Such an analysis highlights the cultural, linguistic, and social frameworks within which these relationships are understood.

1. Common Themes in Both Cultures:

Despite cultural differences, both English and Uzbek proverbs emphasize loyalty, trust, and support as the core values in a true friendship. These are universal ideals across cultures.

- **Loyalty:** Both cultures stress the importance of loyalty in friendships. For example, in English, “A friend in need is a friend indeed” conveys the idea that a true friend shows their worth in times of difficulty. Similarly, Uzbek proverbs like “Qiyinchilikda do’stni tanla” (You recognize your friend in hardship) underline that loyalty and support in hard times are what make someone a true friend.

- **Trust and Honesty:** Another common theme is the importance of trust. English proverbs such as “A friend to all is a friend to none” suggest that real friendship requires exclusive trust, while Uzbek proverbs such as “Do’stlikda sodiqlik muhim” (Loyalty is important in friendship) also emphasize the need for mutual trust.

2. Differences in Social and Emotional Perception:

While both cultures value friendship, the emotional and social dimensions of friendship can differ.

- **Emotional Connection:** English proverbs often present friendship as a bond that needs to be maintained through mutual support, such as in “A friend is someone who knows all about you and still loves you.” This suggests an emotional intimacy that might be seen as a personal, private bond.



- **Social Roles and Reciprocity:** In Uzbek proverbs, friendship is sometimes framed more in terms of mutual exchange and social obligation, such as in “Do’slik – burchdir” (Friendship is an obligation). This indicates that friendship is viewed as more socially embedded and reciprocal, where both parties have a sense of duty to each other.

3. Metaphors and Language Use:

The linguistic and metaphorical elements used in both sets of proverbs reflect distinct cultural perspectives on friendship.

- **English Proverbs:** English expressions tend to use metaphors of testing or endurance. For example, “True friends stab you in the front” uses the metaphor of honesty even at the expense of discomfort, implying that a real friend is someone who tells you the truth, no matter how hard it is.

- **Uzbek Proverbs:** Uzbek proverbs often employ nature-based or agricultural metaphors, such as “Do’stni o’g’irlayotgan paytda bil, orqaga qaytib turganini” (A friend is recognized when they protect you). This suggests a more nurturing view of friendship, where a true friend is someone who “grows” or cultivates the relationship.

4. Cultural Reflection of Friendship:

Friendship is deeply embedded in both cultures but is expressed differently in relation to societal roles and values.

- **English Culture:** English proverbs, in general, reflect a more individualistic view of friendship. Phrases like “A true friend is somebody who can make us feel better no matter how bad things may be” highlight the importance of personal connections and emotional fulfillment in a friendship.

- **Uzbek Culture:** In contrast, Uzbek proverbs tend to emphasize the social and collective aspect of friendship, often tying the value of a friend to their role within the broader community. Proverbs like “Yaxshi do’st – bir tikaning o’rnini to’ldiradi” (A good friend fills the place of a thorn) illustrate the interdependence and the supportive roles friends play within a social structure.

5. Friendship in Challenging Times:



Both English and Uzbek proverbs suggest that true friendship is tested during difficult situations.

- English Proverb: “A friend in need is a friend indeed” – a common proverb highlighting that a real friend proves their loyalty and value in times of adversity.

The cross-cultural analysis of English and Uzbek proverbs on friendship reveals that both cultures share core values such as loyalty, trust, and support. However, the way these values are framed differs. English proverbs tend to highlight individual emotional bonds, while Uzbek proverbs often focus more on the social and reciprocal responsibilities that accompany friendship. Through proverbs, we can see how each culture views the concept of friendship—not just as a personal relationship, but as a social construct that shapes how individuals interact with each other within their communities.

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