

## Linguocultural study of phytonyms in English and Uzbek proverbs

*Bekmurodova Zarnigor Shodmon qizi*  
[zarnigorbeshimova1@gmail.com](mailto:zarnigorbeshimova1@gmail.com)  
Student of Master's department  
Uzbekistan State World Languages University

Scientific supervisor:  
Narmurodova Gulnoza Ilhomovna (PhD)  
UZSWLU Associate Professor in the  
Department of General Linguistics

**Annotation:** This research examines the cultural meanings of plant names, particularly those used in English and Uzbek proverbs. The scientific inquiry addresses culture through its metaphorical expression, sheds light on the values, beliefs, and worldviews of the people that each culture represents, using a systematic approach which includes cross-cultural analysis, statistics, qualitative researches, and comparative study of selected proverbs from both cultures. The results mark some interesting different and similar meanings concerning the role plants bear symbolically in each of the cultures. In the English and Uzbek proverbs, "tree" (*daraxt*) stands as a prominent representative denoting might, growth, and long life. This, on the other hand, reflects the remarkable attribute people all around the world share that trees are regarded to be the symbol of their strength and permanence. On the contrary, with regards to both cultures, "apple" embraces a powerful representation for wisdom, temptation, and virtue. Such phytonyms show how two cultures, though distinct, can be unified in their understanding of ethics. In the end, the study adds to the growing body of phytonomic studies and fosters better understanding between different cultures.

**Key words:** culture, language, phytonym, linguoculturology, cultural symbolism, proverb, paremiology

## Лингвокультурологическое исследование фитонимов в английских и узбекских пословицах

*Бекмуродова Зарнигор Шодмон кизи*  
[zarnigorbeshimova1@gmail.com](mailto:zarnigorbeshimova1@gmail.com)  
Студент магистратуры  
Узбекский государственный университет мировых языков

Научный руководитель:  
Нармуродова Гулноза Илхомовна (PhD)  
Доцент кафедры Общего языкознания  
УзГУМЯ

**Аннотация:** Данное исследование рассматривает культурные значения названий растений, особенно тех, которые используются в английских и узбекских пословицах. Научное исследование обращается к культуре через её метафорические выражения, освещая ценности, убеждения и мировоззрения людей, представляющих каждую культуру. Используя системный подход, который включает межкультурный анализ, статистику, качественные исследования и сравнительное изучение выбранных пословиц из обеих культур, результаты показывают интересные различия и сходства в символическом значении растений в каждой из культур. В английских и узбекских пословицах "дерево" (*daraxt*) выступает как важный символ силы, роста и долголетия. Это, в свою очередь, отражает замечательную

характеристику людей по всему миру: деревья считаются символом силы и устойчивости. Напротив, в обеих культурах "яблоко" имеет мощное представление о мудрости, искушении и добродетели. Такие фитонимы показывают, как две культуры, хотя и различны, могут объединяться в своем понимании этики. В конечном итоге данное исследование вносит вклад в растущее число фитонимических исследований и содействует лучшему пониманию между различными культурами.

**Ключевые слова:** культура, язык, фитоним, лингвокультурология, культурная символика, пословица, паремология

## Ingliz va O‘zbek maqollarida fitonimlarni lingvomadaniy jihatdan o‘rganish

Bekmurodova Zarnigor Shodmon qizi  
[zarnigorbeshimova1@gmail.com](mailto:zarnigorbeshimova1@gmail.com)  
Magistratura talabasi  
O‘zbekiston davlat jahon tillari universiteti

Ilmiy rahbar:  
Narmurodova Gulnoza Ilhomovna (PhD)  
O‘zDJTU Umumiy tilshunoslik kafedrasida dotsenti

