Understanding Culture Through Proverbs

English vs. Dari

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Abstract

This study presents a comparison between the English and the Dari proverbs. It examines how far metaphors and images of both languages can be compared with each other. Moreover, this study explores to what extent Afghan and British people’s understanding of each others’ proverbs can be explained in terms of cultural similarities or differences. The goal of this paper is to reflect culture, customs and traditions which are embedded in proverbs of the English and the Dari language. The comparison is based on data obtained from objective questionnaire surveys. The English and Dari data were specifically collected for this study, because there are no current studies in this field. The Afghan participants were immigrants, who have been living in Germany and the Netherlands. The English participants were people, who have been living in the Netherlands.

Concerning the results of this study it turns out that Afghans tend to understand and interpret the meaning of English proverbs better than the English people, who try to interpret the meaning of the Dari proverbs. The results show that 15 out of 25 British participants scored less than 50%, concerning understanding Dari proverbs; however, only 7 out of 25 Afghan participants scored less than 50%, concerning understanding and interpreting the correct meaning of English proverbs. Generally, it can be said that Afghan females scored better than Afghan males; on the other hand, the percentages of the British males are slightly higher than that of the British females. These results can be explained by taking into account that this research is carried out outside Afghanistan. The interpretation and understanding of the correct meaning of the English proverbs by Afghans can be explained by the fact that Afghans are familiar with not only the Eastern culture, but also the Western, since most of them have been living in Europe for a while. Most of them seem to be familiar with the customs and traditions that play a role in the everyday life of the people. As can be seen from the results of this study, those Afghans, who have a lower education and have not been in Europe for a long time can be said to misinterpret certain English proverbs.

The results of the British can be explained by the fact that Dari proverbs contain more sophisticated pictures and images, which are culturally related to the Afghans and their society. This issue makes it rather difficult for foreigners, such as the British, who have not been in deep contact with the Afghan culture, customs, beliefs and traditions to understand and interpret the correct meaning of a Dari proverb. Considering the results in this study, it
can be said that the percentage differences between the English and the Dari participants are found to be different from each other.
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1. Introduction

Being exposed to the existence of other languages increases the perception that the world is populated by people who not only speak differently from oneself but whose cultures and philosophies are other than one's own. Perhaps travel cannot prevent bigotry but by demonstrating that all people cry, laugh, eat, worry and die, it can introduce the idea that if we try to understand each other, we may even become friends (Maya Angelou, 1993, p. 12)

It is widely accepted among people that understanding a certain language not only requires the mastery or knowledge of grammar, but also the proficiency to comprehend specific features and characteristics of that language, such as idioms, expressions and proverbs. Whereas native speakers frequently make use of idioms and proverbs, it is not easy for non-native speakers to get the message that is implied by a certain proverb used by native speakers immediately. In order to get the meaning of a particular proverb, it is important for the non-native speakers to be competent enough in the related language. In order to illustrate this situation more clearly, I will take my own background as an example. I am an Afghan and a native speaker of Dari, which is one of the official languages in Afghanistan. I have also been studying English as a second language for 15 years. In spite of that, I have often been confronted with difficulties regarding the interpretation and understanding of idiomatic and proverbial expressions in English. Due to my cultural background, it is often difficult for me to interpret the correct meaning of an English proverb and use it effectively in an appropriate situation.

In order to gain more insight into the above mentioned matter, I intend to examine figurative proverbs in the English language and compare them with proverbs in the Dari language. A cross-cultural study will be carried out among the British and the Afghan people in order to investigate in how far figurative proverbs of both languages can be compared with each other and understood by the other community.

One question which might arise is, why people would at all care about comparing proverbs from different languages, such as English and Dari, with each other. The answer is that if people try to examine proverbs from different languages with each other, they would get a better knowledge of the inhabitants, their minds, their living conditions, their society, in other words, of someone else’s culture. This idea is also stressed in the epigraph mentioned at the beginning of this paper, namely that if people try to understand each other’s culture, customs and philosophy of life, they can get along with each other better. As people live in a global world nowadays, they are more aware of different cultures. Cross-cultural linguistic
study, which includes among many other fields, anthropology, cultural studies, psychology
and communication, provides an opportunity to understand differences and similarities
between people’s minds, their languages and their culture. Since I am a bilingual speaker of
Dari and English, I would like to dedicate the results of this paper to the Afghan and English
communities. Another reason for having an interest in the Dari language deals with the fact
that Dari is a rather less investigated language concerning proverbs and its language in
general, due to the lack of linguists in Afghanistan. In terms of cultural differences it is
interesting to compare both languages, because of the fact that Dari is part of the Eastern
culture, while English is mostly spoken in the Western world.

It is important to mention that in certain languages, cultural images and aspects are
more intensely mirrored in proverbs than in other languages. An example of such a language
is Dari, which is spoken in the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan and is located in South-
Central Asia. Along with Pashto, Dari is one of the two official languages of Afghanistan.
Like the English language, Dari, also known as Eastern-Farsi or Eastern-Persian, belongs to
the Indo European language family. Centuries ago, during the Persian Empire, Afghanistan
and the surrounding countries and regions such as Iran, Syria, Iraq, the Caucasus, and parts of
Pakistan, India and Turkey were united under Cyrus the Great. The language that was spoken
at that time was called Old-Persian and was influenced by several ethnic groups. Centuries
after the Persian Empire, when Cyrus’s united dynasty was divided into several parts;
different dialects emerged in different regions. The Dari language is an amalgamation of
different languages of the Persian Empire and nowadays refers to the dialect of the Persian
language spoken in Afghanistan. Iranian people use the term Farsi Iranian to refer to the
variety that is spoken in Iran.

There are also several dialects spoken in Afghanistan. In the northern part of
Afghanistan, for example, the northern dialect Tajiki Dari is spoken, whereas in other areas
close to the border of Iran the dialect Herati Dari is more common. These dialectical
differences reflect also the different ethnic groups living in Afghanistan along with their
customs and traditions. Among other ethnic groups, Pashtoons and Tajiks are the most
prominent groups living in Afghanistan. This is important for this study, since a lot of Dari
proverbs might be related to certain regional or dialectal varieties that are distinguished by
pronunciation, grammar and/or vocabulary.

According to the Online National Geographic’s site (1996), the population of
Afghanistan is estimated at about 29 million. One third of the country’s population speaks
Dari as their mother tongue. Like the English language, which is a lingua franca in Europe,
Dari is used as a lingua franca in Afghanistan, as opposed to Pashtoo. It is important to mention that all three languages are taught at schools in Afghanistan; however, as far as public relations and civil service are concerned, Dari plays a more important role in the everyday life of the people in Afghanistan than Pashtoo and English. Contrary to English, which is taught as an additional language in secondary education from the 7th grade onwards, Dari and Pashtoo are taught as official national languages from primary school onwards. Moreover, it is important to mention, that the level of proficiency in the English language learned by Afghans at schools in Afghanistan is low as opposed to that of people, who learn the English language in the Western world. It can be compared a bit to Pidgin English used in India. This has to do with the fact that there are no qualified English teachers as is the case in the Western world.

Similar to the English language, which as a global language has prestige all over the world, Dari is seen as one of the prestigious languages of Central Asia, with impressive and respected literary traditions. In the last thirty to forty years, however, Afghan linguists did not have the opportunity to examine and compare the Dari language with other Eastern or Western languages in the world in order to record historical developments or changes.

The purpose of this paper is to investigate in how far the metaphors and images in the proverbs of the Dari language can be compared with that of the proverbs of the English language, and to what extent Afghan and British people’s understanding of the proverbs can be explained in terms of cultural similarities or differences. The goal of this paper is to reflect culture, customs and traditions which are embedded in proverbs of the English and the Dari language. In order to find an answer to the main research question mentioned above, the following questions need to be answered first:

2. Where do proverbs come from?
   2.1 What is the origin and development of the proverb?
   2.2 How do we define proverbs and what characteristics do they have?
   2.3 What is the distinction between literal and figurative proverbs?
   2.4 What is the relationship between proverbs and culture?
2. Where do proverbs come from?

The purpose of this section is to give a general overview of what has been discussed so far in English and Dari literature concerning proverbs. In the first subsection (2.1), I will describe the origin and spread of proverbs. There I will also identify four chronological sources with regard to the spread of English proverbs. Section 2.2 will deal with different proverb definitions made by various paremiologists, such as Taylor (1931), Mieder (2004) and Winick (2004). The aim in this subsection will be to describe scholars’ opposing views concerning the definition of a proverb and to establish a working definition which will be used to carry out this pilot study. Additionally, this section will refer to certain characteristics of proverbs with regard to its content and form. In section 2.3, a distinction will be made between literal and figurative proverb readings. The final subsection (2.4) will deal with the relationship of proverbs with culture.

2.1 What is the origin and the development of the proverb?

Since the object of this research is proverbs, it is of interest to ask ourselves where proverbs have come from and/or how they were created. These questions are relevant, for it is important to have general information about the development of proverbs and to have an idea of what constitutes a proverb. Moreover, it is important to know about the various different sources from which proverbs emerged. Both questions mentioned above are significant in order to answer the main research question which is, to what extent Afghan and British people’s understanding of the proverbs can be explained in terms of cultural similarities or differences. Since proverbs are based on people’s experiences and contain concrete cultural pictures of a specific country or community, it is necessary to know how proverbs were created. The majority of studies that investigated proverbs can be said to contain little information about their origin. As Taylor (1931) acknowledges, proverbs have been invented in many ways. Some of them are simple apothegms and common sayings raised to proverbial dignity (p.3). According to the Online Etymology Dictionary (2010), the term *apothegm* comes from Greek and means “to speak one’s opinion plainly”. As Taylor (1931) mentions, an apothegm can be used so many times that it gains proverbial recognition and acceptance among its users. However, Taylor (1931) fails to provide evidence for his observation, since he does not mention how many times a particular apothegm should be used in order to gain
proverbial recognition among its users. Moreover, as the author states, some proverbs seem to result from a historical or an everyday incident, others try to imitate already existing proverbs, and there are also proverbs that owe their creation and origin to the compression of traditional stories and fables (p. 4).

Another pioneer in the study of proverbs is Mieder (2004), who agrees with Taylor (1931) that some proverbs are so old that nobody is able to trace back their precise year of origin (p. 4). As reported by Hadissi (2010), in other cultures, like in Iran and Afghanistan, proverbs and their mutation or alteration through time are not well-documented, since proverbs fall under the oral traditions of language (p. 600). According to Mieder (2004), a proverb’s origin is almost certainly the work or creation of an individual person, intentionally or unintentionally (p. 9). Almost all paremiologists who have been studying proverbs agree that proverbs must have been transmitted orally from the folk and bear traditional authority (Norrick, 1985, p. 40; Taylor, 1931, p. 5; Mieder, 2004, p. 9; Kimilike, 2008, p. 120).

However, some scholars, such as Mieder (2004) remain sceptical as to whether anyone is able to prove that a proverb or a certain text has gained traditionality (p. 5). On the basis of previous research carried out by Norrick (1985), Taylor (1931), Mieder (2004) and Kimilike (2008), it can be said that the precise origin and the source of each proverb is very difficult to trace. Despite all difficulties, almost all paremiologists have tried to reconstruct an approximate history of the origin and dissemination of proverbs. As clearly described by Mieder (2004), four sources, which represent chronological stages for the dissemination of European proverbs can be identified.

