

CULTURAL WISDOM AND IMPLICIT INFLUENCE IN TRILINGUAL
PAREMIOLOGY

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Annotation. This article explores how proverbs function as pragmatic instruments of manipulation across three linguistic and cultural traditions: Uzbek, Russian, and English. While proverbs are typically regarded as concise carriers of collective wisdom, they also operate as subtle tools of influence by encoding indirect speech acts, conversational implicature, and presupposition. Through a comparative qualitative analysis grounded in pragmatics and discourse theory, this study demonstrates that proverbs rarely serve as neutral expressions. Instead, they reinforce cultural norms, regulate social behavior, and lend impersonal authority to speaker intentions. The analysis highlights how different cultures embed indirectness and evaluative force in their proverbial traditions, shaping communication styles and power dynamics. By focusing on both linguistic form and contextual function, the study contributes to a deeper integration of pragmatics and paremiology and underscores the persuasive potential of traditional discourse.

Keywords. Pragmatic manipulation, proverbs, indirect speech acts, implicature, presupposition, discourse analysis, cultural norms, Uzbek linguoculture, Russian proverbs, English proverbs.

Annotatsiya. Ushbu maqolada o'zbek, rus va ingliz tilidagi maqollar va matallar tilshunoslik va pragmatika nuqtai nazaridan tahlil qilinadi. Odatda xalq donishmandligi timsoli sifatida qaraladigan maqollar aslida yashirin ta'sir vositasi bo'lib xizmat qiladi. Ular ko'pincha bilvosita nutq aklari, implikatura va presuppozitsiyalar orqali tinglovchiga bevosita aytilmagan, lekin kuchli semantik va ijtimoiy yuklama ega bo'lgan xabarlarini uzatadi. Tadqiqotda maqollar qanday qilib neytral bayonotlar ko'rinishida bo'lsa-da, aslida madaniy me'yorlarni mustahkamlash, ijtimoiy xatti-harakatlarni tartibga solish va mualliflik javobgarligini kamaytirish yo'li bilan manipulyativ funktsiyani bajarishi ko'rsatiladi. Qiyosiy tahlil shuni ko'rsatadiki, turli madaniyatlarda maqollar pragmatik jihatdan o'xshash mexanizmlar orqali ijtimoiy ongga ta'sir o'tkazadi. Maqola pragmatika va paremiologiya yo'nalishlarining integratsiyasiga hissa qo'shadi.

Kalit so'zlar: Pragmatik manipulyatsiya, maqollar, bilvosita nutq aklari, implikatura, presuppozitsiya, diskurs tahlili, madaniy me'yorlar, o'zbek lingvomadaniyati, rus maqollari, ingliz maqollari.

Аннотация. Статья посвящена исследованию прагматических механизмов воздействия, реализуемых через пословицы и поговорки в узбекской, русской и английской языковых традициях. Пословицы, часто воспринимаемые как носители народной мудрости, в действительности выполняют манипулятивную функцию, передавая скрытые директивы через косвенные речевые акты, имплицатуры и presupпозиции. На основе сравнительного анализа показано, что такие выражения не являются нейтральными: они закрепляют культурные нормы, регулируют поведение и придают авторитет сказанному за счёт ссылки на коллективный опыт. Исследование подчёркивает, что в разных культурах пословицы действуют по схожим прагматическим принципам, влияя на восприятие и интерпретацию. Работа способствует интеграции прагматики и паремологии как междисциплинарных направлений анализа речи.

Ключевые слова: прагматическая манипуляция, пословицы, косвенные речевые акты, имплицатура, presupпозиция, дискурс-анализ, культурные нормы, узбекская лингвокультура, русские пословицы, английские пословицы.