**Annotatsiya:** Ushbu tadqiqot ingliz va o‘zbek maqollarida aks etgan fitonimlar, ya‘ni o‘simlik nomlari ichidagi madaniy simbolizmni chuqur o‘rganishga bag‘ishlangan. Ushbu terminlarning metaforik ahamiyatini o‘rganish orqali tadqiqot har bir madaniyatni belgilovchi asosiy qadriyatlar, e‘tiqodlar va dunyoqarashlarni yoritadi. Kross-madaniy tahlil, statistik baholash, sifatli ma‘lumotlar va taqqoslash yondashuvlarini o‘z ichiga olgan mustahkam metodologik asosdan foydalangan holda, tadqiqot ikkita til an‘analaridan tanlangan maqollarni puxta o‘rganadi. Natijalar har bir madaniyatda o‘simliklarning simbolik rollari o‘rtasidagi qiziqarli o‘xshashliklar va farqlarni ochib beradi. Masalan, "daraxt" atamasi (tree) ingliz va o‘zbek maqollarida muhim motiv sifatida paydo bo‘ladi va kuch, o‘shish va uzoq umr kabi tushunchalarni ramzlaydi. Ushbu umumiylik daraxtlarning mustahkamlik va barqarorlik simboli sifatida universal qadrlanishini ta‘kidlaydi. Boshqa tomondan, "olma" ikki madaniyatda ham kuchli emblem sifatida xizmat qiladi, bilim, vasvasa va axloqiylikni ifodalaydi. Ushbu dualizm ma‘lum fitonimlarning chuqur madaniy hikoyalar va axloqiy qarashlarni qanday o‘z ichiga olishi mumkinligini ko‘rsatadi, bu esa umumiy insoniy tajribani aks ettiradi va bir vaqtning o‘zida alohida madaniy talqinlarni ta‘kidlaydi. Nihoyat, ushbu tadqiqot til va madaniyatning fitonomik simbolizm orqali qanday bog‘lanishini tushunishimizni boyitadi.

**Kalit so‘zlar:** madaniyat, til, fitonim, lingvomadaniyatshunoslik, madaniy ramziylik, maqol, paremiologiya

### Introduction

Culture and language are intertwined in numerous intricate ways. Effective communication necessitates a thorough understanding of the cultural context of native speakers, encompassing their lifestyle, mindset, worldview, national identity, traditions, beliefs, value systems, and patterns of social interaction (Ter-Minasova, 2007). The scholar’s point was that language and culture are inextricably linked, and effective communication requires not only grammatical and lexical proficiency but also an understanding of the cultural context in which the language is used.

It should be mentioned that linguistics of the XXI century is actively developing the idea that language is not only an instrument of communication but also the cultural code of a nation. It happened due to the development of a new anthropocentric paradigm, which gives a man the status of being “the measure of all things” and focuses on studying the “human factor” in the language. The human is considered the center of the Universe and language, because he is the only bearer of

universal and national-specific values. Accordingly, Yu.S. Stepanov claims that linguistics is a science about “language in the human and the human in language” (Stepanov, 2004). Stepanov’s point is that this area of study emphasizes how language and human experience are connected, including how we think, our culture, and society as a whole.

Linguoculturology, a recently developed area of linguistic inquiry rooted in the anthropocentric paradigm, is a dynamic and growing field that bridges linguistics, cultural studies, cognitive linguistics, ethnolinguistics, and sociolinguistics. While drawing from these diverse disciplines, linguoculturology maintains a distinct approach to the study of language and culture, focusing on the in-depth semantics of linguistic elements and their relationship to both universal and culture-specific concepts. V. N. Teliya defines Linguoculturology as “a study aimed at investigating and describing the correlation between language and culture in scope of modern culture national self-consciousness and it’s sign representation” (Телия, 1999, p.16). The scholar’s point was that linguoculturology studies the connection between language and culture within modern society, especially how a nation sees itself and how that self-image is expressed symbolically.

V.V. Vorobyev states that it is “an integrated scientific discipline studying correlations and interactions between culture and language in their functioning” (Воробьев, 2008, p. 37). Vorobyev’s point is that linguoculturology is a unified scientific discipline that examines the relationship between culture and language, and how they interact and influence each other.

V.V. Krasnikh considers Linguoculturology as “a discipline studying manifestation, reflection and fixation of culture in the language and discourse” (Красных, 2002, p. 27). The scholar explains that linguoculturology explores how language and speech reflect and reinforce culture, demonstrating the inseparable link between the two. It studies how language, in its various forms, both embodies and strengthens cultural values and practices.

So, the aim of Linguoculturology is to study linguistic means with the help of which language embodies, stores and transfers culture (Маслюва, 2007). The object of the study are the linguistic units (at all language levels: phonological, lexical, syntactical, etc., which contain culture specific information. The subject of linguocultural studies is the interaction between language, culture and the human who uses language regarded as a “container” for cultural information.

A second critical element requiring consideration is the concept of phytonyms. Phytonym is a term designating a name given to a plant, encompassing trees, flowers, shrubs, grasses, algae, and other types of vegetation. The term is derived from the Greek words "phyton" (plant) and "onoma" (name). The study of phytonyms is significant for various disciplines, including linguistics, botany, anthropology, and cultural studies. They provide information regarding the cultural significance of plants, traditional knowledge, historical connections, and a multitude of other aspects.

