COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS OF PROVERBS IN ENGLISH AND UZBEK: LINGUOCULTURAL AND SEMANTIC PERSPECTIVES

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Abstract

This article compares English and Uzbek proverbs from semantic and linguocultural perspectives. It shows that many proverbs in the two languages express the same universal ideas about work, knowledge, friendship, patience and caution, but encode them through different images rooted in each nation's history, economy, religion and daily life. The study classifies proverb pairs into full, partial and zero equivalents and identifies culture-specific values: the central role of family, elders, hospitality and community in Uzbek proverbs, and of individual responsibility, time and pragmatism in English ones. Structural and stylistic features such as rhyme, parallelism and ellipsis are also compared.

Keywords: proverb, paremiology, linguoculture, national worldview, equivalence, semantics, English, Uzbek.

Introduction

Proverbs are short, fixed sayings that express generalised experience and moral judgement in a memorable form. They are often called the "wisdom of the people" because they preserve the values, beliefs and everyday knowledge of a community across generations. For this reason, proverbs are one of the most valuable sources for studying the relationship between language and culture.

English and Uzbek proverbs grew out of very different conditions. English proverbs reflect a maritime, commercial and later industrial society, influenced by the Bible and by classical Latin sayings. Uzbek proverbs (maqollar) reflect a settled agricultural and trading culture of Central Asia, the nomadic Turkic heritage, Islamic ethics and the classical literature of Alisher Navoiy and other poets.

The aim of this article is to compare the semantics of English and Uzbek proverbs, to classify them by degree of equivalence and to reveal the national values they encode. The results are relevant to translation, intercultural communication and the teaching of English in Uzbekistan.

Theoretical background and methodology

The study of proverbs, or paremiology, has a long tradition. In English studies, the work of W. Mieder and N. Norrick defines the proverb as a traditional, didactic sentence with a fixed form and figurative meaning. In Russian and Uzbek phraseology, A. V. Kunin treated proverbs as a special class of phraseological units with the structure of a sentence. Uzbek proverbs have been collected and described by Sh. Shomaqsudov and Sh. Shorahmedov, whose dictionary Ma'nolar maxzani (2001) remains a key source, and by Sh. Rahmatullayev.

The linguocultural approach, developed by V. N. Telia, V. A. Maslova and others, treats proverbs as carriers of cultural codes: the body code, the animal code, the food code and so on. This approach makes it possible to see why the same idea is expressed through different images.

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The material comprises about 300 pairs of English and Uzbek proverbs taken from The Oxford Dictionary of Proverbs, Ma'nolar maxzani and bilingual phraseological dictionaries. The methods used are semantic and component analysis, comparative-typological analysis and linguocultural interpretation.

Conclusion

Contemporary English and Uzbek respond to the same global pressures with different strategies. English renews its vocabulary mainly from within, through blending, compounding, clipping, acronymy, conversion and semantic shift. Uzbek relies chiefly on borrowing, calquing and the revival of older words, and integrates new roots through its productive suffix system.

These differences follow from three factors: the typological contrast between an analytical and an agglutinative language, the donor–recipient relationship between the two languages, and the active language policy of independent Uzbekistan. Further research could build a bilingual dictionary of recent neologisms and track which Uzbek doublets (investitsiya / sarmoya) stabilise in usage.

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