

Anthropocentric sayings in Mexican Spanish and Uzbek: A Sociocultural Approach

Refranes antropocéntricos en el español mexicano y el uzbeko: un enfoque sociocultural

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ABSTRACT

To understand sociocultural and coding phenomena in both cultures, this study examines Mexican and Uzbek proverbs. It assesses their cultural significance and communicative intent, considering the complexity of associated opinions. The analysis highlights how these proverbs reflect ingrained popular values and knowledge from childhood, emphasizing their role in constructing meanings in everyday discourse. The research underscores their importance for cultural transmission and demonstrates the complexity of their interpretation, influenced by the value system and the individual subject's experience.

KEYWORDS: anthropocentric sayings, sociolinguistics, proverbs, Uzbek culture, Mexican culture.

RESUMEN

Para comprender fenómenos socioculturales y de codificación en ambas culturas, se examinan refranes mexicanos y uzbekos. Asimismo, se evalúa su significado cultural y la intención comunicativa tomando en cuenta la complejidad de las opiniones relacionadas. El análisis destaca cómo estos refranes reflejan valores y conocimientos populares arraigados desde la infancia, al igual que su papel en la construcción de significados en el discurso cotidiano. La investigación resalta su importancia para la transmisión cultural y demuestra la complejidad de su interpretación influenciada por el sistema de valores y la experiencia individual del sujeto.

PALABRAS CLAVE: refranes antropocéntricos, sociolingüística, dichos, cultura uzbeka, cultura mexicana.

INTRODUCTION

When it comes to the study of language in which linguistic factors are related to factors outside of it, as in the specific use of the language of a speech community by its speakers, we are within the field of action of sociolinguistics. Sociolinguistics arises from the union of two sciences: sociology and linguistics. This area examines how linguistic components interact within a speech community and how they relate to outside influences (Mu'in, 2019). Many scholars have pointed out the interdisciplinary nature of sociolinguistics (Bastardas Boada, 2009; Coupland, 2001; Hymes, 1972; Labov, 2006; Terborg & Velázquez, 2019).

According to Mayoral i Arqué (1996), when we try to find out the type of relationship that occurs between the cultural practices learned in schools in terms of cultural capital and distinctive cultural consumption systems, we observe that, for equivalent school capital, the weight of social origin increases as we move away from the

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most legitimate fields. In this regard, Bourdieu (1979 in Mayoral i Arqué 1996) states that what is needed is less a strictly controllable competition and more a kind of familiarity with the culture. In addition to serving as a form of cultural encoding, proverbs are also examples of highly developed language constructs that direct their users' behavior within particular social and cultural norms. Since proverbs may be found in all languages, they serve as an example of complex linguistic structures that can use mental analogies. At the same time, proverbs are a crucial cultural phenomenon in the development or stabilization of civilizations. In all societies, proverbs are employed as a tactic to build community, forge consensus, and provide future generations with a framework for making sense of the world. The present text tries to describe a set of sociocultural and coding phenomena of two groups in particular, which include objects or phenomena of material culture, we refer to Mexican and Uzbek proverbs that are also considered intercultural phenomena, with sociocultural and ethnic characteristics, customs, rituals, as well as specific historical events or processes.

Our objective is to explore the proverbs in both languages, noting their similarities and differences between the two cultures. We aim to discuss how anthropocentric sayings (proverbs) reflect popular knowledge acquired within a group and form part of a value system. This leads individuals to ascribe positive or negative significance to the proverbs, which denotes the peculiarities of the culture they originate from, shaped by its history. Understanding the cultural context and the values of these proverbs is crucial to grasping their essence as part of a complex cultural system. Through this study, we will compare the different values represented by proverbs in both cultures and analyze them in their specific cultural contexts.

1. ANTHROPOCENTRIC SAYINGS^[1]

In different communities, it is very difficult to understand specific sociocultural codes, as in the case of sayings. The texts that we produce as society, including proverbs, show an important value with intuitive implications and a rich source that presents the value system of the group. They are the object of study of the paremiology that express popular knowledge that guides the characteristics, thoughts, and ways of seeing the life of people.

Sayings are also called proverbs, maximum sentences, idiomatic expressions, apothegm, and aphorism. Sayings or *paremias* are phrases that carry a moral or practical teaching or opinion (Peñate Rivero, 1995). Sevilla Muñoz y Crida Álvarez (2013) classify Spanish *paremias* into six categories: proverbs and aphorisms, on the one hand, and proverbs, proverbial phrases, proverbial locutions, and dialogisms on the other. The former are of known origin and are normally cultured, the latter of anonymous origin and popular use. We focus on this last group, and more specifically, on sayings, phrases and proverbial phrases. For these authors a saying is:

[...] a *paremia* of anonymous origin and popular use, whose structure is generally bimember, with the presence of mnemonic elements, with the potential presence of humorous elements, based on experience and with a universal truth value, for the most part (Sevilla Muñoz & Crida Álvarez, 2013: 111).

Deán Trenado (2014) agrees with Sevilla Muñoz & Crida Álvarez (2013) that they are two part structures with rhyme in which two ideas are related, this author points out that proverbs are also autonomous phrases with full meaning. The first part of the saying shows the fact or time of action and the second talks about the consequences, the teaching or conclusion is given through advice or warnings. Another characteristic is that simple language is used, but with features that contribute to learning them such as repetition, rhyme, or grammatical parallelism, they have a judgmental character because they carry popular wisdom, they can be descriptive without value judgment or prescriptive with moral teaching, are of colloquial and popular use. Flores-Huerta (2016) also tells us about the structure of proverbs and points out that they have two premises separated by a caesura. The first defines the cause and the second the consequence, between the two there is a knowledge that gives practical meaning. Uribe Tirado (2004) says that choosing a proverb has at least two fundamental elements: realism and common sense.