The first and oldest source is formed by Greek proverbs, which are found in the earliest works of Plato and other significant ancient Greek scholars, such as Sophocles, Homer and many others. Later, many of these proverbs entered the Latin translations of Plautus, Cicero and other famous writers. Gradually, Latin texts and also Latin proverbs were automatically translated into other European languages (Mieder, 2004, p.10). This explains why there are so many similar proverbs in European languages.

The second source can be traced to the Bible, whose proverbs go back to classical antiquity and early wisdom and gnomic literature. As pointed out by Mieder (2004), the Bible was seen as an important source, where proverbs were found and translated into different European languages (p. 11).

According to Mieder (2004), Medieval Latin can be seen as another source for developing new proverbs whose origins are not related to classical antiquity. In the Middle Ages, the language of Latin was regarded as prestigious and served as Europe’s lingua franca;
therefore, in several Germanic languages, new proverbs developed whose origins cannot be traced back to classical times (p. 12).

A fourth source which is distinguished by Mieder (2004), deals with the influence of American literature on European literature. As he states, several new American proverbs have been imbedded into English on the European continent and culture through mass media (p. 13).

Whereas several English proverb sources are identified by different English and European writers, Farsi and Dari proverbs lack categorization of sources or stages. Farsi and Dari proverbs are found profoundly in the works of some well-known poets, such as Rumi, Saadi and Ferdawsi, as described by Hadissi (2010). However, until now, no clear investigations have been made considering the sources of the Dari or Farsi proverbs. The earliest source however, can be said to be formed by Greek proverbs, since during the Hellenistic civilization in Asia the kingdom Greco-Bactrian emerged, where Greeks reigned for several years over today’s Iran and Afghanistan. Their language dominated in these countries and even today some people believe that there are some Pashtoo words that entered Afghanistan via the Greeks. That a lot of Dari or Farsi proverbs have been taken from works of some well-known poets can be seen in the way in which certain proverbs are uttered by some Afghans. As soon as a proverb is uttered by an Afghan, he or she changes the pitch of his or her voice, causing the proverb to be pronounced in a poetic manner.

Another source is formed by the inhabitants of Iran and Afghanistan, as people create certain proverbs themselves and, other proverbs exist, which can be said to be orally transmitted from generation to generation (Hadissi, 2010, pp. 599-602). A lot of Farsi or Dari proverbs are created by Afghans or Iranians from particular incidents, stories and/ or historical events. When these self-made proverbs come to be used more often by the native residents, they gain a foothold in society. A distinction can be made between some Dari proverbs that are historically older as opposed to some Dari proverbs that are created more recently. Generally, it can be said that older Dari proverbs contain rhyme and rhythm as opposed to the Dari proverbs that are created nowadays. This is also confirmed by Taylor (1931), who states that a lot of older English proverbs used to have rhyme and rhythm in order to be easily remembered by everyone (pp. 120-123). This also explains why some older proverbs that were orally transmitted from generation to generation were easily remembered and are even known to some people nowadays.
2.2 How do we define proverbs and what characteristics do they have?

As mentioned in section 2.1, proverbs are handed down from generation to generation; therefore, proverbs must have undergone a long development. This is not only seen in the form of proverbs that have been changed in the course of time, but also in the various definitions of proverbs that have been gradually improved upon and extended by numerous paremiologists. Previous studies carried out by Taylor (1931), Norrick (1985), Mieder (2004), and Mieder and Lewandowska (2008) indicate that scholars have been confronted with difficulties regarding the definition of the proverb. One major reason why scholars have not been able to create a general definition of a proverb that would fit in every context or situation is the fact that paremiologists have examined different aspects of proverbs. Whereas some scholars have looked at the use and function of proverbs, others were rather more interested in the meaning of proverbs, which may vary per situation or context. (Mieder, 2004, p. 4).

According to Taylor’s (1931) classical study on proverbs, there is no single definition of a proverb; however, later in his work, he tries to provide a more or less general definition for his readers, namely that “(…) a proverb is a saying current among the folk” (p. 3). Mieder (2004) criticizes Taylor (1931) for not providing a proper definition, but at the same time acknowledges that his work has become famous and gained a lot of attention (p. 3). With regard to Taylor’s (1931) study on proverbs, it can be said that his work contains essential information about proverbs and their characteristics. He is regarded to be one of the pioneers in the field of paremiology, describing the origin of proverbs, categorizing their content and discussing their importance. His work represents the most comprehensive introduction to the study of proverbs. This paremiologist does not only describe English proverbs and their content, but tries to give an account of proverbs from all over the world. However, as accurately mentioned by Mieder (2004), Taylor (1931) does not really provide a concrete definition of a proverb (p. 3).

Mieder’s (2004) recent study on the definition of proverbs demonstrates, however, that it is possible to create a more or less general definition that contains most essential elements:

A proverb is a short generally known sentence of the folk which contains, wisdom, truth morals and traditional views in a metaphorical, fixed and memorisable form and which is handed down from generation to generation (p.3).

Nevertheless, Mieder (2004) agrees with Taylor (1931) that “(…) not even the most complex definition will be able to identify all proverbs” (p. 4). This statement is also supported by
Norrick (1985), who states that, since proverb definitions involve syntactic, semantic and pragmatic considerations, it is difficult to create a universal definition of a proverb (p.31). For this reason, the author elaborately describes the important components of proverbs in forty pages; however, he does not provide a general definition for his readers (pp. 31-79).

Contrary to Mieder’s (2004) and Taylor’s (1931) definitions, which were more concerned with the age and the currency of proverbs, as mentioned earlier, Dundes’s (1981), Honeck’s (1997) and Winick’s (2003) definitions refer to the characteristic structures, linguistic markers and intertextual references of proverbs (Lau, Tokofsky & Winick 2004, p. 16). This does not mean, however, that the works of Taylor (1931) and Mieder (2004) are less important or insignificant. Given the fact that all definitions include essential and important aspects of proverbs, I will consider all definitions equally important. One of the characteristic structures is also emphasized in the work of Mieder and Lewandowska (2008), who have studied German and Polish proverbs. As the paremiologists report, an essential characteristic of a proverb is that it has a fixed linguistic form (p. 40). By this, the authors mean that proverbs are short utterances that give a concise description of something. Besides that, proverbs can stand for themselves and can be regarded as independent micro texts (Mieder & Lewandowska 2008, p. 41).

Other scholars, such as Röhrich and Mieder (1977) insist that proverbs must be complete sentences (pp. 2-3). By this, the scholars mean that a proverb consists of a subject, a verb and an object, thus being grammatically correct. However, this idea is criticized by Norrick (1985), who provides several examples of proverbs, such as Like father, like son, which are considered to be not grammatically full sentences, but are still considered to be proverbs. He therefore introduces another term to replace the above mentioned criterion of grammatical sentence, based on the structure of conversation (pp. 33-35). According to Norrick (1985), the property of a “free conversational turn” seems to be a more appropriate defining criterion for proverbs. As described by the author, this notion seems to be empirically testable and independent from any grammatical theory. The notion of a free conversational turn contains the idea that the speaker leads a conversation and stops voluntarily, without being interrupted by somebody. This idea is related to proverbs in that a speaker might gain a turn and utter a proverb, which is a complete, fully rounded idea, without being interrupted by the other speaker. The proverb uttered in this conversation emerges and functions as a continuation to the previous utterance of another speaker, or as Norrick (1985) states, “…the proverb is usually woven into the fabric of the conversation” (p. 69). According to the author, other genres, such as jokes, riddles and songs interrupt the
continuation of a free conversation and are not thus “woven” in. These genres need an announcement or a kind of introduction into the subject matter. Moreover, as he adds, proverbs consist of “one potentially free conversational turn” making them distinct from the genres mentioned above, which allow several free conversational turns (p. 68).

Additionally, as Norrick (1985) reports, proverbs are spoken rather than sung or written; they are didactic, general, prosodic, entertaining and humorous (pp. 70-71). Whereas some characteristics, such as tradition, didactic purpose, figurativeness and generality seem to be essential and helpful properties in determining and defining the term proverb, other properties, such as, humour and prosody seem to be optional characteristics that are not found in every proverb.

In addition to Norrick’s (1985) properties of a proverb, Mieder and Lewandowska (2008), as mentioned earlier, provide some common and widely known functions of proverbs which have not yet been sharply distinguished by other paremiologists. They emphasize that proverbs have social and illocutionary functions. By ‘social function’, is meant that proverbs focus on and assess persisting cultural, historical and social experiences. However, it is not made clear by Mieder and Lewandowska (2008), what is actually meant by the ‘illocutionary function’ or force of a proverb (p. 41). The ‘illocutionary function’ or force might refer to Searle’s (1980) classification of illocutionary speech acts. Speech acts can be found on three levels, namely, the locutionary act, the illocutionary act and the perlocutionary act. The illocutionary act refers to the semantic or illocutionary force of an utterance. It refers to its real, actual intended meaning of an utterance (pp. 1-2). According to Röhrich and Mieder (1977), proverbs can also have an ‘illocutionary function’ and serve as “caution, persuasion, argumentation, verification, consolation, calmness, conviction, admonition, reprimand, observation, explanation, description, justification and summation” (p. 41).

Another important characteristic mentioned by Mieder and Lewandowska (2008) deals with the cognitive function of proverbs. Concerning the presentation or interpretation of a subject or a text, proverbs function as a socially effective cognitive aid. Additionally, proverbs help to evaluate the stock of knowledge in a socially characteristic manner (p. 42).

As can be noticed from all the data mentioned above, characteristics of proverbs differ from one study to another; scholars, such as Norrick (1985) refer to the semantics and the grammatical form of proverbs, whereas other paremiologists, such as Mieder and Lewandowska (2008) are more concerned with the vitality and the use of proverbs.

Taylor (1931), Norrick (1985), Mieder (2004) and Mieder and Lewandowska (2008) indicate that there are certain “external” and “internal” stylistic characteristics found in a
number of proverbs. As described by Taylor (1931), among stylistic characteristics of proverbs, alliteration, parallelism, rhyme and ellipsis are the most frequent ones found (pp. 4-40). According to Burger (2007), these characteristics represent the ‘external’ stylistic properties. Additionally, as indicated by Burger (2007), ‘internal’ stylistic properties are found in proverbs which include among others, hyperbole, paradox, personification, irony and metaphor (pp. 391-392). In this paper, I will replace the terms ‘external’ and ‘internal’ by ornamental and substantial stylistic properties, since these terms are more appropriate in this context. The terms ‘external’ and ‘internal’ can be said to be rather vague and they seem to be on the same level as opposed to the terms ‘ornamental’ and ‘substantial’ that have a concrete meaning and differ in degree with regard to the significance of the stylistic properties. However, it should be noted that no generalisation can be made regarding the idea that every proverb should include these properties.

A question that arises from the works mentioned above is, whether there are some characteristics of proverbs which are relevant for this current study. Norrick’s (1985) characteristic of a free conversational turn is not regarded to be an essential criterion for this research, since this study does not look at proverbs within conversations, but at proverbs outside any conversational context. However, one should bear in mind that the chosen proverbs can appear within any conversation. As is widely accepted, proverbs do not normally stand on their own, but for the purpose of this research, I will be looking at different images, metaphors and the proverbs’ meaning in general with regard to the Afghan and English culture, therefore, the criteria of free conversational turn is not a subject in this paper. This study rather focuses on the social and illocutionary functions of proverbs, because this function or characteristic of proverbs deals with cultural, historical and social experiences that are important in order to understand proverbs and gain knowledge about different cultures in which they emerged. With regard to stylistic properties, it can be said that I will be looking at one of the substantial stylistic properties, namely metaphors that occur in proverbs of both languages.

