

Conceptualization of Worldview through Proverbs: A Comparative Study of Kalasha and Khowar Proverbs

ABSTRACT

Folk literature in the form of proverbs, folktales, and folk songs carry strong traces of the culture of any community, for they not only represent the folk beliefs but also help project the worldview of a community. The current study aims to explore the worldview of the Kalasha and Khowar speakers which is manifested through the proverbs found in both the languages. Since it is a small scale qualitative inquiry based on a comparative analysis of the cultural traits of the two communities, the study focuses only on one form of folk literature --- proverbs, as they are considered one of the most effective tools for exploring the world view of different cultures. The data for the study are based on a collection of Kalasha and Khowar proverbs published in the form of two separate books carrying more than hundred proverbs of each language along with their Urdu translation. A comparative analysis of these proverbs indicates striking similarities as well as differences between the two communities. The similarities between the cultures of the two communities may be attributed to the geographical proximity of the Khowar and Kalasha speakers, whereas the differences between the two groups reinforce the principle of linguistic relativity which is the basis of Sapir-Whorf hypothesis, according to which speakers of different languages perceive reality in different ways. The study is an important contribution in the field of cultural linguistics and paremiology both of which require further research as they are crucial for understanding diverse cultures.

Keywords: *proverbs, linguistic relativity, worldview, cultural linguistics, paremiology.*

* Assistant Professor, Department of English, University of Karachi, Pakistan.

Introduction

Proverbs, commonly referred to as 'pearls of wisdom' are an important part of folklore which, provide us the cultural lens that is not only needed to view others' perception of the world but also help us compare our own perception of the world with theirs. According to Meider (2004), a proverb is "a short generally known sentence of the folk which contains wisdom, truth, moral and traditional views in a metaphorical and memorisable form and which is handed from generation to generation" (p. 3). Commenting on the functions of proverbs, Dabaghi, Pishbin, & Niknasab (2010) state: "Proverbs are speech entities that can be used in every aspect of discussions such as poetry, wise saying, and contemplative argument as well as daily lives of all cultures to address situations or just in leisurely discourse" (p. 810). While discussing the usefulness of proverbs, Meider (2018) states that "proverbs remain an effective discursive force in various communicative modes" (p.1). Since the symbolic or idiomatic meaning embedded in proverbs through the use of specific imagery is culture-specific, understanding the meaning of proverbs used in any linguistic community, opaque as they are, requires a certain degree of cultural competence. The images and metaphors employed in proverbs of different languages may be the same but what they symbolize may vary from one language to the other which is indicative of the cultural traits specific to each language. Be it the use of colour, flower or animal imagery, the figurative or symbolic meaning is deeply rooted in the culture that a language embodies. For instance, in some cultures the colour 'green' is a symbol of prosperity while in others it symbolizes immaturity, lack of experience or even jealousy. Similarly, if we consider example of yellow colour, it is used as a symbol of diseased sex or sickness in European context, whereas in Chinese culture yellow symbolizes royalty as it is the colour of emperor's robes in China.

There are also striking differences with regard to the use of animal imagery in different speech communities. Calling someone a 'dog', for instance, in Urdu and many other indigenous languages spoken in Pakistan is an insult, a verbal abuse to be more precise. Just as 'dog' carries negative connotations in proverbs found in Urdu and in many other local languages of Pakistan, it is used in a highly pejorative sense in Malay proverbs as well. According to Hui (2010, p.64) "Dog is the symbol of dirtiness, immorality and low status according to the Malay worldview,

and therefore carries negative effect. Proverbs relating to dogs are relatively many and most of them are negative." In English, however, 'dog' carries positive connotations as the expression 'top dog' implies boss, or leader or someone who is powerful enough to beat others in a competition. It is also symbolic of faithfulness in the western world. Another example of animal imagery that can be cited here is that of an 'owl'; calling someone an 'owl' in Urdu is considered derogatory as owl is used as a symbol of stupidity in Urdu language whereas it symbolizes wisdom in English. Yet another example of cultural contrast projected through the use of animal imagery is with reference to 'dragon', which is used as a personification of evil in some cultures, whereas it carries positive connotations in Chinese culture. For the Chinese, dragon is not evil, but a symbol of strength and good luck, which is evident from one of the Chinese proverbs "With money you are a dragon; with no money, a worm" where dragon symbolizes good luck and strength.

Just as similar metaphors can carry different meanings, different metaphors may be employed to convey the same concept in different cultures. Consider the use of diversity in metaphors found in proverbs of different languages where the hidden or implied message is same. One example that can be cited here is with regard to the use of different metaphors in an English and Urdu proverb carrying the same implied meaning. The English proverb "Make hay while the sun shines" is equivalent in meaning to "*behtiGa~ga me~ haath dhona*" as both imply 'making the most of any opportunity that one gets'. The use of 'sun' imagery in the English proverb is indicative of the importance of a sunny weather as it is mostly cloudy in England. A sunny weather is a rare sight in England and therefore the reference to 'sun' in this proverb highlights its importance, whereas in the Urdu proverb, the reference to river Ganges is made because it was and is still considered a sacred river by many natives of the Indo-Pak subcontinent.