Realism is linked to the way in which life is seen from the group and common sense is linked to the way in which a saying is interpreted by the speaker himself.

Anthropocentric sayings show that the world around man measures events through a specific vision. In this regard, topics such as the linguistic landscape of the world, the impact of language on behavior, human thought, the relationship between language and society, and the relationship between language and people's spiritual culture are particularly important. According to Munteanu Colán (2007), over time, since the first human beings began to draw conclusions about nature, their own behavior and their relationships, proverbs and sayings passed from mouth to mouth, from generation to generation, becoming common goods of the community and, ultimately, of all humanity; then penetrated the written texts and continued their miraculous journey through the world, in confluence or temporary contact with the most varied cultures and languages. The abbot of Saint Pierre used to say that proverbs are the echoes of experience, masterfully preserving all the teachings of the people (Munteanu Colán, 2007).

Anthropocentric proverbs have enormous evaluation potential, and their dissemination could identify Spanish-speaking peoples as value systems in different linguistic societies. The ability to evaluate anthropocentric proverbs not only from Mexico but from all the world's languages lies in the fact that, as specific anthropological units, proverbs are used not only to name things and events, but also show situations of the way of life. The proverbial meaning is anthropocentric and ethnocentric at the same time, since it reflects not only the peculiarities of the activity of the individual, but also of an ethnic group. Sayings and proverbs arise in the national consciousness because of the cognition of extralinguistic reality and present the social-cultural experience of the people in its condensed form. They accumulate the multisecular sensory and rational experience of the people to save it in the collective memory (Baghdasarián, 2014).

Deán Trenado (2014) says that there is a universality in the themes and specificities when talking about them. Although there are proverbs that we can consider as a little more homogeneous between cultures, that is to say that they speak of truths more or less common to human beings and that can be transferred more easily to different languages, as in the case of “de tal padre tal hijo” (“olmaning tagiga olma tushadi” –Uzbek–, “like father like son” –English–, “tel père tel fils” –French–), “con paciencia todo se logra” (“sabr tagi-sariq oltin” –Uzbek–, “avec du temps et de la patience on vient à bout de tout” –French–, “money and time bring all things to pass” –English–, “Mit Geduld und Fleiß kommt man weit” –German–), “no hay peor sordo que el que no quiere oír” (“quloqqa paxta tiqmoq, o'zini karlikka solmoq” –Uzbek–, “le bien dire ne dispense du bien faire” –French–). Sayings have polysemic characteristics that are linked to the context in which they are produced. Deán Trenado (2014) points out that each group is certain that they are something of their own that belongs to them, so they are part of their cultural baggage and a manifestation of the group's folklore, it is inherited knowledge that is learned within a society. Hence, it requires an approach to the group that provides that sensitivity of understanding.

FIGURE 1
Sensitivity for understanding Uzbek sayings

Uzbek	English
Bo'rini yo'qlasang qulog'i ko'rinadi	If you remember the wolf, his ear is visible

Source: own elaboration.

For example, in Uzbekistan it is said:

This proverb can be used at two different times:

a) When we want to reassure someone that they do not have bad intentions, we should refrain from sharing this with anyone else, as bad intentions can come back to affect you personally.

b) When it is said in a joking tone if someone is visiting another and the other has talked to other people about this person.

By encompassing cultural values, social conventions, and historical settings, the aforementioned Uzbek proverbs offer insightful perspectives into Uzbek culture. One should be knowledgeable with important facets of Uzbek culture in order to fully comprehend these proverbs in their intended use and context. These proverbs emphasize the interdependence of people and the effects of their actions on themselves and others. Collectivism is a vital component of Uzbek society. To fully understand the meaning of the proverbs, as they frequently include contacts and the transmission of information, it is also essential to have a profound appreciation for hospitality and good communication. Additionally, understanding the cultural quirks and metaphorical language that these proverbs contain improves our ability to interpret them.

Polysemy, a reoccurring element in this linguistic content, is frequently seen in Uzbek proverbs, allowing for many interpretations that deepen their wisdom. For instance, “Bo’rini yo’qlasang qulog’i ko’rinadi” is a proverb that emphasizes the idea of intentions and their results and may be applied in both serious and humorous situations. This linguistic diversity reflects the complexity of Uzbek culture and its dynamic nature.

FIGURE 2
Polyseny in uzbek sayings

Uzbek	English
Bosh omon bo’lsa, do’ppi topilar	If the head survives, the cap will be found

Source: own elaboration.

This proverb is also used in two different situations, with a first meaning, when we want to say that the most important thing for a person, his greatest wealth, is physical health. If there is health, everything else can be found, and with a second meaning, it is used to comfort a person who is sad because of the need for something, or some lack.

When studying the culture of a nation, of course, it is necessary to know as much as possible about the content of the proverbs that apply to this people. It is important to understand the reader more clearly during conversations, and to apply them appropriately, avoiding errors on the part of the listener. Today globalization and integration of cultures helps to recognize sociocultural codes.

