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ALISHER NAVOIY NOMIDAGI TOSHKENT DAVLAT O‘ZBEK TILI VA ADABIYOTI UNIVERSITETI

“ZAHIRIDDIN MUHAMMAD BOBUR MEROSINING SHARQ DAVLATCHILIGI VA MADANIYATI RIVOJIDA TUTGAN O‘RNI”

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O‘ZBEK VA INGLIZ TILLARIDAGI FITONIM BIRIKMALI PAREMIYALARNING LINGVOKOGNITIV XUSUSIATLARI

LINGUOCOGNITIVE FEATURES OF PHYTONYM-BASED PAROEMIAS IN UZBEK AND ENGLISH

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Annotatsiya. *Ushbu maqolada o‘zbek va ingliz tillaridagi fitonim birikmali paremiyalarning lingvokognitiv xususiyatlari qiyosiy yondashuv asosida yoritiladi. Fitonim komponent paremiyalar milliy-madaniy tajriba, qadriyatlar va konseptual tasavvurlarni kodlaydi. Tadqiqot antroposentrik paradigma doirasida “inson→fitonim”, “hayot→fitonim”, “faoliyat→fitonim” kabi kognitiv modellarning ishlash mexanizmlarini, shuningdek, go‘zallik, tafakkur va ijtimoiy jarayonlarni aks ettiruvchi kognitiv funksiyalarni tahlil qiladi. Natijalar fitonim paremiya birliklarining universal va milliy xususiyatlarini ajratish, hamda tarjima va madaniyatlararo muloqotda ularning interpretatsiya strategiyalarini belgilashga xizmat qiladi.*

Kalit so‘zlar: *Paremiologiya, fitonim, lingvokognitiv tahlil, antroposentrizm, konsept, qiyosiy tadqiq.*

Annotation. *This article examines the linguocognitive features of phytonym-based paroemias in Uzbek and English from a comparative perspective. Plant names in paroemias function as culturally salient lexical triggers that activate shared knowledge about nature, human experience, and value systems. Working within an anthropocentric paradigm, the study models the conceptual mappings that motivate phytonymic paremias and describes their cognitive functions in discourse. The analysis is organized around three recurrent cognitive models such as “human→phytonym”, “life→phytonym”, and “activity→phytonym” and three clusters of cognitive functions: aesthetic evaluation and the promotion of beauty, the promotion of thinking and reasoning, and the representation of social action and processes. The findings highlight both universal metaphorical patterns (growth, roots, harvest) and culture-specific profiles shaped by local ecology, agriculture, and sociohistorical experience. The paper also outlines translation-relevant implications,*

arguing that successful rendering of phytonymic paremias requires attention to conceptual equivalence rather than literal lexical substitution.

Keywords: *Paremiology, phytonyms, cognitive linguistics, anthropocentric paradigm, conceptual mapping.*

Paremiology studies stable proverbial expressions as culturally significant units of language that condense collective experience and social norms into memorable forms. In Uzbek and English linguistic traditions, paroemias serve not only as didactic tools but also as compact “cognitive artifacts” that preserve culturally preferred ways of categorizing the world. One of the most productive semantic domains in proverb formation is the domain of plants. Phytonymic lexemes naming trees, flowers, grains, fruits, seeds, and related botanical entities are frequent components of paremias because plants are visible, recurrent in everyday life, and strongly associated with cycles of growth, labor, and evaluation.

The present research is motivated by a central question: how do phytonym-based paroemias encode and activate conceptual knowledge in Uzbek and English, and in what ways do these conceptualizations converge or diverge across the two languages? Addressing this question requires an approach that moves beyond surface lexical comparison and considers the underlying conceptual structures that support proverb meaning. Therefore, the study is framed within an anthropocentric and linguocognitive perspective, where language is treated as a window into human conceptualization.

1. The objectives of the paper are [Kövecses, Z. 2010.] to outline the theoretical foundations necessary for a linguocognitive study of phytonymic paroemias in Uzbek and English; [Kövecses, Z. 2010] to propose and describe key cognitive models that organize plant imagery in paroemias; [Lakoff. G, Johnson. M, 1980] to identify major cognitive functions performed by phytonym-based paroemias in discourse; and [Samadova V. B, Suyunov Sh. Y, 2025] to discuss translation-relevant implications of conceptual asymmetries.