Although there has been a disagreement regarding the definition of proverbs, almost all scholars agree that proverbs are short traditional metaphorical utterances that express the essence of cultural truths, wit, wisdom, morality and sum up recurrent social circumstances. With regard to form, proverbs can be said to be fixed and independent statements as opposed to proverbial phrases, such as To have one foot in the grave, which permit changes to fit the grammar of the context. (Taylor, 1931, Norrick 1985, Mieder, 2004, Winick, 2004, Mieder and Lewandowska, 2008). In this paper I am going to adopt this definition, since it does not
only contain what proverbs are, but also what they do. Moreover, as pointed out earlier, these aspects are the ones that are mentioned most often by scholars and seem to be relevant in defining the proverb. Another reason why this working definition is considered to be relevant for this study is that this study focuses on cultural aspects that play an important role in understanding and interpreting proverbs of two distinct languages, namely English and Dari with each other.

2.3 What is the distinction between literal and figurative proverbs?

As extensively described by Norrick (1985), proverbs can be read literally and figuratively. Whereas literal proverb readings are carried out with no difficulty, figurative proverb readings require more effort in understanding and interpreting the correct meaning of a proverb (pp. 81-84). The proverb Like father, like son is given as an example of a literal proverb by Norrick (1985), who asserts that the literal reading of the proverb equals the standard proverbial interpretation (p. 82). However, it can be argued that such proverbs can also function as a type of extension in order to refer to children in general who behave or can be characterized as their parents. It is questionable whether an explicit gender distinction is necessary since its meaning can be applied and understood in a context where female siblings can also be referred to by this proverb. This observation questions the sharp distinction that is made by Norrick (1985) between literal and figurative proverb readings, since in the first instance, if there is a literal meaning of a proverb, the proverb is read literally and gradually its figurative reading is developed. However, if the literal meaning of a proverb makes no sense at all to the reader, then readers might develop a figurative meaning of that proverb. The extension in the meaning of the proverb Like father, like son only refers to human beings and cannot be applied to other objects.

Literal proverbs, such as What is done cannot be undone can appear in different contexts and can be applied to various situations. However, this proverb does not contain several layers of meaning and is more easily understood than the proverb You need not teach a fish to swim. This is, because the first-named does not refer to a concrete activity, whereas the last-named does. The activity presented in What is done cannot be undone is more general and can be applied in different situations, as opposed to the concrete activity presented in You need not teach a fish to swim. For some people it is difficult to derive the general meaning of a proverb that contains specific or concrete images.
As opposed to literal proverbs that have found their way into the repertoire of proverbs, figurative proverbs certainly are a more interesting field for analysis. The object of the current study will be figurative proverbs, because such proverbs convey a message that is vividly expressed. In addition, figurative proverbs say more than the sum of the words that they contain and they are more easily misunderstood by non-native speakers of a certain language, because such proverbs, as mentioned before, contain difficult images or metaphors and might be culturally related to a specific country and its people and present a concrete activity. Such proverbs, therefore, might create difficulties for non-native speakers of that language trying to derive the correct meaning of a certain proverb. The ability to understand and interpret proverbial sayings has been of great interest not only to researchers in the subfield of semantics, but also in psychology and psycholinguistics. As is also indicated by some psycholinguistic tests, non-literal understanding of proverbs and their interpretation seem to be more difficult for some people, since figurative proverbs contain vivid and complicated images, which can be applied to a wider range of situations demanding varying degrees or stages of comprehension (Rapp and Schmierer 2010, p. 422).

2.4 What is the relationship between proverbs and culture?

According to Földes (2003), cultural concepts deal with mental structures, which enable an individual to store or save perceptual and conceptual information of his or her culture, as well as to interpret cultural experiences and expressions (p. 17). This means that people are provided with clichés or stereotypes as aids to interpret cultural phenomena. One major reason why proverbs are observed and studied even nowadays has to do with the phenomenon that proverbs convey different cultural pictures. Since proverbs contain observations of everyday life, represent popular philosophy of life and provide an insight into human behaviour and character, proverbs can also indirectly be said to transmit knowledge of different cultures.

As the adopted working definition of this research paper implies, proverbs have a deeper relationship with a particular culture since proverbs describe socially important aspects or thoughts within a specific community. Moreover, cultural pictures of a certain community that are mostly expressed in metaphors are more vividly expressed in some proverbs of the community than in another. The term culture, as defined in the Oxford Advanced Learner’s Dictionary (2000), represents the “customs and beliefs, art, way of life and social organization of a particular country and/or its people”. Moreover, as indicated, this term refers to “the
beliefs and attitudes about something that people in a particular group or organization share”. Concerning this definition, it can be said that both, proverbs and culture illustrate the way a certain community thinks, behaves and acts. In this comparative study I will attempt to examine to what extent culture and cultural images are reflected in the proverbs of Dari and English and in how far people understand the figurative proverbs of a different community and culture.

Proverbs of some countries, such as Afghanistan, transmit knowledge of the Afghan culture, its traditions, customs and beliefs. This is seen in the proverb *Ie Khinaye bad az eid ast*, which can be translated as “This is henna after sugar festival”. The picture, which is presented in this proverb, is culturally related to Afghanistan, its people and its traditions. Generally, people in Afghanistan believe, that ‘henna’ represents purity, fortune, happiness and luck. Therefore, ‘henna’ is used by the people of Afghanistan at special festivals or feasts in order to bring luck and happiness to them. Afghan girls, as well as Afghan boys put ‘henna’ on their hands. The word ‘sugar festival’ or ‘eid’ refers to the celebration of Eid-ul Fitr, the festival celebrating the end of the Islamic fasting month of Ramadan. Usually, ‘henna’ is used by girls at the end of the month of Ramadan to indicate that the fasting has come to an end. However, when someone puts “henna after sugar festival” on his or her hands means, that someone is late with something. It also indicates the uselessness of an action, idea, or behaviour, which does not arrive or happen at an appropriate time. For someone, who is not a native speaker of Dari and who is not aware of the cultural traditions in Afghanistan, it would be difficult to derive the correct meaning of such a proverb.

According to Mieder and Lewandowska (2008), proverbs, just like metaphors, make cultural knowledge linguistically visible (p. 153). This idea can also be seen in the following Dari proverb, *Hazara ra ke roy dadi boye damadi meayad*, translated in English as, “If you give a Hazara an opportunity, you will smell the bridegroom inside him”. This proverb is again culturally related to Afghanistan and transmits knowledge of a different culture and its inhabitants. The word ‘Hazara’ refers to the third largest ethnic group of Afghanistan. Hazaras represent a minority group and are associated with people, who are oppressed by other ethnic groups in Afghanistan. The group is associated with poverty and belongs to the lower social class of Afghanistan. The word ‘opportunity’ in this context refers to financial help or support. This proverb means that if you give someone something, he or she will probably overact and will take advantage of that person’s good will and intention. The comparison with ‘bridegroom’ is used in this proverb to indicate that a Hazara, like a bridegroom, will even dare to ask for the hand of someone’s daughter.
From the above mentioned examples, it is evident that there is a link between understanding a certain proverb and the culture one lives in. Hence, proverbs that are from a different cultural background might be misinterpreted by people who do not have any information about a certain country, as in the case of Afghanistan and its culture.
3. Type of research

In order to come up with a result for the main research question, which is to what extent Afghan and British people’s understanding of proverbs can be explained in terms of cultural similarities or differences, it is important to focus on the type of research that will play a role in highlighting these distinctions. This pilot study will be based on quantitative, comparative work.

3.1 Research methodology

For the purpose of this pilot study, I will compile questionnaires. The methodology of questionnaires has been selected, because more people can be reached this way, including people at some distance. Moreover, questionnaires can be done quickly and do not need the investigator to be present. It is important to mention that other methods, such as qualitative discourse analysis would also have been appropriate for this pilot study. However, this study that had to be completed in a relatively short period of time was best served with a quantitative survey. Ideally, it would have been better if the investigator observed English conversations, to find out which proverbs are daily used in communities. The next step would have been to look for the exact equivalents in Dari conversations in Afghanistan in order to establish a comparative study on English and Dari proverbs. However, this study would have taken a long time, it would have included a large number of participants and because of the distance between Europe and Afghanistan, it would have been a difficult task for the investigator to travel from one country to the other.

In order to establish the questionnaires, it is important to mention that 6 factors will be taken into account for the interpretation and analysis of the results, namely, age, sex, level of education, the amount of years spent outside one’s own country, the region where participants come from originally and knowledge and level of proficiency of other languages apart from the participants’ mother tongue. Besides these factors, 4 out of the chosen 24 proverbs will be invented statements, which won’t be proverbs in both languages. These 4 statements will be referred to as non-proverbs. This will be done to see to what extent participants differentiate non-proverbs from proverbs and in how far people’s interpretation of non-proverbs will be influenced by the fact that both groups will be dealing with figurative proverbs and their meaning.
3.2 Data collection and criteria

It is important to mention at the beginning of this section that the questionnaire surveys will be carried out in the Netherlands and Germany, thus, outside Afghanistan and Great Britain. This is important to mention, because the participants and their environment are not representative for all Dari and English speakers. In order to carry out this study, two questionnaires have been constructed with 30 questions in total (see Appendix A and B). The reason why two questionnaires have been compiled has to do with the fact that this research will be based on a comparative study concerning English and Dari proverbs and their understanding by the other community. The first 6 questions ask for information about the participants, the following 20 will reflect English and Dari proverbs with the same or nearly the same meanings and finally, 4 other non-proverbs will be invented.

Twenty British proverbs have been taken from works of Taylor (1931), Norrick (1985), Mieder (2004) and from the Online Oxford English Dictionary of Proverbs (2011). The English proverbs will be categorized into four domains. These domains concern agriculture, religion, professions and the weather. The proverbs, which will be chosen for these four domains will contain images from these domains, but the proverbs won’t necessarily refer to the domains directly. In order to illustrate this distinction, the proverb, *It never rains, but it pours*, is taken as an example, which includes an image from the domain of weather, namely ‘rain’; however, this proverb neither refers to weather conditions in a certain area, nor does it suggest a weather forecast. Each of the four domains will include 6 proverbs, including one non-proverb.

As a next step, I will be looking for the exact equivalents or the nearest equivalents of the British proverbs in the Dari language. Some of the Dari proverbs will be taken from the work of Habibian (1995), others will be known to me, since Dari is my mother tongue. Proverbs with the same or nearly the same meaning will be chosen, in order to find out in how far English and Dari proverbs will differ from each other concerning its metaphors and images and to what extent cultural differences or similarities can be traced.

The Dari proverbs will be translated into English, because this questionnaire will be given to the British community and it is assumed that no one in the British community will be familiar with the Dari language (see Appendix B). Similarly, the English proverbs will be translated into Dari, which will be provided for Afghans. Both questionnaires will include a literal translation of the proverbs, which will be presented in square brackets and then a free translation will be provided in bold type (see Appendix A). It is important to mention that
although some of the Afghan participants will indicate that they are familiar with the English language, their level of proficiency in the English language can be regarded as low or moderate, therefore the questionnaires for Afghans are also translated into their mother tongue. It is important to mention that none of the presented English proverbs will be known to the Afghans, even when they indicate that they are familiar with the English language. This is known to me, since I know all the Afghan participants’ knowledge of the English language, who take part in this questionnaire, very well. Additionally, both questionnaires will contain four possible multiple-choice answers for each proverb, which will be marked as a, b, c and d. One of the four presented answers will entail the correct meaning of the proverb, whereas the other three answers will be partly correct or invented.

