



HOSPITALITY AND SOCIAL ETIQUETTE IN ENGLISH AND UZBEK PROVERBS

N.S.Kobilova

PhD, Associate Professor, Bukhara State University

n.s.qobilova@buxdu.uz

Z.S.Tohirova

Master's student, Bukhara State University

zulxumortohirova6184@gmail.com

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ABSTRACT

In this paper, the representation of hospitality in English and Uzbek proverbs is explored. It is interesting to note that despite the differences between the two nations' cultures, hospitality is represented in both of their proverbs in a similar manner. Both cultures depict hospitality by expressing generosity through proverbs. The comparative analysis highlights how both cultures conceptualize generosity, respect, and social norms through traditional paremias.

It is evident that hospitality is a universal value that is deeply embedded in the culture of each society. It is the embodiment of warmth, generosity, and respect that the host expresses for the guest. Both in English culture and in Uzbek culture, hospitality and social etiquette are conveyed through proverbs that are passed down through generations. These proverbs not only convey the social culture and values of the people but are also a reflection of their social priorities.

Paremias (Proverbials) are also an important source of information for studying cultural norms and values, since they condense cultural experience in a linguistic form¹. Cultural proverbs of Uzbeks indicate that helping guests is one of their important moral obligations and they often emphasize respect toward visitors. For example, "Mehmon – rizq egasi (The guest is the host of well-being)".

Comparative analysis allows one to spot both differences and similarities between the proverbs of English-speaking culture and those of the Uzbek people, expressing hospitality and social etiquette. It helps to reveal the peculiar interpretation of each culture, as well as some universal human values.

English people consider that hospitality is often associated with politeness, moderation, and respect for personal boundaries. English proverbs emphasize kindness to guests while also highlighting individual responsibility and mutual respect. For example, the proverb "A guest is a gift from God" reflects the moral obligation to treat guests with kindness and gratitude². Similarly, "Make yourself at home" symbolizes friendliness and openness, encouraging guests to feel comfortable without imposing excessive formality. Another proverb, "Good fences make good neighbors," indirectly relates to social etiquette by

¹ Mieder, W. (2004). Proverbs: A Handbook. Westport, CT: Greenwood Press. –P 21

² Mieder, W. (2004). Proverbs: A Handbook. Westport, CT: Greenwood Press. –P 78-80

emphasizing respect for personal space and boundaries, which is a key aspect of polite social interaction in English-speaking societies³. These proverbs reveal that English hospitality values balance: generosity is appreciated, but it is regulated by respect for privacy and social norms.

Uzbek culture places exceptional importance on hospitality, often viewing it as a moral duty and a reflection of personal and family honor. Uzbek proverbs strongly emphasize generosity, self-sacrifice, and respect toward guests. For instance, the proverb “Mehmon otangdan ulug’” (“A guest is more honorable than your father”) illustrates the high status of guests in Uzbek society and the expectation to prioritize them above personal comfort⁴. Another proverb, “Mehmon kelsa, rizq keladi” (“When a guest comes, fortune comes”) associates hospitality with prosperity and divine blessing. Such proverbial sayings indicate how hospitality in Uzbek culture is not merely about good manners but is also closely linked to spiritual practices. “Social etiquette regulates speaking, respect, and social interactions. Self-control and speaking politely are common references to ‘etiquette’ in English proverbs. “Think before you speak” and “Manners make the man” underscore respect in speaking and social behavior.

Uzbek proverbs, on the other hand, emphasize respect for elders, modesty, and harmony within the community. The proverb “Kattaga hurmat, kichikka izzat” (“Respect the elder, be kind to the younger”) clearly defines social roles and ethical behavior⁵. Despite cultural differences, both traditions underline the necessity of politeness and moral conduct for maintaining social harmony.

A comparison of the two languages brings to light similarities and differences in the way hospitality and etiquette are conceptualized. On one hand, in English and Uzbek proverbs, hospitality is conceptualized as a moral value and indicator of moral integrity. However, English proverbs represent moral constraints and measures, while Uzbek ones represent shared responsibilities and limitless generosity.

English social etiquette emphasizes more on verbal politeness, while Uzbek etiquette emphasizes more on hierarchical respect. These variations can be attributed to the cultural divergences between English-speaking societies, where the culture leans towards individualism, and Uzbek societies, where the culture leans towards collectivism. Proverbs can offer a rich source on the value of the concept of hospitality and politeness. English and Uzbek proverb analysis indicates that, even though the concept of hospitality and politeness is universal, its interpretations can be different based on the norms and cultures of the respective societies. Analysis of the proverb can offer linguistic improvement, as well as awareness related to other cultures..

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³ Trench, R. C. (2003). On the Lessons in Proverbs. London: Macmillan. –P 42

⁴ Karimov, I. A. (2010). Yuksak ma’naviyat – yengilmas kuch. Tashkent: Ma’naviyat. –P 56-57

⁵ Rahmatullayev, Sh. (2006). O‘zbek xalq maqollari va matallari. Tashkent: Fan. –P 135

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