

THE ROLE OF LEARNING STYLES AND MOTIVATION IN ACTIVATING LINGUOCULTURAL CODES IN TEACHING FOREIGN LANGUAGES THROUGH PAREMIOLOGICAL UNITS (BASED ON ENGLISH AND UZBEK)

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Abstract: The article investigates the role of learning styles and motivation in activating linguocultural codes through English and Uzbek paremiological units in foreign language teaching. The study seeks to identify pedagogical mechanisms that help learners access cultural meaning layers encoded in proverbs and sayings. A qualitative comparative design combining descriptive, linguocultural, and pedagogical modeling methods is used. The analytical corpus contains 24 English and 24 Uzbek units. The findings show that paremiological material foregrounds such codes as diligence, patience, speech ethics, knowledge, solidarity, and prudence. Visual, reflective, collaborative, and translation-based tasks appear especially productive for different learner profiles, while motivational support enhances engagement, interpretation, and retention.

Keywords: paremiological units; linguocultural code; learning styles; motivation; English; Uzbek; foreign language teaching

Introduction. Current approaches to foreign language teaching emphasize not only grammatical competence but also the ability to interpret meanings that are culturally embedded, pragmatically shaped, and socially indexed [1], [9]. In this perspective, paremiological units deserve special attention because they condense experience, evaluation, metaphor, and social norms into compact linguistic forms [5], [6]. When proverbs and sayings are integrated into classroom practice, learners confront culture in a manageable yet meaningful format. An English proverb such as 'Actions speak louder than words' and an Uzbek unit such as 'Yetti o'lchab, bir kes' do more than illustrate vocabulary; they encode expectations about responsibility, judgment, and social conduct. Through comparison and interpretation, learners begin to see how language organizes value systems and culturally preferred ways of acting [7], [8]. However, the educational effect of such material does not emerge automatically. Learners differ in the ways they process information, respond to symbolic content, and

sustain involvement in classroom tasks. For this reason, learning styles and motivation become crucial mediating variables in the activation of linguocultural codes [1], [2]. Some learners benefit from visual mapping and categorization, others from discussion, translation, contextual dramatization, or reflective writing. Task design therefore determines whether a proverb remains a decorative example or becomes an instrument of cultural meaning-making. The relevance of the present study lies in its attempt to connect learning styles, motivational dynamics, and paremiological material within one pedagogical model. Drawing on English and Uzbek data, the article explores which linguocultural codes are most salient, how they can be operationalized in teaching, and how different task formats support or hinder interpretive engagement.

Literature Review. Research on learning styles in second language education has long attempted to explain why learners respond differently to the same input and the same instructional procedures. While rigid classifications have been criticized, scholars still agree that learners display relatively stable preferences in processing, organizing, and retrieving information [2], [4]. These preferences matter especially in tasks that require symbolic interpretation rather than straightforward decoding. Motivation has been described as one of the most powerful predictors of success in foreign language learning. Gardner's distinction between integrative and instrumental orientations provided an early social-psychological foundation [3], whereas Dörnyei later focused on classroom-based motivational strategies, goal setting, teacher discourse, and the maintenance of learner engagement over time [1]. More recent pedagogical thinking links motivation with autonomy, relevance, challenge, and affective safety [10]. Within linguocultural and cultural-linguistic frameworks, language is treated as a carrier of collective conceptualizations, cultural schemas, and value-laden knowledge [7], [8]. Sharifian's work on cultural conceptualizations is particularly useful for understanding why comparable linguistic forms may activate different meanings across communities [7]. Kramsch's notion of the 'third place' similarly highlights the mediating space in which learners negotiate between languages and cultures [9]. Paremiological scholarship adds a further dimension. Mieder characterizes proverbs as concise records of folk wisdom, while Norrick emphasizes their semantic density, social embeddedness, and pragmatic flexibility [5], [6]. Conceptual metaphor theory also helps explain why proverbs remain didactically powerful: they map abstract values onto concrete images and scenarios [12]. This makes them highly suitable for classroom work that combines vocabulary development, cultural interpretation, and communicative interaction. Yet the intersection of paremiology, learner styles, and motivation remains underexplored. Studies often discuss proverbs as cultural material or as phraseological items, but fewer works address how different learner profiles engage with them and how motivation can be strategically enhanced through proverb-based pedagogy. The present article addresses this gap by proposing a comparative

English-Uzbek model. Research on formulaic language also supports the pedagogical value of proverb work: fixed expressions provide memorable chunks, promote inferencing, and connect lexical learning with conceptual framing [11], [12]. When learners compare full equivalents, partial equivalents, and culture-specific analogues, they become more aware of how values are linguistically patterned.

