



FROM SEMANTICS TO PRAGMATICS: THE APPLICATION AND DIDACTIC USE OF PROVERBS IN ENGLISH AND UZBEK LANGUAGE TEACHING

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MAQOLA HAQIDA

ANNOTATION

Qabul qilindi: 12-yanvar 2025-yil

Tasdiqlandi: 15-yanvar 2025-yil

Jurnal soni: 17

Maqola raqami: 21

DOI: <https://doi.org/10.54613/ku.v17i.1364>

KALIT SO'ZLAR/ КЛЮЧЕВЫЕ СЛОВА/

KEYWORDS

proverbs, pragmatics, language teaching, didactics, English, Uzbek, intercultural competence, applied linguistics

Proverbs are seen as a special mix of word meanings, practical uses, and culture codes. They are considered powerful but little-used tools in foreign language teaching. Their teaching value in English and Uzbek classes is examined in this study. The change from understanding words to using them in talk is followed. A qualitative comparison method is employed. The role of proverbs in building students' talk skills, culture awareness, and right speaking is explained. A collection of teaching-important English and Uzbek proverbs was studied for meanings, uses, and teaching value. It was found that proverbs are usually taught as word items first. Their talk functions-like advice, warnings, judging, persuading—are not used enough in class. Proverb teaching is argued to clearly improve talk skills and culture knowledge. Practical ideas for class design, materials, and teacher training in English and Uzbek programs are given.

Introduction. A big change in language teaching methods has happened recently. Focus has moved from grammar rules to talk skills, practical use, and culture understanding. In this new view, good language goes beyond grammar rules. It includes making right meanings in social talk situations¹. Real language examples are now preferred in teaching. They show true talk patterns. Proverbs stand out as perfect real examples. They are culture-based fixed sayings. Semantic meaning, talk intent, and social judgment are packed into short forms². Proverbs are used everywhere in normal talk. Important talk jobs are done by them: advice is given, warnings are issued, behavior is judged, actions are supported, social rules are strengthened. Despite this rich use, their teaching role is still limited³. This is especially true in English as foreign language and Uzbek as foreign language classes. In English and Uzbek school programs, proverbs are mostly treated as word or style examples. Students are asked to remember meanings or find figures of speech⁴. Their use in real talk is ignored most of the time. This narrow view turns proverbs into dead culture items. They are cut off from their real work. This limited way is especially bad. Talk mistakes, not grammar mistakes, cause most culture talk problems. As indirect talk acts, proverbs are seen in a practical way⁵. Advice, blame, or moral judgment can be given softly by them. Face threats are reduced. Their common use, indirect style, and culture power make them perfect tools for teaching talk skills, polite ways, and culture-right talk⁶. Cross-culture differences are shown in how proverbs are used. They point to different value systems, talk expectations, and right-use rules. The English-Uzbek pair is very useful for study. English teaching stresses hints, student choice, and soft talk. Uzbek talk style shows group needs and clear morals⁷. These deep differences appear in proverb use, understanding, and teaching. Against this background, the teaching chances of proverbs in English and Uzbek classes are questioned in this study. The path from word meanings to talk use is followed. It is shown that talk-aware proverb teaching clearly improves talk quality, culture understanding, and skill to read value-full talk. Semantic, talk, and teaching views are

combined⁸. This work helps applied linguistics research on real materials, talk teaching, and proverb lessons.

Proverbs were found to have a two-part structure in the word study. Basic word centers like "stitch" or "path" were covered by picture layers. LIFE = JOURNEY and TIME = RESOURCE ideas were seen in both English and Uzbek examples. Word density was similar with Uzbek at 1.84 ideas per syllable and English at 1.76.

Talk study showed clear use differences. English proverbs led with 41% advice and 29% encourage types⁹. General wisdom was favored as in "A stitch in time...". Uzbek examples had stronger 52% order force and 33% judging tone. Group rules were created as in "Ota-ona aytgan yo'l...". Proverb place study showed 68% ended turns and 22% explained before.

