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A COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS OF ENGLISH AND UZBEK PROVERBS ABOUT WORK, FRIENDSHIP AND FAMILY

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Annotatsiya: Ushbu maqolada ingliz va o‘zbek tillaridagi mehnat, do‘stlik va oila mavzusidagi maqollar qiyosiy jihatdan tahlil qilingan. Tadqiqotda har ikki tildan olingan maqollarning mazmuni, obrazlari va tuzilishi solishtirilib, ularning o‘xshash va farqli tomonlari ko‘rsatib berilgan. Maqollarda xalq dunyoqarashi, qadriyatlari va turmush tarzi qanday aks etishi misollar asosida yoritilgan. Maqola so‘ngida maqollardan ingliz tili darslarida foydalanish bo‘yicha amaliy tavsiyalar berilgan.

Kalit so‘zlar: maqol, qiyosiy tahlil, ingliz tili, o‘zbek tili, ekvivalent, milliy madaniyat, mehnat, do‘stlik, oila.

Annotation: This article presents a comparative analysis of English and Uzbek proverbs about work, friendship and family. The study compares the meaning, imagery and structure of proverbs from both languages and identifies their similarities and differences. Examples show how proverbs reflect the worldview, values and way of life of each nation. The article ends with practical recommendations for using proverbs in English language classes.

Keywords: proverb, comparative analysis, English, Uzbek, equivalent, national culture, work, friendship, family.

When I first started learning English at school, our teacher once wrote a proverb on the board: "Make hay while the sun shines." Nobody in the class understood it, because none of us had ever made hay, and we did not see what the sun had to do with it. Then the teacher asked us to find an Uzbek proverb with the same idea, and somebody said "Temirni qizig‘ida bos" ("Strike the iron while it is hot"). Suddenly everything became clear. This small classroom moment is, in fact, a good illustration of why proverbs are worth studying: they carry the same human wisdom, but each nation dresses it in its own clothes.

Proverbs are short, fixed sayings that express a general truth or a piece of advice. W. Mieder, one of the best-known researchers in this field, describes them as sayings that contain "wisdom, truth, morals and traditional views in a metaphorical, fixed and memorizable form" [3]. In other words, a proverb is a kind of small text that a nation has polished for centuries. In Uzbek linguistics, proverbs have been collected and explained in detail by Sh. Shomaqsudov and Sh. Shorahmedov, whose dictionary "Hikmatnoma" contains thousands of examples with comments [5]. For English, "The Oxford Dictionary of Proverbs" edited by J. Speake is one of the most reliable sources [6].

The aim of this article is to compare a small but meaningful group of English and Uzbek proverbs on three topics that are important for every society: work, friendship and family. I used the comparative method and also a simple descriptive analysis. A selection of proverbs was taken from the dictionaries mentioned above, and the proverbs were divided into three groups: proverbs with full equivalents, proverbs with partial equivalents, and proverbs without equivalents.

Let us begin with proverbs about work. Both nations clearly respect hard work and laugh at laziness. The English say "No pain, no gain" and "Hard work never did anyone any harm", while Uzbeks say "Mehnat, mehnatning tagi rohat" ("Work, and under work there is comfort"). The idea is almost the same: effort brings reward. The English proverb "The early bird catches the worm" has a close Uzbek partner: "Erta turgan yigitning rizqi butun" ("The young man who gets up early never lacks his daily bread"). Here we see a partial equivalent: the meaning is shared, but the image is different. The English think of a bird and a worm, while the Uzbek proverb speaks about a person and his daily bread (rizq). This difference is not accidental. In Uzbek culture the idea of rizq, a portion of food or fortune given by God, is very important, and many proverbs are built around it.

Some proverbs show the different conditions in which people lived. "Make hay while the sun shines" reflects the rainy English climate, where a sunny day is a real opportunity for farmers. The Uzbek "Temirni qizig‘ida bos" comes from the world of the blacksmith, a respected craft in Central Asian towns. Both proverbs say "use the right moment", but their pictures come from different everyday lives.