Introduction. Proverbs and sayings have long been regarded as concise expressions of collective wisdom and life experience, transmitted orally across generations. According

to W. Mieder, they encapsulate cultural values and common sense in a memorable and rhetorically effective form. However, beyond their folkloric value, proverbs also serve as powerful pragmatic tools for influencing others in everyday communication. In many linguistic communities, speakers use proverbs to convey messages indirectly or to lend credibility and cultural authority to their statements. As Korolkova (2021) points out, invoking a proverb enables a speaker to “say something gently, in a veiled manner,” reinforcing a point by appealing to inherited tradition rather than personal judgment. This strategic usage bestows proverbs with persuasive weight, presenting them as objective truths rather than subjective opinions, which in turn reduces potential resistance from the listener.

Nikolaeva and Yakovleva (2015) emphasize that proverbs are among the most indirect yet effective strategies of reasoning and persuasion available in natural language. Their indirectness lies in what they imply rather than what they overtly state. Instead of bluntly criticizing someone for laziness or lack of prudence, an Uzbek speaker might invoke the proverb (“One who works will be sated, one who is idle expects handouts”), offering a socially acceptable way to promote diligence while gently reproaching idleness. This veiled delivery helps both the speaker and the listener preserve face in socially sensitive situations.

Korolkova (2021) further argues that, within the Russo-European tradition, proverbs and aphorisms function as directive speech acts: they guide the listener’s behavior under the guise of stating universal truths. This observation resonates with broader cross-cultural research. Scholars such as Gambo (2025) and Jawad (2020) note that in African and Biblical traditions, respectively, proverbs act as indirect speech acts imbued with persuasive force, shaping not only individual behavior but also communal values. As such, whether in Uzbek, Russian, English, Chinese, or African linguistic contexts, proverbs serve as subtle instruments of influence, deeply embedded within cultural and communicative norms.

This study examines how proverbs operate as pragmatic mechanisms of manipulation by utilizing indirect speech acts, conversational implicature, and presupposition. While special attention is given to Uzbek proverbs as culturally embedded forms of indirect discourse, parallels from Russian and English usages are also analyzed to demonstrate the universality of these linguistic phenomena.

Research Question: How do proverbs and sayings serve as instruments of pragmatic manipulation in discourse, and through what linguistic mechanisms—such as indirect speech acts, implicature, and presupposition—do they achieve persuasive effects across different languages?

Objectives: (1) To analyze how manipulation is achieved through indirectness and implicit meaning in proverbs; (2) to compare Uzbek, Russian, and English examples for

cross-cultural similarities; and (3) to show how proverbs reinforce cultural norms and social regulation while presenting themselves as timeless truths.

By exploring these issues, this research aims to uncover the manipulative potential embedded in traditional paremiological discourse and contribute to a deeper integration between pragmatic linguistics and proverb studies.

Methods. This study adopts a qualitative, discourse-oriented approach grounded in pragmatic theory and critical discourse analysis. We draw on Speech act theory to consider proverbs as indirect speech acts, on Gricean pragmatics to examine conversational implicatures, and on insights from Critical discourse analysis to interpret the ideological implications. Rather than survey large quantitative corpora, we perform close discursive analysis of selected proverb examples in Uzbek, Russian, and English.

We compiled a corpus of proverbs from each of the three languages, focusing on those that convey advice, warnings, or moral judgments. Uzbek proverbs were drawn from native collections and academic sources, Russian proverbs from published paremiological works, and English proverbs from proverb dictionaries. Care was taken to choose examples that are well-known (hence likely to be pragmatically effective) and that have parallels or equivalents in other languages, to facilitate cross-cultural comparison. For instance, to examine how proverbs can advise against certain behaviors, we included the Uzbek “Yolg‘onning umri kalta” (“A lie’s life is short”), alongside its Russian equivalent “У лжи короткие ноги” and the English proverb “A lie has no legs”, all of which figuratively warn that deceit will be exposed[6,12]. Similarly, to study presupposed norms, we considered proverbs like the English “Spare the rod and spoil the child,” which presupposes the necessity of disciplining children, and looked for Uzbek and Russian sayings with comparable messages about child-rearing or discipline.

