

SEMANTIC AND STYLISTIC FEATURES OF UZBEK PROVERBS RELATED TO “MERCY”

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Annotation. *This article analyzes the semantic and stylistic features of Uzbek proverbs connected with the concept of “mercy” (rahm-shafqat, mehr, muruvvat). The study focuses on how mercy is expressed through moral evaluation, metaphor, antithesis, parallelism, repetition and didactic generalization in Uzbek proverbial discourse. The analysis shows that Uzbek proverbs represent mercy not only as an emotional feeling, but also as a social, ethical and spiritual value that regulates human relationships. Proverbs about mercy usually encourage kindness toward the weak, respect for parents and elders, support for orphans and the poor, and compassion toward all people. The research is based on descriptive, semantic and stylistic methods.*

Keywords: *Uzbek proverbs, mercy, compassion, semantics, stylistics, folklore, morality, paremiology.*

Annotatsiya. *Ushbu maqolada “rahm-shafqat”, “mehr”, “muruvvat” tushunchalari bilan bog‘liq o‘zbek xalq maqollarining semantik va uslubiy xususiyatlari tahlil qilinadi. Tadqiqotda rahm-shafqat g‘oyasining maqollarda axloqiy baholash, metafora, antiteza, parallelizm, takror va didaktik umumlashtirish orqali ifodalanishi yoritiladi. Tahlil natijalari shuni ko‘rsatadiki, o‘zbek maqollarida rahm-shafqat faqat hissiy kechinma emas, balki insonlar o‘rtasidagi munosabatlarni tartibga soluvchi ijtimoiy, axloqiy va ma‘naviy qadriyat sifatida namoyon bo‘ladi. Bunday maqollar insonni mehribonlikka, yetim-yesirga yordam berishga, ota-onaga hurmat ko‘rsatishga va jamiyatda insoniylik tamoyillariga amal qilishga undaydi.*

Kalit so‘zlar: *o‘zbek maqollari, rahm-shafqat, mehr, muruvvat, semantika, stilistika, folklor, axloq.*

Аннотация. *В статье рассматриваются семантические и стилистические особенности узбекских пословиц, связанных с понятием «милосердие» (rahm-shafqat, mehr, muruvvat). Особое внимание уделяется тому, как идея милосердия выражается в пословицах через нравственную оценку, метафору, антитезу, параллелизм, повтор и дидактическое обобщение. Результаты анализа показывают, что в узбекских пословицах милосердие воспринимается не только как эмоциональное качество человека, но и как важная социальная, этическая и духовная ценность. Такие пословицы призывают к доброте, уважению к старшим, заботе о сиротах, помощи нуждающимся и сохранению человечности в обществе.*

Ключевые слова: *узбекские пословицы, милосердие, сострадание, семантика, стилистика, фольклор, нравственность, паремиология.*

Introduction. Proverbs are one of the most concise and expressive genres of folk oral creativity. They reflect the worldview, moral standards, social experience and aesthetic thinking of a nation. In Uzbek culture, proverbs have always served as an important means of educating people, regulating social behavior and transmitting ethical values from one generation to another. Among the values expressed in Uzbek proverbs, the concept of “mercy” occupies a special place because it is closely connected with kindness, humanity, generosity, patience, forgiveness and moral responsibility.

The topic “Semantic and stylistic features of Uzbek proverbs related to mercy” is relevant because mercy is not only a linguistic concept, but also a cultural and ethical category. Uzbek proverbs about mercy show how the people understand goodness, compassion, help, respect and spiritual purity. Such proverbs are usually short in form but deep in meaning. They express moral conclusions through figurative language, comparison, contrast, rhythm and repetition. Therefore, the study of mercy-related proverbs helps to reveal the national-cultural features of Uzbek thought and the stylistic richness of Uzbek proverbial speech.

Literature review. The theoretical basis of the article is connected with folklore studies, paremiology and linguistic semantics. Uzbek proverbs have been widely collected and studied in national folklore research. The collection *O‘zbek xalq maqollari* prepared by T. Mirzayev, A. Musoqulov and B. Sarimsoqov is one of the important sources for studying Uzbek proverbs; the catalogue data identifies it as a 512-page book published by Sharq in Tashkent in 2005 [1]. The same source describes proverbs as a compact but meaningful folklore genre that reflects language beauty, wisdom and the people’s centuries-old life experience.