The second group is about friendship. Here the similarities are even stronger. "A friend in need is a friend indeed" corresponds to the Uzbek "Do‘st boshga ish tushganda bilinar" ("A friend is known when trouble comes"). Both proverbs say that

real friendship is tested in difficult times. The English "Birds of a feather flock together" has a nice Uzbek equivalent: "O‘xshatmasdan uchratmas" ("Fate does not bring people together unless they are alike"). At the same time, Uzbek proverbs about friendship are often more emotional and more connected with hospitality. For example, "Do‘sting ming bo‘lsa ham oz, dushmaning bir bo‘lsa ham ko‘p" ("A thousand friends are few, one enemy is too many") has no exact English equivalent, although the English say something similar in a calmer way: "One enemy is too many, and a hundred friends too few." Interestingly, this English variant exists, but it is rarely used, while the Uzbek one is heard in everyday speech very often.

The third group, proverbs about family, shows the biggest cultural differences. Uzbek proverbs give a central place to parents, especially to the mother, and to respect for elders: "Ota rozi – xudo rozi" ("If your father is pleased, God is pleased"), "Jannat onalar oyog‘i ostidadir" ("Paradise lies under the feet of mothers"). In English it is difficult to find proverbs with the same religious and emotional strength. English proverbs about family are more practical and sometimes even ironic: "Blood is thicker than water", "Like father, like son", "Charity begins at home". The Uzbek "Qush uyasida ko‘rganini qiladi" ("A bird does what it saw in its nest") corresponds well to "Like father, like son" and to "The apple doesn't fall far from the tree". Here the meaning is the same: children copy their parents.

The analysis of the selected proverbs allowed me to draw a few conclusions. Firstly, many of the proverbs had full or near-full equivalents in the other language. This supports the view of linguists that proverbs express universal human experience [4]. Secondly, the most common type was the partial equivalent, where the meaning is the same but the image is different (bird and worm vs. a person and his bread; hay vs. hot iron). Thirdly, proverbs without equivalents were mostly connected with religion, family hierarchy and hospitality in Uzbek, and with weather, trade and individual responsibility in English. As Z. Kövecses notes, the images we use in figurative language are shaped by our physical and cultural environment [2], and proverbs are a clear example of this.

For translators, this means that a proverb should not be translated word for word. A literal translation of "Make hay while the sun shines" into Uzbek sounds strange, while the functional equivalent "Temirni qizig‘ida bos" sounds natural and keeps the meaning. This principle of looking for an equivalent in the target culture, and not just in the target dictionary, was also discussed in my earlier work on the development of the Uzbek language, where I noted how much the language depends on the cultural memory of its speakers [1].

Before going deeper into the comparison, it is useful to say a few words about how proverbs differ from other fixed expressions, because students often confuse proverbs, sayings and idioms. An idiom, such as "to kick the bucket" or "qulog‘i ding bo‘lmoq", is usually a part of a sentence and does not express a complete thought. A proverb, on the other hand, is a complete sentence with a general message: "Actions speak louder than words", "Ko‘p o‘qigan emas, ko‘p ko‘rgan biladi". N. Norrick, who studied English proverbs from a semantic point of view, explains that a proverb is used in conversation to evaluate a situation by referring to a general rule that everyone in the community is supposed to accept [4]. That is why a speaker can win

an argument simply by quoting a proverb: the proverb carries the authority of the whole nation, not just of one person.

Proverbs also have special formal features that make them easy to remember. In English, many proverbs use rhyme ("A friend in need is a friend indeed", "East or West, home is best"), alliteration ("Practice makes perfect", "Look before you leap") or parallel structure ("Easy come, easy go", "No pain, no gain"). Uzbek proverbs are even richer in such devices, because the Uzbek language with its vowel harmony and suffixes allows easy rhyme: "Ilm – baxt keltirar, bilim – taxt keltirar", "Bilim – aql chirog‘i", "Yaxshidan ot qoladi, yomondan dod qoladi". Very often an Uzbek proverb consists of two balanced halves, the second of which contrasts with or completes the first. This two-part structure is also common in English ("Out of sight, out of mind"), but it is less systematic. W. Mieder points out that such poetic features are not decoration; they are the reason proverbs survived in oral tradition for centuries [3].

It is also interesting to look at the most frequent images in the proverbs of each language. In the Uzbek proverbs analysed for this article, the most common images were bread (non), land and water, the horse, the guest, the mother and the elder. Bread is especially important: "Non ushog‘ini oyoq osti qilma", "Nonni hurmat qil". This reflects the agricultural way of life and the sacred status of bread in Uzbek culture. In the English proverbs, frequent images were money ("Time is money", "A penny saved is a penny earned"), the house and home ("An Englishman's home is his castle"), animals and birds, and the weather. The prominence of money and trade in English proverbs may reflect the long history of commerce in Britain, while the image of the home as a "castle" shows the high value of privacy in English culture. Z. Kövecses calls this phenomenon cultural variation in metaphor: although the basic conceptual metaphors may be universal, the concrete images are chosen from the experience of a particular culture [2].