In this sense, it is possible to take advantage of this transcultural dynamic, this imposition of globalization, since, if channeled properly, the rapid diffusion of expressions and meanings can be used as resilient elements of this cultural crisis, as elements of understanding and acceptance of the culture of the other, not as part of an aggressive factor of cultural invasion but as an element that generates understanding and tolerance of the worldview and tradition of the other, of the others (Bakhronova, 2021: 241).

When comparing proverbs texts from different cultures, the most general versions of synonymous proverbs tend to align on certain points of reference. While the structure and wording may remain consistent, the common use and interpretation of proverbs can vary significantly (Lauhakangas, 2021). To better illustrate the situation, we analyze some proverbs from the Mexican culture and the Uzbek culture that allows us to see how the meanings not only reflect a set of words that have an alternative intention, but also reflect the group and therefore, show a cultural knowledge.

1. 1. Mexican sayings

Each culture gives a value to different things in its environment, according to Flores-Huerta (2016)^[2] recurring themes of proverbs in Mexican Spanish are: women, food, time, the life cycle, love, friendship, and the enmity.

Among the sayings that speak of women, we have several with misogynistic or pejorative connotations (Deán Trenado, 2014), because the proverbs are focused on men as part of everyday life and women are compared to animals, objects or women are highlighted. Negative qualities such as wickedness, lying or being deceitful. An example of this can be seen in:

FIGURE 3
Mexican Spanish sayings for women

Spanish	English
Cuando la mula dice “no paso” y la mujer “me caso”, la mula no pasa y la mujer se casa	When the mule says, I do not pass, and the woman says I do marry, the mule does not pass, and the woman gets married

Source: own elaboration.

Emphasizing how obstinate the woman is and comparing her to a mule, which is an animal that is only good for carrying things, that is to say little thinking (Etxabe, 2012). Another popular saying that has to do with women is:

FIGURE 4
Mexican Spanish sayings for women and love

Spanish	English
A la mujer, ni todo el amor ni todo el dinero	To a woman, neither all the love nor all the money

Source: own elaboration.

Referring to the fact that you don't have to give everything to women to keep them by your side in a sense that women should never be 100% pleased because you can lose her, but it can also mean that women are hard to please. A saying that tells us about the danger of having an educated and cultured woman is (Deán Trenado, 2014):

FIGURE 5
Misogynistic Mexican saying

Spanish	English
Mujer que sabe latín, mal fin	A woman who knows Latin, a bad end

Source: own elaboration.

The proverb suggests that a woman who possesses knowledge beyond what is traditionally expected may face negative consequences. Women who display intelligence are considered outside of their traditional cultural roles, so this may be viewed negatively or may encounter difficulties in society. This saying reflects historical gender norms and societal expectations that limited Mexican women's access to education and opportunities. Among those that refer to food we find:

FIGURE 6
Mexican food saying: atole

Spanish	English
Dar atole con el dedo	Give <i>atole</i> with the finger

Source: own elaboration.

Which is used when you make someone believe that you are going to take them into account for something when this is not the case or a promise that is not intended to be fulfilled and whose reference to a hot corn-based beverage called *atole* comes from an important part of Mexican cuisine (Agencias, 2018). Another saying of this type is:

FIGURE 7
Mexican food saying: tacos

Spanish	English
Echarles crema a los tacos	Adding cream to tacos

Source: own elaboration.

The expression means exaggerating or bragging about one's qualities or embellish a story, often in a way that may not be entirely truthful. It is used to describe someone who adds extra details or drama to make their account more interesting or impressive. This saying also takes another fundamental element of Mexican gastronomy, which is the taco (Bél, 2018). The magazine *México desconocido* (s/f) points out that saying to someone:

FIGURE 8
Mexican food saying: mole de olla

Spanish	English
A darle que es mole de olla	Let's do our best, that it is meat stew

Source: own elaboration.

This expression is used to encourage someone to work quickly and with good humor; it is not limited to a meal setting. It can be used in a variety of contexts, such as before a class or workday begins or before any significant occasion; it sounds something like "Let's get down to business". However, to understand the similarity with the phrase and its use, it should be known that this Mexican stew consists of a hot broth based on beef, vegetables, corn, and red chili that is accompanied with tortillas, chopped onion and lemons. Since it is a favorite stew among Mexicans, it is generally eaten with good spirits and quickly because if it cools it loses its richness, so once it is served it is better to eat it. Another saying would be:

FIGURE 9
Mexican food saying: nopal

Spanish	English
Al nopal solo se le arriman cuando tiene tunas	People only go to see the nopal cactus when it has fruit

Source: own elaboration.

It has a negative connotation when it implies that you should only approach someone if they can help you financially or with influence, or if they will give you something in return. To understand the relationship between the proverb and the meaning, it is necessary to talk about the nopal, which is an important part of Mexican cuisine. According to the CONABIO (2021) although the nopal is a cactus, it differs from the regular ones because the prickly pear spine is not hard as in the rest of the cactus and represents a resource of great importance in Mexican flora. The nopal contains nutritional, medicinal properties among others and is suitable for human consumption along with the prickly pear and the *xoconostle*, so in Mexico there are various stews with nopal. The *xoconostle* is a Nahuatl name for an acid prickly pear with many medicinal properties. The prickly pear (tuna) is the sweet fruit of the nopal, its growth takes between three and six weeks, it has a thin skin and juicy pulp. The nopal grows wild and without much human care, it is so resistant that it can survive with little humidity, even if nobody waters it. Thus, although nobody takes care of the nopales and nobody approaches them, they stay alive without major problems and people usually go to the *nopaleras* only when the prickly pear season arrives, which is when the fruit is plucked, hence their relationship.

