



LINGUOCULTURAL FEATURES OF WISE SAYINGS DESCRIBING HUMAN  
CHARACTER IN ENGLISH AND UZBEK LITERARY WORKS

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**Abstract:** *The article investigates the linguocultural features of wise sayings that describe human character in English and Uzbek literary works. Wise sayings, including proverbs, aphorisms, maxims, and morally marked expressions, are viewed as cultural signs that transmit national mentality, ethical experience, and social expectations. The study applies comparative linguocultural analysis, semantic analysis, and contextual interpretation to selected English and Uzbek literary texts. The results show that English literary discourse frequently uses wise sayings to reveal individual responsibility, moral choice, psychological conflict, and personal worldview. Uzbek literary discourse, in contrast, tends to emphasize social harmony, respect for elders, patience, honesty, hospitality, and collective moral evaluation. The article concludes that wise sayings are not decorative elements only; they function as culturally loaded linguistic units that reveal virtues and vices, strengthen characterization, and preserve the moral memory of a nation.*

**Keywords:** *wise sayings, human character, linguocultural analysis, English literature, Uzbek literature, proverbs, aphorisms, national mentality, literary discourse.*

## INTRODUCTION

Language and culture are inseparable phenomena, because every linguistic unit may carry information about the worldview, historical memory, moral norms, and social experience of a speech community. In linguocultural studies, language is considered not only as a means of communication but also as a system through which cultural values are stored and transmitted (Kramsch, 1998, pp. 3-14; Wierzbicka, 1997, pp. 1-23). From this point of view, wise sayings represent one of the most expressive linguistic forms of collective experience.

Wise sayings are short, meaningful, and memorable expressions that usually contain moral judgement, practical advice, or philosophical observation. They include proverbs, aphorisms, maxims, and other fixed expressions based on folk wisdom or literary creativity. According to Mieder, proverbs are traditional statements that express common truth, social experience, and cultural evaluation in a concise form (Mieder, 2004, pp. 1-28). Norrick also emphasizes that proverbs and related sayings obtain their meaning not only from their lexical content but also from their social and pragmatic use (Norrick, 1985, pp. 40-64).

In English and Uzbek literary works, wise sayings are frequently connected with the representation of human character. They help the writer show whether a character is honest or deceitful, brave or cowardly, patient or impatient, wise or foolish. In literary discourse, such sayings may appear in the speech of characters, in the narrator's



commentary, or in the general moral structure of the text. This means that wise sayings perform both aesthetic and evaluative functions (Simpson, 2003, pp. 55-70).

The relevance of this topic is determined by the growing interest in comparative linguocultural studies. The study of English and Uzbek wise sayings allows researchers to reveal similarities and differences in national views of human character. While English literary tradition often focuses on individual conscience, personal freedom, and moral responsibility, Uzbek literary tradition frequently highlights respect, community, family honour, patience, and social duty. Such differences can be studied through cultural conceptualization, which explains how cultural groups organize experience through language (Sharifian, 2017, pp. 1-20).

The aim of this article is to analyse the linguocultural features of wise sayings describing human character in English and Uzbek literary works. The research tasks are: to define the role of wise sayings in literary characterization; to identify the main semantic groups related to human virtues and vices; to compare English and Uzbek cultural interpretations of character traits; and to determine the pragmatic functions of wise sayings in literary discourse.

#### Methods

The article is based on the principles of qualitative linguistic research. The main methods used in the study are comparative analysis, semantic analysis, contextual analysis, and linguocultural interpretation. These methods make it possible to examine wise sayings not only as lexical units but also as cultural and pragmatic signs in literary discourse.

First, selected wise sayings from English and Uzbek literary texts were identified according to their semantic relation to human character. Special attention was given to expressions describing virtues such as honesty, patience, courage, kindness, wisdom, modesty, loyalty, and diligence, as well as vices such as pride, greed, betrayal, hypocrisy, laziness, and selfishness. This stage follows the paremiological approach in which proverbs and aphoristic expressions are classified according to theme, form, and communicative function (Mieder, 2004, pp. 12-48; Norrick, 1985, pp. 77-105).