The difference in the use of fruit imagery in an Urdu and Khowar proverb can be cited as another example of proverbs where the implied meaning is same. The Urdu proverb "*xarbuuza xarbuuze ko dekh ke ra~g badalta he*" is expressed in Khowar proverb as "*a~guura~ guur ko dekh ke ra~g badalta he*" (This is the literal translation of the Khowar proverb in Urdu) and both these proverbs carry the same meaning, as they both imply that people tend to be influenced by each other's company. The only difference is that in the Khowar proverb, instead of 'muskmelon', 'grape' is used as a metaphor and this difference in the use of fruit

imagery can be attributed to the landscape of the region where the language is spoken. It is pertinent to mention here that the flora and fauna of any region also contribute in shaping the language and culture of a community, which together help formulate conceptual metaphors that exist in proverbial statements and idiomatic expressions found in any language. Take example of the reference to 'cow' and 'goat' in Kalasha proverbs like, "*charaahgaah ko dekh kar gaae chhoRni chaahiye*". The literal meaning of this proverb is that "one should examine the pasture before leaving the cow for grazing", while the implied meaning is "One should consider one's position and resources while making plans." Another example from Kalasha proverbs is "*bakri bhi apne be' Then ki jagah khurach khurach ke be' Thti he*". The literal meaning of this proverb is that "the goat also cleans the place thoroughly for sitting, while the implied meaning is that "animals are also aware of the importance of cleanliness". Since the Kalasha community is basically agrarian, one finds frequent references to 'cow' and 'goat' in Kalasha proverbs. The messages embodied in proverbs are not only enveloped in conceptual metaphors but are also deeply rooted in the culture of a community they are a part of. In fact, they are the tools used to project the entire worldview of a community which includes that community's beliefs and practices, which in turn shapes the entire life style of that community. Since conceptual metaphors are 'culturally constructed', Sharifian (2011) uses the term *cultural metaphors*. It is these cultural metaphors that constitute proverbs.

Research Questions

In order to explore the use of cultural metaphors which make the proverbs of one language distinct from others, the study aims to answer the following research questions:

1. What kind of cultural metaphors are used in Kalasha and Khovar proverbs?
2. What similarities and/ or differences are found in the two communities' worldview as reflected through their proverbs?

Literature Review

Paremiology or the study of proverbs, owes its existence to Dundes (1934-2005), a pioneering paremiologist, who did extensive work to develop this field of inquiry. Another scholar, who has done significant work on proverbs, is Mieder (1997; 2004; 2005; 2008; 2012; 2018). In his state-of-the art article on paremiology, Mieder (2008) provides a detailed account of the development of this field of inquiry from past to present. The article provides a good base to research scholars interested in the field as it provides details of the published journals, essays and collections of proverbs of different languages. In his recent article, Mieder (2018) provides a diachronic account of the relationship between proverbs and their humanistic value with specific reference to political discourse in the last three centuries.

Although paremiology is not a new field of study, it has recently gained immense popularity in contemporary research on Cultural Linguistics --- a subfield of linguistics --- which helps unmask a variety of linguistic phenomena by exploring the relationship between language and culture.

There is a vast body of research literature available on folk lore, especially on proverbs of different languages, which have been studied from a multitude of perspectives. In some research studies the focus is on the worldview projected through proverbs and other forms of folk literature (Hui, 2010; Ma, 2011; Mele, 2013; Samreen, 2013; Schuster, 1998; Zormeier & Samovar, 2000), while in others the focus is on the comparison of proverbs of two or more languages to examine cultural diversity projected through them (Dabbagh & Noshadi, 2015; Liu, 2013; Mohamadi & Nabifer, 2012; Sameer, 2016; Wang, 2000; Zhang, 2016). Understanding the proverbs used by any ethnolinguistic community enhances our understanding of the worldview that a community has, which according to Ma (2011) "ought to be studied as windows to the inner world of respective group members." (p.4). It is the quest for comprehending this worldview that has led to the production of a large body of research on proverbs. Rong (2013) in his article on proverbs discusses the cultural significance and diversity of proverbs with a focus on understanding the low-context and high-context cultures. The article includes examples of proverbs on different aspects of life from different communities to reinforce the differences in their world view which in turn affect the life style of these communities. The study advocates the notion

of linguistic relativity proposed by Sapir-Whorf Hypothesis, according to which speakers of different languages perceive reality in different ways.

Other than exploring the general worldview of a community through its proverbs, research scholars have also investigated portrayal of people representing different relations, different age groups (David & Noor, 2013; Dogbey & Sapaty, 2019; Kaplan, 2002) as well as gender construction through proverbs found in different languages (Asimeng-Boahene, 2013; Asiyabola, 2007; Balogun, 2010; Mpungose, 2010; Mwhia, 2005; Ncube & Moyo, 2011; Zahedi & Imani, 2011). One study that deserves a special mention with reference to gender representation in proverbs is by Hussein (2005) which focuses on the ethno-cultural construction of male and female identity in African proverbs. The study stands apart from other studies on gender construction through proverbs in the sense that it is not confined to the analysis of the proverbs of one or two African languages but several including, *Acholi, Amharic, Ganda, Igbo, Kamba, Nama, Oromo, Tsonga, Yoruba, and Zulu*. The result of this qualitative study, based on content analysis and hermeneutics, corroborates findings of previous studies on gender discrimination in proverbs as it reveals bias against the female gender.

Unlike Hussein (2005), who explored gender identity in African proverbs by collecting data from several African languages, Jayawardena (2015), did a comparative study of the projection of female identity in French and Sinhala proverbs. The data were based on the collection of proverbs in both the languages that focus exclusively on women. The results of the study reveal that in the proverbs used for women in both French and Sinhala, women are negatively stereotyped.