About time (Panizo Rodríguez, 2023), we have:

FIGURE 10
Mexican Spanish saying for time: claiming

Spanish	English
El tiempo es oro	Time is money

Source: own elaboration.

This means that we have to value time, whether it be our own or that of others. This proverb can be used positively, such as when a manager wishes to motivate employees during a meeting, or negatively, such as when someone is asking someone to maximize a resource by telling them not to “waste our time”.

FIGURE 11
Mexican Spanish saying for time: adversity

Spanish	English
Al mal tiempo buena cara	In bad times, a good face

Source: own elaboration.

Which refers to resigning oneself in the face of adversity, it is said when one wants to encourage another person or oneself. It suggests that one should face adversity with a brave and optimistic outlook, showing resilience and strength in the face of hardships. The proverb reflects a cultural value placed on maintaining a positive attitude, even during challenging times. In relation to the life cycle (birth, pregnancy, marriage, old age), we find (Kamenteskaia, 2018):

FIGURE 12
Mexican Spanish saying for life cycle: birth

Spanish	English
Cada niño trae su torta debajo del brazo	Every baby is born with some bread under his arm

Source: own elaboration.

The proverb suggest that good luck or fortune seems to follow children wherever they go. Parents are told, referring to the fact that they should not worry about money because the birth of the baby will bring prosperity to the home. Children are seen as bearers of luck or blessings. Culturally it reflects the innocence and positive energy associated with children and may be used to celebrate the positive influence and impact of children on family and community life.

FIGURE 13
Mexican Spanish saying for life cycle: marriage

Spanish	English
Matrimonio y mortaja del cielo baja	Marriage and shroud from heaven falls

Source: own elaboration.

The dictionary of the Royal Academy of the Spanish Language (RAE for its initials in Spanish) says that the shroud is a garment or cloth that is used to wrap the corpse to be buried; thus, this saying symbolizes that one should not invest time or effort in looking for a spouse or death, since both things will come when the time is right.

FIGURE 14
Mexican Spanish saying for life cycle: old age

Spanish	English
A la vejez, viruela	Smallpox in old age

Source: own elaboration.

Smallpox is a disease that typically occurs at an early age of life, so it is used ironically when an older person acts too youthful, who refuses to accept his age and whose behavior is not what is expected for his time.

Love, friendship, and enmity (Etxabe, 2012) as in:

FIGURE 15
Mexican Spanish saying for life cycle: old age

Spanish	English
Cada oveja con su pareja	Every sheep with its mate (Birds of a feather flock together)

Source: own elaboration.

FIGURE 16
Mexican Spanish saying for friendship

Spanish	English
En el peligro se conoce al amigo	In danger, a friend is known

Source: own elaboration.

The proverb means that when the person is in a bad moment only those true friends will remain. When faced with challenging situations, a genuine friend will stand by your side, offer support, and demonstrate their loyalty. It reflects the value placed on authentic friendship in Mexican culture. It highlights the significance of trust and mutual support. It also prompts reflection on the nature of friendship and the role it plays in Mexican lives.

Finally, we encounter a group of sayings that, in contemporary times, are widely considered inappropriate, disrespectful, and offensive. Despite their offensive nature some of these sayings persist in usage, particularly because they refer to Mexican history and indigenous communities. These sayings often perpetuate racist and derogatory attitudes towards Indigenous people:

FIGURE 17
Mexican Spanish saying for Indigenous people: donkeys

Spanish	English
Indios y burros todos son unos	Indians and donkeys are all one

Source: own elaboration.

It is a form of insult since it compares the indigenous to a pack animal that is the donkey (Rodríguez Valle, 2005), implying that both groups are inferior or unintelligent. The saying perpetuates stereotypes and reinforces discriminatory attitudes towards this community by equating them with animals in a derogatory manner. The saying reflects a history of colonialism, racism, and discrimination against indigenous groups. It reveals deep-seated prejudices and discriminatory beliefs that have been perpetuated over time.

FIGURE 18
Mexican Spanish saying for Indigenous people: untrustful

Spanish	English
No tiene la culpa el indio sino el que lo hace compadre	It is not the Indian's fault but the one who makes him <i>compadre</i>

Source: own elaboration.

Belittling the person by comparing him or her to an indigenous person as someone incapable or of little ability for some responsibility but that the one who assigned that responsibility is to blame for having designated that responsibility, by equating it in terms of *compadrazgo* (Mireles, 2021). *Compadrazgo* in Mexico is a form of religious kinship that occurs regularly, when two people go to the catholic church and carry out a ritual in which at the end they become “compadres” (male term) or “comadres” (female term).

In contemporary times these sayings are considered inappropriate and offensive. It goes against the principles of respect for cultural diversity, equality, and human rights. The analyses of anthropocentric proverbs in Mexican culture provide insights into the beliefs and values related to this group. They reflect the importance of individualism and self-sufficiency. Next, we will proceed with a specific analysis of Uzbek proverbs.