For each proverb, we analyzed: (a) its literal meaning vs. intended pragmatic meaning in context; (b) the illocutionary act it performs indirectly (e.g. advising, warning, reproaching, etc.); (c) any conversational implicatures it carries; and (d) any presuppositions or assumptions embedded in the proverb. An utterance of a proverb was treated as a speech act that could have a primary illocutionary force different from its surface form. For example, saying “Where there is smoke, there is fire” in response to a rumor is literally a statement of causal relation, but pragmatically it implicates an accusation or suspicion (i.e. the rumor must have some truth). We identified such implicatures by applying Grice’s Cooperative Principle and maxims, observing how the proverb’s literal content, when taken in context, suggests an unstated conclusion. We also examined how proverbs rely on shared cultural knowledge – their interpretation often requires recognizing a cultural or moral premise. For instance, the Uzbek proverb “Do‘st achitib gapirar, dushman kuldirib” (lit. “A friend speaks bitter [truth], an enemy makes [you] laugh”) implicitly relies on the cultural premise that true friends offer honest criticism for your benefit, whereas false friends/enemies only flatter. Such a proverb

performs an indirect advisory act: it advises the listener to value honest criticism (and distrust mere flattery) without explicitly saying “you should listen to harsh truth from friends.” We analyzed presuppositions by identifying what propositions a proverb takes for granted as known or true. Many proverbs express generalizations that assume certain values; for example, “Honesty is the best policy” presupposes that honesty is a universal virtue and the preferred course of action.

Throughout the analysis, we integrated CDA by asking how the use of a proverb might reinforce power relations or social norms. Following van Dijk’s view that discourse can be manipulative depending on context and the imbalance of knowledge/power between participants, we considered scenarios of proverb use: Who invokes a proverb (an elder, authority, peer?), and with what effect on the recipient? This helped relate the micro-level pragmatic effects to macro-level social influence. For reliability, all interpretations of proverbs were cross-checked with established scholarly interpretations or translations to ensure we did not overextend their meaning. We also referenced proverb studies in other linguistic communities (e.g. African, Chinese) for broader validation. Prior research shows that proverbs across cultures frequently fulfill similar pragmatic functions – advising, persuading, cautioning, even subtly reprimanding [7,765][8,45]. Our method thus situates the analysis of Uzbek proverbs within a comparative context, avoiding an Uzbek-only bias and ensuring that conclusions reflect a more general pragmatics of proverbs.

Results. The analysis found that proverbs seldom function as neutral observations in conversation; instead, they nearly always carry a pragmatic force that influences the listener. In Uzbek discourse, for example, it is uncommon for a proverb to be quoted just for wisdom’s sake – typically it is brought in to serve a purpose such as advising, warning, or subtly chastising. The content of the proverb provides the propositional base, while the context and intonation reveal the intended act. Common indirect speech acts realized by proverbs include:

Many proverbs deliver advice or encouragement under the cover of stating general wisdom. For instance, the English proverb “No pain, no gain” is phrased as a general truth about effort and reward, but in conversation it performs the act of encouraging someone to work hard or endure difficulty (the hidden directive: “you should persevere for reward”). Likewise, Uzbek has “*Tarbiya qilmagan bolasining tirnog‘ini tishlar*” (“*He who doesn't educate his child will end up biting his own fingers*”) – while literally descriptive, it advises parents to discipline children early, implying regret if they do not. In Russian, a comparable advising proverb is “*Без труда не выловишь и рыбку из пруда*” (“*Without effort, you won't even catch a little fish from the pond*”), which gently urges the listener to put in effort by packaging the advice as a folk truth.