With the aim to investigate the influence of proverbs on a society, Abou-Zaid (2013) conducted a unique study that focused on exploring the relationship between the American proverbs, sayings and the economic behavior observed in the American society. The study utilized four categories with reference to economic behavior: consumption and savings, work ethics, investment and risk taking, and finally attainment of education. The findings of the study reveal a strong impact of American proverbs on the economic behavior of the members of American society which is a further manifestation of how proverbs can influence people's thoughts and behavior.

A pragmatic study on proverbs adopting context-structure analysis conducted by Omoloso (2012) is another study that deserves appreciation. The study is based on the belief that “proverbs in discourse function within a web of contexts—linguistic and situational, which are crucial in deploying and interpreting them” (Omoloso, 2012, p. 1322). Since the study focused on pragmatic analysis by applying context-structure approach, the data were collected from instances of real discourse employing proverbs in Yoruba language, literary texts in Yoruba including prose, poetry, and drama, and proverbs used in Yoruba video games. The proverbial data collected for the study were divided into three categories: declarative proverbs, interrogative proverbs and serial proverbs based on a combination of two or more declarative or interrogative proverbs. The data analysis reveals that the interpretation of proverbs is context-dependent and that both linguistic and situational factors help in decoding the illocutionary force of proverbs. The study reinforces the importance of understanding the socio-cultural aspects of a community to be able to comprehend its proverbs.

Apart from studying proverbs from pragmatic perspective and their impact on people’s behaviour, their life style, their attitudes, and their worldview in general, proverbs have also been studied with reference to their significance in language teaching (Abadi, 2000; Brosh, 2013; Nippold, Allen, & Kirsch, 2000; Nippold, Power, & Taylor, 2001; Nuessel, 2003; Palmer & Brooks, 2004).

Despite the availability of a vast body of research literature on the study of proverbs of different languages from different perspectives across the globe, there is scarcity of research on paremiology with reference to the indigenous languages of Pakistan. Except a few studies that focus on gender representation in proverbs used in some Pakistani languages, mostly Punjabi and Pashto (Khan, Mustafa, & Ali, 2017; Khan, Sultana, & Naz, 2015; Mir, 2018; Rasul, 2015; Sanauddin, 2015), there is no significant research available on exploring proverbs found in local languages. The current study is an attempt to fill in the existing gap and is undertaken with the aim to explore the cultural diversity that is embedded in the proverbs employed by both the Khowar and Kalasha speakers. It is not only the first comparative study on proverbs conducted in Pakistani context but also the first to explore the worldview projected through Khowar and Kalasha proverbs by taking a multidimensional approach.

Methodology

Since it is a small scale qualitative inquiry based on a comparative analysis of the cultural traits of the two communities, the study focuses only on one form of folk literature --- proverbs. The data for the study are based on a collection of Kalasha and Khowar proverbs published in the form of two separate books carrying more than hundred proverbs of each language along with their Urdu translation. The book titled *Kalasha Matal* (2016) --- Kalasha Proverbs--- is published by USAID while the book titled *Khowar Mataalaan Gurzen* (a Collection of Khowar Proverbs) is published by Forum for Language Initiatives (FLI), a non-profit organization in Islamabad that is making efforts to provide mother tongue education in Khowar and some other indigenous languages spoken in the Northern areas of Pakistan

The major reason for choosing Kalasha and Khowar proverbs was my visit to Chitral in May 2019, where majority of the people speak Khowar as their mother tongue, and Bumburet, Kalash valley, where the Kalasha language is spoken. Both Khowar and Kalasha are Dardic languages. However, unlike Khowar which is the second largest Dardic language spoken not only in Chitral but also in some valleys in Ghizer district of GB, Kalasha is spoken by a very small number of speakers (5000 to be more precise). Kalasha speakers live as a close-knit community and are restricted to the three valleys: Bumburet, Rumbur, and Birir, with several small villages in Chitral district, KPK. (Torwali, 2019). I had always wanted to attend the *Chillam Joshi* festival that the Kalasha celebrate to welcome spring in mid-May every year. It was after attending this festival that my interest in exploring Kalasha culture enhanced. I was lucky enough to interact with a few local guides, one of who also shared with me a book of Kalasha proverbs, which mentioned earlier, has been published with the help of USAID to preserve Kalasha language and culture. After reading that book of Kalasha proverbs I decided to do a comparative study of Kalasha and Khowar proverbs because through my travelling and interaction with the two communities, I had observed differences in their religious and cultural ideologies. With the aim to study the worldview of the two communities, each with a distinct language, I also wanted to see if the geographical proximity of the two communities has led to the emergence of any similarity in their worldview.

Data Analysis

In order to analyze proverbs found in any language, socio-cultural, psychological as well as geographical/ecological factors need to be taken into account as proverbs are the product of a combination of all these factors. Since these factors contribute to the ideological construction of any community, they cannot be neglected while analyzing proverbs. Therefore, the data based on Khowar and Kalasha proverbs are analyzed from multiple perspectives.