The number of participants in this study consists of 50 males and females altogether. As already mentioned before, the Afghan participants are my own family members and friends, whom I know personally, and the British participants consist of people whom I know from my part-time work as a sales advisor. Other British people are friends of friends or colleagues of friends. The total number of participants with regard to each language consists of 25. The investigation includes middle-class people between the age of 20 and 59. The level of education between the participants differs from case to case. Some of them are or were university or college students, whereas others are or were apprentices. It is important to mention that the questionnaires are carried out face-to-face in most cases and some via the electronic mail system. Those, who are contacted online, are asked not to use any other aids, such as the internet or ask other people for help. Their responses were sent back to me in word documents. Nevertheless, it is important to mention that it is not guaranteed that everyone upheld the rules.

3.3 Equivalents of English proverbs in Dari

As mentioned before, one of the fundamental questions of this study is, how far English and Dari proverbs are distinctive from each other concerning its metaphors and images and to what extent cultural differences or similarities can be traced. The following Table (3.1) refers to the 20 equivalents of the English and Dari proverbs, which are found and will be focussed on in this study. Moreover, 4 non-proverbs are taken, which have the exact translations and a literal meaning in both languages in order to see in how far participants will be influenced in treating these statements as proverbs (see Table 3.1, nr. 4/11/17/23). Proverbs 1-6 are categorized as proverbs, which belong to the agricultural domain. Numbers 7-12 refer to
English proverbs, which belong to the domain of religion. Proverbs 13-18 refer to the professional domain and proverbs 19-24 fit into the domain of weather. The meanings of these proverbs are listed in the third column. When there is a difference in meaning between an English and a Dari proverb, the meanings will be distinguished from each other.

Table 3.1: Equivalents and their meanings

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>English proverbs</th>
<th>Dari proverbs (translated)</th>
<th>Meaning</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Make hay while the sun shines</td>
<td>Put bread in the oven while it’s hot</td>
<td>Refers to an action that should be done now, as it is the best time for it</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>One flower makes no garden</td>
<td>With one flower no summer is made</td>
<td>Refers to the whole of something that cannot be made by a piece of that thing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The grass is always greener on the other side</td>
<td>The voice of a drum is pleasant at a distance</td>
<td>Refers to people who think what they want is better than what they have</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pick up/collect the apple harvest</td>
<td>Pick up/collect the apple harvest</td>
<td>Refers to someone who should pick up the apple harvest</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>An acre of action is better than twenty land of promise</td>
<td>One makes hundred heads wet and none of the shaved</td>
<td>Refers to people who perform less than they promise</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Give him an inch and he’ll take a yard</td>
<td>Don’t make out of an offer a disaster</td>
<td>Refers to people who are brazen and impudent</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>For everything there is a season</td>
<td>Every word and point have their places</td>
<td>Refers to an appropriate timing for everything</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Don’t cast your pearls before swine</td>
<td>What does a donkey know of salt</td>
<td>Refers to someone who is not cultured enough to appreciate something</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Physician heal thyself</td>
<td>Blind of oneself, but not blinded to other people</td>
<td>Refers to someone who should attend to his own faults in preference of pointing to other people’s faults</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A leopard cannot change his spots</td>
<td>A habit that gets inside someone’s body, will get out when he or she dies</td>
<td>Refers to the notion that things/people cannot change their innate nature</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Don’t praise your enemy</td>
<td>Don’t praise your enemy</td>
<td>Refers to someone who warns people not to praise their enemies</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pride goes before a fall</td>
<td>No matter how high a mountain is, there is always a path on the top of it</td>
<td>Refers to someone who is proud, but makes a mistake that will lead to his or her defeat</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Too many cooks spoil the broth</td>
<td>When too many butchers get together, the cow won’t be pure</td>
<td>Refers to a thing that gets worse when too many people have a say in that thing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>While the doctors consult the patient dies</td>
<td>The medicine reached Sohrab after dying, Mahmood’s sending of jewels is similar to that</td>
<td>Refers to the importance of timing in situations which are perfectly clear, but which provide unnecessary loss of time that results in being late with something</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A bad workman blames his tool</td>
<td>When the wrestler is defeated, he says “my underwear was tight”</td>
<td>Refers to a person with a record of failing who looks for reasons of his failure in other things but his own</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hang a thief when he is young and he’ll not steal when he is old</td>
<td>If the first brick is not put straight by the architecture, the wall won’t go straight till the sky</td>
<td>Refers to someone who should evade, correct, change something or somebody as early as possible in order to prevent something or somebody from making a mistake in the future</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A shoemaker’s house looks beautiful</td>
<td>A shoemaker’s house looks beautiful</td>
<td>Refers to a shoemaker’s house that looks nice</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18</td>
<td>A thief believes everybody else steals</td>
<td>Don’t see others from the mirror of your own</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19</td>
<td>It never rains, but it pours</td>
<td>Either no no, or give give a lot</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20</td>
<td>Every cloud has a silver lining</td>
<td>Behind every dark cloud there is brightness</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21</td>
<td>Big thunder, little rain</td>
<td>Don’t be afraid of a black cloud and someone with a long beard, be afraid of a white cloud and someone, who is shaved</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>22</td>
<td>Keep something for a rainy day</td>
<td>It’s better to have something, which someone will need, even if it is poison snake</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>23</td>
<td>When the wind blows the leaves shake</td>
<td>When the wind blows the leaves shake</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>24</td>
<td>Hoist your sail when the wind is fair</td>
<td>Waiting is bitter, but its fruit has sweetness</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### 3.4 Cultural pictures and knowledge via proverbs

The aim of this section is to highlight some images, pictures and metaphors of the Dari equivalents presented in Table 3.1, in order to understand and interpret the correct meaning of them. This section deals with the choice of certain Dari proverbs presented in Table 3.1 and tries to focus on the question, to what extent cultural knowledge of a particular country, such as Afghanistan is needed to understand and interpret the correct meaning of some of its proverbs. This is related to this research, since a lot of Dari proverbs contain specific images and metaphors that can be said to be culturally related to Afghanistan, its inhabitants, their emotions and their way of thinking.

As I was looking for the exact equivalents of some English proverbs in the Dari language, it was very difficult for me to find proverbs with the same meaning, as English and Dari proverbs are used in two distinct cultures. The difficulty arises when things, ideas or beliefs in one culture or language are expressed differently than in another culture or language. An example of such an English proverb is, *Let not the sun go down on your wrath*, which means not to hold on to your anger for more than one day. Since the origin of this proverb is the Bible, it is difficult for people, with a different cultural background and a different religion than Christianity to find the exact same proverb in their own language. This is mentioned in order to illustrate that not every proverb necessarily exists in all languages in the world. In Afghanistan, for example, this proverb does not exist, the content or the meaning
of it is used colloquially in spoken language as an advice, but there is no Dari proverb found with the exact meaning.

As can be seen in the above mentioned Table (3.1), the domains of proverbs change from one language to the other. A proverb from the domain of religion does not necessarily need to occur in the same domain in another language. An example can be seen in proverb number 5 (see Table 3.1), where the English proverb, *An acre of action is better than twenty land of promise*, refers to the agricultural domain of land and acre, whereas the Dari equivalent refers to the domain of profession. The translated Dari proverb, “One makes hundred heads wet and none of them shaved”, refers to barbers, whose profession is not regarded to be clean and nice in Afghanistan since, historically speaking, barbers began their careers not only shaving people’s heads, but also removing unwanted hair from other parts of the body.

Some proverbs can be said to refer to the same domains, such as number 1 and 2, which fit into the agricultural domain of both languages. Moreover, proverbs number 13 and 16 contain images that refer to the professional domain. Last but not least, proverbs number 20 and 21 both contain images from the domain of the weather. It seems that besides differences of domains in certain proverbs, there are also a number of similarities in the domains of proverbs between the English and the Dari language. With regard to the proverbs of the English language which have their origin in the Bible (see Table 3.1, nr. 7/8/9/10/12), none of their equivalents in the Dari language can be said to come from the holy Koran. This medium is not seen as a source in the Muslim community. In Islam, it is not allowed to change a piece of advice from the Koran into a proverb. Rather a piece of advice from the Koran will be changed into colloquial or spoken language, in order to function as a kind of rule or principle of behaviour for every Muslim human being on earth. Although it is changed into colloquial or spoken language, it is neither changed into a proverb, nor does it function as a proverb.

Although the meanings of the proverbs listed above (see Table 3.1) are nearly the same, except for number 19, the images and metaphors that the Dari proverbs contain seem to be more vivid and culturally based than some of the English proverbs, which cannot be said to be intensely culturally based. It seems that metaphors are rooted in the beliefs, traditions and intentions of language users. In order to demonstrate this, three proverbs of the above mentioned Table 3.1 (nr. 3,8 and 14) are taken to show in how far these Dari proverbs are culturally based and more distinct than their English equivalents. It is important to mention that it was difficult for me to find concrete English proverbs, because of my cultural
background since I am more aware of Afghanistan’s culture than Britain’s culture. The translated Dari proverb number 3 is very specifically linked to the Afghan culture, as it states that, “The voice of a drum is pleasant at a distance”. The drum in this proverb, which is named ‘dohl’ in the Dari language, is a special drum, which is not used in Western culture. It is used at traditional Afghan weddings, when the bride and bridegroom enter into the hall for the first time. The association is made with a national instrument of Afghanistan, which is culturally related to Afghanistan, its festivals and its people. As soon as somebody hears the sound of that special drum, which is also played at weddings, he or she immediately links the event to happiness and joy and likes to be a member or part of that event or wedding. As soon as the person gets close to the actual event, the sound of the drum will be extremely loud so that he or she will probably get annoyed by it and won’t enjoy the event at all. Within this context it is said that someone appreciates something else more than his or her personal things, which he or she has. The national Afghan instrument ‘dohl’ or ‘drum’ is pictured in this proverb, which makes it difficult for someone with a different cultural background to relate this to a concrete event or association.

A similarity, which is seen in the English and Dari proverbs listed under number 8 (see Table 3.1) has to do with the fact that both proverbs contain animal associations or metaphors, although they do not belong to the same domains. The translated Dari proverb, “What does a donkey know of salt”, is culturally related to Afghanistan and its language, since the word ‘salt’ is associated in Afghanistan with taste. A dish that has no salt also has no taste and is not delicious. Additionally, someone’s beauty is also compared to ‘salt’, as an Afghan would say “she is very salty”, meaning that the girl is really beautiful. Thus, the metaphor that a donkey does not know anything of salt, means literally that someone who is ugly, not cultured and dumb like a donkey won’t know anything about the taste of ‘salt’ or the beauty of something to appreciate it. The same is true for the English proverb, which is very close to the Dari proverb; however, there is no expression, such as ‘salt’ in Don’t cast your pearls before a swine that can be said to be used in a specific way in a culture. In the English metaphor the beauty and the value of something expensive is contrasted to the ugliness and dirtiness of a swine. Nevertheless, it is important to mention that there are people, who do not see swine as inferior or ugly animals and might not get the correct meaning of this proverb immediately.