Proverbs, one of the key objects of paremiology, offer a valuable lens for understanding the intricate relationship between language and culture. By studying proverbs from different cultures, researchers can gain insights into shared values and unique perspectives, fostering enhanced cross-cultural communication and appreciation for linguistic diversity. Moreover, the effective use of proverbs in communication serves as a marker of cultural competence and belonging, reinforcing a sense of shared identity within a cultural group.

Phytonyms, or plant-related words, frequently appear in proverbs due to the historical and symbolic significance of plants in human life. Different cultures associate specific plants with various meanings, shaped by their environment, beliefs, and traditions.

### **Methodology**

This study employed cross-cultural, statistical, qualitative and comparative methods to explore the cultural symbolism of phytonyms in English and Uzbek proverbs. The analysis focused on a selection of English and Uzbek proverbs, identified through a collection of English and Uzbek folk proverbs. Proverbs were included if they contained a clearly identifiable phytonym, seemed to relate to a recognizable cultural value, and were readily understandable to the researcher.

The analysis involved a close reading and interpretation of the proverbs, focusing on the metaphorical use of the phytonyms and their connection to cultural values. The researcher drew upon their own understanding of English and Uzbek culture, as well as general knowledge about plant symbolism, to identify the cultural values reflected in the proverbs.

The validity and reliability of this analysis are limited by the reliance on the researcher's subjective interpretations. However, this exploratory study provides a preliminary overview of the cultural symbolism of phytonyms in English and Uzbek proverbs and identifies potential avenues for future research using more systematic and rigorous methods.

### **Cultural Symbolism of Phytonyms in English proverbs**

The cultural symbolism of phytonyms in English proverbs offers a fascinating glimpse into the values, beliefs, and practical wisdom embedded within the language. These proverbs often use plants as metaphors to convey lessons about life, human nature, and the world around us. Below are some common examples:

1. *"Every rose has its thorn"*

This proverb reminds us that even the most beautiful or desirable things in life have their downsides or drawbacks. The rose represents beauty and pleasure, while the thorn represents pain and difficulty.

2. *"The apple doesn't fall far from the tree"*

This proverb suggests that children tend to resemble their parents in character and behavior. The apple represents the child, and the tree represents the parent. It reflects a belief in the power of heredity and the influence of family.

3. *"A bad apple spoils the bunch"*

It can be seen from this proverb, one negative or corrupt individual can have a detrimental influence on the entire group, leading to its downfall. In this proverb, the apple represents an individual member of a group. It is a common and familiar fruit, making it easily relatable. The "bad" apple symbolizes a person who is corrupt, dishonest, unethical, or otherwise harmful to the group. The act of spoiling represents the negative influence that the "bad" apple has on the other members of the group, leading to their moral decay or downfall.

4. *"Grass is always greener on the other side"*

This proverb shows that other people's situations, possessions, or opportunities always seem more desirable or advantageous than one's own, even if that is not actually the case. In this proverb, grass represents one's current situation, possessions, or opportunities. It is something familiar and readily available. The color green is often associated with envy, prosperity, and good fortune. The phrase "greener" suggests that the other person's grass is somehow superior or more desirable. The "other side" represents a different situation, a different set of possessions, or a different opportunity. It is something that is perceived as being better or more desirable than what one currently has.

### **Cultural Symbolism of Phytonyms in Uzbek proverbs**

Uzbek proverbs linked to phytonyms often offer practical advice, reflecting the close relationship between the Uzbek people and the land. They frequently convey moral lessons, emphasizing virtues like hard work, cooperation, and respect for elders. Many proverbs highlight the importance of community, interdependence, and shared prosperity. Moreover, the natural world is often depicted as a source of wisdom and a reflection of the human condition. Let's dive into some examples:

1. *"Hunarli yigit - mevali daraxt" (Equivalent "A skilled craftsman is a treasure.")*

This proverb suggests that a young man with skills and talents is like a fruit-bearing tree – beneficial, productive, and valuable to society. He provides nourishment and contributes to the well-being of others. Skilled young man represents a person who has honed their abilities and can contribute meaningfully through their craft.

Fruit-bearing tree represents productivity, generosity, and providing sustenance or benefit to others. A tree that bears fruit is valuable and contributes to the community.

2. "Gul o'ssa - yerning ko 'rki, Qiz o'ssa elning ko 'rki" ("Flowers adorn the earth, and virtuous women adorn society.")

This proverb highlights the importance of both natural beauty and the role of women in society. Flowers beautify the landscape, while girls, as they grow into women, contribute to the beauty, strength, and well-being of the nation. This proverb emphasizes the potential that women have to benefit the country.