Use of Animal Imagery

The use of animal imagery is commonly found in proverbs of different languages across the world with differences in the nature of employment of animal imagery and its connotations. This, in turn, is indicative of the differences in the *Weltanschauung* or worldview of the communities of practice (CoP). The differences may not necessarily be related to the use of animal imagery alone but may also lie in the frequency of usage of such imagery in proverbs of different languages. Although the use of animal imagery is found in both Kalasha and Khowar proverbs, it abounds in Khowar proverbs and has symbolic associations. A wolf, for instance, is perceived as an emblem of devil, in Khowar language, which is evident from one of the Khowar proverbs which can be translated in English as "Think of the wolf and the wolf is here". This proverbial statement is similar to both the English proverb "Think of the devil and the devil is here" and the equivalent Urdu proverb "*she'taan ka naam lo to she'taan haazir*" implying that one should avoid talking about evil to prevent oneself from its influence. There are nine other Khowar proverbs using the image of 'wolf' and in all of them 'wolf' carries negative connotation, which indicates that wolf evokes the image of evil in the mind of Khowar speakers.

Another animal that is frequently referred to in Khowar proverbs is 'cat'. One of the Khowar proverbs where cat imagery is used is "*sardio~ me~ ghar me~ billi bhi qubuul nahi~*", which literally means "Even a cat is not acceptable at home in winter". The implied meaning is that guests are not welcome in winter. Another Khowar proverb where 'cat' is used as a symbol of unreliability is "*duudh ki rakhvaali billi se karaana*". Its

literal meaning is "Making a cat guard milk" which actually implies "Giving responsibilities to an unreliable person".

Other animals referred to in Khowar proverbs include: bear, eagle, crow, duck, dog, donkey, snake, camel, ant, lion, pigeon, hen, ox, goat, monkey, fox, mouse, lizard, and fish. Unlike the animal imagery used in Khowar proverbs, the animal imagery employed in Kalasha proverbs is limited. Nevertheless, the animals that are referred to in Kalasha proverbs are more or less the same, which is indicative of the similar fauna owing to the geographical proximity of the two regions. Here are a few examples of Kalasha proverbs using animal imagery:

- a. *charaahgaah jo dekh kar gaae chhoRni chaahiye*
Literal meaning: "One should let the cow free after looking at the grazing field."
Implied meaning: "One should consider one's position and resources while making plans."
- b. *bheR ko maut nahi aati, vo xud khod kar xanjar nikaalti he'*
Literal meaning: "A sheep does not die a natural death; it digs out knife to invite death."
Implied meaning: "Some people invite trouble for themselves."
- c. *se'laablakRia~ le jaata he' aur me'~Dakkaraahta he'*
Literal meaning: "A flood takes away the woods whereas a frog just keeps croaking."
Implied meaning: "A workaholic person does the work without wasting time whereas a work shirker wastes time in empty talk."
- d. *TuuTesii~gvaali bakri revaR me nahi~ aati*
Literal meaning: "A goat with a broken horn does not move with the flock."
Implied meaning: "People with some flaws do not attend gatherings."
- e. *Bakri bhi apne be' Then ki jagah khurach kurach ke be 'Thiti he'*
Literal meaning: "A goat also cleans its place with its paws before sitting."
Implied meaning: "Animals are also aware of the importance of cleanliness."
- f. *Kutte aur lomRi ki tarha jama kar ke baadshah ki tarha kha*
Literal meaning: "Save like a dog and a fox and eat like a king."
Implied meaning: "One should not be ashamed of hard work. Hard work makes one great."

Since the Kalasha people earn their livelihood through agriculture, there are frequent references to sheep, goat, and cow in their proverbs.

Use of Color Imagery

Colors carry symbolic significance which may vary from one culture to another. What a certain color symbolizes in one culture may be diametrically opposed to what it stands for in another culture. Take example of the colour 'red' which is a sign of danger in some communities while in others it symbolizes love and warmth. Color symbolism is projected through proverbs of different languages which embody the cultural metaphors used by members of different communities. Taking example from Khowar language, one finds how the color black is perceived by the Khowar speakers in Chitral. In one of the Khowar proverbs, "*kale dhaage ka guchchha har ghar me~ aasakta he*", (implying that "any home can be afflicted with a calamity"), the color 'black' is used as a sign of bad omen. Another example of a Khowar proverb where the reference to black colour is found is "*kale kiiRe ki nazar me~ us kiaulaad xuubsuurat*" (Literal translation: "In black ant's eyes, its offspring is beautiful"). This proverb implies that no matter how ugly children are, they appear beautiful to their parents.

The negative projection of black color in Khowar proverbs is in sharp contrast to the symbolic value assigned to black by the Kalasha community. The traditional clothes worn by all the female members of the Kalash valley are black in colour. The female members of the Kalasha community, irrespective of their age, wear handmade black dress that is adorned with colorful embroidery. One of the Kalasha guides who I had an informal interaction with reported that in Kalash valley, the color 'white' is reserved for males while 'black' for females to indicate opposite sexes. For the people of Kalash valley, 'black' symbolizes 'warmth' and 'modesty' both of which are considered feminine attributes. According to the local Kalasha women, one major reason why it is worn by the women of Kalash valley is that it conceals blood during menstruation and another reason is that it completely covers the Kalasha women in the sense that the body parts do not become visible in black. For the Kalasha, black is also economical in the sense that unlike other colors, black does not get dirty so easily and therefore the Kalasha women, who have to work in the fields, can keep wearing the same dress for several days. Considering the significance of black for the people of Kalash valley, it is

logical enough not to find any Kalasha proverb in which black carries negative connotation.

