

SIMILARITIES BETWEEN ENGLISH AND UZBEK PROVERBS  
CONTAINING PROPER NAMES: A THEMATIC ANALYSIS

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**Abstract:** *This article examines the similarities between English and Uzbek proverbs that contain proper names, focusing on their thematic aspects. Proverbs are an integral part of a nation's cultural identity and collective wisdom. By analyzing examples from both languages, the study shows that although the names differ, the underlying themes—such as hard work, foolishness, bravery, and justice—are universal. The findings highlight the importance of proverbs with proper names in understanding cultural values and moral lessons shared by different nations.*

**Keywords:** *proverbs; proper names; English; Uzbek; culture; themes; similarities*

## Introduction

Proverbs are an ancient and significant form of folklore that express a nation's moral, social, and cultural views. Proverbs containing proper names occupy a special place because they often symbolize human qualities and social roles. English and Uzbek proverbs show remarkable thematic similarities, although the names reflect different cultural and historical contexts. For example, English proverbs frequently use names such as Jack, Tom, or Harry, while Uzbek proverbs employ names like Avaz, Boyqobil, or Otaqul.

Despite these cultural differences, both languages use proper names to illustrate universal human experiences and values (Mieder, 2004; Speake, 2015). By incorporating personal names, proverbs create relatable scenarios and convey moral lessons in a vivid and memorable way. This method allows societies to pass knowledge from generation to generation while highlighting the virtues and flaws of human nature.

**Thematic Analysis of Proverbs** Both English and Uzbek proverbs emphasize the value of hard work. For example, the English proverb "Jack of all trades, master of none" warns that spreading oneself too thin can lead to mediocrity, highlighting the importance of diligence and focus. Similarly, the Uzbek proverb "Avaz ishlasa, ovqat topar" (If Avaz works, he will find food) teaches that effort is rewarded with sustenance. In both cases, the proper name personalizes the lesson, making it more relatable and memorable for the audience. Proverbs often illustrate human intellect and folly. English proverbs like "Tom was born to be hanged" convey inevitable foolish outcomes, while Uzbek proverbs such as "Boyqobilning aqli so'zi ikki og'iz" (Boyqobil's wise word is worth two words) emphasize prudence and wisdom. The use of proper names helps encapsulate the traits of archetypal characters, reinforcing cultural expectations about intelligence, decision-

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making, and social conduct. Courage and fear are common themes in proverbs across cultures. English proverbs such as “Harry fears nothing” depict bravery as a desirable trait, while Uzbek equivalents like “Otaql qo‘rqmas, yov qochmas” (Otaql fears nothing and flees not from the enemy) highlight valor and steadfastness. Despite differences in context and phrasing, the moral remains universal: bravery is rewarded and cowardice frowned upon.

Proverbs often reflect ethical norms and social justice. In English, “Jack will be punished for his deeds” conveys accountability, while Uzbek proverbs such as “Avaz qilgan ishini qilmasa, jazoga tortilar” (If Avaz does not fulfill his duties, he will be punished) reinforce similar values. By attaching a personal name to moral lessons, these proverbs strengthen the message and make it culturally resonant.

**Cross-Cultural Significance.** The comparison of English and Uzbek proverbs reveals that, while the names and cultural references differ, the underlying human experiences are universal. Both sets of proverbs use proper names as narrative devices to:

- Illustrate moral and ethical lessons.
- Highlight personal virtues and vices.
- Serve as memorable educational tools.
- Preserve cultural identity and social norms.

• Proverbs act as cultural bridges, connecting societies through shared human experiences. They reveal that despite geographical, linguistic, and historical differences, fundamental human concerns—hard work, intelligence, courage, and justice—remain consistent across cultures (Permyakov, 1979).

### Conclusion

The comparison of English and Uzbek proverbs with proper names reveals both differences and similarities. While English proverbs contain names familiar in Western societies, Uzbek proverbs reflect Central Asian traditions (Karimov, 2010). However, their themes—such as hard work vs. laziness, wisdom vs. foolishness, bravery vs. cowardice, and loyalty vs. betrayal—remain universal.

This shows that proverbs with proper names not only enrich each nation’s linguistic heritage but also act as cultural bridges that connect people through shared moral values and life lessons. By studying these proverbs, researchers and language learners can gain a deeper understanding of cultural norms, historical values, and human psychology.

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