Method and Methodology. The study adopts a qualitative comparative design with elements of pedagogical modeling. The analytical corpus consists of 48 paremiological units, evenly divided between English and Uzbek. Selection criteria included pedagogical usability, semantic transparency, figurative density, cultural salience, and relevance to classroom discussion. The corpus was assembled from proverb collections, teaching materials, and paremiological reference works [5], [6]. The procedure involved four stages. First, units were grouped according to dominant thematic and axiological codes. Second, each unit was interpreted in terms of its linguocultural load and its likely classroom value. Third, suitable task formats were matched with learner preferences, including visual-cognitive, reflective-analytical, dialogic-collaborative, and translation-creative modes. Fourth, motivational potential was evaluated through relevance, challenge, personal identification, and opportunities for interaction [1], [2], [10]. A three-layer methodological model was used throughout the analysis: the verbal layer (lexical form, imagery, and figurative structure), the cultural layer (value, norm, social script), and the pedagogical layer (task design and motivational trigger). This model made it possible to relate proverb interpretation to classroom practice without reducing culture to mere background information.

A coding matrix was developed for every unit with four descriptors: core image, axiological center, suitable classroom procedure, and likely motivational response. This made the model not only descriptive but also directly transferable to lesson planning.

Table 1.

Dominant linguocultural codes in the corpus and their pedagogical value

Code	English sample	Uzbek sample	Pedagogical value
Diligence	No pains, no gains	Mehnatning tagi rohat	Comparing work ethics and value framing
Patience	Patience is a virtue	Sabr qilgan murodga yetar	Axiological interpretation and reflection
Speech ethics	Think before you speak	Yaxshi soʻz jon ozigʻi	Pragmatic and ethical interpretation

Solidarity	Many hands make light work	Hashar - elga yarashar	Collaborative discussion work
Prudence	A stitch in time saves nine	Yetti o‘lchab, bir kes	Problem-solving and decision making

Table 2.

Selected pairs of parallel paremiological units

English unit	Uzbek parallel	Dominant code	Comment
Actions speak louder than words	Amal gapdan ustun	Responsibility	Action is prioritized over declaration
Patience is a virtue	Sabr qilgan murodga yetar	Patience	Achievement is framed through endurance
Knowledge is power	Ilm - nur	Knowledge	Knowledge as social and ethical value
Many hands make light work	Hashar - elga yarashar	Solidarity	Cooperation reduces effort
Think before you speak	Yaxshi so‘z jon ozig‘i	Speech ethics	Words carry social consequences
A stitch in time saves nine	Yetti o‘lchab, bir kes	Prudence	Forethought prevents loss

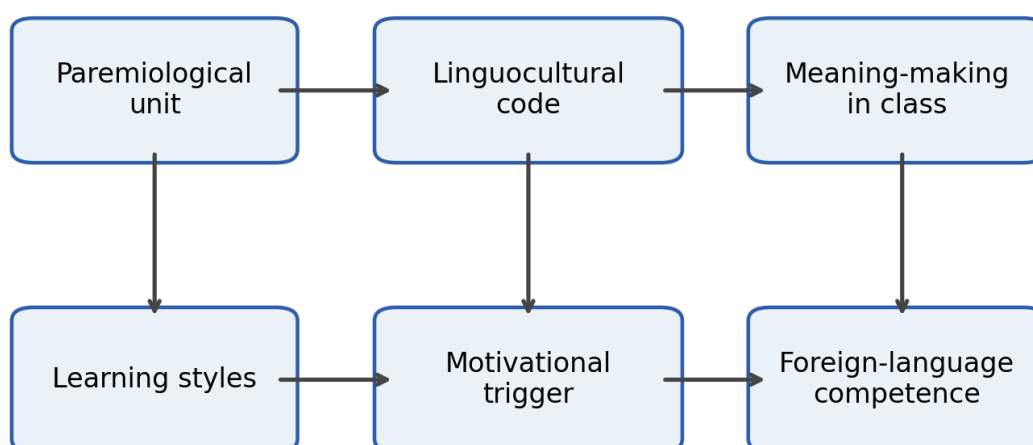


Figure 1. Three-layer model for activating a linguocultural code through a paremiological unit