Use of Culture-specific Items

Besides the use of animal and colour imagery in proverbs, the proverbs of different languages also employ culture-specific terms that hold a mirror to their cultural beliefs and practices, including their food choices. One example of a Khowar proverb with reference to culture-specific items include: *"kanjuus hamesha apni nasvaar ki Dabbi ke baare me~ sochta he"* (which implies that a miser or a stingy person always thinks of his/her food). In this proverb, the word *'nasvaar'* is culture-specific. It refers to an edible item that many Pakhtun people in KPK, especially the males, consume. It is a kind of addiction like *'guTka'* which is used by quite a few people from the lower or lower-middle class living in Karachi, irrespective of their age and gender.

There is another Khowar proverb in which reference to a culture-specific food item is found. The literal translation of this proverb in Urdu is *"naalaaiq aurat koshoshab khaane ka shauq hota he' aur mehanti aurat ko uun se dhaage bunne ka"* (an incompetent woman is only fond of eating *shoshab*--a local dish famous in Chitral--whereas a workaholic woman is fond of knitting wool into thread) which implies that a work shirker always thinks about the food whereas a workaholic person thinks about work.

Some examples of Kalasha proverbs with culture-specific items include:

- a. *Pul ke niiche se guzra hua paani vaapis nahi aata*
Literal translation: "The water passed under the bridge does not return."
Implied meaning: "Once passed, time does not return."
- b. *Duudh ki miqdaar ko dekh kar chamcha naachta he'*
Literal translation: "The spoon dances by looking at the quantity of milk."
Implied meaning: "Wealthy people are served with happiness."
- c. *jab tiir xatm ho jaae~ to baRa shikaar haazir ho jaata he'*
Literal translation: "When one runs out of arrows, a big prey appears."
Implied meaning: "When resources end, big opportunities emerge."

Gender Representation

Gender being a socio-psychological rather than a biological construct is perceived in different ways in different cultures. In patriarchal societies built on the foundation of male dominance, female gender is devalued which is manifested through the attitude towards female members of the society. They are not only denied freedom of speech but are also deprived of decision-making which is the right of every mature adult irrespective of his/her gender. Folk literature found in any language in the form of proverbs and sayings reveals a great deal about how people belonging to a certain community of practice (CoP) perceive as well as treat each gender. For example: The Arabic proverb "A woman is like an onion, she must always have her head down" reflects Arabs' expectation of women to be submissive, whereas the Rajhastani proverb "Women are like shoes, they can always be replaced" reveals the derogatory attitude of Rajhastanis towards women. The metaphor of 'shoes' employed in this proverb intensifies the degree of humiliation that women are subjected to.

The analysis of Khowar and Kalasha proverbs provide enough evidence of the world view that both the Khowar and Kalasha communities hold with regard to gender. Khowar proverbs display a unique trend with regard to gender representation. For instance, in one of the *Khowar* proverbs, which is translated in Urdu as "*ek rasoli ki aa~kh nahi~hoti aur ek beTi ki*" (Literal translation: "Neither a tumor nor a daughter has eyes") implying that some daughters make unfair demands from their parents without considering their economic condition. In this proverb, daughters are projected as inconsiderate. Whereas in another Khowar proverb representing female gender, a widow is projected in a positive light as is evident from its Urdu translation given in the book on *Khowar* proverbs (*beva aasmaan pe hal chala sakti he'*) implying that widows are very hardworking. If we analyze Khowar proverbs given in the book from where the data are drawn, the proverbs on female gender outnumber those on male gender. However, in most of the proverbs, female gender is negatively stereotyped. Take example of another *Khowar* proverb which is translated in Urdu as "*naalaaq aurat ki sui me~lamba dhaaga*" which means several excuses can be made to conceal one's incompetence. The implied meaning of this proverb is not gender-specific but the language used in the actual proverb to convey this meaning is gender-biased and reveals negative attitude of the Khowar people towards women. Yet another example of a Khowar proverb

denigrating women is "*hasne vaali aurat aur hilne vaali lakri ka koi e'tabaar nahi*" (Literal meaning: a woman who laughs and a wooden plank that shakes are not trustworthy). Comparing a woman to a piece of wood, which is an inanimate object, is in itself an insult.

Unlike the negative stereotyping of female gender, one finds positive stereotyping of male gender which is evident from one of the Khowar proverbs, '*beta pe'da hone ki der hoti he*' implying that the birth of a son is a sign of good omen as a son takes the responsibility of the house as soon as he grows up.

In contrast to *Khowar* proverbs based on gender, there are very few gender-related proverbs in the book on Kalasha proverbs. Nevertheless, there is not much difference between the Khowar and Kalasha people's attitude towards women. Here are a few examples of Kalasha proverbs that negatively stereotype female identity:

a. *doshiiza ki xuubsuurti qaliil muddati phuul ki tarha hoti he'*

Literal meaning: The beauty of a girl is like the beauty of a short-lived flower.

Implied meaning: Physical beauty is ephemeral.

b. *aurat ki daaRhi nahi~ hoti*

Literal meaning: A woman does not have a beard.

Implied meaning: It is difficult for a woman to be wise.

In the first example the focus is on projection of the ephemeral beauty of women, while the second proverb reflects male chauvinism as the metaphor of 'beard' is used to symbolize wisdom which is associated with masculine identity.