Materials and Method. The analysis draws on a working corpus of Uzbek and English paroemias containing explicit phytonym components (e.g., names of plants, parts of plants, cultivated crops, and plant-related products such as fruit, seed, hay, or grain). The corpus is compiled from authoritative proverb dictionaries, paremiological collections, and educational compilations commonly used in each linguistic tradition. Only stable, proverb-like units are included; free metaphors or author-specific poetic uses are excluded.

Methodologically, the study combines (a) component analysis to isolate the phytonymic element and its semantic potential; (b) cognitive-semantic analysis to reconstruct conceptual mappings and image schemas; (c) contrastive analysis to compare English and Uzbek patterns; and (d) functional interpretation to identify

discourse-pragmatic effects (evaluation, persuasion, warning, encouragement). In keeping with cognitive linguistics, the analysis treats proverb meaning as motivated by conceptual metaphor, conceptual metonymy, and culturally shared frames [Lakoff, Johnson, 1980: 3].

The article uses representative examples as illustrations. When proverbs have close counterparts across languages, they are treated as evidence of universal conceptual tendencies; when counterparts are absent or structurally different, the divergence is interpreted as culture-specific profiling of the plant domain.

Theoretical Foundations of Phytonymic Paremias. Both Uzbek and English paremiological traditions recognize proverbs as fixed expressions characterized by stability, reproducibility, and semantic integrity. English paremiology has a long history of lexicographic recording and classification, culminating in modern proverb studies that emphasize context, variation, and pragmatics [Mieder, 2004: 5]. Uzbek paremiology, shaped by oral tradition and later systematic collection, has developed distinct descriptive and functional approaches grounded in national cultural values and the linguistic picture of the world.

From a linguocognitive perspective, the significance of paremiology lies in its ability to reveal conventional conceptualizations. Proverbs are not random; they rely on entrenched conceptual links that speakers can access quickly. Therefore, studying phytonymic paremias helps reconstruct how nature-based knowledge is organized and applied to human-centered domains such as character, morality, work, and social relations.

Research on Phytonym-Component Paremias in World Linguistics. International studies have repeatedly shown that plant imagery is one of the most productive sources of proverbial metaphor. Plants provide rich material for conceptualizing time (seasons), causality (sowing–reaping), and evaluation (fruitful vs. barren). In cognitive semantics, such regularities are often explained through embodied experience and image schemas of growth, containment, and cyclicity [Kövecses, 2010: 15]. Across languages, certain botanical symbols recur: the “root” as foundation, “seed” as potential, “fruit” as result, and “tree” as continuity and lineage. Yet the distribution and prominence of particular phytonyms varies with ecology and culture. For agrarian cultures, crops such as wheat, cotton, or grapes may become central; in other contexts, oak, apple, or rose may dominate. Such differences suggest that phytonymic paremias should be analyzed not only lexically but also as culturally situated conceptual structures.

The anthropocentric paradigm views language as oriented toward the human being: language encodes what matters to speakers, how they perceive the world, and how they evaluate experience. Within this paradigm, paremias are seen as tools for shaping behavior and transmitting cultural norms. Linguocognitive analysis adds that proverbs operate by activating conceptual frames and mapping them onto target situations.

In phytonymic paremias, the plant domain is typically the source domain that structures understanding of human or social phenomena. The proverb works because speakers share knowledge about plant properties (growth, fragility, seasonality, fruitfulness) and can project that knowledge onto abstract targets. This projection is frequently metaphorical (A PERSON IS A TREE) or metonymic (FRUIT FOR RESULT). The present study uses this framework to systematically describe how Uzbek and English paremias exploit plant imagery to generate meaning.

Cognitive Models. The human→phytonym model covers paroemias in which plant properties are used to conceptualize human character, behavior, social status, or interpersonal relationships. The mapping is motivated by perceptual similarity and culturally learned associations: firmness may be mapped from a tree’s wood; humility from a bending branch; beauty from flowers; and moral impurity from weeds.

In English, character is often conceptualized via fruits and trees. For example, “The apple doesn’t fall far from the tree” foregrounds family resemblance, where *tree* symbolizes lineage and *apple* symbolizes a child. The proverb compresses a genealogical inference into a plant-based scene. Similarly, “Mighty oaks from little acorns grow” frames human development as growth from a small seed, reinforcing an optimism about potential. In Uzbek, comparable mappings appear, but the profiling may differ due to cultural preference for social harmony and collective values. The proverb “Mevali daraxt egilar” (A fruitful tree bends) conceptualizes a successful or wise person as modest rather than arrogant: *Fruitfullness* stands for achievement, while bending stands for humility. Another illustrative pattern uses *Ildiz* (root) to conceptualize origin and identity, emphasizing continuity and responsibility to one’s foundations.