Discussion. The analysis suggests that paremiological units are most effective in foreign language teaching when they are approached not as isolated idiomatic

ornaments, but as condensed models of cultural reasoning, social experience, and value transmission. In other words, proverbs and sayings should be treated as linguocultural microtexts that encode collective knowledge, behavioral norms, and culturally approved ways of interpreting reality. Such an approach allows learners not only to understand the literal and figurative meanings of paremiological units, but also to access the deeper sociocultural logic embedded in them [2], [9]. For example, the English proverb "*A stitch in time saves nine*" and the Uzbek saying "*Bugungi ishni ertaga qo'yma*" both activate a linguocultural code related to prudence, responsibility, and time management. Despite their semantic proximity, the pedagogical route through which students arrive at this shared cultural code is not identical; rather, it depends significantly on the structure of the learning task, the students' cognitive preferences, and the degree of motivational engagement built into the lesson. When such proverbs are presented merely as lexical equivalents, learners may grasp the surface meaning, but they often fail to appreciate the cultural worldview and normative message underlying them. By contrast, when these units are embedded in communicative, interpretive, and comparative classroom activities, they become powerful tools for activating intercultural awareness [2], [6]. The findings also indicate that learning styles mediate the depth and mode of proverb interpretation. Visual learners tend to respond more productively to sequencing charts, semantic networks, conceptual diagrams, and cause-and-effect mapping, all of which help them visualize the internal logic of a proverb and its practical implications. Reflective learners demonstrate stronger engagement when given short analytical writing tasks, comparison prompts, or mini-essays in which they explain the moral and cultural significance of a saying in both source and target cultures. Discussion-oriented or socially interactive learners, in turn, benefit most from dialogic formats such as role plays, pair interpretation, group debates, and problem-solving activities, where paremiological units function as prompts for negotiation of meaning and cultural reflection [2], [9], [11]. Another important observation is that learner motivation significantly strengthens the educational value of paremiological material. When students perceive proverbs as relevant to real-life situations, moral choices, interpersonal communication, or national identity, their level of attention and interpretive effort increases. In such cases, motivation operates not merely as a supporting psychological factor, but as a central condition for transforming paremiological units into meaningful pedagogical resources. Integrative motivation is especially important here, because students who are interested in the culture of the target language tend to engage more deeply with the symbolic, ethical, and worldview dimensions of proverbs. At the same time, instrumental motivation also plays a role, particularly when students recognize that understanding such units improves communicative competence, translation ability, and discourse interpretation [3], [7]. The comparative evidence from English and Uzbek

further demonstrates that many paremiological units share universal conceptual cores, such as diligence, patience, honesty, caution, or wisdom, while differing in imagery, stylistic texture, and cultural emphasis. This makes them particularly useful for foreign language teaching, since they allow instructors to combine similarity and difference in one classroom framework. Learners can identify common human values across languages while also noticing how these values are verbalized through distinct metaphorical images and culturally specific codes. In this respect, paremiological units serve as a bridge between language learning and intercultural competence development [4], [8].

Overall, the discussion confirms that the pedagogical potential of paremiological units emerges most fully when three factors are aligned: first, the teacher's ability to frame proverbs as carriers of linguocultural knowledge; second, the adaptation of activities to learners' styles and cognitive preferences; and third, the stimulation of learner motivation through meaningful, context-sensitive, and culturally rich tasks. Thus, the activation of linguocultural codes through paremiological units should be viewed not as a spontaneous result of proverb exposure, but as an outcome of carefully designed instructional practice grounded in both linguodidactic and pragmalinguistic principles [5], [10].

Results. Motivation strengthens this interpretive process. When students are invited to relate a proverb to personal experience, compare it with an equivalent in another language, or decide whether it still applies to contemporary life, they move from passive reception to meaningful participation [1], [10]. In such cases the proverb becomes a trigger for identity work, not merely a lexical example. Codes of solidarity and collective effort were especially productive in comparative work. English material such as 'Many hands make light work' can be paired with Uzbek units associated with cooperative labor and community support. The pair does not simply teach equivalence; it opens a discussion of how each culture verbalizes joint responsibility, mutual help, and the social value of collective action. Motivation increases when learners recognize their own social world within the target language material. Speech-ethics codes displayed a particularly rich contrast. English sayings like 'Think before you speak' and 'Speech is silver, silence is golden' foreground restraint and self-control, whereas Uzbek units often extend the same field toward respect, harmony, and the social consequences of words. This demonstrates that even when thematic equivalence exists, axiological emphasis can shift across cultures [7], [8]. Such shifts are pedagogically valuable because they train learners to distinguish literal similarity from deeper cultural alignment. From the perspective of learning styles, four instructional formats proved especially robust: visual-cognitive mapping, analytical commentary, dialogic collaboration, and translation-based creative reconstruction. The first supports categorization and memory, the second deepens semantic awareness, the third

enhances negotiation of meaning, and the fourth fosters intercultural mediation. Rather than assigning learners permanently to one style, the model recommends using varied entry points so that proverb interpretation becomes accessible and motivating for a wider classroom profile. Translation-oriented tasks proved particularly useful. When a full equivalent exists, learners can quickly identify semantic overlap; when only a partial equivalent or a cultural analogue is available, deeper linguocultural differences become visible. This contrast trains students to distinguish literal transfer from culturally adequate mediation [7], [9].

Table 3.