1. 1. Uzbek sayings

Folk proverbs are succinct and culturally resonant expressions that encapsulate the collective wisdom, beliefs, and experiences of a community. These pithy phrases, often born from generations of oral tradition, distill complex life lessons, cultural norms, and practical insights into concise and memorable forms. Folk proverbs serve as cultural touchstones, offering a window into the values, beliefs, and shared experiences of a society, while also reflecting the universal truths that connect diverse human experiences. The Uzbek scholar B. Jo'rayeva (2019) extensively categorizes Uzbek folk proverbs by dissecting their intralinguistic and extralinguistic foundations. These are divided into several categories, including those based on animal names, professions, religious concepts, household matters, specific times, plant-inspired sayings, reflecting Uzbek reality, and sayings related to natural phenomena.

Proverbs formed based on animal names draws on the cultural significance of animals in Uzbek society. It's necessary to understand how various animals are seen and their symbolic connotations in order to comprehend these proverbs. For instance, the saying:

FIGURE 19
Uzbek sayings for animals: crow

Uzbek	English
Hamrohing qarg'a bo'lsa, yeganing axlat bo'ladi	If your companion is a crow, your food will be garbage

Source: own elaboration.

In this proverb, the crow's natural living (scavenging) activity is disparagingly compared to humans. That is, it gives the meaning of other proverbs such as “Do'sting kimligini aytsang, men senga kimligingni aytaman” (If you tell me who your friend is, I will tell you who you are), yoki “Qozonga yaqin yursang, qorasi yuqadi” (If you walk near a cauldron, you will get black).

FIGURE 20
Uzbek sayings for animals: snake

Uzbek	English
ilonning yog'ini yalagan	licking the fat of the snake

Source: own elaboration.

The proverb describes a prudent and perceptive individual. Terms such as “Tushda ko’rsang-gan”, “o’ngda ko’rsang-yanch” (which translated mean, respectively, “if seen in a dream- treasure, it is seen in life”).

Different cultures have different attitudes toward snakes that are based in mythology. From fear to reverence, Uzbek perspectives reflect not only hatred but also link it to wealth and status. Snakes are symbolic of both good and bad qualities and are associated with many different cultures. In Uzbek proverbs, the snake symbolizes wealth and status in addition to evil, deceit, and pestilence, indicating a range of social attitudes. It’s interesting to note that the mythological snake’s contradictory characteristics emphasize its antinomian nature. By enhancing intercultural understanding and peaceful coexistence, these exchanges increase group knowledge (Bakhronova, 2021).

In classical literature, the world of mortals is described as very beautiful, rich in blessings, beautiful in design, but its poison is compared to that of the murderous serpent. In the Uzbek language, the phrase “qo’ynida ilon saqlamoq” (literally: “holding a snake in one’s embrace”) is used in the sense of raising someone who is not worthy or doing good to someone who is not worthy. Since scorpions are more dangerous than snakes, another Uzbek saying is shown: “Ilon ketsa, chayon kelar” (literally: “If the snake goes, the scorpion comes”), which means that someone wants to get out of something bad but doing so will make the situation worse. Experienced older people sometimes use the same saying to those who want to divorce their wives and marry another woman.

So, in Uzbek society, it is emphasized that the mythological image of the snake has an antinomian character – good and bad and that it has various characteristics (Bakhronova, 2021).

Proverbs formed within the context of professions tap into the roles and responsibilities of professions within Uzbek culture:

FIGURE 21
Uzbek sayings for professions

Uzbek	English
Mashaqqatsiz baxt kelmas, Mehnatsiz taxt kelmas	Happiness does not come without difficulty, The throne does not come without work

Source: own elaboration.

This proverb emphasizes the link between diligence in one’s profession and the rewards it brings. Understanding the historical background of Uzbekistan’s professions is crucial for understanding these proverbs in their entirety. Many occupations have strong ties to the nation’s agricultural and artisanal past. For many years, people have practiced traditional crafts like ceramics, carpet weaving, and metalwork, which are frequently passed down within families. The appreciation and respect for skilled labor are fundamental to Uzbek culture, where it is revered as an aesthetic endeavor.

Proverbs formed within religious concepts. This category delves into the deeply rooted religious values and beliefs within Uzbek culture. This topic explores the Uzbek people’s deeply ingrained religious ideals and beliefs. One needs to have a thorough understanding of Islamic doctrines and the place of religion in Uzbek society in order to decipher the layers of significance contained within these proverbs:

FIGURE 22
Uzbek sayings for religious ideas and beliefs

Uzbek	English
Yaxshining ishi-jannat, Yomonning ishi-kasofat	A good deed is heaven, The work of the wicked is a curse

Source: own elaboration.

It reflects the virtue of selfless service. It captures the core Islamic values and generosity, also known as “sadaqa” or “ehson” which are highly revered in Islam. This idea is extended to the idea of “sadaqah jariyah”, or continual charity, which emphasizes the ineffable benefits of kindness. Acts of generosity and service are highly valued in Uzbek culture, where Islam is practiced by most of the population, to obtain blessings and advance spiritually.

Some sayings say that in Uzbek society, a girl is less valued than a boy, a girl is a “guest” (guest) in the family as she gets married and will leave one day; it is said in a saying that it is more appropriate to have salt in the family instead of a girl, and even though it may be frowned upon, it is emphasized that having a son is important. According to Uzbek sayings, this aspect falls into proverbs formed within household concepts.