Teaching chance study showed little use. Word tasks led with 79% of examples. Talk tasks made 14% and culture uses only 7%. Task types showed missed chances. Proverb finish tasks checked word memory without hints. Translation lost talk change. English proverbs helped hint practice with finish tasks at 92% match rate. Uzbek examples gave clear models for new culture learners. Matching pairs like "Bird in hand" and "Qo'lda turni" helped move learning without culture loss.

Literature review. The semantic and culture role of proverbs has long been known in linguistics research. Proverbs are described¹⁰ as short folk wisdom that shows morals and social rules. This early work set the culture value of proverbs. But little was said about teaching use. Talk skills became central in applied linguistics¹¹. Talk mistakes—not grammar—are seen as main cause of culture talk problems. Proverbs are viewed as real talk material that shows normal use. Recent studies show fixed language like proverbs helps talk fluency¹². Culture sayings teach hidden right-use and polite rules. In Uzbek linguistics, researchers stress the moral and teaching role of proverbs in national culture¹³. But their use in foreign language teaching for talk lessons is not much studied. English-Uzbek teaching studies are very few¹⁴. Semantic study, talk theory, and teaching use are connected by this study. A clear model for proverb teaching is offered.

¹Axmedov Ikboljon. (2024). Strategies for Vocabulary Enhancement in EFL Contexts: An Analytical Approach. *Multidisciplinary Journal of Science and Technology*, 4(6), 571–573.

²Axmedov Ikboljon. (2025). A speech act analysis of proverbs: exploring the illocutionary force of traditional wisdom. *pedagogik tadqiqotlar jurnali*, 5(1), 96–105.

³Axmedov, I. (2024). Paremiology: enhancing academic insight through proverbs. *University research base*, 768–773.

⁴Axmedov, I. (2025). Birds, beasts, and nature: an ecolinguistic and axiological study of metaphor source domains in english and uzbek proverbs. *Qo'qon universiteti xabarnomasi*, 16, 144–149.

⁵Axmedov, I. (2025). proverbs as social glue: how shared wisdom creates connection and understanding. *Journal of Multidisciplinary Sciences and Innovations*, 1(3), 1058–1065.

⁶ Ikboljon, A. (2024). Exploring Cultural Wisdom and Communication Dynamics: A Comparative Analysis of English and Uzbek Proverbs within the Framework of Paremiology and Discourse Analysis. *International Journal of Formal Education*, 3(6), 301–308.

⁷Ilxomovich, I. A. (2022). Problems in the acquisition of English nouns. *Web of Scientist: International Scientific Research Journal*, (6), 1128–1133

⁸The Conceptualization of "Family" And "Kin": A Comparative Semantic and Axiological Analysis of English and Uzbek Proverbs. (2025). *International Journal of Political Sciences and Economics*, 4(12), 200–208.

⁹the Historical and Cultural Layers in Uzbek Proverbs: Tracing Values from Nomadic Traditions to Modernity. (2025). *International Journal of Artificial Intelligence*, 5(12), 2880–2885.

¹⁰ Taylor, A. (1931). *The proverb*. Harvard University Press.

¹¹ Levinson, S. C. (1983). *Pragmatics*. Cambridge University Press.

¹² Taguchi, N. (2019). *The Routledge handbook of second language acquisition and pragmatics*. Routledge.

¹³ Qayumov, X. (1992). *O'zbek maqollari va matallari*. Fan.

¹⁴ Axmedov, I. (2024). A comparative analysis of uzbek and english proverbs: cultural insights and linguistic features. *Qo'qon universiteti xabarnomasi*, 13, 284–285.

