LINGUISTIC DIFFERENCES OF 'FRIENDSHIP' IN UZBEK AND ENGLISH

Soatova G.K.

Soatova Gulsunoy Kupaysinovna - senior teacher
DEPARTMENT OF THEORETICAL ASPECTS OF ENGLISH № 3
UZBEKISTAN STATE WORLD LANGUAGES UNIVERSITY,
TASHKENT, REPUBLIC OF UZBEKISTAN

Abstract: *this article explores the multifaceted concept of friendship across Western (English) and Eastern (Uzbek) cultures, highlighting its universal yet culturally diverse nature. It delves into the etymological origins of 'friend' and 'friendship' in English, tracing their evolution from Old English and Proto-Germanic roots to reflect changing social dynamics and linguistic nuances. The discussion then shifts to the Uzbek understanding of friendship, emphasising its strong communal bonds, loyalty, and the significance of terms like 'do'st' and related expressions.*
Keywords: *friendship, cultural diversity, English culture, Uzbek culture, etymology, linguistic analysis, social constructs, interpersonal relationships, collectivism.*

Introduction

Since ancient times, humans have placed a high value on the concept of friendship. The concept of 'friendship' is universal, and when people make friends, they emphasise their characters and interests. Still, the concept of 'Friendship' is culturally diverse due to the customs and beliefs. As social interconnection develops, humans inherently seek connection, and they try to find a way in which 'friendship' is understood, expressed, and lived out varies significantly across cultures, often deeply embedded in linguistic structures.

It is important to understand cultural concepts and distinctions. In some cultures, friendship is characterised by strong emotional bonds and loyalty, whereas in others, it may be viewed more pragmatically as a network of mutual support and benefits. This distinction highlights how cultural values shape interpersonal relationships. In English Western society, friendship reflects a sense of obligation and interdependence, contrasting sharply with the more individualistic interpretations. In contrast, Eastern society, Uzbeks, friends may prioritise communal goals over personal aspirations, fostering a deeper sense of loyalty.

The words 'friend' and 'friendship' have a rich etymological history that reveals their evolution from Old English and Proto-Germanic roots, reflecting changing social dynamics and cultural values over centuries. This linguistic journey begins with the Old English term 'freond', which denoted someone who loved or was fond of another. Its Proto-Germanic counterpart, 'frijond', further illustrates the deep-rooted connections between friendship and love, emphasising the importance of these relationships in early societies. (Lucas) This connection highlights how the notions of companionship and mutual support have been integral to human interaction since ancient times. Furthermore, as the language evolved, so did the connotations associated with friendship, leading to a broader understanding of the term in various cultures. This evolution can be traced back to Old English, where the term 'freond' was commonly used to denote a person with whom one had a bond of trust and affection. This term not only reflected a close relationship but also held connotations of loyalty and support, which have persisted into modern usage. In the English language, buddy, pal, companion, acquaintance, confidant, best friend, close friend, and casual friend reflect the various nuances of friendship that have emerged over time. Each term carries its connotations and reflects the cultural relationships. Understanding these distinctions enhances our appreciation for the depth and complexity of human connections.

In Uzbek, in its place, the concept 'friend' and 'friendship' is understood widely. Friend means any of two or more people who are close in views, feelings, and work, and who are connected by friendship and harmony, comrade. There are some terms such as a 'qadrdon do'st' (valued friend), 'chin do'st '(a true friend), 'qiyomatli do'st' (a worthy friend), 'vafodor do'st' (a loyal friend). There is a proverb like 'don't tell a secret to your friend that means that your friend also has a friend'. The other terms, such as 'oshna', 'hamroh', 'yoron', 'yor' 'og'ayni' reflect 'friend'; however, these are not as strong as the word 'do'st', which means 'friend'. (O'zbek tilining izohli lug'ati)

In Uzbek society, friendship is considered with a strong emphasis on loyalty, mutual respect, shared experiences, and often, a sense of obligation and responsibility. There is a blend of personal choice with communal and familial expectations. Also, there is the concept of mahalla (neighbourhood/community) and its influence on friendships. As a collectivistic society, friendships in Uzbekistan can sometimes evolve into family-like bonds, and friends can continue their lifelong relationships to become 'quda-anda' (a kinship aspect that develops after the engagement ceremony of a young man and a girl). There is no exact equivalent of this word in the English language.

Meanwhile, in the English language, there is a term ‘penfriend’ which can be translated into Uzbek as ‘xat yozishib turuvchi do‘st’. There is no exact term with this meaning in the Uzbek language. In Uzbek, ‘mehmondo‘stlik’ can be translated as ‘hospitality’, and there is no involvement of the term ‘friend’.

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