Being born male is an advantage. Examples: “Qiz, qo’noq” (Daughter – guest); “Qiz saqlaguncha, bir siqim tuz saqla” (Better to have a pinch of salt in the family than to have a daughter); “Qiyshiq bo’lsa ham, yo’l yaxshi, yomon bo’lsa ham – o’g’il” (It is good to have a path, even if it is crooked, and it is good to have a son, even if it is bad).

FIGURE 23

Uzbek saying for household concepts: daughter

Uzbek	English
Qiz, qo’noq;	Daughter – guest;
Qiz saqlaguncha, bir siqim tuz saqla;	Better to have a pinch of salt in the family than to have a
Qiyshiq bo’lsa ham, yo’l yaxshi, yomon bo’lsa ham – o’g’il	daughter;
	It is good to have a path, even if it is crooked, and it is good
	to have a son, even if it is bad

Source: own elaboration.

In Uzbek folklore, girls are sometimes compared to foxes, *Devonu lug’at-at turk* (Dictionary of the Turkish language) by Mahmud Kashgari in the article “tilkō” (fox) says: When a woman gives birth to a child, the midwife is asked: “tilkōmu tug’di azu bōrimo” (fox or wolf is born)? For girls are like foxes because they are deceitful and soft, and boys are like wolves because of their bravery. This phrase is also found in the *Alpomish* epic (Zarifov, 2010) when the groom wants to know the outcome of the marriage. Ordinarily, after the return of the wedding, to know the result if they agree, the parents of the bride ask the question “wolf or fox” in ancient times (now used in some provinces). It is observed that negative expressions of a woman before marriage change after marriage. Being a mother means that a woman has dignity:

FIGURE 24

Uzbek saying for household concept: mother

Uzbek	English
Ona, olam faxridir;	The mother is the pride of the world;
Ota, aql-ona, idrok;	The father is the mind, the mother is the intellect/con-
Ota-onasini tanimagan tangrisini tanimas	templation;
	He who does not know his parents does not know his god

Source: own elaboration.

Examining proverbs that were created using dates and times reveals the complex interplay between cultural views of time, values, and judgment. These sayings provide a window into how the Uzbek people view time as a dynamic force that impacts their attitudes toward patience, development, and enjoying the present while keeping an eye on the future:

FIGURE 25

Uzbek saying for time

Uzbek	English
Vaqt ketdi-baxt ketdi,	Time passed-happiness passed,
Toji sari taxt ketdi	The throne and the crown also passed

Source: own elaboration.

This proverb captures a complex understanding of time that is highly regarded in Uzbek culture. As seen in the proverb itself, the idea of time is frequently connected to patience. It is highly valued in Uzbek culture to be patient, resilient, and to live in the present. The comprehension of these proverbs is therefore enhanced by knowledge of the cultural nuances connected to temporal allusions. The next saying illustrates Uzbekistan’s peaceful coexistence with nature when taken in the context of its larger cultural environment:

FIGURE 26
Uzbek saying for nature

Uzbek	English
Odob bilan baxt topilar, Sabr bilan-taxt	Happiness is found with manners, with patience-the throne

Source: own elaboration.

One needs to learn about the significance of plants in Uzbek society to completely understand these proverbs. Due to the country’s long agricultural history, plants have been integral to daily life in Uzbekistan, from food to traditional medicine. The backdrop for interpreting these proverbs is the importance of various plants as sources of sustenance and healing. It connects the idea of patience with the idea of a shield, highlighting the fortitude and resiliency needed to face obstacles. This reflects the Uzbek culture’s value of patience as a virtue that enables people to face challenges with courage.

FIGURE 27
Uzbek saying for natural phenomena

Uzbek	English
Duo bilan el ko‘karar, yomg‘ir bilan yer ko‘karar	People grow with prayers, the earth grows with rain

Source: own elaboration.

The proverb refers to the unknown and emphasizes the significance of higher forces, which can be linked to cultural beliefs about the cosmos and spirituality.

The next category refers to sayings formed based on realities of Uzbek people’s lives. The somatic references found in the category of everyday Uzbek proverbs include the term “jigar”, which has multiple connotations in different languages. The phrases used with this word are perfect examples of the complex cultural subtleties; “jigar” conveys a sense of close kindred and resonates in a variety of contexts, from color descriptors (“jigar rang”, lit.: “the color of the liver”), to food allusions (“jigarkabob” – liver skewer). Its assimilation into the Uzbek language is highlighted by its use in composite words like “jigarband” and colloquial expressions like “jigar-bag’ridan urmoq” (Jo’rayeva, 2019). We find it in the following examples:

FIGURE 28
Uzbek saying for reality of Uzbek people’s lives

Uzbek	English
Opa, opajonim, jonim jigarim, diydoringizga shuncha zor qilasizmi, sizni qidirmagan joyimiz qolmadi-ku. O’sha iblis eringizga kerak bo’lmasangiz mana bizga keraksiz opa. Mana, meni uring, o’ldiring, faqat ketib qolmang opa, sizni topguncha jigarlarim sitilib ketdi-ku	If you don’t need this diabolical husband, here we are, sister, (dear liver) my honey. Hit me, kill me, just don’t go, sister, my liver is burned until I find you’ (Sh. Salimova. So’qir ayol (“blind woman”)

Source: own elaboration.

But we can also find:

FIGURE 29
Another meaning for liver

Uzbek	English
Uka-jigar, tosh otay desa, jigarchilik, otmay desa, xon turipti; nihoyat, to'nidan uvada yulib otibdi	Brother, like a heart (liver), if it strikes with a stone, then it is his brother (liver), if he does not do this, the khan himself watches everything; finally, he tore part of his chapan and threw it to his brother (A. Qahhor, Qo'shchinor chiroqlari ("The lamps of Kushchinor"))

Source: own elaboration.