Contrary to the English proverb, While the doctors consult the patient dies, the Dari equivalent, “The medicine reached Sohrab after dying, Mahmood’s sending of jewels is similar to that”, mentioned in Table 3.1 contains a long history, which is culturally and historically related to Afghanistan. There is a well-known story in Afghanistan, called Rostam
and Sohrab, written by the famous poet Ferdawsi. The story begins with Rostam, who is Sohrab’s father. Both are famous warriors of their time. However, neither Rostam, nor Sohrab know that they are related to each other. Sohrab gets killed by his father Rostam in a battle, and as soon as Rostam finds out that Sohrab was his son, he starts to look for medicine and mourns for the death of his son for which he is responsible. Mahmood of Ghazni was the prominent ruler of the Ghaznavid dynasty in today’s Afghanistan. Ghazni was at that time the capital city of Afghanistan. Mahmood orders the famous poet Ferdawsi to write the story of Rostam and Sohrab. After 27 years of hard work, when the so-called “shahnama of Ferdawsi” was completed by the poet, he went to the capital city to present his work to Mahmood. As written in many medieval texts, Mahmood had no interest in Ferdawsi’s written work. He did not even give any money to Ferdawsi, which was agreed upon at the beginning. Later, when Mahmood realized his mistake, he sent the money and jewels to the poet’s village. However, when Mahmood’s men arrived, they heard that Ferdawsi had died a few hours earlier. The proverb reminds Afghans about the historical event of that time, which is culturally related to Afghans, their literature and their beliefs. Nevertheless, it also refers generally to the fact that there is a late arrival of something, which results in somebody’s death. As can be noted, this proverb is livelier as opposed to the English proverb. It refers to a specific event in Afghanistan and might therefore create difficulties in understanding and interpreting its correct meaning.

As demonstrated above, certain Dari proverbs contain concrete images or pictures which are culturally related to Afghans, their beliefs, customs and traditions. In order to understand and interpret the correct meaning of a certain proverb from a different culture, it is important to deal with the cultural analysis of some proverbs. In understanding a certain culture and its proverbs, it is important to relate the vivid images, pictures and metaphors to that specific culture and community. Concrete images, thoughts or objects, mentioned in the proverbs above might create difficulties in deriving the meaning of these proverbs.

3.5 Results

The results of 25 Afghan people are presented with regard to 20 British proverbs and 4 non-proverbs in the following Tables 3.2.1 and 3.2.2. In Tables 3.3.1 and 3.3.2 the results of 25 British people are presented concerning 20 Dari proverbs, together with 4 non-proverbs. The numbers in the first column stand for the equivalent numbers of the questionnaires (see Appendix A and B). Questions 1 till 6 include personal information about the respondents,
such as age, sex and level of education and so on. Some information is abbreviated in the tables, for more detailed explanation see questionnaires (Appendix A and B). The main question of both of the questionnaires is to find out what somebody means or refers to, when he or she utters the following statements. The term ‘statement’ is used in the questionnaires, since it is a neutral term as opposed to ‘proverbs’, where people would anticipate that all presented sentences are proverbs. The ‘proverbs’, which are presented under number 4, 11, 17 and 23, are non-proverbs that do not exist at all in the Dari and the English language (see Table 3.1). In the following Tables, (3.2.1, 3.2.2, 3.3.1 and 3.3.2), the colour green stands for the correct answers of the Afghan and British people and red stands for the wrong answers of both communities. The last horizontal row presents the scores of each respondent in percentages. The numbers 1-6, presented in the Tables below refer to the questions, provided in the Appendixes A and B.
# Table 3.2.1: Responses 1 till 13 (English proverbs for Afghans)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Nr.</th>
<th>Responses</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>20-39</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Female</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>University</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>16-20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Born in E.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Eng. (l), Germ. (g), Fren. (l)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>c</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>b</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>d</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
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<td>15</td>
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</tr>
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<td>16</td>
<td>c</td>
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</tr>
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<td>27</td>
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<td>29</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>30</td>
<td>c</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Score</td>
<td>63%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 3.2.2: Responses 14 till 25 (English proverbs for Afghans)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Nr.</th>
<th>Hindi (l)</th>
<th>Dutch (g)</th>
<th>Engl. (m)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>20-39</td>
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<td>20-39</td>
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<td>20-39</td>
<td>20-39</td>
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<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>20-39</td>
<td>20-39</td>
<td>20-39</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>20-39</td>
<td>20-39</td>
<td>20-39</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>20-39</td>
<td>20-39</td>
<td>20-39</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>20-39</td>
<td>20-39</td>
<td>20-39</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Score: 50% 63% 58% 63% 38% 50% 67% 46% 63% 42% 50% 50%
Table 3.3.1: Responses 1 till 13 (Dari proverbs for the British people)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Nr.</th>
<th>Responses</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>20-39</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>20-39</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>20-39</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Female</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Male</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Male</td>
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<tr>
<td>7</td>
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<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>Male</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>Male</td>
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<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>Female</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>Male</td>
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<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>Female</td>
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<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td>Male</td>
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<td>14</td>
<td>Female</td>
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<td>Male</td>
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<td>16</td>
<td>Female</td>
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<td>17</td>
<td>Female</td>
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<td>18</td>
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<tr>
<td>29</td>
<td>Male</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>30</td>
<td>Male</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| Score | 29% | 42% | 33% | 50% | 50% | 46% | 50% | 58% | 38% | 29% | 38% | 42% | 50% |
Table 3.3.2: Responses 14 till 25 (Dari proverbs for the British people)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Nr.</th>
<th>Responses</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Score</td>
<td>46%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
3.6 Analysing the data of the Afghan participants

As indicated in Tables 3.2.1 and 3.2.2, 13 Afghan female and 12 Afghan male participants have taken part in the questionnaire concerning British proverbs and their meaning. Whereas Afghan female participants were between the age of 20-49, Afghan male participants were between 20-59. As can be observed, differences are found concerning their level of education. Some participants indicate to be in or have followed an apprenticeship; others categorize themselves to have a university level of education. The highest score, which is 75% is reached by an Afghan female participant (see Table 3.2.1, nr. 12), whose education is indicated to be at a university level. The score is calculated, in that the total number of proverbs, which is 24, is divided by the total number of correct answers. The participant with the highest score has been living in Europe for about 20 years and has a good knowledge of the Dutch language. It seems that she has integrated herself into Western society and is acquainted with Western beliefs, thoughts, customs and traditions. Contrary to this score, the lowest score, which is 38%, is achieved by two Afghan female participants. Interestingly, their educational levels vary from each other (see, Table 3.2.1, nr. 2 and Table 3.2.2, nr. 18). Although the female participant, number 2 has been living in Europe for more than 20 years, nevertheless she has scored less than the rest. This might have to do with her level of education, which was not started and completed in Europe. The apprenticeship was done in Afghanistan, before the participant’s arrival in Europe. In addition, the participant did not work in Europe and did not have contact with other people in society. The fact that she is originally from Kabul indicates, that she did not have any problems in reading and understanding the Dari translations. Besides that, her limited knowledge of other European languages seems to create a barrier in understanding and interpreting proverbs from a different culture and society. Although participant number 18 indicates that she has a university level of education, nevertheless, her score can be categorized to be low in comparison with other participants. This has mainly to do with the fact that she has only lived in Europe for some few years. As indicated, this participant completed her university education in Afghanistan and not in Europe. Thus, it seems that not only the level of education plays an important role, but also the country where someone has finished his or her education.

Clearly, the amount of years that someone lives in the Western world plays an essential role in understanding and interpreting someone else’s culture, language and proverbs. This is also seen in the score of participant number 11, which is 42%. This
participant has only lived in Europe for 5-10 years, and although it is indicated that she has a university level of education, her knowledge of other European languages is limited. It is again seen that a combination of the amount of years that someone spends in the Western world, the level of education and the knowledge of other languages plays an important role in understanding and interpreting proverbs of a different culture. It is interesting to mention that 10 out of 13 Afghan female participants have reached 50% or more, whereas 8 out of 12 male participants scored 50% or more. The number of Afghan female participants, who achieved more than 60% in this questionnaire is 7 as opposed to the male participants, which is 2. It seems that Afghan female participants’ percentages are higher than the percentages of Afghan male participants. This indicates that Afghan female participants tend to know more about the Western world, its culture, since they have understood and interpreted the British proverbs better than the Afghan male participants. Whereas some people, like the Afghan male participant number 4 (see Table 3.2.1) tend to choose the literal meaning of a proverb, others, who have little knowledge of the European culture and do not operate on the exclusion principle, tend to choose another invented or partially correct answer, which is again not correct.

In the following Table (3.3.3) the important factors are listed once again briefly with regard to the high scores of Afghans, as mentioned above. The term ‘high score’ refers to participants’ correct responses, who achieved 50% or more. The sign plus (+) indicates the strong influence of factors, such as sex, level of education, knowledge of other languages and so on, which play an important role in analysing the results. The signs (+/-) and minus (-) refer to the neutral and less influential factors. It is important to mention that no tendency of any of the above named signs is indicated with regard to the factor of age since nearly all Afghan participants are between the age 20 and 39.

Table 3.3.3: Influence of factors (Afghan participants)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Age</th>
<th>Sex</th>
<th>Level of education</th>
<th>Amount of years outside one’s own country</th>
<th>Regional origin</th>
<th>Knowledge of other languages</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>+</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>+/-</td>
<td>+</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
3.7 Analysing the data of the British participants

As indicated in Tables 3.3.1 and 3.3.2, 20 Dari proverbs were presented to 13 British female and 12 British male participants. Moreover, 4 proverbs under number 4, 11, 17 and 23 were presented to the British subjects in order to see in how far people treat non-proverbs as proverbs. The age of the British female participants varied between 20 and 39, whereas the British male participants’ age varied between 20 and 59. As can be noticed from both of the tables, only 4 out of 13 females guessed half of the presented Dari proverbs right, as indicated in their score (50%). It is important to mention that 9 out of 13 British participants scored less than 50%. The lowest score, which is 25%, is achieved by a female participant, with an educational level of apprenticeship. 6 out of 12 British male participants scored 50% or more and the other 6 scored less than 50%. The highest score, which is 58%, is reached by a British male participant with a university background. With regard to the sex of the participants, it can be said that the British males scored better than the British females.

It is important to mention that 6 out of 7 British, who have done an apprenticeship, scored less than 40%, whereas 1 out of 8, who indicated to have a university level of education scored less than 40%. This means that the level of education is again important in order to understand and interpret proverbs correctly. The knowledge and proficiency of other languages does not tell us that much in this particular case, since 4 out of 8 people, who indicated that they know another language apart from their own mother tongue scored 50% or more and the other 4 scored less than 50%. Moreover, there are several others, such as participants number 8 and 13, who do not know any other languages and still scored 50% or more.

With regard to the non-proverbs presented under number 4, 11, 17 and 23, as listed in Tables 3.3.1 and 3.3.2, generally, it can be said that the British females treated these statements as non-proverbs and chose the correct literal answers as opposed to the British males, who looked for a more general or figurative meaning for these statements. A similar Table (3.3.4) as mentioned in section 3.6 is also designed for the British participants with regard to the important factors, such as sex, level of education and so on. The term ‘high score’ refers to participants’ correct responses, who achieved 50% or more. The sign plus (+) indicates the strong influence of these factors, which play an important role in analysing the results. The signs (+/-) and minus (-) refer to the neutral and less influential factors.
Additionally, it is important to mention that no declaration can be made with regard to the factor of age since nearly all British participants are between the age 20 and 39.