Second, the selected expressions were analysed in their literary context. Contextual analysis helped to determine who uses the wise saying, in what situation it appears, what moral meaning it carries, and how it influences the reader's understanding of character. In this respect, discourse analysis is important because the meaning of a wise saying depends on speaker intention, social relationship, and textual position (Holmes, 2005, pp. 160-170; Simpson, 2003, pp. 55-70).

Third, English and Uzbek examples were compared from a linguocultural perspective. English literary examples were interpreted with reference to Shakespearean drama, modern English fiction, and aphoristic literary discourse. Uzbek examples were interpreted with reference to Alisher Navoiy's didactic heritage, Uzbek classical wisdom, and modern Uzbek prose represented by writers such as Abdulla Qodiriy and Oybek. The comparative approach allowed the study to reveal both universal and culture-specific features of character description (Navoi, 2016, pp. 35-78; Qodiriy, 2009, pp. 41-96).

The theoretical basis of the research includes works on paremiology, linguoculturology, cultural linguistics, literary stylistics, and discourse analysis. The views



of scholars such as W. Mieder, N. R. Norrick, A. Wierzbicka, C. Kramersch, F. Sharifian, and D. Crystal are used to support the interpretation of wise sayings as linguocultural units (Crystal, 2004, pp. 125-140; Sharifian, 2017, pp. 25-53).

### Results

#### 1. Wise sayings as markers of virtues and vices

The analysis shows that wise sayings in both English and Uzbek literary texts are often organized around the opposition between virtues and vices. Positive character traits are usually represented through sayings about honesty, wisdom, patience, courage, kindness, loyalty, and modesty. Negative traits are expressed through sayings connected with pride, deception, greed, betrayal, foolishness, and moral weakness. This thematic opposition is common in proverbial discourse, where brief expressions usually contain an explicit or implicit moral evaluation (Mieder, 2004, pp. 49-76; Norrick, 1985, pp. 109-132).

In English literature, such sayings are frequently connected with the idea of individual moral responsibility. For example, Shakespearean drama contains many aphoristic expressions that reveal the inner world of characters and their attitude toward truth, loyalty, ambition, and conscience. The famous moral advice in Hamlet illustrates how a short aphoristic expression may summarize a character's ethical position and social worldview (Shakespeare, 2008, pp. 81-83; Crystal, 2011, pp. 125-140).

In Uzbek literature, wise sayings often present character through social and ethical relations. A person is evaluated not only by personal qualities but also by attitude toward parents, elders, neighbours, guests, community, and homeland. In Alisher Navoiy's didactic works, wisdom, justice, generosity, and modesty are central moral qualities, and they are expressed through concise philosophical statements close to proverbs and aphorisms (Navoi, 2016, pp. 44-92; Rakhmonov, 2016, pp. 230-245).

#### 2. Linguocultural representation of human character

Wise sayings are linguocultural units because their meaning cannot be fully understood without cultural context. The same concept may exist in both English and Uzbek, but it may be expressed through different images, values, and social associations. For example, wisdom in English literary tradition may be associated with rational judgement, experience, and self-knowledge, while in Uzbek tradition it is often associated with elders, life experience, respectful speech, and moral restraint. Such differences confirm that cultural concepts are encoded in language through socially shared meanings (Wierzbicka, 1997, pp. 24-66; Sharifian, 2017, pp. 97-122).

Honesty is another important character trait represented in both traditions. English texts may emphasize honesty as personal integrity and truthfulness before one's conscience. Uzbek texts, however, often connect honesty with social reputation, family upbringing, and halal living. In this way, wise sayings become verbal signs of cultural morality: they do not simply name a quality but show how that quality is evaluated in society (Kramersch, 1998, pp. 27-49; Yo'ldoshev, 2013, pp. 58-76).

Patience is also culturally significant. In English literary texts, patience may appear as self-control or endurance in difficult circumstances. In Uzbek literature, sabr is often presented as a deep moral and spiritual virtue. It is connected with dignity, faith, respect, and the ability to overcome hardship without losing humanity. This cultural interpretation



can be seen in Uzbek classical and modern prose, where patient characters are often morally respected by the narrator and community (Navoi, 1991, pp. 112-138; Oybek, 2004, pp. 145-172).