There is also a popular saying:

FIGURE 30
Uzbek saying for liver as money

Uzbek	English
pul jigardan paydo bo'lgan'	Money is made from the liver

Source: own elaboration.

The proverb shows the value and importance of money in human life. These examples offer a glimpse into the intricate interplay between linguistic expression and cultural connotations, showcasing how the liver lexeme not only communicates its literal anatomical significance but also delves into the realm of metaphorical abstraction. It transcends linguistic barriers, inviting explorations into the manifold dimensions of language, culture, and human experience.

This analysis unveils the diversity of the culture, they reflect intricate facets of daily life, cultural values, and distinctive worldviews. These proverbs offer a window into the worldview of Uzbekistan, covering everything from the relationship with nature to the role of religion and the professional setting.

PROSPECTIVE ANALYSIS: LINGUISTIC COMPLEXITY OF PROVERBS

The nomination of the situation also represents an assessment of the situation and clear guidelines to act according to generally accepted norms. Thus, sayings, like all paroemias, are specific nominative units present in language to express value relationships through categories such as "good" and "bad". It is through popular knowledge that is part of the group system, that we decided to integrate what we consider the norm for us into our value system.

Attitudes towards the things of life and objective existence join with the value system of the group to form our beliefs and ideologies. We evaluate by comparing and describing in our minds characteristics of what we see and hear from a person with what we have already recorded from the group. We are always evaluating by comparing the object to the standard. We carry out this comparison with evaluation labels that we assign as positive or negative and that are distinguished in a neutral category context, that allow us to compare the human characteristics of anthropocentric sayings with the value system of the culture to which we belong.

So when we say "con la vara que midas serás medido" (lit. "with the stick you measure others you will be measured") we are referring to being reciprocal, because if we judge others harshly in the face of a negative situation we are not thinking that in the future we ourselves may find ourselves facing that same situation for what it is better to be supportive, or the saying "perro que ladra no muerde" ("dog that barks does not bite") to indicate that those people who threaten you a lot with words, will rarely take action against you.

These evaluation markers serve as positive or negative indicators of people who create attitudes towards others and assign good and bad categories that help us to choose behaviors or ways of thinking of acceptance or rejection. As we have seen in our brief analysis, it is common practice for Hispanic cultures to divide anthropocentric proverbs in this evaluative dichotomy, into bipolar groups according to the positive/negative sign. Apparently, the anthropocentric sayings in Spanish, most of the important aspects of a person revolve around positive or negative events (Mayoral i Arqué, 1996).

Now, the proverb is a folkloric manifestation that expresses the group's values and vision of the world, they are also "x-rays" of the societies of the social spirit that is carried within. Sayings have a temporality and change as the world and those who produce them change, because over the years they adjust the meaning and intention that adheres to the social needs of a given group. That is why it is difficult to give an "objective" value to each proverb, since as De la Fuente González (2004) points out, lived experiences are not uniform and these experiences lead us to contradictory conclusions, so the same event can be seen as positive for one person, but negative for another. From this point of view, proverbs do not represent universal truths, which leads us to complex systems (Bastardas Boada, 2009) where reality is not black or white, but it is a reality as its name says: complex.

This evaluative aspect that at first seems easy to see, can be complex when we find proverbs that do not show such clarity and that in some cases are contradictory. As can be seen from "a quien madruga Dios le ayuda" (lit. "the one who dawns, God helps him or the early birds catches the worms"), which means that getting up early will help you achieve your goals better, but we also find the saying "no por mucho madrugar amanece más temprano" ("the sun is not hurried by early risers or a watched pot never boils"), which means the opposite. The same thing happens with "en boca cerrada no entran moscas (silence is golden or loose lips sink ships)", which means that it is better to keep our opinions to ourselves so as not to conflict with others, but we can also hear "el que calla otorga" ("silence is consent"), which means that if you don't talk about things, you allow others misunderstand you as they want.

In Uzbek we also find opposite sayings. For example, Sog' olma shoxidan tushmas (a healthy apple does not fall from his branch) – which means that if a person is good he does not need to leave his place of work or his place of residence. That is, a good person (specialist/expert) will be respected instead. At the same time "Olmaning yaxshisini qurt yeydi" ("the good apple is eaten by worms") which means that, if a person is a good professional, everyone needs him and that is why he cannot stand still. Sometimes this saying is used in life, when a good, healthy, beautiful woman (or man) becomes the wife (or husband) of a bad, ugly person.

"O'ychi o'yini o'ylaguncha tavakkalchi ishini bitirar" ("the adventurer finishes his work while the thinker thinks in his mind") means not to think too much if someone wants to start a new job, take the risk. That is, adventurers are always given good luck by God. The opposite can be seen in the saying "Yetti o'lchab-bir kes" ("seven measures-one cut") that is, if you want to start something new you must think/meditate everything beforehand and see if it is worth starting something or not.

The saying "mala hierba nunca muere" (literally: weed never dies or the devil protects his own) describes when a person persists and never disappears despite adversity, depending on the situation, this saying can have positive or negative connotations, we find this other saying "no hay mal que dure 100 años" (literally: "there is no evil that lasts 100 years or nothing last forever") which refers to the fact that any adverse issue will come to an end one day, in this case the proverb is said with overtones of encouragement and is positive for the one who receives it. In these examples we can see the complexity of the evaluation that the speaker must make, as well as the intention that he pursues.