3. "Yolg'iz daraxt o'rmon bo'lmas" ("One tree doesn't make a forest.")

This proverb emphasizes the importance of community, cooperation, and interconnectedness. One individual, no matter how strong or talented, cannot achieve the same impact or provide the same benefits as a group working together. It speaks to the value of collective effort and the limitations of individual action.

4. "Arpa-bug'doy bir kuningga yaraydi, Sodiq do'sting o'lguningcha yaraydi." ("Barley and wheat are useful for a day, but a loyal friend is useful until you die.")

This proverb reminds us that material things provide temporary sustenance, while a true/loyal friend offers lifelong support. The barley and wheat represent basic necessities that sustain us for a short time. They are limited and temporary. In contrast, the true friend represents a lasting relationship that provides unwavering support and companionship throughout life. The comparison is that physical and moral support is more useful than limited resources, since life support is more important.

Rare Uzbek literary works also utilize such proverbs extensively. For example, in Abdulla Kadiri's "Mehrobdan Chayon" (Scorpion from the Mihrab), the proverb "*Chumchuqdan qo'rqib tariq ekmagay*" (One who fears sparrows doesn't sow millet) is used to mock cowardly individuals: "For instance, there's a Turkish equivalent: 'One who fears sparrows doesn't sow millet,' which is used to ridicule cowards." [A. Kadiri, Mehrobdan Chayon, T., G'. G'ulom, 2016, p. 47]. In this context, the proverb is spoken by Makhdum to Anvar. Makhdum misinterprets Anvar's refusal to participate in injustices as cowardice, attributing his reluctance to accept a position to fear. Kadiri skillfully employs the proverb to convey this misinterpretation.

Furthermore, in his article "Donations to the Support Association," Kadiri satirizes schools: "If, as in the past, we *propagate the seeds of tasteless melons* (*bemaza qovunning urug'ini ko'paytirilsa*), if school renovations are only remembered on the eve of the school year, if children shiver and scratch from lice in the cold, if every unqualified person is appointed as a teacher or educator, if children are made to fight rams, thereby establishing a new 'reputation' for these new schools among the people, then, God willing, our wish will come true, just like smoke escaping from our lungs!" The reference to "seeds of tasteless melons" (*bemaza qovunning urug'i ko'p*) implies an abundance of something worthless, and Kadiri uses this metaphor to critique the poor quality of schools, teachers, and education, despite their existence.

While English and Uzbek cultures try to effectively use phytonyms in proverbs, their frequency of use varies, and this can be seen in the table below:

	English	Uzbek	Factors
Mostly used	<i>Tree (General)</i> : The generic term "tree" is likely very common due to its versatility and broad applicability to various metaphors.	<i>Daraxt (Tree - General)</i> : Similar to English, the generic term "tree" is likely versatile and widely applicable.	
	<i>Apple</i> : As seen in "a bad apple spoils the bunch," the apple carries strong cultural associations with knowledge,	<i>Bug'doy (Wheat)</i> : Wheat is a staple food and holds significant agricultural importance in	

	temptation, and morality.	Uzbekistan, which makes it a common symbol in various expressions related to prosperity, sustenance, and hard work.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Practical (How easy is it to use this concept?)</li> <li>• Memory (How easy is it to memorize and retell?)</li> <li>• Emotions (How many people can this invoke on an emotional level?)</li> </ul>
	<i>Rose</i> : Due to its association with beauty, love, and romance, the rose is likely a frequent fixture in English proverbs related to relationships and emotions.	<i>Gul (Flower)</i> : Flowers often symbolize beauty, love, and nature, making them a popular motif in literature and oral traditions.	
<b>Rarely used</b>	<i>Specific Tree Species (Oak, Willow, etc.)</i> : While these trees carry symbolic weight, they're less versatile than the generic "tree" and might appear in fewer proverbs.	<i>Trees Not Native to the Region</i> : Trees that are not commonly found in Central Asia may be less likely to appear in Uzbek proverbs.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Is this something that is commonly known? (Is this something that only a specific group knows?)</li> <li>• Is it a part of every day life?</li> </ul>
	<i>Flowers with Less Common Symbolism (Violet, Daisy, etc.)</i> : These flowers have less widespread cultural associations and may be used in more niche or specialized proverbs.	<i>Flowers with Less Common Symbolism</i> : Similar to English, flowers with more specific or less widespread cultural associations may be less common.	
	<i>Agricultural Crops (Wheat, Barley, etc.)</i> : While important for sustenance, these plants may not be as readily used in metaphors about human nature or social dynamics.	<i>Exotic Fruits or Vegetables</i> : Plants that are not traditionally cultivated or consumed in Uzbekistan may be less frequent.	