Table 3.3.4: Influence of factors (British participants)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Age</th>
<th>Sex</th>
<th>Level of education</th>
<th>Amount of years outside one’s own country</th>
<th>Regional origin</th>
<th>Knowledge of other languages</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>+</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>+/-</td>
<td>+/-</td>
<td>+/-</td>
<td>+/-</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

3.8 Comparing results

On the whole, it is noticeable, that the British were confronted with more difficulties regarding understanding and interpreting Dari proverbs as opposed to the Afghans, who recognized the correct meaning of numerous British proverbs. This is also indicated in the Tables 3.2.1, 3.2.2, 3.3.1 and 3.3.2, where 15 out of 25 British participants scored less than 50%. This shows that the British have less knowledge of the Afghan culture, its society, its customs and traditions than the other way around. As opposed to the outcome mentioned before, 7 out of 25 Afghan participants scored less than half. This means that the Afghan people interpreted and understood certain meanings of English proverbs better than the British. Whereas 10 out of 25 British scored 50% or more regarding Dari proverbs and their meaning, 18 out of 25 Afghans scored 50% or more regarding understanding the British proverbs. This shows that figurative proverbs of Dari are more easily misunderstood by the British subjects, since figurative proverbs of Dari contain more vivid and complicated images, which are culturally related to the Afghan society and its people. As the British do not have a close relationship with Afghanistan and its people in general, it is difficult for the Westerners to interpret and understand certain customs, traditions and beliefs, which are manifested in certain Dari proverbs. However, as also the results of this research indicate, Afghans, who have spent a lot of time outside their own country in Europe, tend to understand and interpret the European culture better, since they try to integrate into the European community.

Generally, the non-proverbs, presented under number 4, 11, 17 and 23 (see Table 3.1) were answered much better by the British than by the Afghans. This is indicated in Table 3.3.1 and 3.3.2 by the colour green, which represents a correct answer. The scores of the British show that they were more aware of the fact that these statements do not contain a figurative meaning, but need to be treated as natural statements, which have a literal meaning. The following Table (3.3.5) presents the amount of correct answers of the British and the Afghans regarding non-proverbs.
As can be seen in Table 3.3.5, the scores of the British subjects concerning non-proverbs are better than that of the Afghan participants. This tells us also something about the Afghans, who fantasized a lot with the four proverbs mentioned above in order to find a rather general or figurative meaning of these proverbs. Afghans might have fantasized about the non-proverbs since there are a lot of myths, stories and fables in Afghanistan which people believe to be true. This might have created difficulties for Afghans to exclude invented or figurative meanings of non-proverbs as the subjects might have been influenced by their own culture and beliefs.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Nr.</th>
<th>British</th>
<th>Afghan</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>23</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>29</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
4. Conclusion

It is important for an outsider to bear in mind that there are underlying cultural differences between the Western and Eastern worlds, which affect norms, values, customs, beliefs and traditions in various European and Asian countries. Similarly, the language a certain community speaks and how certain people think and handle certain situations in their lives affect the culture of a particular country. Previous research carried out by paremiologists, such as Mieder and Lewandowska (2008); indicate that proverbs are a cross-cultural phenomenon which are not limited in time. According to these scholars, proverbs like metaphors make cultural knowledge linguistically visible (pp. 97-153). The results of this pilot study show that generally, Afghans tend to recognize and understand the meaning of an English proverb better than their fellow British opponents. Whereas 15 out of 25 British participants scored less than 50%, concerning the understanding of Dari proverbs, only 7 out of 25 Afghan participants scored less than 50%, concerning the understanding of English proverbs.

In order to explain the outcome, it is important to mention that this study is carried out in Europe and not inside Afghanistan. A major reason why Afghans probably recognized and understood the meaning of the British proverbs better than the other way around is because many Afghans have been living in Europe for a long time. They have been integrating themselves into the European culture and haven been familiarizing themselves with the cultural differences. It is difficult for Western foreigners who have never lived in an Asian country like Afghanistan and never engaged themselves with its culture and its language to derive the implied meaning of a particular proverb which also transmits pictures of a different culture.

Moreover, it is worth mentioning that Afghans might have scored better than the British participants, because the metaphors or images presented in the English proverbs might not have created difficulties or ambiguity with regard to understanding the correct meaning of some English proverbs as opposed to some Dari proverbs. A major aspect of this study is that Dari proverbs contain more difficult images, which are culturally related to Afghanistan, its peoples’ beliefs, traditions and philosophy of life. Afghanistan is a country in which traditional aspects play an important role in the everyday life of the people; therefore, these culturally related images are also reflected in the Dari language, its idiomatic expressions and its proverbs. Besides the fact that every Afghan individual is related to a specific group in society, there are also certain Dari proverbs that are specifically related to the Afghan culture.
and society. This might also account for some of the English proverbs; however, as the images or metaphors presented in the English proverbs in this study show, they are hardly related to the British culture, as they contain more abstract images. The fact that the chosen English proverbs in this study are not related to the British culture and its people does not mean that there are no English proverbs that are culturally related to the British community. This may have to do with the investigator’s lack of knowledge of the English culture and its proverbs due to the investigator’s different cultural background. The analysis of the objective data, which is examined in the Dari and the English proverbs, provides support for the connection between language, proverbs and culture.

4.1 Restrictions and further research

In all cases it is essential to be aware of the fact that the universality of any empirical research cannot be determined and confirmed by a single-subject study. Concerning this research, which is a pilot study, it can be said that there were certain factors limiting the generality of this research, because of the fact that this research was faced with the following restrictions:

- The study was carried out outside Afghanistan where the participants and their environment were not representative for all Dari speakers
- The number of participants was restricted in both questionnaires
- Participants were far apart in age
- Recent studies on the Dari proverbs were not found

In order to make a better comparison with the English language, the above named points are important to be taken into account for further research in this field.
Bibliography


Appendixes

Key to the questionnaires

7) c 13) d 19) d 25) c
8) b 14) b 20) a 26) c
9) b 15) a 21) b 27) b
10) a 16) c 22) d 28) c
11) d 17) c 23) b 29) a
12) a 18) c 24) c 30) c
Appendix A: Questionnaires designed for the Afghan people

1) What is your age?  
(Chand sala hasten?)

between 20 – 39 □
(baine) 39 – 49 □
49 – 59 □
60 – 69 □
older □
(kalantar)

2) Sex:  
(Jens)

male □  female □
(mard)  (zan)

3) Level of education:  
(Darajaye tahseel)

Apprenticeship □  
(reshtashaq)

University □
(pahantoon)

Other, namely ____________________
(cheese degar)

4) How long have you been living in Europe/outside Afghanistan?  
(Cheqadar sal meshawad, ke kharej az Afghanistan zendagi karden?)

0-5 years □
5-10 years □
11-15 years □
16-20 years □
> 20 years □

5) Which Afghan province did you live in?  
(Dar kodam welayate Afghanistan zendagi mekarden?)

___________________
6) How many other languages do you speak, besides your mother tongue?
(Kodam lessanhaye degar ra metawanen sohbat bekonen, pahlooye zabane madariye khod?)

excellent (bisyar khub) good (khub) moderate (yak kame) little (kam)

English □ □ □ □ □
German □ □ □ □ □
Dutch □ □ □ □ □
Spanish □ □ □ □ □
French □ □ □ □ □
Hindi/Urdu □ □ □ □ □
Russian □ □ □ □ □
Other, namely ___________ □ □ □ □ □

[Degar, ba messle]

When somebody says the following statements, what does he/she refer to?
(Kasse ke ien jomkaha ra megoyad chi mekhwahad ke ba ien jomlaha eshara konad?)

7) Make hay while the sun shines
[ Bezaaz kah ta ke aftab metabol ]

Ta waqte ke aftab metabol kah besaaz.

a) refers to the cold temperature in which one should not dry hay.

Eshara mekonad, ke dar hawaye saard kasse kah ra khoshk namekonad.

b) refers to the hot temperature in which it’s best to dry hay.

Eashara mekonad, ke dar hawaye garm behtareenash ast, ke kasse sabza ra kah besazad.

c) refers to an action that should be done now, as it is the best time for it.

Eshara mekonad ba yak ammale ke kasse fehlan mekonad, bakhatere ke zameena moseyed ast.

d) refers to the 17th Century law according to which peasants had to dry their hay under specific weather conditions.

Dar qanoone 17 chopan ha bayad ast ke sabza ra khoshk mekardan, nazar ba aab wa hawaye ke peshe roh dashtand.
8) One flower makes no garden

[ Yak gol meshawad ne/hetsch bagh/haweli ]

Ba yak gol bagh/haweli nameshawad.

a) refers to the instance where a garden does not look nice by only one flower, but also other plants and greeneries are needed to make it look beautiful.

Yak bagh wa ya yak haweli maqbul namebashad tanha ba yak gol, balke degar sabzeeha wa ya golha zaroor hastand, ta yak bagh ra maqbul besazand.

b) refers to the whole of something that cannot be made by only a piece of that thing.

Dar majmoh yak cheese ba koli az yak bakhshe az aan nameshawad sakht.

c) refers to the 18th Century when flowers were very costly and a garden could not be made only with one flower.

Dar qarne 18, gol ha bisyar geran boodand, wa yak bagh ba yak gol nameshod sakht.

d) refers to a king who uttered this statement when he stood in front of his big garden and wondered how to fill his garden with flowers.

Yak padshahe ien jomlah ra goft, waqte ke pesherohe haweliye bozorgash estada bood wa namefahmeed ke baghe khod ra chi kessem por besazad.

9) The grass is always greener on the other side

[ Sabza ast hamesha sabztar dar degar taraf ]

Sabza hamesha dar degar taraf sabztar ast.

a) refers to someone who dies and the grass grows upon his or her grave.

Baraye kasse megoftand ke memorad wa sabza bar roye qabrash meroyad.

b) refers to people who think that whatever they want is better than what they have.

Gofte meshawad waqte ke yak kasse feker mekonad ke har cheese ke mekhwahad behtar ast az cheese ke darad.

c) refers to someone’s death which should always be associated with greenery since greenery brings luck in someone’s after life.

Choon sabza hamesha ba khoshbakhti ertebat darad, kasse ke memorad ba sabza yad meshawad ta dar zendagiye baadi khoshbakhat tar az ien bashad.
d) refers to the beauty of something.

\[ Ba\ maqbuliye\ yak\ cheeze\ eshara\ mekonad. \]

10) Pick up the apple harvest

\[ \text{Jamkon}\seeb\hassel\] 

Hassele seeb ra jamkon.

a) refers to someone who should pick up the apple harvest.

\[ Mani\ medehad\ ke\ kasse\ hassele\ seeb\ ra\ jamkonad. \]

b) refers to people who want to give away their inheritance to somebody.

\[ \text{Eshara mekonad ba mardomhaye ke mekhwahand}\ \text{jaydade}\ khod\ ra\ baraye\ kasse\ bedehand.} \]

c) refers to someone who wants to give somebody something.

\[ \text{Eshara mekonad ba yak kasse ke yak cheese ra baraye yak kasse mekhwahad bedehad.} \]

d) refers to apples which are associated with children who should be brought-up well.

\[ \text{Eshara mekonad ba Seeb ke ba awaladha tashbeh shodaand, wa bayad ast ke yak tarbiyate khub begirand.} \]

11) An acre of action is better than twenty land of promise

\[ \text{Yak zameen az ammal behtar az beest zameen wada.} \]

a) refers to peasants who promise a lot and do not keep their promises.

\[ \text{Ba dehqanan eshara mekonad, ke anha ziad wada mekardan, wale ammale ba wadahaye khod namekardan.} \]

b) refers to people who exchange their lands with each other and keep their promises.

\[ \text{Ba mardomhaye eshara mekonad ke zameenhaye khod ra tabdeel ba yak degar mekardan wa wadahaye khod ra negah mekardan.} \]
c) refers to an entity of something which is better than something else, thus a comparison is made.