In Uzbek folklore studies, O. Madayev’s *O‘zbek xalq og‘zaki ijodi* is also important because it explains the specific features, history, genres and examples of Uzbek oral poetic creativity [2]. The source is listed as a 2010 textbook on Uzbek folk oral creativity, which makes it useful for understanding the general folklore background of proverbs. In addition, studies on the cultural significance of Uzbek proverbs emphasize that proverbs are transmitted from generation to generation as a form of spiritual heritage and are connected with national identity, moral education and everyday communication.

Foreign paremiological studies also provide a useful theoretical framework for analyzing proverbs. Wolfgang Mieder’s *Proverbs: A Handbook* is a major work in proverb studies [3]; library catalogue data describes it as a 2004 Greenwood Press publication with bibliographical references and an index. Neal R. Norrick’s *How Proverbs Mean: Semantic Studies in English Proverbs* is also significant because it focuses on the semantic interpretation of proverbs [4]; De Gruyter lists the book as published in 1985 in the series *Trends in Linguistics* [5]. These works help to analyze Uzbek proverbs not only as folklore units, but also as semantic, pragmatic and stylistic texts.

Methodology. The article uses a descriptive-analytical method to examine Uzbek proverbs related to the semantic field of mercy. The selected proverbs include lexical units such as *rahm*, *shafqat*, *mehr*, *muruvvat*, *yaxshilik*, *savob*, *yetim*, *ko‘ngil* and *insoniylik*. These words and expressions are important because they directly or indirectly express the idea of compassion and human kindness. The analysis is based on representative Uzbek proverbs from folklore collections and common proverbial usage. The semantic method is used to identify the main meaning groups of mercy-related proverbs. In this article, the proverbs are divided into several semantic groups: mercy as moral duty, mercy as social

support, mercy as spiritual reward, mercy as human dignity, and mercy as emotional closeness. This classification helps to show that the concept of mercy in Uzbek proverbs is not limited to pity; it includes active kindness, generosity, forgiveness and social responsibility. The stylistic method is used to study the expressive devices of the selected proverbs. Special attention is paid to metaphor, antithesis, parallelism, repetition, rhythm, ellipsis and didactic tone. Proverbs usually have a compressed structure, which means that a broad moral idea is expressed in a short and memorable form. For this reason, stylistic analysis is necessary to understand how Uzbek proverbs influence the listener and how they preserve moral values in oral speech.

Analysis. The following table presents selected Uzbek proverbs related to mercy and analyzes their semantic and stylistic features.

№	Uzbek proverb	General meaning	Semantic feature	Stylistic feature
1	Rahm qilganga rahm qilinar.	A merciful person will also receive mercy.	Reciprocity of kindness and compassion.	Repetition of <i>rahm</i> creates rhythm and moral emphasis.
2	Mehr bergan mehr topar.	A person who gives love and kindness receives the same.	Mercy as mutual moral exchange.	Parallel structure and lexical repetition.
3	Yaxshilik qil, dengizga tashla, baliq bilar; baliq bilmasa, Xoliq bilar.	Goodness is never lost; even if people do not see it, God knows it.	Mercy as spiritual reward.	Gradation, metaphor and religious-cultural imagery.
4	Yetimning boshini silagan savob topar.	Helping orphans is a noble and blessed action.	Mercy toward the weak and vulnerable.	Symbolic image of “stroking the head” expresses care.
5	Ko‘ngil ko‘ngildan suv ichar.	Hearts understand and support each other.	Mercy as emotional closeness.	Metaphor: the heart is presented as something that drinks water.
6	Mehr ko‘zda, mehr so‘zda.	Kindness is shown through both look and speech.	Mercy as communicative behavior.	Parallelism and sound harmony.
7	Yaxshi so‘z — jon ozig‘i.	A kind word gives spiritual strength.	Mercy through speech.	Metaphor: word is compared to food for the soul.
8	Yomonlikka yaxshilik — mardning ishi.	Responding to evil with goodness is a sign of bravery.	Mercy as moral superiority.	Antithesis: <i>yomonlik</i> / <i>yaxshilik</i> .
9	Ota-onaga mehr qilgan kam bo‘lmas.	A person who respects and cares for parents will not lose blessings.	Mercy within family relations.	Didactic generalization and moral prediction.
10	Insonning ziynati — mehr-shafqat.	The true beauty of a person is compassion.	Mercy as human dignity.	Metaphor: mercy is described as adornment.
11	Kattaga hurmat, kichikka izzat.	Respect elders and show care to younger people.	Mercy as social harmony.	Balanced parallelism and contrast.
12	Bechora ko‘nglini	Do not hurt a	Mercy as	Imperative form strengthens the