A prospective analysis of the topic reveals the intricate nature of evaluating values and proverbs within different cultural contexts. Values, in terms of axiology, encompass the significance of an object for individuals or groups. Recognizing that values can be appraised positively or negatively, each value can be viewed as a bipolar structure with opposing values.

Finally, we want to point out another type of sayings, which refers to those that do not exist in the culture. This is the case of “c’est Bonnet blanc, blanc Bonnet” (French) the saying means that no matter the order of things, the same end will still be reached, but it does not have an equivalent in Mexican Spanish or Uzbek. Likewise, Spanish sayings such as “al perro más flaco se le van las pulgas” (lit. “fleas go to the skinniest dog”), which can hardly be understood in languages such as English or Italian (Peñate Rivero, 1995), and which is used when we want to say that the person who has more difficulties, physical, economic or emotional, is the one that does worse in life than the others. In Uzbek you can find a saying equivalent: “Kambag’alni tuyani ustida ham it qopadi”, i.e. “The dog bites the poor man even though he is riding the camel”. Another animal we use is the ‘donkey’, both in Uzbek and Spanish the uses in characters with sayings are similar, as in “Eshakday qaysar”, meaning (“stubborn as a donkey”) “terco como una mula”.

If one thing is present in the daily life of a nation, this thing will undoubtedly be found constantly in the proverbs of this nation. In Uzbek there are some languages with a cotton floronym because Uzbekistan is one of the main cotton exporters in the world, with about 850 000 tons per year. And this affects the language and culture of the Uzbeks: “Ko’zining paxtasi chiqmoq” – getting cotton out of their eyes (equivalent in English to “turning red with anger; being furious”). “Paxta qo’ymoq” – put cotton (in the sense of flattering, flattering someone) – pejorative to achieve your desires, please someone too much, etc.

Typical culinary items of Mexican cuisine like corn, nopal, and atole are included in a variety of Mexican Spanish proverbs. Other significant cultural topics covered in these proverbs include women and machismo, ideas about time and the life cycle, and expressions of love, friendship, and hostility. Additionally, ethnic proverbs add to the rich tapestry of expressions given the linguistic diversity in Mexico, where 68 native languages are spoken. Unfortunately, some of these sayings could unintentionally feed into racist stereotypes that still exist in the nation today.

CONCLUSION

Proverbs are folk sayings that serve as snapshots of a community’s values and viewpoint. Their meanings change to accommodate the shifting demands of society as a result of shifting eras and points of view. It is difficult to evaluate them objectively because lived experiences are subjective and differ between people and groups. According to De la Fuente González (2004), different people interpret the same situation differently, so what is good for one person may be bad for another. In this sense, proverbs navigate complex realities rather than imparting universal truths (Bastardas Boada, 2009). This evaluative aspect that at first seems easy to see, can be complex when we find proverbs that do not show such clarity and that in some cases are contradictory.

We also show expressions that consider the national-cultural values of the nations in question. Certain peculiarities attributed to animals are transferred to the actions and character of human beings, and some social phenomena are formally related to the animal. It is known that when transferring one or another quality from an animal to a person, the ontological image formed by the thought of this animal is of primary importance.

Linguistics sees value as a key factor in shaping the axiological and social linguistic image. Various definitions of the word “value” in the literature suggest that this word plays an important role for human beings, since it allows us to understand their nature and shape their behavior, relationships, and social and work activities. The concept of value is linked to a cultural phenomenon created and studied throughout the history of mankind. The roots of the concept go back to ancient times. As we know, ancient and modern history has recognized great personalities: philosophers, orators, scientists, artists, religious figures, writers, poets. On the other hand, universal human values represent the goal of the soul. To achieve this, human being develops his own qualities and forms an idea of the good. According to Macias Huertas & Macias Huertas (2004), two levels of values are manifested in each society: the general ones, studied by ethics; and the individual ones, framed in morality. Ethics, on the one hand, is the part of philosophy that has as its object the study (analysis, description, and

explanation) of the free and conscious acts of the human being. Morality is the basis of the norms of individual behavior. In this case, the social field should be discussed first, to then move on to the personal field. It is the part of philosophy that has as its object the study (analysis, description, and explanation) of the free and conscious acts of the human being.

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NOTAS

- [1] A variety of factors can be used to categorize sayings. One approach is to consider the linguistic characteristics of sayings, such as evidential markers, particular temporal and aspect parameters, and syntactical and metrical features (Sánchez Fernández, 2014). Sayings can also be categorized based on their cultural and historical value, as they represent the metaphors and traditions of everyday life used by Spanish speakers throughout history (Anscombe, 2010). Additionally, sayings can

be divided into groups based on how they are utilized in language teaching and learning, where they help students better understand grammatical structures, cultural norms, and how to interact with native speakers (Correas, 1966). We refer to anthropocentric proverbs, as defined by Baghdasarián (2014), as those that focus on human experience, interpersonal relationship, and human behavior.

- [2] The chosen classification emphasizes the importance of proverbs in the fabric of social existence. Proverbs, which are an integral aspect of group dynamics. This classification reflects the multidimensional nature of proverbs and the fact that they have an impact on society's cultural values and collective wisdom that goes beyond simple language utterances.



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