### Discussion

An analysis of phytonym usage in English and Uzbek proverbs reveals both intriguing similarities and notable differences, reflecting the distinct cultural contexts and historical experiences of each society. In both cultures, plants often serve as metaphors for human qualities, social relationships, and life lessons. However, the specific types of plants used, and the values they represent, can vary significantly.

For example, while both English and Uzbek proverbs utilize the image of a "tree" to symbolize strength, growth, and longevity, the specific species of tree and its associated connotations may differ. In English proverbs, the "oak" is often invoked to represent resilience and endurance, reflecting its prominence in the English landscape and its historical association with power and authority. In

contrast, Uzbek proverbs may feature the "chinar" (plane tree) or other locally significant trees, which carry different symbolic meanings related to shade, shelter, and community gathering places (cite sources on Uzbek cultural symbolism of trees).

Similarly, while both cultures recognize the importance of hard work and productivity, the specific plants used to represent these values may differ. English proverbs often mention grains like "wheat" or "corn" (maize), reflecting the historical importance of agriculture in English society. Uzbek proverbs, on the other hand, may feature plants like "cotton" or "melons," which are economically significant crops in Uzbekistan and have strong associations with industriousness and agricultural expertise.

These differences highlight the importance of considering the specific ecological, economic, and historical contexts when interpreting the cultural symbolism of phytonyms in proverbs.

### Conclusion

This study explored the cultural symbolism of phytonyms in a selection of English and Uzbek proverbs, utilizing a qualitative, comparative, and statistical method. Through an analysis of four English and four Uzbek proverbs, the research illuminated the ways in which these linguistic units reflect cultural values and perspectives related to life lessons, human nature, social relationships, and societal well-being. The English proverbs analyzed revealed a focus on themes such as the duality of beauty and hardship ("Every rose has its thorn"), the influence of heredity and family ("The apple doesn't fall far from the tree"), the corrupting power of negative individuals ("A bad apple spoils the bunch"), and the tendency to idealize the situations of others ("The grass is always greener on the other side"). The Uzbek proverbs, on the other hand, emphasized the value of skilled labor and its contribution to society ("Hunarli yigit - mevali daraxt"), as well as the potential of women to benefit the country.

While the scope of this exploratory study is limited by the small sample size and the reliance on the researcher's subjective interpretations, it provides a preliminary overview of the cultural symbolism of phytonyms in English and Uzbek proverbs. The findings suggest that both cultures utilize plant-based metaphors to convey important cultural values and beliefs, but that the specific values emphasized and the plants used to represent them may differ depending on the unique historical, economic, and ecological contexts of each society.

Future research could build on these findings by expanding the sample size to include a more comprehensive collection of English and Uzbek proverbs, employing more rigorous methods of data analysis, and exploring the potential influence of factors such as region, social class, and gender on the interpretation of plant symbolism. Additionally, comparative studies with other languages and cultures could provide further insights into the universal and culture-specific aspects of human relationships with the natural world.

### References:

1. Ashurova, D. U., & Galieva, M. R. (2019). Cultural Linguistics: Main Issues, Trends and Tasks. Uzbekistan: Language and Culture, 2, pp 42–73.
2. Abdushukrovna, A. D. (2024). STUDY AND THEORETICAL BASIS OF PHYTONYMS. Next Scientists Conferences, 1(01), 183–186.
3. Abdullayeva, N. A. (2023). Proverbs used in Abdulla Kadiri's works and their analysis. Oriental Renaissance: Innovative, educational, natural and social sciences, 3(4).
4. A. Kadiri. (2016). Scorpion from the Mihrab. Tashkent, p 47.
5. Mirzayev, T., Musoqulov, A., & Sarimsoqov, B. (Eds.). (2005). O'zbek xalq maqollari [Uzbek folk proverbs]. Sharq, p 257.
6. Martin H. Manser. (2007). The facts on file dictionary of proverbs. New York, p 513.
7. Maslov, V. A. (2001). Linguoculturology. Moscow, p 101.
8. Sayfiyeva, K. K. (2015). Linguocultural importance of English phytonym proverbs. International Journal of Literature and Languages, 5, pp 90–91.

9. Stepanov, V. N. (2003). Provocative discourse. Socio-cultural communication.
10. Ter-Minasova, S. G. (2000). Language and intercultural communication. Moscow, p 146.