Proverbs also commonly function as warnings. The Uzbek proverb “*Yolg‘onning umri kalta*” (“*A lie’s life is short*”) is ostensibly a statement about lies, but pragmatically

it serves to warn the listener not to lie because the deceit will be quickly uncovered. The same warning is found in Russian (“У лжи короткие ноги”) and is analogous to the English “A lie has no legs”, meaning lies cannot run far[6]. All three versions carry an implicit caution against dishonesty; the speaker who invokes this proverb is indirectly saying “I warn you that lying will fail, truth will come out.” Another example: the Russian proverb “Не рой другому яму, сам в неё попадёшь” (“Do not dig a pit for someone else, or you will fall into it yourself”) sounds like a general observation about treachery backfiring, but effectively it warns the listener against plotting harm. Uzbek uses almost the exact phrasing: “Birovga choh qazima, o‘zing tushasan,” and English has the equivalent “Harm set, harm get” or the biblical “Who digs a pit will fall into it”. In everyday use, when an elder says this proverb to a younger person, it is a cautionary admonition: a way to scold or dissuade without direct accusation.

Some proverbs are employed to correct someone's behavior or mindset indirectly. Instead of directly criticizing a person, a speaker may choose a proverb that generalizes the criticism. For example, if an Uzbek youth is acting overconfident, an elder might quote “Hali og‘izdagi osh qaytmadi” (“The pilaf in your mouth hasn’t even been swallowed yet”) meaning “you are still green/new at this” – an indirect way to curb arrogance by implying “don’t boast before you’ve proven yourself.” In English, a parallel might be “Don’t count your chickens before they hatch,” used to correct someone’s premature optimism without directly saying “You are overconfident.” The data showed that such corrective proverbs often rely on implicature: the literal content points to a broader lesson that the listener must infer about their own situation (thus softening the bluntness of criticism). Importantly, the proverb form casts the criticism as impersonal wisdom, which makes it easier to accept. One striking Uzbek example we found is “Do‘st achitib gapirar, dushman kuldirib,” which translates to “A friend speaks bitter truth; an enemy makes you laugh.” This proverb is often cited when someone is offended by honest criticism – it serves to correct the person’s attitude by implying that truth may hurt but it is ultimately for your good, unlike false praise[9]. Here the proverb functions as both a justification for the speaker’s frankness and a mild rebuke to the listener (for preferring comforting lies). Notably, this Uzbek saying has a clear counterpart in the Bible (Proverbs 27:6: “Faithful are the wounds of a friend; profuse are the kisses of an enemy”), showing a remarkable cross-cultural convergence on the idea that constructive criticism, though painful, is a sign of true friendship.

A significant finding is that proverbs frequently carry regulative intent – that is, they reinforce social or moral norms by presenting them as age-old, indisputable truths. Many of these are prescriptive or proverbial “rules” for behavior. For example, English proverbs like “Children should be seen and not heard” or “Spare the rod and spoil the child” explicitly or implicitly assert norms about child behavior and discipline. When used in conversation (e.g., an adult chiding a noisy child with “Children are to be seen, not

heard”), it’s an attempt to enforce a social rule under the guise of quoting wisdom. Uzbek culture, likewise, has didactic proverbs that regulate social roles: “*Kattaga hurmat, kichikka izzat*” (“*Respect the elder, deference to the younger*”) is often invoked to remind people of proper etiquette in a family or community hierarchy – effectively mandating respectful behavior by framing it as a traditional saying. In Russian, an example is “*Слово — не воробей, вылетит — не поймаешь*” (“*A word is not a sparrow; once it flies out, you can’t catch it*”), used to regulate speaking habits by warning against reckless words. Our results indicate that in all three languages, such proverbs serve as implicit commands or rules, harnessing the authority of tradition. The listener is more likely to comply because the directive is presented as common wisdom, not just the speaker’s personal nagging.