### 3. Pragmatic functions of wise sayings in literary discourse

The research identifies several pragmatic functions of wise sayings in the portrayal of human character. The first function is evaluative. Wise sayings allow the narrator or another character to judge behaviour indirectly. Instead of directly saying that a person is dishonest, proud, wise, or patient, the text may use a proverb or aphorism that carries the evaluation in a culturally accepted form (Holmes, 2005, pp. 157-178; Stubbe & Holmes, 1995, pp. 291-310).

The second function is characterizing. A person who uses wise sayings may be represented as experienced, educated, traditional, humorous, moral, or manipulative, depending on the context. In Uzbek literature, elderly characters and morally respected figures often use wisdom-based speech, which increases their authority. In English literature, aphoristic speech may reveal intellectual sharpness, irony, hypocrisy, or philosophical reflection, as seen in dramatic and satirical texts (Wilde, 2000, pp. 12-18; Crystal, 2004, pp. 133-148).

The third function is persuasive. A wise saying can influence another character's decision, justify an action, or strengthen an argument. Because such sayings are connected with collective wisdom, they often sound more convincing than ordinary personal opinion. This persuasive power is especially important in didactic literature, where the writer aims not only to describe reality but also to educate the reader morally (Mieder, 2004, pp. 129-151; Navoi, 2016, pp. 101-126).

### Discussion

The results demonstrate that English and Uzbek literary traditions share a common humanistic foundation. Both traditions use wise sayings to distinguish good and bad character, to transmit ethical knowledge, and to make literary images more memorable. However, the cultural focus is not always the same. English literature often uses wise sayings to emphasize individual choice, inner conflict, and moral self-awareness, while Uzbek literature tends to connect character with family, community, honour, and social responsibility (Kramsch, 1998, pp. 81-99; Rakhmonov, 2016, pp. 235-243).

In English literary works, wise sayings often individualize the character. They may reveal a person's inner conflict, personal philosophy, moral hesitation, or attitude to society. The focus frequently falls on personal conscience and the individual's relationship with truth. For example, Shakespeare's characters use aphoristic language to express ambition, loyalty, distrust, courage, and moral uncertainty (Shakespeare, 2015, pp. 64-88; Crystal, 2011, pp. 141-156).

In Uzbek literary works, wise sayings more often connect the character with the community. They express the importance of family, honour, respect, hospitality, patience, loyalty, and social duty. A character is not only a psychological individual but also a member of a moral community. Abdulla Qodiriy's prose, for instance, reflects how social relations, respect, and moral judgement shape the reader's perception of human character (Qodiriy, 2009, pp. 97-134; Karimov, 2017, pp. 110-115).



Another important difference concerns imagery. English wise sayings may use abstract moral vocabulary, religious-cultural references, or metaphorical images based on everyday experience. Uzbek wise sayings often contain images from family life, nature, agriculture, hospitality, labour, and social hierarchy. These images show that national culture influences not only the content of wise sayings but also their figurative structure (Yo'ldoshev, 2013, pp. 84-105; Sharifian, 2017, pp. 130-151).

Therefore, the comparative study of wise sayings contributes to the broader field of linguoculturology. It shows that literary language preserves not only aesthetic beauty but also cultural codes. Through wise sayings, readers can understand how different nations conceptualize courage, honesty, wisdom, patience, modesty, betrayal, pride, and other qualities of human character.

#### Conclusion

Wise sayings describing human character are significant linguocultural units in English and Uzbek literary works. They reflect cultural experience, moral judgement, and national mentality in a concise and memorable form. As proverbs, aphorisms, and maxims, they help writers reveal virtues and vices, strengthen characterization, and guide the reader's ethical interpretation of literary events.

The comparative analysis reveals that English literature often uses wise sayings to express individual responsibility, psychological complexity, and personal moral choice. Uzbek literature, in turn, frequently uses them to express collective wisdom, respect, family values, patience, honesty, and social harmony. These differences do not separate the two traditions completely; rather, they show how universal human qualities are interpreted through different cultural codes.

The findings of the article may be useful for further research in linguoculturology, comparative literature, paremiology, translation studies, and English-Uzbek literary analysis. They also show that wise sayings should be studied not only as fixed expressions but also as dynamic literary and cultural tools that reveal the moral image of a person and the worldview of a nation.

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