Methods. A qualitative comparative corpus design was employed in this investigation, strategically triangulating semantic, pragmatic, and pedagogical analytical frameworks to yield comprehensive insights into proverb functionality. This methodological architecture was deliberately selected to capture the multidimensional nature of proverbs as linguistic, interactional, and instructional phenomena, enabling systematic cross-linguistic scrutiny within English and Uzbek pedagogical contexts. The primary analytical corpus was meticulously constructed from 120 purposively sampled English-Uzbek proverb instantiations, representing high-frequency occurrences within established pedagogical repertoires. Source validation was rigorously pursued through dual verification channels: (1) structured teacher surveys administered to 28 English language instructors and 32 Uzbek language educators across Tashkent State University of Uzbek Language and Literature and affiliated institutions, yielding frequency rankings and contextual usage profiles; and (2) systematic extraction from learner corpora spanning CEFR levels B1-C1, encompassing 450 authentic tokens from instructional materials, examination papers, and classroom transcripts collected between 2023-2025. Sampling criteria prioritized functional equivalence, cultural salience, and instructional prevalence, ensuring corpus representativeness while mitigating selection bias.

The investigation unfolded across three analytically discrete yet interlinked phases, each operationalized through established theoretical and methodological protocols.

Firstly, semantic Decomposition adhered scrupulously to Cruse's componential analysis paradigm, systematically decomposing lexical nuclei into semantic primitives while concurrently mapping figurative instantiations. Core procedures encompassed: (a) denotative decomposition disaggregating literal referents (e.g., "stitch" → fabric repair; "path" → physical trajectory); (b) connotative profiling capturing evaluative loadings (e.g., "path" → moral trajectory); and (c) schematic mapping elucidating conceptual metaphors (LIFE=JOURNEY, TIME=RESOURCE) via systematic alignment of source-target domain correspondences. Lexical density metrics were computed as concepts-per-syllable ratios, facilitating quantitative cross-linguistic comparability. Secondly, Pragmatic Categorization operationalized Searle's speech act taxonomy—assertives, directives, commissives, expressives, declaratives—augmented by Brown & Levinson's (1987) politeness theory framework. Illocutionary force was classified through iterative coding cycles incorporating: (i) propositional content analysis; (ii) contextual felicity profiling (participant roles, setting, sequential position); and (iii) sincerity condition verification. Sequential embedding was charted via conversation analysis protocols, documenting proverb deployment as turn-final summarizers, preemptive justifications, or repair initiators. Cross-cultural felicity conditions were differentiated, with English implicature salience contrasted against Uzbek obligative explicitness. Finally, Pedagogical Affordance Evaluation systematically appraised didactic applicability through task design heuristics derived from Nation & Macalister's principles of curriculum design. Analytical dimensions included: input elaboration potential (comprehensibility enhancement via visual/linguistic support); output scaffolding capacity (structured practice opportunities); transferability indices (context-generalization metrics); and metapragmatic reflection facilitation. Task taxonomies were developed encompassing proverb completion, translation recalibration, role-enactment scenarios, discourse completion exercises, and intercultural debate protocols.

Analytical procedures were executed sequentially: (1) interlinear semantic glossing produced standardized meaning representations; (2) pragmatic function matrices generated illocutionary force distributions; (3) cross-linguistic alignment procedures yielded 92.4% functional congruence (Cohen's $\kappa=0.87$ for equivalence judgments); and (4) pedagogical adaptation protocols synthesized task sequences optimizing semantic-pragmatic progression.

Validity and reliability were robustly triangulated through multiple procedural safeguards. Member-checking was conducted with 12 native speaker consultants (6 English, 6 Uzbek) who verified semantic glosses, pragmatic categorizations, and pedagogical extrapolations. Intercoder reliability was established at $\kappa=0.88$ across 36 double-scored exemplars (30% corpus overlap), with discrepancies

resolved through discussion to consensus. Theoretical triangulation across Hallidayan, Searlean, and Nationian frameworks mitigated paradigmatic bias. The English-Uzbek juxtaposition deliberately leveraged typological complementarity, positioning English's implicature-heavy profile against Uzbek's directive-explicit orientation to maximize contrastive illumination. Ethical protocols were stringently observed throughout. Informed consent was secured from all teacher and consultant participants. Learner corpus data underwent de-identification per Tashkent State University IRB guidelines (Protocol LING-2025-047). Data management adhered to GDPR-compliant anonymization standards, ensuring participant confidentiality across all analytical phases.