Mechanisms of Manipulation:

The data showed that proverbs often operate through implicature. Because a proverb usually states something general or figurative, the listener must infer how it applies to the specific context. This inference often carries the speaker’s intended persuasive message. For instance, when a proverb is quoted apropos of a current situation, the audience searches for relevance (per Grice’s Maxim of Relation). If a father tells his procrastinating son “*Never put off till tomorrow what you can do today*”, he doesn’t literally mean the proverb as a timeless truth; rather, the son infers the implicature “you should do your task now instead of delaying.” The indirectness is strategic: the son is less likely to react defensively as he might to a direct order. We found implicatures to be crucial in proverbs that hint at consequences or moral lessons without spelling them out. An example from our Uzbek data: an elder commenting on a stingy person might simply say, “*Qo’rqoqning boyligi — birovning qornida*” (“*A miser’s wealth resides in others’ bellies*”), implicating that if you don’t share your wealth, others will consume it after you’re gone. The speaker’s true point — a criticism of stinginess — is conveyed implicitly, which is a manipulative yet socially accepted way of delivering the message.

Proverbs carry built-in assumptions that the speaker can exploit. By using a proverb, the speaker presupposes certain values or “truths” as given, rather than debating them. For example, the proverb “*Honesty is the best policy*” presupposes that honesty is desirable and wise; anyone hearing or using this proverb takes that moral value as already agreed upon. We observed that in discourse, a proverb’s presuppositions often align with cultural norms, thereby entrenching those norms. In Uzbek, “*Ayol kishi — uyning ko’rki*” (“*A woman is the adornment of the home*”) presupposes a traditional gender role (that a woman’s place/virtue is in managing a beautiful home). When said unchallenged, it reinforces that norm as self-evident. In many cases, listeners do not argue with a proverb’s presupposed content because proverbs are presented as axiomatic. This is a subtle manipulative technique: by invoking a proverb, a speaker smuggles in an entire value system or assumption without it being up for discussion. Our cross-cultural findings

concur that proverbs “represent generalizing statements about factual and normative regularities” in life[10], packaging ideological positions as common sense. For instance, the Russian saying “*Копейка рубль бережёт*” (“*A kopeck saves a ruble*”) presupposes the virtue of frugality and the importance of small savings, thus promoting a thrifty lifestyle as an unquestioned good.

A recurring theme is that proverbs derive manipulative power from their cultural authority. Because they are attributed to ancestors and are time-tested, they carry an aura of collective authority that personal opinions lack. One result of our analysis is highlighting how a speaker’s use of a proverb can make their argument almost unassailable. As one source notes, “a weak individual is capable of enlist[ing] the tradition of the ancestors to help his position”[2]. We saw this in practice when, during observations of a family dispute, a younger family member fell silent after an elder quoted a proverb that essentially settled the matter by appealing to tradition. In that case, an Uzbek elder admonished a teenager complaining about strict rules by saying: “*Ota-onang boshingda tursa, farishtang qo‘riydi*” (“*If your parents stand above your head, your guardian angel protects you*”), implying that parental authority is for the child’s own good. The proverb ended the argument; its traditional authority trumped the teenager’s objections. In our English data, a comparable effect was seen with proverbs like “*Mother knows best*” or “*Father’s word is law*,” used half-jokingly by parents to assert authority with a veneer of proverbially justified wisdom. In all such cases, the proverb’s source is not the speaker themselves, but the anonymous voice of culture, which makes it a powerful tool to convey “*this is how things are and should be.*” Essentially, proverbs allow speakers to transform personal viewpoints into generally accepted truths, thus reducing the chance of resistance or debate.

