

## A COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS OF PROVERBS RELATED TO THE CONCEPT OF “HAPPINESS” IN ENGLISH AND UZBEK

**Sevinch Qonokboyeva**

National Pedagogical University of Uzbekistan named after Nizami,  
Faculty of Philology, Department of English Language Theory and Methodology

Scientific Supervisor: **Ibrohim Usarov**

Associate Professor of the Department of English Language Theory and Methodology,  
Candidate of Philological Sciences

**Abstract:** This paper explores the linguistic and cultural representation of the concept of happiness in English and Uzbek proverbs. Proverbs are culturally rooted expressions that reflect a community’s worldview, values, and emotional perceptions. By comparing English and Uzbek proverbs associated with happiness, this study reveals how each language conceptualizes emotional well-being through distinct cultural and cognitive lenses. The analysis employs comparative linguocultural and semantic methods, highlighting both universal and culture-specific aspects of happiness.

**Keywords:** happiness, proverb, concept, linguoculturology, English, Uzbek, comparative analysis.

### 1. Introduction

Proverbs serve as valuable linguistic units that embody collective wisdom, emotions, and moral codes of a society. The concept of happiness—a universal human emotion—is expressed differently across languages and cultures.

In English, happiness is often linked to personal satisfaction, luck, or fortune, while in Uzbek culture, it is closely associated with family, peace, and divine blessing. This paper aims to compare English and Uzbek proverbs related to happiness, identifying similarities and differences in their semantic and cultural representations.

The study addresses the following research questions:

1. How is the concept of happiness reflected in English and Uzbek proverbs?
2. What cultural values underpin these conceptualizations?
3. What linguistic strategies are used to express happiness metaphorically?

### 2. Methods

The research adopts a comparative linguocultural approach, combining semantic, structural, and conceptual analyses.

### Data Collection

A total of 40 proverbs (20 in English and 20 in Uzbek) were selected from authoritative proverb dictionaries and folklore collections. Examples include:

- English sources: Oxford Dictionary of Proverbs (Speake, 2015), A Handbook of English Proverbs.
- Uzbek sources: O‘zbek xalq maqollari (Q. Muhammadiyev, 2010), Maqollar va matallar to‘plami.

### Analytical Framework

The analysis focused on:

1. **Semantic field** – identifying words associated with happiness (joy, luck, blessing, etc.);
2. **Metaphoric models** – analyzing metaphorical representations (e.g., happiness is light, happiness is luck);
3. **Cultural context** – interpreting cultural connotations embedded in each proverb.

## 3. Results

### 3.1. English Proverbs on Happiness

English proverbs conceptualize happiness as an individual pursuit, often linked to luck, contentment, and wisdom.

No English Proverb	Literal Meaning	Cultural Interpretation
1 “There is no happiness where there is no wisdom.”	True happiness requires wisdom.	Deep understanding and thoughtful living are essential for lasting joy; wisdom guides emotional well-being.
2 “A contented mind is a perpetual feast.”	A satisfied heart is like an endless banquet.	Inner contentment brings lasting fulfillment; happiness is not dependent on wealth or abundance.
3 “Enough is as good as a feast.”	Having enough is equal to having abundance.	Moderation and sufficiency bring joy; appreciating what one has leads to inner peace.
4 “A happy heart is better than a full purse.”	Emotional joy is more valuable than material wealth.	True happiness comes from inner joy, not from money or possessions.

These proverbs reflect the individualistic nature of Western culture, where happiness is tied to personal agency, psychological satisfaction, and self-control rather than collective well-being.

### 3.2. Uzbek Proverbs on Happiness

In contrast, Uzbek proverbs reveal a collectivist and spiritual view of happiness, often associated with family, peace, and divine favor.

No	Uzbek Proverb	Literal Meaning	Cultural Interpretation
1	“Baxt boylik o’lchanmaydi.”	bilan Happiness cannot be bought with money.	Moral happiness over material wealth.
2	“Baxtli oila – gavhari.”	dunyo A happy family is the jewel of the world.	Family is the heart of happiness and social harmony.
3	“Baxtni izlagan topgan baxtli.”	emas, Not the seeker, but the one who finds happiness is happy.	Happiness is not found externally, but recognized through inner contentment and gratitude.
4	“Tinchlik – baxt kaliti.”	Happiness lies in peace..	Stability and harmony ensure joy.

Uzbek culture views happiness as a shared, spiritual, and socially oriented value, reflecting Islamic ethics and traditional family-centered ideals.

### 3.3. Comparative Analysis

Aspect	English Proverbs	Uzbek Proverbs
Source of happiness	Inner peace, self-effort	Family, faith, peace
Cultural orientation	Individualistic	Collectivist
Moral dimension	Wisdom and moderation	Piety and good intention
Metaphoric image	Happiness as luck, light, or wealth	Happiness as peace, home, or divine gift
Value emphasis	Self-realization	Social harmony

The analysis reveals that while both cultures value non-material happiness, the English worldview emphasizes individual agency, whereas the Uzbek worldview highlights communal and spiritual dimensions.

## 4. Discussion

The findings confirm that proverbs function as cultural mirrors reflecting how societies define and pursue happiness.

In English, happiness is self-centered, achieved through wisdom and contentment, resonating with the pragmatic and Protestant work ethic. In Uzbek culture, happiness depends on collective welfare, spiritual purity, and peace within the family—core elements of traditional Eastern philosophy and Islamic morality.

Furthermore, both languages use negative definitions (“A happy heart is better than a full purse”, “Baxt boylik bilan o’lchanmaydi”) to stress the moral superiority of spiritual happiness over material wealth, showing partial universality of moral understanding despite cultural differences.

## 5. Conclusion

This comparative study demonstrates that although happiness is a universal human concept, its expression through proverbs is shaped by cultural and moral frameworks.

- **English proverbs** emphasize individual pursuit and internal satisfaction;
- **Uzbek proverbs** stress social harmony and divine blessing.

The results suggest that intercultural linguistic studies of emotion-related concepts contribute to better understanding of cultural cognition and translation equivalence in paremiology.

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