Stereotypical Representation of Different Communities

The attitudes that speakers of different communities have towards each other is embodied in the proverbs used in their language, which often turn into stereotypical judgments. One example is the stereotypical representation of the Bihari community which is reflected in the Urdu proverb "*jo nakaTeaari se vokaTe Bihari se*" which implies that Biharis are very shrewd and cunning, which, of course, is a negative projection of Biharis, and can result in wrong judgement of Biharis on the part of other groups. Similarly, in Khowar proverbs, the Wakhi speakers from Wakhan community are stereotyped as greedy and troublesome, which may not be the case with every Wakhi speaker. There are two Khowar proverbs in which there is a reference to Wakhan and both the proverbs project a

negative image of the Wakhi community. Here is the translation of both the Khowar proverbs in Urdu and English, which negatively stereotype the Wakhi community. The implied meaning of each is given in English:

- a. *Baaliim ki aa~dhi hamesha chalti he' aur Wakhan ka bheRia har vaqt Dakaar maarta he'*

Literal meaning: The winds of Baaliim always keep blowing and the wolves of Wakhan always belch.

Implied meaning: Problems never come to an end.

- b. *Wakha~ se taa'luq rakhne vale ko agar apne piichhe ghoRe pe biThaaoge to vo lagaam thaamne ki koshish kare ga*

Literal meaning: If you make a person from Wakhan sit at the back of your horse, he will try to hold the rein.

Implied meaning: If we give leniency to a greedy person, he/she exploits it.

The Khowar speakers also have negative attitude towards the British as manifested in the Khowar proverb "*uuper se aajiz aur andar se a~grez*" (Literal translation: Humble from appearance but British from inside). This proverb carries the implication that some people appear to be naïve but are actually evil from inside. The reference to the British people in the last proverb indicates the Khowar speakers' evaluation of the British as evil which is not surprising because many people in the Indo-Pak subcontinent did not approve of the British because of their invasion of the sub-continent and how they enslaved the people. Many of them still consider the British cunning and manipulative.

In contrast to Khowar proverbs using negative stereotyping of certain communities, the Kalasha proverbs reveal positive stereotyping. For instance, a Kalasha proverb "*Rambuur vale apni har baat manva lete he'~*" (Literal meaning: People of Rambuur know the art of making themselves heard), which implies the ability to get one's rights, projects the people of Rambuur having strong determination and convincing power. Since the Kalasha community is a self-contained community, with minimal interaction with other communities outside their valley, one neither finds stereotyping of communities outside their valley nor does one find negative stereotyping of any community living within their valley. The absence of negative stereotyping of any community manifests tolerance for others on the part of the Kalasha community. One proof of the high degree of tolerance of the Kalasha community is the peaceful coexistence of many family members with different religious beliefs.

There are quite a few Kalasha speakers who even after embracing Islam live in complete harmony with their family members who worship deities.

Attitude Towards Different Relations

The projection of relationships in proverbs of different languages provides a great deal of information about how different relationships are viewed in specific cultures. For Khowar speakers, a son-in-law is compared to a donkey who is made to work all the time as is evident from the Khowar proverb literally translated as *"There is no difference between a son-in-law and a donkey"* implying that a son-in-law should be made to do all the work. Khowar speakers' negative attitude towards a son-in-law is in contrast to their positive attitude towards husbands which is manifested in one of the Khowar proverbs literally translated in English "A weak husband is better than a strong son." (Implied meaning: It is difficult for a woman to spend life without a husband). The projection of women in this Khowar proverb can not only compel Khowar women to underestimate their ability to survive alone but can also reinforce the belief in men that women cannot be self-sufficient, which is the manifestation of a typical patriarchal society.

A Khowar proverb *"vaaliden agar bachche ko na samjhaae~ to duniya sikhaati he"* (Implied meaning: "A child who is deprived of parents' counseling and guidance suffers") sums up the importance of parental guidance for children that Khowar speakers believe in. Like Khowar speakers, the Kalasha people also place parents above every other relation as is evident from one of the Kalasha proverbs which is translated in Urdu as *"jo maa baap ke huquuq ko nahi~jaanta vo xuda ko bhi nahi~ jaanta."* (Translation: "A person who does not know the rights of parents does not even know God"). Keeping the significance of indirect teaching and counseling in mind, David and Noor (2013) consider proverbs ideal "to inform children of what is expected of them." (p.86). The same point is made through Kalasha and Khowar proverbs related to the significance of parental guidance and the importance of the rights of parents.

Findings and Conclusion

The findings of the study reveal striking similarities as well as differences between the two communities. In the proverbs of both the Khowar and the Kalasha language, feminine identity is negatively stereotyped in contrast to the masculine identity, while the rights of parents are given importance without any discrimination between father and mother. Another similarity found between the two cultures is the use of animal imagery which is more or less the same and this similarity can be attributed to the somewhat similar fauna of Chitral and Kalash valley because of the geographical proximity of the two regions.

However, despite the similarities between the two cultures as manifested through the proverbs of both the languages, there are quite a few differences. One major difference lies in the symbolic value assigned to colours; the symbolic meaning associated with colours is unique in each case. Another major difference lies in the way certain communities are stereotyped in the proverbs of both the languages. Whereas in Khowar proverbs, some communities are negatively stereotyped, in Kalasha proverbs one can find examples of positive stereotyping. Moreover, the culture-specific terms employed in some of the proverbs of both the languages manifest the distinctive identity of each culture. Thus, the differences between the two groups reinforce the principle of linguistic relativity which is the basis of Sapir-Whorf hypothesis, according to which speakers of different languages perceive reality in different ways.

The study of the proverbs found in both the languages under investigation provide useful information about the complex relation between the culture of these two communities, as despite speaking different languages they can neither be said to hold an entirely different worldview nor can they be said to have the world view that is an exact replica of the other because of their geographical closeness.