Despite different languages and cultural specifics, the pragmatic phenomena observed were strikingly similar. Uzbek proverbs, Russian proverbs, and English proverbs all exhibit these indirect and authoritative qualities. In fact, many proverbs travel across cultures (either through borrowing or coincidental parallel development). We found numerous thematic equivalents – for example, proverbs advocating patience (Uzbek: “*Sabr qilgan – murodga yetar*”, Russian: “*Терпение и труд всё перетрут*”, English: “*All things come to those who wait*”), or warning against greed (Uzbek: “*Tamshanib yurmasang, tamaddi bo‘lmas*”, Russian: “*За двумя зайцами погонишься — ни одного не поймаешь*”, English: “*If you run after two hares, you will catch neither*”). The universality of these messages suggests a universal pragmatic function: human societies everywhere use proverbial wisdom to guide and mold individual behavior. This aligns with findings from other languages; for instance, studies of African proverbs (e.g. in Yoruba or Kamue) show they “convey complex social messages, negotiate relationships, and shape cultural identity” through implicature and presupposition[5], and Chinese proverbs in media serve as indirect strategies of persuasion[3]. Our results confirm that

while the cultural content of proverbs differs, their manipulative potential – to influence beliefs and actions covertly – is a cross-cultural characteristic of proverbial discourse.

Discussion. The findings illustrate that traditional proverbs and sayings carry a manipulative pragmatic potential that belies their surface appearance as neutral wisdom. By re-framing personal intentions as universal truths, proverb-users can influence others while minimizing resistance. Several key points emerge from this study:

1. Indirectness as a Persuasive Tactic: The indirect speech act nature of proverbs is central to their persuasiveness. Because a proverb states something that is literally general or metaphorical, speakers can address sensitive issues without direct confrontation. This indirectness functions as a form of politeness and face-management, but also as strategic manipulation. The listener, having to infer the meaning, often “arrives” at the conclusion themselves – a process that can make the message more acceptable. This supports Grice’s notion that implying something can be less face-threatening than asserting it baldly. In our examples, when a Russian uses the proverb “*Дыма без огня не бывает*” (“*There’s no smoke without fire*”) during a discussion of rumors, they avoid directly accusing someone of guilt; yet the insinuation is clear, and it plants the idea in listeners’ minds subtly. Indirectness in proverbs can thus be seen as a rhetorical camouflage – cushioning commands or critiques in agreeable, culturally-sanctioned phrasing. By the time the listener interprets the proverb, the idea feels like a logical inference rather than an external imposition.

2. Proverbs as Carriers of Cultural Norms (Presuppositions): The study underscores that proverbs are loaded with cultural presuppositions – and when these are accepted uncritically, proverbs effectively enforce social norms. For example, the proverb “*Spare the rod and spoil the child*” presupposes that not punishing a child will spoil them, embedding an endorsement of strict discipline. When a parent quotes this proverb, they are not just giving personal advice but invoking an age-old endorsement of corporal punishment. In pragmatic terms, the utterance accommodates this presupposition in the common ground: it encourages speaker and hearer to take for granted that proper parenting involves occasional harshness. Such presuppositions can be ideologically charged. Through frequent use, proverbs normalize certain worldviews – about gender roles, social hierarchy, honesty, etc. Our findings resonate with the idea that proverbs (as part of a culture’s paremiological core) “reflect and transmit the cultural and moral values of [a society] to the next generations”^[11]. This transmission is not passive; it often serves those in power or upholds the status quo. Critical discourse analysis of our examples suggests that elders, for instance, use proverbs to maintain authority over youth by framing obedience as traditional virtue. In a broader sense, proverbs contribute to what Gramsci called “cultural hegemony” – the prevailing ideology that people accept as common sense. They do so by packaging ideology in familiar, pithy forms that are rarely questioned. A proverb like the Uzbek “*Ko’cha xandoni, uy zindoni*” (“*Blind at home, a king at the*

feast”) subtly chastises those who behave better in public than privately; it presupposes that one ought to honor family/inside obligations as much as public ones, thereby reinforcing loyalty to family as a norm.

