



A COMPARATIVE LINGOCULTURAL STUDY OF EMPATHY-RELATED
PROVERBS IN ENGLISH AND UZBEK

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Annotation: *This study investigates empathy-related proverbs in English and Uzbek from a comparative linguocultural perspective. Proverbs are considered stable linguistic units that preserve cultural values, social norms, and collective experience. The research is grounded in linguocultural and cognitive linguistic theories proposed by V. V. Vorobyev, G. Lakoff, M. Johnson, and A. Wierzbicka, who stress the interdependence of language, culture, and conceptualization. The analysis demonstrates that although empathy represents a universal emotional value, its linguistic realization in proverbs reflects culturally specific moral priorities and social models. English proverbs predominantly emphasize personal emotional support and individual moral choice, while Uzbek proverbs underline communal solidarity, moral responsibility, and shared emotional experience. This study argues that empathy-related proverbs function as cultural tools shaping social behavior and ethical judgment.*

Key words: *empathy, proverb, linguoculture, paremiology, cultural values, conceptual analysis, comparative linguistics, emotional concepts, worldview, national mentality, English language, Uzbek language*

INTRODUCTION

In recent years, linguocultural studies have increasingly focused on the analysis of emotional concepts as key elements of national worldviews. Language not only reflects reality but also shapes patterns of thinking and social behavior. Proverbs occupy a special position among linguistic units because they combine linguistic stability with cultural depth and evaluative meaning. Empathy, as a complex emotional and ethical phenomenon, plays an essential role in regulating interpersonal relations and maintaining social cohesion. Scholars such as Wierzbicka emphasize that emotions are not universal in their linguistic expression, as each culture selects and encodes emotional meanings differently. From this perspective, empathy-related proverbs provide valuable material for revealing how moral values are transmitted across generations.

The comparative analysis of English and Uzbek proverbs is particularly relevant due to the cultural and typological differences between these language communities. English-speaking cultures are often characterized by individual-centered social models, while Uzbek culture traditionally emphasizes collectivism and communal responsibility. Studying empathy within these contrasting frameworks allows for identifying both shared human values and culturally specific patterns of emotional expression. This research



contributes to linguocultural and comparative linguistics by demonstrating how empathy functions as a culturally embedded concept rather than a purely psychological phenomenon.

Main part. Empathy-related proverbs perform several important functions within a linguocultural system. They transmit ethical norms, regulate social behavior, and provide evaluative guidance in emotionally significant situations. From a semantic perspective, empathy in proverbs is expressed through notions of compassion, shared suffering, assistance, and emotional understanding. From a pragmatic perspective, such proverbs guide speakers toward socially acceptable responses to another person's hardship.

In English proverbs, empathy is commonly associated with interpersonal solidarity and voluntary moral action. Expressions like "A friend in need is a friend indeed" emphasize the moral value of loyalty during difficult times. This proverb reflects a cultural orientation toward personal relationships, where empathy is demonstrated through individual choice and emotional commitment.

Another proverb, "Misery loves company," suggests that emotional pain becomes more bearable when shared, highlighting empathy as a psychological mechanism of relief rather than a collective obligation. English empathy-related proverbs often employ neutral or abstract imagery, which allows them to function universally across various social contexts. This linguistic feature reflects a tendency to conceptualize empathy as an internal emotional state supported by rational understanding and communication. Empathy, in this context, is closely linked to emotional intelligence and self-awareness.

In contrast, Uzbek proverbs conceptualize empathy primarily through social and collective imagery. Proverbs such as "Bir kishi uchun qayg'u bo'lsa, el uchun sinov" present suffering as a shared experience that concerns the entire community. This reflects a cultural worldview in which emotional involvement is expected and morally required. Another proverb, "Dardni bo'lishsang yengil bo'ladi," reinforces the idea that empathy functions through collective support and open emotional exchange. Uzbek empathy-related proverbs frequently include expressive vocabulary and moral evaluation, strengthening their didactic character. They promote values such as compassion, patience, mutual assistance, and respect for others' suffering. Comparative analysis shows that while both English and Uzbek proverbs recognize empathy as a positive and necessary human quality, the cultural emphasis differs. English proverbs foreground personal moral responsibility, whereas Uzbek proverbs prioritize social harmony and communal care. These distinctions are rooted in historical traditions, social organization, and cultural norms.

Conclusion. The comparative linguocultural study of empathy-related proverbs in English and Uzbek reveals that empathy is a universal emotional concept shaped by culture-specific linguistic mechanisms. Proverbs serve as cultural texts that encode moral values, social expectations, and collective experience. The analysis demonstrates that English proverbs conceptualize empathy mainly as an individual emotional and ethical choice, emphasizing personal responsibility and emotional understanding. In contrast, Uzbek proverbs represent empathy as a collective moral duty closely connected with social unity and shared responsibility.



The findings confirm that empathy in proverbs functions not only as an emotional reaction but also as a culturally regulated model of behavior. By comparing empathy-related proverbs in English and Uzbek, the study contributes to a deeper understanding of how language reflects cultural attitudes toward emotion and social interaction.

The results of this research may be useful for further studies in linguocultural analysis, intercultural communication, and comparative paremiology.

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