\[ Ba\ cheese\ eshara\ mekonad\ ke\ behtar\ ast\ az\ cheese\ degare, (cheese\ ra\ ba\ cheese\ degare\ mqayessa\ kardan) \]

d) refers to people who perform less than they promise.

\[ Ba\ mardomha\ eshara\ mekonad\ ke\ ammal\ kamtar,\ wale\ wada\ ziad\ mekonand. \]

12) Give him an inch and he’ll take a yard
[ Bete ba o yak inch wa o khwahad gereft yak yard ]

Yak inch baresh bete wa yak yard (90cm) megirad.

a) refers to people who are brazen and impudent.

\[ Eshara\ mekonad\ ba\ ensanhaye\ ke\ deedadaray\ hastand. \]

b) refers to the textile industry when the owners did not allow their employees to take cloth with them; therefore, the employees got mad and stole the material.

\[ Eshara\ mekonad\ ba\ fabrika\ haye\ tekka\ wa\ ya\ lebbas, ke\ sahebe\ fabrika\ ha\ baraye\ kargarhaye\ khod\ ejaza\ namedadand\ ke\ ba\ khod\ ziad\ tekka\ bobarand,\ wa\ anha\ tekka\ ra\ medozdeedand. \]

c) refers to people who steal something from someone.

\[ Eshara\ mekonad\ ba\ ensanhaye\ ke\ cheeze\ ra\ az\ kasse\ dozdi\ mekonand. \]

d) refers to someone who is taken for a fool by someone else.

\[ Az\ yag\ ahmaq\ cheese\ ra\ bade\ awordan. \]

13) For everything there is a season
[ Baraye harecheez anja ast yak mawsem ]

Baraye har cheese yak mawsem ast.

a) refers to the ripening of harvest and fruits which peasants should always remember.

\[ Mawsemme\ har\ yak\ nawa\ mewa\ ra\ bayad\ dehqanan\ made\ nazar\ begirand. \]

b) refers to the weather which has four seasons.

\[ Har\ hawaye\ az\ khod\ char\ fassel\ darad. \]
c) refers to the biological fact that for every being on earth there is a mating season.

_Ba sabot raseeda dar biology, ke har mawjoode dar dunya az khod yak zamane kar darad ke yak nassle degar azash beroyad._

d) refers to an appropriate timing for everything.

_Eshara mekonad ke baraye haar cheese yak zamane dorost wojood darad._

14) Don’t cast your pearls before swine

[ Nate neshan az khod golobandha peshe khuk ]

_Golobandade morwaridat ra peshe yak khuk neshan nate._

a) refers to a special kind of swine which gets wild when it sees pearls.

_Yak kessem khuke wojoood darad ke agar morwarid ra bebinat, wahshee meshawad._

b) refers to someone who is not cultured enough to appreciate something.

_Yak kasse bekultur ke yak cheese ra qader namekonad._

c) refers to people who cannot tolerate the fact that someone else is richer than they are.

_Adamhaye ke qabool nametwanan bekonand ke kasse digar azeishan pooldar ast._

d) refers to the 16th Century myth, that if someone lets a swine to cast an eye over his or her pearls, the pearls might get stolen soon by somebody.

_Dar qarne 16 yak afsanahe bood ke megostand agar kasse golobande khod ra ba yak khuk neshan bedehad, golobandash ba zudi az kasse degar dozdi khwahad shod._

15) Physician heal thyself

[ Doktar komak kon khodra ]

_Doktar khod ra komak kon._

a) refers to someone who should attend to his own faults in preference of pointing to other people’s faults.

_Kasse ghalati khod ra namebinad, ba bar ghalatiye degaran meandeshad._
b) refers to physicians who think that they do not need any help whereas they do, because they are often confronted with patients who have serious psychological problems which also influences the physicians’ lives.

Doktar ha feker mekonand ke hetsch nawa komakke zaroorat nadarand, amma darand, bakhaterke anha rohbaro ba mareezhaye khod hastand, ke problemhaye rawani darand wa ham ien problemhayeshan ba esse moshkelat dar zendagiye doktar ha ham megardad.

c) refers to confident people who think to be perfect in every way.

Ensanha bisyar maghroor hastand, wa feker mekonand ke khodeshan az har negah perfekt hastand.

d) refers to the 17th Century when infectious diseases reached a peak and even physicians needed to heal themselves.

Dar qarne 17 mareeze haye bacteriayi bisyar ziad shod, wa ba hameen kessem doktar ha ham zaroorat ba komak dashtand.

16) A leopard cannot change his spots

[yak palang nametawanad tagheer khodra khalhaye/range]

Yak palang range khod ra tagheer dara nametawanad.

a) refers to the fact that when an animal or a human being is born, they cannot change their outward appearance, as it is biologically determined.

Ba saboot raseeda dar biology, ke haywanha wa ya ensanha waqte ke ba dunya meayand chehraye zaheriye khod ra tagheer dara nametwanad.

b) refers to the fact that everyone should accept everyone else the way they are born and not try to change them.

Har mawjoode ke dar dunya ast, bayad hammagi anha ra qabool konand ba gessme ke dar dunya ba wojood amada and wa na anha ra bekhayand ke tagheer bedehand.

c) refers to the notion that things cannot change their innate nature.

Cheeze assiele khod ra tagheer da nametawanad.

d) refers to the notion that animals cannot change their spots, because scientifically this is not possible yet.

Daneshmandan ba saboot rassneedaand ke haywanha khalhaye khod ra, wa ya chehraye khod rat a hanooz tagheer dara nametawanad.
17) Don’t praise your enemy

[Tareefe doshmane khodra makon.]

a) refers to people who praise everyone including their enemies.

_Ensanhaye ke tareefe hamagi ra mekonand, wa hatta tareefe doshmanane khodra._

b) refers to a warning that when you praise your enemies they will soon defeat you.

_Yak akhtar ast ke agar doshmane khod ra tareefesha bekoni, bazudi tora az bain mebarad._

c) refers to someone who warns people not to praise their enemies.

_Yak akhtar ast ke kasse bayad ast doshmane khod ra tareef nakonad._

d) refers to people who seem to be nice but are not, and therefore someone should not praise them.

_Ensanhaye ke khub maloom meshawand aantaur nestand, wa adam bayad ast ke anha ra tareef nakonad._

18) Pride goes before a fall

[Eftekhare merawad peshaz yek oftadan]

Eftekhare pesh az aftadan mera.

a) refers to people who are stubborn and never accept to be defeated.

_Ensanha hetsch gahe qabool nadarand ke bobazand, wa ya beoftand._

b) refers to a proud and overconfident girl who thinks to be the best, but gets defeated by another girl.

_Yak dokhtare ke bisyar maghroor ast wa feker mekonad ke behtareen ast, az yak dokhtare degar shekast mekhorad._

c) refers to someone who is proud, but makes a mistake that will lead to his or her defeat.

_Yag kasse maghroor yak ghalatiye mekonad ke hanam ghalati sababe sekashtash meshawad._
d) refers to the fact that an instance or behaviour called A comes first, then another behaviour or instance called B will be followed by A, thus A is followed by B.

Yak mahzela wa ya yak ammale baname A, awaltar meyayad, az yak mahzela wa yak ammale baname B, (A peshtar az B meyayad).

19) Too many cooks spoil the broth

[ Bisyar ziad ashpazha kharabkardan aashra ]

Ashpazhaye ziad ash ra kharab mekonand.

a) refers to many people who come together and ruin the dish.

Mardomhaye ziad ke yakjah meshwand nan ra kharab mekonand.

b) refers to cooks who cannot cook at all.

Ashpazhaye ke hetsch naan pockhtan ra yaad nadarand.

c) refers to something that gets worse when cooks interfere.

Cheeze kharab meshawad, waqte ashpazha modakhela konand.

d) refers to a thing that gets worse when too many people have a say in that thing.

Cheeze kharab meshawad, waqte bisyar mardom dar bareye haman cheez Jahr wa bas dashta bashand.

20) While the doctors consult, the patient dies

[ Waqteke doktarha mashwarakardan mareez moord ]

Waqte ke doktarha mashwara mekonand, mareez memorad.

a) refers to the importance of timing in situations which are perfectly clear, but which provide unnecessary loss of time that results in being late with something.

Waqt geranbaha ast dar massayele ke waze hastand, amma waqt zaye kardan ba ess meshawd ke kasse deer berassad.

b) refers to the disagreements of doctors concerning the illness of their patients.

Neshan medehad ke doktar ha ba yakdegar hamnazar nestand dar baraye mariziyehaye mareezane khod.
c) refers to the indifference attitude of doctors with regard to their patients who are used to the fact that people die every day.

Doktar ha betaftawot hastand dar moqabele marezane khod, bakhatere ke adat darand ke ensanha har rooz memorand.

d) refers to a disaster which occurs when many people try to interfere in a situation.

Yak kharabi ra neshan medehad ke dar yag mawzoh dar ayenda meshwad, agar bisyar mardom kosheshe modakhela bekonand.

21) A   bad   workman   blames   his   tool

[ Yak kharab kargar gonahkardenast an az khod wassayel ]

Yak kargare kharab wassayele kare khod ra gonahkar medanad.

a) refers to someone, who is not able to do anything at all.

Kasse ast ke asslan hetschkara ast.

b) refers to a person with a record of failing who looks for reasons in other things but his own.

Yag adame nakam ke daleele cheese ra dar dega cheez ha mepalad, montaha na dar khod.

c) refers to a workman whose tool does not work therefore he blames it.

Yak kargare ke wassayele karyiash kar namedehad wa kharabi ra dar wassayele khod mekhahad payda konad.

d) refers to people who are good-for-nothing and without any talent.

Ensanhaye ke hetschkara nestand wa hetsch nawa talent nadarand.
22) Hang a thief when he is young and he’ll not steal when he is old

[ Badarbezan yak dozd waqte o ast jawan wa o khwahad na
steal waqte o ast peer ]

Yak doze jawan ra ba dar bezan waqte ke jawan ast, wa o dozdi nakhwahad kard dar peeri.

a) refers to thieves who get old as years pass by which results in not being able to practise their profession since their age does not allow them to do so.

Taaloq darad ba dozdane ke jawan hastand wa dozdi metawanan bekonan, amma waqte ke peer meshawand kessb wa kare khod ra nametawanand dawam bedehand.

b) refers to stealing which is a very bad thing and is condemned.

Dozdi bisyar kare kharab ast, ke hetsch kasse nabayad kard.

c) refers to a situation in which a contrast can be seen between a young and an old thief.

Farq bayne yak dozed jawan wa peer maloom meshwad.

d) refers to someone who should evade, correct, change something or someone as early as possible in order to prevent something or somebody from making a mistake in the future.

Kasse bayad ast koshesh bekonad ke cheese ra har chi zoodtar tagheer betawan dad ta haman cheez wagheh nashawad dar ayenda.

23) A shoemaker’s house looks beautiful

[ Booodooz khanaash maloommeshawad maqbul ]

Khanaye yak booddooz maqbul maqbul maloom meshawad.

a) refers to something that looks nice but is not.

Ceeze ke maqbul maloom meshwad, antaur nest.

b) refers to a shoemaker’s house that looks nice.

Khanaye yak booddoz maqbul ast.

c) refers to somebody of whom someone would not think to be rich.

Kasse az yak kasse degare feker namekonad ke pool dar bashad.
d) refers to somebody whose house looks beautiful from outside but not from inside.