	og‘ritma.	helpless person.	protection from harm.	moral message.
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The table shows that Uzbek proverbs related to mercy can be grouped into several semantic directions. The first group presents mercy as reciprocity: a person who shows compassion will receive compassion in return. The proverbs *Rahm qilganga rahm qilinar* and *Mehr bergan mehr topar* express this idea clearly. Their semantic structure is based on moral balance: kindness returns to the person who gives it. The second group presents mercy as a religious and spiritual value. The proverb *Yaxshilik qil, dengizga tashla, baliq bilar; baliq bilmasa, Xoliq bilar* shows that good deeds should not be performed only for public praise. This proverb contains a deep ethical idea: mercy has value even when it is invisible to society. The use of *Xoliq* gives the proverb a spiritual meaning and connects human kindness with divine justice. The third group connects mercy with social protection. Proverbs about orphans, poor people, parents, elders and children show that mercy in Uzbek culture is strongly related to social responsibility. A merciful person is expected to support weak people, respect elders, protect the helpless and avoid hurting others. This demonstrates that Uzbek proverbs understand mercy as practical action, not only as inner emotion.

Stylistically, the analyzed proverbs are characterized by brevity, rhythm and figurativeness. Repetition is one of the most common devices: *rahm — rahm, mehr — mehr, ko‘ngil — ko‘ngil*. Antithesis is also important, especially in proverbs where goodness is contrasted with evil. Metaphor gives emotional power to the proverb: for example, *Yaxshi so‘z — jon ozig‘i* presents kind speech as spiritual food. Through these devices, proverbs become memorable and educational.

Results. The analysis leads to the following results: Uzbek proverbs related to mercy express mercy as a central moral value of national culture. The concept of mercy is connected with *mehr, rahm-shafqat, muruvvat, yaxshilik, savob* and *insoniylik*. Mercy in Uzbek proverbs is not passive pity; it is active kindness, help and moral responsibility. Proverbs about mercy often refer to weak or vulnerable people, such as orphans, poor people, children and the elderly. Family relations are an important semantic field of mercy, especially respect for parents and elders. Many proverbs express the idea that goodness and mercy return to the person who gives them. Religious and spiritual meanings are visible in proverbs where good deeds are connected with reward, blessing and divine awareness. The main stylistic features of mercy-related proverbs are repetition, parallelism, metaphor, antithesis and imperative tone. The short and rhythmic form of proverbs makes them effective for moral education. Uzbek proverbs about mercy preserve national values and encourage people to live with kindness, compassion and humanity.

Conclusion. In conclusion, Uzbek proverbs related to “mercy” reveal the deep moral and cultural foundations of Uzbek national thinking. They show that mercy is understood not merely as an emotional reaction, but as a stable ethical principle that

guides human behavior. Through proverbs, the Uzbek people express the importance of kindness, generosity, respect, patience, forgiveness and support for vulnerable members of society. The semantic analysis demonstrates that mercy-related proverbs form several important meaning groups: mercy as reciprocity, mercy as spiritual reward, mercy as social responsibility, mercy as family duty and mercy as human dignity. The stylistic analysis shows that these meanings are expressed through concise and powerful linguistic devices such as metaphor, repetition, antithesis, parallelism and didactic generalization. Therefore, Uzbek proverbs about mercy are valuable not only as folklore examples, but also as linguistic, cultural and educational materials.

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