

SYNONYMIC AND ANTONYMIC ANALYSIS OF UZBEK PROVERBS

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Abstract. *Proverbs are a treasure trove of a nation's wisdom, reflecting its culture, traditions, and moral values. This thesis examines the synonymic and antonymic relations in Uzbek proverbs, aiming to reveal the intricate layers of meaning embedded within them. By analyzing the linguistic structure and semantic connections, the study sheds light on how proverbs convey similar or opposing ideas to encapsulate the essence of Uzbek thought. Keywords: Uzbek proverbs, synonymy, antonymy, semantics, cultural heritage.*

Аннотация. *Пословицы являются кладезем народной мудрости, отражая культуру, традиции и моральные ценности нации. В данной работе исследуются синонимические и антонимические отношения в узбекских пословицах с целью выявления сложных смысловых слоев, заложенных в них. Анализируя лингвистическую структуру и семантические связи, исследование раскрывает, как пословицы выражают схожие или противоположные идеи, передавая суть узбекского мировоззрения. Ключевые слова: узбекские пословицы, синонимия, антонимия, семантика, культурное наследие.*

Annotatsiya. *Maqollar xalq donoligini, millatning madaniyati, urf-odatlari va axloqiy qadriyatlarini aks ettiruvchi bebaho xazina hisoblanadi. Ushbu ilmiy ishda o'zbek maqollarida uchraydigan sinonimlik va antonimlik munosabatlari o'rganilib, ular tarkibidagi murakkab ma'no qatlamlari yoritiladi. Lingvistik tuzilma va semantik bog'lanishlarni tahlil qilish orqali maqollarda o'xshash yoki qarama-qarshi g'oyalar qanday ifodalanganligi ochib beriladi. Kalit so'zlar: o'zbek maqollari, sinonimlik, antonimlik, semantika, madaniy meros.*

INTRODUCTION

Proverbs hold a special place in the linguistic and cultural heritage of a nation. They encapsulate generations of wisdom and serve as a medium for expressing complex ideas succinctly. In the context of the Uzbek language, proverbs are a reflection of the nation's identity and values. This thesis aims to analyze the synonymic and antonymic structures within Uzbek proverbs, providing insight into their semantic richness.

Main body. Synonymy and antonymy are fundamental concepts in linguistics that reveal how words, phrases, and expressions relate to each other in terms of meaning. Synonymy refers to the phenomenon where two or more lexical items share a similar

or identical meaning, though they may differ slightly in context or usage. For example, in English, the words “big” and “large” are synonyms, as they both describe something of significant size. However, their use may vary depending on the context, showing that synonymy is often partial rather than absolute. Similarly, in Uzbek, the terms “katta” and “ulug” share the idea of largeness or greatness, but the latter carries a more formal tone, often used in ceremonial or respectful contexts. As Crystal notes, “Synonymy often reflects cultural and contextual preferences in language use.”¹⁶ Antonymy, on the other hand, pertains to the relationship between words with opposing meanings. Linguists categorize antonymy into various types, such as binary (true opposites like “hot” and “cold”), gradable (terms that allow degrees, like “big” and “small”), and relational antonyms (paired opposites like “buy” and “sell”). Uzbek proverbs often utilize antonymy to convey moral lessons or highlight contrasting ideas. For instance, the proverb “Yomon odamning yuzi qora, yaxshi odamning yuzi yorug” (The face of a bad person is dark, while that of a good person is bright) juxtaposes good and evil through visual and symbolic imagery, emphasizing moral integrity.¹⁷ The semantic structure of proverbs is often compact, allowing them to express complex ideas succinctly. According to Wierzbicka, “Proverbs are a mirror of a society’s worldview, encapsulating moral, ethical, and practical lessons in a linguistic nutshell.”¹⁸ In Uzbek proverbs, semantics often reflects cultural values such as hospitality, respect for elders, and the importance of hard work. For instance, the proverb *Mehnat qilgan – qirni egallaydi* (He who works hard conquers the mountain) uses metaphorical language to emphasize the rewards of perseverance and effort. Synonymy in proverbs is a tool for reinforcing ideas by expressing them through different linguistic forms. In Uzbek culture, this linguistic phenomenon is often employed to emphasize shared values. For example, the proverbs *Yaxshilik qil, yaxshilik ko`rasan* (Do good, and you’ll find good) and *Yaxshi ish qilsang, yaxshi gap eshitasan* (If you do good deeds, you’ll hear good words) share the same moral lesson: good deeds yield positive outcomes.¹⁹

Similarly, the proverb *Boylik baxt emas, qanoat baxtdir* (Wealth is not happiness; contentment is happiness) contrasts materialism with spiritual satisfaction. The juxtaposition of *boylik* (wealth) and *qanoat* (contentment) reflects the Uzbek worldview, which often associates true happiness with inner peace rather than external possessions.²⁰ This example shows how antonymy in proverbs often carries moral or philosophical weight, making it a key element in their semantic structure.

¹⁶ David Crystal, *The Cambridge Encyclopedia of Language* (Cambridge University Press, 1997), 120.

¹⁷ A. Yuldashev, “O‘zbek maqollarida sinonim va antonim munosabatlar,” *Filologiya fanlari jurnali*, 2020, 45.

¹⁸ Anna Wierzbicka, *Understanding Cultures through their Key Words* (Oxford University Press, 1997), 87.

¹⁹ S. T. Saidov, *Maqollar va ularning lingvistik tahlili* (Toshkent, 2005), 22.

²⁰ Mukarramova, “Proverbs as the Mirror of Culture,” 38.

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