This methodological architecture—integrating corpus rigor, theoretical triangulation, and pedagogical applicability—furnishes a replicable blueprint for proverb-mediated pragmatics instruction while establishing robust empirical foundations for the substantive findings reported subsequently.

Results. Proverbs were found to have a two-part structure in the word study. Basic word centers like "stitch" or "path" were covered by picture layers. LIFE = JOURNEY and TIME = RESOURCE ideas were seen in both English and Uzbek examples. Word density was similar with Uzbek at 1.84 ideas per syllable and English at 1.76.

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Discussion. Proverbs connect word knowledge and talk skills, as findings show. Their teaching value stays small when only words are taught. But as talk acts in context, proverbs become strong tools for indirectness, polite ways, and culture rules¹⁵. English and Uzbek proverbs show different teaching problems. English learners find hidden meanings hard. Uzbek learners need help with soft advice. Proverb lessons solve these by showing real talk patterns. From teaching view, proverbs build culture talk skills¹⁶. Right ways to advise, criticize, or judge are learned.

The double-layer structure of proverbs was found in word study. Basic word centers like "stitch" or "path" are covered by picture layers¹⁷. LIFE=JOURNEY or TIME=RESOURCE ideas are common in both. Word pack density is similar (Uzbek: 1.84 ideas per syllable; English: 1.76). Talk study shows use differences. English proverbs lead in advice (41%) and encourage (29%). General wisdom is favored ("A stitch in time..."). Uzbek examples show stronger order force (52%) and judging tone (33%). Group rules are made ("Ota-ona aytgan yo'l..."). Proverb place study shows they end turns (68%) or explain before (22%). Teaching chance charts show little use. Word tasks lead (79% examples), talk tasks are 14%, culture uses 7%. Task types show missed chances. Proverb finish tasks check word memory without hints. Translation loses talk change. English proverbs help hint practice with finish tasks. Uzbek examples give clear models for new culture learners. Matching pairs ("Bird in hand"/"Qo'lda turni") help move learning without culture loss.

Conclusion. Real talk-strong, culture-true teaching centers are made by proverbs. Their path from word items to talk tools is shown in this study. English-Uzbek matches use hint-direct scales well. Talk quality, culture sharpness, and rule talk skill are clearly improved by planned proverb use. Class builders, material makers, and teachers get study-based plans for proverb talk teaching across language types. Important teaching results for English and Uzbek class types are shown by the comparison view used here. Oblique advice and judging hints are typical in English proverbs. Speakers must guess word goal and talk power. This mind work is harder for non-native speakers. Open moral judging and group rules are shown by Uzbek proverbs. Different talk

¹⁵Axmedov, I. (2024). Comparative analysis of adjectives in english and uzbek languages. Qo'qon universiteti xabarnomasi, 13, 295–296.

¹⁶The Semantics of Advice: Modality and Value Judgment in English and Uzbek Proverbial Structures. (2025). Journal of Multidisciplinary Sciences and Innovations, 4(11), 3273–3277.

knowledge types are made. Knowledge of these differences is needed for teachers and students. This is especially true in two-country or cross-culture classes. Proverb adding speeds culture talk skill, talk clearness, and sentence-above skill from teaching view. Proverb supports work best across types: talk pulling by conversation starts, pretend plays by role scenes, think meetings asking attitude directions, and think-back plans growing goal reading, view giving, and value study. These building ways fit talk ideas and task teaching well. Real talk

training is made. Proverb teaching—based on talk not separate words—is pushed by this study as good way joining word form, culture sign, and work power. Future study can grow these ideas by hard class tests, student collection cutting, or long studies testing talk-proverb work's talk gains. Proverbs are re-seen as live talk machines not still word strange things by language teachers. Form, meaning, and talk work links are made clearer.

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