Learning profile, task format, and motivational mechanism

Learning profile	Suitable task format	Motivational trigger	Expected result
Visual-cognitive	Mapping, icons, tables	Visible structure	Fast code recognition
Analytical-reflective	Commentary, semantic notes	Logical control	Deep interpretation
Dialogic-collaborative	Debate, pair work, role play	Social participation	Pragmatic activation
Translation-creative	Equivalence search, reformulation	Personal contribution	Intercultural mediation

Results. The corpus analysis showed both overlap and asymmetry in the dominant codes activated by English and Uzbek paremiological units. In both sets, diligence, patience, and solidarity appeared frequently; however, Uzbek material displayed relatively greater density in patience and speech-ethics codes, while English material gave stronger prominence to prudence and task-oriented practicality. These differences support the claim that paremiological units encode culturally shaped priorities within shared human experience [5], [7]. In pedagogical terms, the findings indicate that proverb-based activities can simultaneously develop lexical competence, figurative awareness, sociocultural interpretation, and communicative fluency. Visual tasks supported associative retention and code recognition; collaborative discussion fostered pragmatic sensitivity; translation and reformulation tasks developed intercultural mediation skills [9], [11].

The motivational dimension was most evident in tasks that combined personal relevance, comparison, and interpretive choice. Asking learners to connect a proverb with lived experience, to compare English and Uzbek value accents, or to defend one proverb as the most suitable for a given situation produced higher levels of verbal

participation and reflective engagement. In other words, motivation emerged not as an external reward alone but as a function of meaningful cultural involvement [1], [3].

The model also yielded a three-stage lesson sequence: activation (guessing the proverb from a picture or situation), interpretation (comparison, explanation, translation), and transfer (dialogue, reflective paragraph, mini-project). Such sequencing sustains motivation across the lesson while activating different learner preferences in turn.

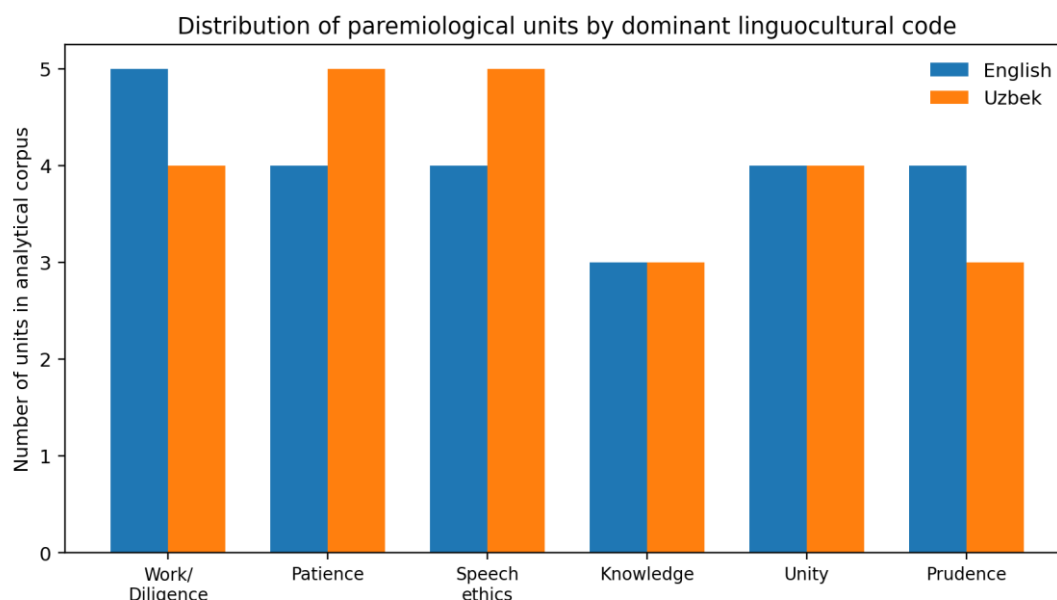


Figure 2. Distribution of paremiological units by dominant linguocultural code

Conclusion. The study confirms that learning styles and motivation play a central role in activating linguocultural codes through paremiological units in foreign language teaching. Proverbs and sayings are pedagogically powerful because they condense collective experience, values, and communicative norms in forms that are brief yet semantically dense. The findings also show that no single instructional format is sufficient. A flexible model combining visual, analytical, collaborative, and translation-based tasks is more effective because it accommodates different learner preferences while keeping motivation high. Such variety allows proverb work to move from memorization toward interpretation, comparison, and intercultural reflection.

In practical terms, teachers should explain proverbs not only lexically but also axiologically; compare English and Uzbek units to cultivate intercultural awareness; and design tasks that involve personal choice, experience, and discussion. A promising direction for further research would be classroom-based intervention studies measuring how proverb-centered instruction affects long-term retention, cultural interpretation, and learner motivation.

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