Cognitively, the model serves evaluative and didactic functions: it categorizes people and behaviors, guides social judgment, and recommends desirable traits. In both languages, the mapping often relies on culturally stable plant frames: fruitfulness→value, deep roots→reliability, and weeds→undesirability.

The life→phytonym model organizes paroemias where life trajectories, time, and existential experience are conceptualized through plant cycles. The mapping is grounded in the embodied observation that plants pass through regular phases—seed, sprout, growth, bloom, fruit, decay—and that human life likewise unfolds in stages.

English paroemias frequently highlight temporal and causal aspects of life through agricultural metaphors: “You reap what you sow” presents life outcomes as harvest results, establishing a moral causality frame. “Make hay while the sun shines” treats opportunity as a seasonal condition that requires timely action. Such proverbs create a cognitive script in which life is managed like farming: anticipate conditions, work at the right time, and accept that outcomes depend on prior inputs.

Uzbek paroemias also employ life-as-growth imagery, often emphasizing endurance and continuity. Expressions built on tree and root tend to conceptualize life as stability and heritage: planting a tree implies future benefit, and roots imply connection to ancestors and land. In such models, life is evaluated not only by immediate results but by long-term continuity.

The cognitive function of life phytonym paroemias is to offer interpretive templates for life events: success and failure, waiting and patience, growth and decline. The proverb’s plant scene serves as a mnemonic frame enabling speakers to interpret complex life experiences with minimal cognitive effort.

The activity phytonym model includes paroemias where human work, effort, and purposeful action are conceptualized as plant-related processes such as planting, watering, pruning, and harvesting. The model is especially salient in cultures where agricultural experience has historically shaped daily life.

In English, the sowing–reaping script is a central organizer of activity and responsibility. “You reap what you sow” works as both a life proverb and an activity proverb: it frames action as investment and outcome as return. Another pattern is the use of “seed” to conceptualize beginnings: a small initial effort can lead to significant results.

In Uzbek, activity is frequently conceptualized through labor combined with botanical imagery: planting, cultivating, and tending symbolize disciplined work. Proverbs that contrast “fruitful tree” with “barren tree” can be used to evaluate productivity. The mapping reinforces a culturally important schema: effort, patience, and collective support lead to socially valued outcomes.

This model’s cognitive function is strongly pragmatic: it motivates action, warns against laziness, and legitimizes social evaluation of work. It also supports persuasive discourse teachers, parents, and leaders can invoke these proverbs to strengthen norms about effort and responsibility.

Paroemias Promoting Beauty: Aesthetic Conceptualization. Aesthetic evaluation is a prominent cognitive function of phytonymic paremias because flowers, blossoms, and fruit are culturally salient symbols of beauty, attraction, and harmony. In many languages, floral images structure conceptual metaphors such as BEAUTY IS A FLOWER, YOUTH IS BLOOMING, and LOVE IS A ROSE WITH THORNS.

In English, the proverb “Every rose has its thorn” compresses a complex aesthetic evaluation: the ROSE profile highlights beauty and desirability, while THORN profiles risk or pain. The proverb is used to interpret relationships and experiences by integrating positive and negative dimensions into a single conceptual scene.

In Uzbek, plant images are likewise used to evaluate beauty and moral elegance. Flower-based expressions often appear in poetic proverb-like units and everyday wisdom.

Even when the surface meaning references nature, the target is human appearance, kindness, or social grace. The aesthetic function is not purely descriptive: it regulates norms of appropriate self-presentation and interpersonal respect.

Cross-linguistically, the aesthetic function reveals a shared cognitive tendency: speakers rely on easily visualized plant images to express abstract evaluations. Yet the specific plants used, and the cultural scripts they invoke, can differ. For example, ROSE is deeply entrenched in English and European symbolism, while Uzbek tradition may foreground locally salient flowers and cultivated plants in ways that better reflect regional ecology.

Phytonymic paremias do not only evaluate; they also promote thinking by offering compact epistemic rules about knowledge, causality, and inference. Plant images provide concrete scaffolding for abstract reasoning.

The ROOT metaphor is particularly productive. Across languages, roots symbolize hidden causes and deep foundations. English expressions such as “to get to the root of the matter” (proverbial phrase) conceptualize understanding as digging beneath the surface. Uzbek paremias that involve ILDIZ similarly highlight origin and causality. When a speaker invokes the root image, they guide the listener toward a deeper causal explanation rather than a superficial symptom.