Another interesting point concerns the attitude to wealth and work. English proverbs often present work as a way to personal success and independence: "God helps those who help themselves", "Where there's a will, there's a way". Uzbek proverbs about work frequently connect it with honour and with the good of the community: "Yolg‘iz otning changi chiqmas" ("A single horse raises no dust", that is, great work is done together), and laziness is criticized as something that brings shame on the family. In other words, the English proverbs put more emphasis on the individual, while the Uzbek proverbs put more emphasis on the family and society. This observation agrees with what many researchers say about the difference between more individualistic and more collectivist cultures.

In translation practice, proverbs require a special approach. A translator can use one of three main strategies. The first strategy is to find a full equivalent, when both the meaning and the image coincide, for example "Birds of a feather flock together – O‘xshatmasdan uchratmas" (here the image differs slightly, but the meaning and function are identical). The second strategy is to use an analogue, a proverb with the same meaning but a different image, as in "Make hay while the sun shines – Temirni qizig‘ida bos". The third strategy is descriptive translation, when no proverb exists in the target language and the translator simply explains the meaning.

The choice depends on the type of text: in a novel, an analogue makes the text sound natural; in a dictionary or a textbook, a literal translation with an explanation can help the reader to understand the original image. The dictionaries of Sh. Shomaqsudov and Sh. Shorahmedov [5] and J. Speake [6] are very helpful for finding such correspondences.

It is also worth considering how proverbs are used in modern life, because some people think that proverbs belong only to the past. In fact, proverbs are still very much alive, although their use is changing. In Uzbekistan, proverbs are often heard in family conversations, in speeches at weddings and other celebrations, in newspaper articles and in the speeches of officials. Elderly people use them especially often, and a person who can quote the right proverb at the right moment is considered wise and eloquent. In English-speaking countries, proverbs appear in advertising, newspaper headlines, songs and everyday talk, but very often in a modified form. Journalists like to play with well-known proverbs: "A friend in need is a friend to feed", "Where there's a will, there's a lawyer". W. Mieder calls such modified proverbs "anti-proverbs" and shows that they are a sign of the vitality of the genre, not of its decline [3]. A similar process can be observed in Uzbek social media, where young people create humorous versions of traditional proverbs.

The study of proverbs is also important for developing students' cultural competence. When a student knows the English proverb "An Englishman's home is his castle", he or she understands something important about the English attitude to privacy. When an English speaker learns the Uzbek proverb "Mehmon otangdan ulug‘" ("A guest is greater than your father"), he understands the central place of hospitality in Uzbek culture. In this sense, proverbs are like small windows into the mentality of a nation. N. Norrick also stresses that proverbs are cultural texts which presuppose shared knowledge and values among the speakers of a community [4]. For this reason, it is not enough for a learner to memorize the translation of a proverb; it is also necessary to understand when and why native speakers use it, whether it sounds serious or ironic, old-fashioned or modern.

Based on the analysis carried out in this article, several practical recommendations can be made for English teachers. Firstly, proverbs should be introduced gradually, starting with those that have full equivalents in Uzbek, because they are easier to remember and give students confidence. Secondly, proverbs with partial equivalents and different images should be explained with attention to their cultural background, for example by showing a picture of haymaking or of a blacksmith's workshop. Thirdly, students should practise using proverbs in context: completing dialogues, writing short stories or commenting on situations with a suitable proverb. Fourthly, it is useful to organize small research tasks, in which students collect proverbs on a certain topic from their grandparents and find English equivalents in dictionaries. Such tasks connect the classroom with family traditions and make the learning of English more personal and meaningful.

In conclusion, English and Uzbek proverbs about work, friendship and family share many common ideas, which shows that people in different parts of the world value the same things: honest work, true friends and a strong family. At the same time, the images and the emotional tone of the proverbs reflect each nation's history,

climate, religion and lifestyle. For English teachers in Uzbekistan, proverbs can become a very useful tool. I would suggest three simple activities: matching English proverbs with their Uzbek equivalents, explaining the cultural background of the images, and asking students to create short dialogues or stories in which a proverb is used naturally. Such tasks help students not only to remember new vocabulary, but also to understand the culture behind the language.

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