Recommendations

The findings of this comparative study call for a need to undertake similar research on proverbs of other indigenous languages spoken in Pakistan to explore the worldview projected through them. For it is not only essential to develop a deeper understanding of the cultural diversity

found in the worldview of different ethno linguistic groups in the country but also discover some of the similarities that exist despite the distinct identity that each ethno linguistic group possesses.

There is also a need to provide cultural exposure through proverbs as they are the conduits of rich culture that each language embodies. The young generation needs to be familiarized with the proverbs of their heritage language so that they develop awareness about their cultural roots despite being physically away from their native environment. Not only should the young generation be exposed to proverbs at home, curriculum developers and syllabus designers should also make sufficient room for a component on proverbs and idioms while selecting material for language teaching as it is the linguistic right of every individual in a community to have knowledge of the worldview its community has.

Moreover, by incorporating native language proverbs in the curriculum, one can engage learners in a critical discussion about their truth value in today's world. For instance, the proverbs that project stereotypical views on gender or certain relationships, or ethnic groups can be questioned.

References

- Abadi, M.C. (2000). Proverbs as ESL Curriculum. *Proverbium*, 17, 1-22.
- Abou-Zaid, S.A. (2013). The U.S. Folklore, Proverbs, and Economic Behaviour. *Economics & Sociology*, 6(2), 126-134. DOI: 10.14254/2071-789X.2013/6-2/11.
- Asimeng-Boahene, L. (2013). The Social Construction of Sub-Saharan Women's Status through African Proverbs. *Mediterranean Journal of Social Sciences*, 4(1),123-131.
- Asiyanbola, A.A. (2007). A Syntactic and Semiotic Analysis of Some Yoruba Sexist Proverbs in English Translation: Need for Gender Balance. *Nebula*,4(3), 63-78.
- Balogun, A.O. (2010). Proverbial oppression of Women in Yoruba African Culture: A Philosophical Overview, Thought and Practice. *A Journal of Philosophical Overview of Kenya, New Series*, 2(1), 21-36.

- Brosh, H. (2013). Proverbs in the Arabic Language Classroom. *International Journal of Humanities and Social Science*, 3(5), 19-29. https://www.ijhssnet.com/journals/Vol_3_No_5_March_2013/3.pdf
- Dabaghi, A., Pishbin, E., & Niknasab, L. (2010). Proverbs from the Viewpoint of Translation *Journal of Language Teaching and Research*, 1(6), 807-814. DOI:10.4304/jltr.1.6.807-814.
- Dabbagh, A. & Noshadi, M. (2015). An interpretation for the significance of 'time': The case of English and Persian Proverbs. *Theory and Practice in Language Studies*, 5(12), 2580-2590.
- David, M.K & Noor. M.N. F. (2013). Parental Responsibilities as represented in Malay Proverbs. *Journal of Modern Languages*, 15(1), 85-104.
- Dogbey, E. & Sapaty, G. (2019). Portrayal of Children and Adults in Ewe Proverbs, *Research on Humanities and Social Sciences*, 9(2), 107-117. file:///C:/Users/Lap/Downloads/Portrayal_of_Children_and_Adults_in_Ewe.pdf.
- Hui, K.L. (2010). How Malay Proverbs Encode and Evaluate Emotion? A Paremiological Analysis. *International Journal of the Malay World and Civilisation*, 28(1), 57-81. file:///C:/Users/Lap/Downloads/How_Malay_proverbs_encode_and_evaluate_e.pdf
- Hussein, W.J. (2005). The Social and Ethno-cultural Construction of Masculinity and Femininity in African Proverbs. *African Study Monographs*, 26(2), 59-87.
- Jayawardena, M. M. S. H. (2015). Women in Proverbs: A Comparative Study in French and Sinhala. *International Journal of Language and Literature*, 3(2), 107-116. DOI: 10.15640/ijll.v3n2a11.
- Kaplan, M. (2002). Employing Proverbs To Explore Intergenerational Relations Across Cultures. In M. Kaplan, N. Henkin, & A. Kusano (Eds.), *Linking Lifetimes: A Global View of Intergenerational Exchange*, pp. 39-64. Lanham, MD: University Press of America.
- Khan, A. A. (2016). *Khovar Matalan Gurzen: Khovar kahaavato~kamajmua* (Khovar Proverbs: a Collection of Khovar Proverbs). Islamabad: Forum for Language Initiatives.