Seeds and grains also support epistemic thinking. They encode the idea that small beginnings matter and that development requires time. Such paremias encourage patience, planning, and long-term orientation. In this sense, phytonymic paremias function as “cognitive shortcuts”: they package culturally validated reasoning patterns into memorable language.

The epistemic function is crucial for education and social learning. In both Uzbek and English communities, elders and teachers employ plant-based paremias to explain why certain choices lead to certain results. Conceptually, this reflects a shared human reliance on growth-based reasoning, but it is culturally elaborated through local agricultural knowledge.

Paroemias Reflecting Social Action and Processes. A third cluster of cognitive functions relates to social action, collective behavior, and social processes. Plant imagery is often used to structure social relations: trees can stand for families or communities; forests can stand for society; and cultivation can stand for education and moral formation.

In English, proverbs about “grass” and “greener” often relate to social comparison and desire (e.g., “The grass is always greener on the other side”). The plant scene provides a cognitive model for envy and perceived inequality. Similarly, “A rolling stone gathers no moss” uses a plant-like image (moss) to conceptualize stability versus restlessness; it can be used either to warn against rootlessness or to praise mobility, depending on context.

In Uzbek, social process meanings are frequently connected with collective continuity and moral responsibility. Tree and shade imagery can represent social benefit: planting and nurturing imply contributing to others, while cutting a tree can symbolize harm to the community. Such paremias support prosocial norms: respect for elders (roots), support for youth (sprouts), and patience in social change (seasons).

This function is especially important in public discourse, where proverbs legitimize viewpoints and create a sense of shared cultural authority. Because plant imagery is emotionally and culturally resonant, it serves as an effective tool for persuasion and social alignment.

Discussion: Similarities, Differences, and Translation Implications. The comparative analysis suggests that Uzbek and English phytonymic paremias share several conceptual cores. First, both rely heavily on the growth cycle as a model for morality and causality: effort leads to results, and beginnings matter. Second, both employ foundational metaphors involving roots, trees, and fruit to conceptualize identity and value. These similarities likely reflect universal embodied experience with plants and agriculture, supporting the cognitive-linguistic claim that metaphor is grounded in shared human experience [Lakoff, Johnson, 1980: 3].

At the same time, differences emerge in the cultural profiling of plant frames. English proverb usage often highlights individual responsibility and personal choice within the sowing–reaping script; Uzbek paremias frequently foreground social harmony, humility, and continuity with community and ancestry. The same plant image (tree/fruit) can thus be interpreted with different pragmatic emphasis.

These divergences create translation challenges. When a source proverb has a close conceptual counterpart in the target language, a functional equivalent can be used (e.g., sow–reap metaphors). However, when the plant frame is culturally specific using locally salient plants or culturally specialized scripts literal translation may preserve lexical content but lose conceptual force. In such cases, translation should aim for conceptual equivalence: the translator may choose a different plant image that triggers a similar evaluative frame in the target culture [Samadova, Suyunova, 2025: 11].

From a pedagogical perspective (particularly in bilingual education and ESL contexts), explicit teaching of conceptual mappings can improve learners’ proverb comprehension. Learners often misinterpret proverbs when they focus on literal meanings rather than the conceptual structure. A linguocognitive description of phytonymic paremias can therefore support intercultural competence and pragmatic fluency.

Conclusion. This paper has examined the linguocognitive features of phytonym-based paremias in Uzbek and English by integrating paremiological description with cognitive-semantic modeling. Three core cognitive models were identified;

“human→phytonym”, “life→phytonym”, and “activity→phytonym” motivated by stable knowledge about plants and their cycles. The analysis also described three clusters of cognitive functions: aesthetic evaluation, epistemic guidance, and the representation of social action and processes. The results point to both universal and culture-specific patterns. Universality is visible in growth-based reasoning and in shared metaphors of roots, seeds, fruit, and harvest. Cultural specificity is visible in which plants are foregrounded, how strongly community-oriented values are profiled, and how proverbs are pragmatically deployed in social contexts. Future work within the dissertation will extend the corpus and provide quantitative distributional evidence for these patterns.

Overall, phytonymic paremias constitute a rich domain for linguocognitive research because they reveal how ecological experience, cultural memory, and conceptual structure interact in stable linguistic forms.

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