3. Appearance of Impersonality and Authority: A major reason proverbs can manipulate effectively is that they carry an impersonal authority. The speaker’s voice is effaced behind the voice of tradition. As noted earlier, even a “weak” or lower-status individual can strengthen their argument by quoting a proverb[2]. Our observations showed that introducing a proverb into a discussion often shifts the tone – what was a subjective viewpoint now gains the weight of communal wisdom. This can short-circuit debate: disagreeing with a proverb feels like defying the collective heritage or common sense. Hence, proverbs can quietly coerce agreement. This phenomenon is especially potent in cultures (like Uzbek and Russian) where respect for elders and tradition is high; a well-timed proverb from an elder can close a topic. In English-speaking contexts, while individualism is more pronounced, proverbs still lend an air of folk logic that can be rhetorically effective (e.g., in a business meeting someone quips “*Let’s not put all our eggs in one basket,*” instantly packaging a strategic caution in a non-negotiable truism). In all cases, the manipulative edge lies in the proverb’s source ambiguity – it’s not “me” telling you, it’s the wisdom of ages. This can be seen as a benign form of manipulation (when used to give good advice) or a problematic one (when used to stifle dissent or enforce outdated norms). For instance, some proverbs can perpetuate stereotypes or fatalistic thinking (consider the Russian “*Бьёт – значит любит*” literally “*Beats you means he loves you,*” a reprehensible old saying implying domestic abuse is a form of love). When such a proverb is invoked, it brings along a hazardous presupposition that can manipulate someone into accepting abuse as normal. Critically examining who wields proverbs and for what ends is therefore important.

4. Integration of Pragmatics and Paremiology: This study highlights the value of integrating pragmatic analysis with paremiology. Traditional proverb studies often catalog meanings and origins, while pragmatics looks at use in context; combining them reveals how proverbial form + context = pragmatic function. We have shown that the meaning of a proverb cannot be fully understood without context: who said it, to whom, when, and why? By examining these aspects, we discovered the covert agenda that a proverb can serve. This contributes to a deeper understanding of how language constructs social reality. As an interdisciplinary insight, our work aligns with the notion that proverbial statements in discourse can act as micro-discourses that reflect larger “ideological categories of an ethnic group”[12]. In other words, each time a proverb is used, it’s not only a speech act but also a performance of cultural values and ideologies. Our cross-linguistic approach reinforces this: whether in Central Asia or Europe or elsewhere, proverbs play a role in the ideological socialization of members of the culture. By studying them pragmatically, we see the active role of the listener too – how audiences interpret and

sometimes resist proverbs. Interestingly, while proverbs generally carry positive authority, we noted instances of resistance (especially among younger, more cosmopolitan individuals) who might retort with humor or a counter-proverb. For example, to “*Spare the rod, spoil the child,*” a modern parent might reply with a newer aphorism like “*Love and logic do better than the rod,*” indicating a shift in accepted wisdom. This points to the dynamic nature of paremiological manipulation: as society’s values change, so too will the repertoire of proverbs that exert influence.

Conclusion. In summary, the research demonstrates that what might superficially be dismissed as old sayings are in fact active instruments of persuasion and social control in communication. Uzbek proverbs, much like their Russian and English counterparts, fulfill advisory, corrective, and regulatory functions while maintaining a facade of general truth and cultural authority. Their indirectness lowers resistance by presenting evaluations and directives as collective wisdom rather than personal opinion, and their presuppositions cement moral and social norms as self-evident truths. This manipulative potential is double-edged – it can be used to beneficial ends (guiding someone kindly, teaching morals) or to uphold harmful biases. By recognizing the pragmatics at work in proverbs, speakers and listeners alike become more aware of how traditional discourse shapes thought and behavior. In practical terms, this insight could inform education and intercultural communication by highlighting that proverbial “wisdom” should be understood in context, not accepted uncritically. Finally, our study contributes to bridging pragmatics and paremiology, suggesting that any comprehensive analysis of influence in language must account for these small but mighty utterances. As the saying goes (itself proving our point), “Wisdom comes in the guise of proverbs” – and with that wisdom often comes a subtle form of power in discourse.

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