- Khan, A.L., Mustafa, R. & Ali, G. (2017). Punjabi Proverbs and Gender: Construction of Multiple Identities. *NUML Journal of Critical Inquiry*, 15(I), 67-70.
- Khan, Q., Sultana, N., & Naz, A. (2015). The Linguistic Representation of Gender Identities in Pakhtu Proverbs. *NUML Journal of Critical Inquiry*, 13(II), 73-87.
- Liu, J. (2013). A Comparative Study of English and Chinese Animal Proverbs: From the Perspective of Metaphors. *Theory and Practice in Language Studies*, 3(10), 1844-1849. doi:10.4304/tpls.3.10.1844-1849.
- Ma, L. (2011). The Word and the World: Exploring World Views of Monolingual and Bilingual Chinese Through the Use of Proverbs. *Open Access Dissertations*. 530. URL: https://scholarlyrepository.miami.edu/oa_dissertations/530.
- Mele, L.M. (2013). Kanuri proverbs: metaphoric conceptualization of a cultural discourse. *Journal of African Cultural Studies*, 25(3), 333-348. DOI: 10.1080/13696815.2012.749783.
- Mieder, W. (1997). Modern Paremiology in Retrospect and Prospect. *Paremia*, 6, 399-416. Madrid.
- Mieder, W. (2004). *Proverbs: A Handbook*. London: Greenwood Press.
- Mieder, W. (2005). A proverb is worth a thousand words: Folk wisdom in the modern mass media. *Proverbium* 22, 167-234.
- Mieder, W. (2008). *Proverbs speak louder than words: Wisdom in art, culture, folklore, history, literature and mass media*. York: Peter Lang.
- Mieder, W. (2012). Think outside the box: Origin, nature, and meaning of modern Anglo-American proverbs. *Proverbium: Yearbook of International Proverb Scholarship*, 29, 137-196.
- Mieder, W. (2018). The Humanistic Value of Proverbs in Sociopolitical Discourse. *Humanities*, 7(28), 1-22. DOI: 10.3390/h7010028.
- Mir, S. (2018). Construction of Negative Identity of Female Gender in the Punjabi Proverbs. *Journal of Humanities and Social Sciences*, 6(4), 125-129. <http://www.sciencepublishinggroup.com/j/hss>. DOI: 10.11648/j.hss.20180604.15

- Mohamadi, K. & Nabifer, N. (2012). A comparative study of English and Persian proverbs based on Halliday's experiential metafunction. *Journal of Academic and Applied Studies*, 2(8 & 9), 22-36.
- Mpungose, Z. M. (2010). Perceived gender inequality reflected in Zulu proverbs: a feminist approach. *South African Journal for Folklore Studies*, 25(2), 76-99.
- Mwihia, N. C. (2005). *A Theological Analysis of African Proverbs about Women: with reference to proverbs from Gikuyu people of Central Kenya*. An Unpublished Master's Thesis. University of KwaZulu-Natal: Pietermaritzburg: South Africa.
- Ncube, B. & Moyo, T. (2011). Portraying women as the other: Ndebele proverbs and idioms in context of gender construction. *Africana*, 5(3), 126-142.
- Nippold, M.A., Allen, M.M., & Kirsch, D. I. (2000). How adolescents comprehend unfamiliar proverbs: The role of top-down and bottom-up processes. *Journal of Speech, Language and Hearing Research*, 43, 621-630.
- Nippold, M.A., Power, R. & Taylor, C.L. (2001). Comprehending literally-true versus literally-false proverbs. *Child Language Teaching and Therapy*, 17, 1-18.
- Nuessel, F. (2003). Proverbs and metaphoric language in second language acquisition. In Wolfgang Mieder (Ed.), *Cognition, Comprehension and Communication: A Decade of North American Proverb Studies (1990-2000)*, (pp. 395-412). Hohengehren: Schneider-Verlag.
- Omoloso, K.R. (2012). A context-structure Analysis of Yoruba Proverbs in Discourse. *US-China Foreign Language*, 10(7), 1318-1329.
- Palmer, B.C., & Brooks, M.A. (2004). Reading until the cows come home: Figurative language and reading comprehension. *Journal of Adolescent and Adult Literacy*, 47, 370-379.
- Rasul, S. (2015). Gender and Power Relationships in the language of Proverbs: Image of a Woman. *FWU Journal of Social Sciences*, 9(2), 53-62.

- Rong, H. (2013). Proverbs Reveal Culture Diversity. *Cross- Cultural Communication*, 9(2), 31-35.
<http://www.cscanada.net/index.php/cc/article/view/j.ccc.1923670020130902.1346>. DOI:
<http://dx.doi.org/10.3698/j.ccc.1923670020130902.1346>.
- Samreen, A. (2013). Folksongs: The Real Portrayal of Baltistan's Culture. *Pakistan Journal of History and Culture*, XXXIV(2), 122-138.
- Sameer, H.I. (2016). A cognitive study of certain Animals in English and Arabic Proverbs:A Comparative Study. *International Journal of Language and Linguistics*, 3(5),133-143.
- Sanauddin, N. (2015). Proverbs and patriarchy: analysis of linguistic sexism and gender relations among the Pashtuns of Pakistan. An Unpublished Ph. D. Dissertations. School of Social and Political Sciences, University of Glasgow, Scotland.
- Schuster. E. (1998). Proverbs: A Path to Understanding Different Cultures. *Journal of Extension*, 36(1),18-23.
- Sharifian, F. (2011). Cultural Conceptualisations and Language: Theoretical Framework and Applications. Amsterdam/Philadelphia: John Benjamins.
- Torwali, Z. (July 7, 2019). The languages of northern Pakistan. *The NEWS*.
<http://www.thenews.com.pk>.
- USAID. (2016). *Kal'as'aMatal (Kalasha Proverbs)*.Ayun& Valleys Development Programme.
- Wang, Dechun. (2000). *Proverbs and Cultures in Chinese and English*. Shanghai: Shanghai Foreign Language Education Press.
- Zahedi, K. & Imani, A. (2011). 'Woman' in English proverbs: A critical discourse analysis approach. *Critical Language and Literary Studies* 4(7), 81-113.
- Zhang, X. (2016). Proverbs as a mirror of culture: American and Chinese values contrasted. *China Media Research*, 12(2), 42-51.
- Zormeier, S. M. & Samovar, L. A. (2000). Language as a mirror of reality: Mexican American proverbs. In Larry A. Samovar and Richard E. Porter (Eds.), *Intercultural communication: A reader* (9th edition), (pp. 225-229). San Francisco, CA: Wadsworth.