*Khannaye kasse kea z beroon maqbul maloom meshawad, az daroon maqbul nest.*

24) A thief believes everybody else steals

[ *Yak dozd bawarkardan hamagi degaran dozdikardan* ]

**Yak doz feker mekonad ke degaran/hamma dozdi mekonan.**

a) refers to whatever a thief does others do the same.

*Hark are ke yak dozd mekonad, hamma aan kar ra mekonand.*

b) refers to people who are gullible and naïve.

*Ensanha bisyar khoshbawar hastand.*

c) refers to people who see others the way they want to see them in order to alleviate their own deeds.

*Ensanha deharan ra gessme mebinand, gessmek ke mekhwahand anha ra bebinand, ta andazaye kharabihaye khod ra kam konand.*

d) refers to people who are a believer and have faith in someone or something as opposed to people who do not have faith in anything.

*Bisyari Ensanha bawar wa ya ieman ba cheese way a kasse darand, az ensanhaye ke bawar wa ya ieman ba hetsch cheese nadarand.*

25) It never rains, but it pours

[ *Hetschgah baran, amma bareshe shadeed* ]

**Hetsch gahe namebarad, amma agar bareed khub mebarad.**

a) refers to peasants who foresaw the weather in March in order to know how much rain will fall in the month of April.

*Dehganan howa ra peshbini mekardan dar mahe March, ta befahmand ke dar mahe April cheqadar barabn khwahad bareed.*

b) refers to happiness which does not come as often as people think, but when it comes it comes all at the same time.

*Khoshbakti cheese ast ke mardom feker namekonand ke ziad dar zendagiyeshan waqehe booftad, montaha agar khoshbakhti meayad, hama khoshbakhti yakjah meayad.*
c) refers to troubles, as they come, they come together.

_Badbakhtī wa problem ha hamma yakjah meayand._

d) refers to peasants who wait for the rain, as they want their fields to get wet in order to bring in their harvest.

_Dehqānān hamma montazere baran hastand, ta zameen hayeshan ra tar konand, wa anha azash hassele begirand._

26) Every cloud has a silver lining

[Har abr darad yak noqrayi roshani]

_Har abr, yak roshnayi noqrayi darad._

a) refers to clouds which people think are white but are not.

_Ensanha feker mekonand ke abre safeed ast, montaha yak range darand._

b) refers to something that is not identifiable as it looks like a cloud, but suddenly becomes more visible as one recognizes it.

_Cheeeze ba assani maloom nameshwad wa ba meesle yak abr memanad, montaha ahesta ahesta ba peshe roh meyayad wa adam aan cheez ra meshenassad._

c) refers to a bad situation that has a good aspect to it.

_Yak mawzohe kharab, khubi ham darad._

d) refers to the situation that when the sun shines upon a cloud it seems that it has a silver lining, whereas it does not have. Someone’s eyes are deceived by the sunlight or something.

_Waqte ke aftar bar sare abr meoftad, kasse feker mekonad ke yak range noqrayi ba wojood meyayad, montaha hecht kodam range wojood nadarad. Cheshemhaye kasse cheese ra mebinad ba roshaniye aftar way a ba cheese degare, ke asslan wojood nadarad._
27) Big thunder, little rain

[ Bozorg ghor ghor, kam baran ]

Baba ghor ghoriye bozorg, barane kam.

a) refers to the terrible sound of a thunder and to the expectation that someone would have about the amount of rain that would follow after a thunder.

"Ba sadaye bade baba ghor ghori eshara mekonad wa ba tawaqoye ke mardom darand baad az yak yak baba ghor ghoriye ke haman ghessem yak barane shadeed meayad."

b) refers to someone or something which someone expects to be extremer than something else, but turns out not to be.

"Cheeze way a kasse ra ke adam bad tar tawaqo mekonad, montaha wageh nameshwad."

c) refers to someone who describes the weather conditions in a certain area.

"Aaab wa hawaye yak manteqa ra peshbini kardan."

d) refers to something bad that won’t occur in someone’s life.

"Cheeze bad wageh dar zedayie kasse nemeshawad."

28) Keep something for a rainy day

[ Negahkon cheese baraye yak barani rooz ]

Cheeze ra negah kon baraye yak roze barani.

a) refers to an umbrella that someone should keep when it starts to rain.

"Yak chatriye ra baraye roze barani adam bayad ast ke negah konad."

b) refers to saving money for the future.

"Yak kamme pool bayad ast adam baraye ayendaye khod negah konad."

c) refers to something that should be kept for possible emergencies in the future.

"Yak cheese ra bayad ast dar yagan problem ha dar ayenda bare khod negah konad."
d) refers to an order to keep your happiness and joy for the first rainy day which is celebrated in fully length in places where not much rain is falling.

_Eshara menomayad baa an roze baraniye ke sale yak bar tajleel meshawad dar mamalekhaye ke baran kam mebarad ta khushihaye khodra baa an rooz negahdareem._

29) **When the wind blows the leaves shake**

[ _Waqt ke shamal mezanad bargha shor _]

_Waqt ke shamal mezand bargha shor mekhorand._

a) refers to the fact that when the wind blows the leaves shake.

_Yak cheese wazeh ast ke waqte ke shamal mezanad bargha shor mekhorand._

b) refers to when something bad happens other things will have to deal with the consequences of the bad happening.

_Yak cheese kharab agar shawad, degar cheez ha ra ba essash meshawad ke zarar bebinad._

c) refers to something which is very easily scared by something else.

_Yak cheese ke bisyar zud az cheezeh degare metarssad._

d) refers to something which is bigger and scarier than another smaller thing.

_Yak cheeeze kalantar way a bozorgtar ke tarsnak tar ast az yak cheeeze ke bar aksash ast._

30) **Hoist your sail when the wind is fair**

[ _Ammadakon khodra keshtiye waqteke shamal ast khub _]

_Ammadakon kishtiye khodra, ta waqte ke shamal khub ast._

a) refers to the perfect timing of something.

_Yak zamane khub baraye cheeze ke hamin hala bayad ast ke ammali shawad._

b) refers to the good weather conditions.

_Eshara mekonad bar hawa ke bisyur khub ast._
c) refers to something that should be done or started when circumstances are most favourable.

Cheeze bayad ast ke shawad, wa ya shoro shawad, waqte ke zameena wa zamaan behtareen barayash mossayed ast.

d) refers to the fact that a sail should be prepared when the wind condition is the best, otherwise the sail won’t start to move.

Ien waqyeat dard ke yak kishti bayad ast zamane amada shawad, waqte ke hawa mossayed basha, agar ne kishti haye badi nametawanand ke shoro ba harakat konand.
Appendix B: Questionnaires designed for the British people

1) What is your age?
   - between 20 – 39 □
   - 39 – 49 □
   - 49 – 59 □
   - 60 – 69 □
   - older □

2) Sex:
   - male □
   - female □

3) Level of education:
   - Apprenticeship □
   - University □
   - Other, namely ___________________

4) If you are living outside Great Britain, how long have you been living in another European country?
   - 0-5 years □
   - 5-10 years □
   - 11-15 years □
   - 16-20 years □
   - > 20 years □

5) Which British region are you from?
   ___________________

6) How many other languages do you speak, besides your mother tongue?

              excellent  good moderate little
Spanish     □    □    □    □    □
German      □    □    □    □    □
Dutch       □    □    □    □    □
Dari        □    □    □    □    □
French      □    □    □    □    □
Hindi/Urdu  □    □    □    □    □
Russian     □    □    □    □    □
Other, namely ___________ □    □    □    □
When somebody says the following statements, what does he or she refer to?

7) Ta tanor garm ast bayad nan ra chaspand

[ Till oven hot is must bread put ]

Put bread in the oven while it’s hot.

   a) refers to the hot temperature which is needed for the oven to get hot first before bread is put inside the oven.

   b) refers to the preparation instructions of how to bake bread in the oven.

   c) refers to an action that should be done now, as it is the best time for it.

   d) refers to an action that should not be done now since the circumstances are not good.

8) Ba yak gol bahar nameshawad

[ With one flower summer not made ]

With one flower no summer is made.

   a) refers to the season of summer which cannot be made by only one flower.

   b) refers to the whole of something that cannot be made only by a piece of that thing.

   c) refers to family which represents “summer” in which more than one “flower” which is associated with a child is needed in order to make a family look complete.

   d) refers to the season of summer which is associated with the beauty of a flower.

9) Sadahe dol az door khoshast

[ The voice drum from/at far nice ]

The voice of a drum is pleasant at a distance.

   a) refers to the sound of a drum, which is very loud when someone stands next to it, therefore, someone should not stand very close to it, but hear it at a distance.

   b) refers to people who think what they want is better than what they have.

   c) refers to something which is pleasant.

   d) refers to something bad which will be announced by an instrument, therefore, people prefer to hear bad news from a distance.
10) Hassele seeb ra jamkon

[ Harvest apple pick up/collect ]

Pick up/collect the apple harvest.

a) refers to someone who should pick up the apple harvest.
b) refers to people who want to give away their inheritance to somebody.
c) refers to someone who wants to give somebody something.
d) refers to apples which are associated with children who should be brought-up well.

11) Sad sara tar kard wa yak sara kal ne

[ Hundred heads wet are and one head shaved not ]

One makes hundred heads wet and none of them shaved.

a) refers to hairdressers who work quickly and never say “no” to their customers when they come inside their shop, but at the end the customers have to wait very long and their hair does not look the way they imagined at the beginning.
b) refers to people who think to be perfect and can do everything, but the opposite turns out to be the case.
c) refers to people who do not finish their work.
d) refers to people who perform less than they promise.

12) Sala ra bala nako

[ Offer of disaster do not ]

Don’t make out of an offer a disaster.

a) refers to people who are brazen and impudent.
b) refers to something good that someone offers to someone with which he or she tries to fulfil his or her bad intentions.
c) refers to someone who makes a big deal out of something.
d) refers to people who are pessimistic about something.
13) Har sokhan jaye wa har nokta makane darad
   
   [ Every word place and every point place has ]

Every word and point have their places.

a) refers to people who like to talk a lot but should not do so.

b) refers to all human beings who speak different languages and live in different places.

c) refers to the fact that every object has its determined place.

d) refers to an appropriate timing for everything.

14) Khar dar namak chi mefamad
   
   [ Donkey of salt what knows ]

What does a donkey know of salt.

a) refers to donkeys that don’t appreciate salt.

b) refers to someone who is not cultured enough to appreciate something.

c) refers to people who do not have any knowledge.

   .

d) refers to people who are dumb.

15) Kore khod binahe mardom
   
   [ Blinded of oneself not blinded of people ]

Blind of oneself, but not blinded to other people.

a) refers to someone who should attend to his own faults in preference of pointing to other people’s faults.

b) refers to people who do not see the good qualities in themselves but wish to have the good qualities or characteristics of other people.

c) refers to people who are pessimistic regarding their own relationship with their partners, and therefore they look at other people’s relationship whom they wish to be as their own.

   .

d) refers to people who pretend to be someone good in front of other people but are the opposite in reality.
16) Adate ke ba tan darayad az marg barayad

[ Habit which is body inside when die outside ]

A habit which gets inside someone’s body will get out when he or she dies.

a) refers to the fact that everyone should accept people the way they are and not try to change them.

b) refers to a habit that will never change.

c) refers to the notion that things/people cannot change their innate nature.

d) refers to the fact that peoples’ habits only change when they die.

17) Tareefe doshmane khodra makon

[ Praise enemy your not ]

Don’t praise your enemy.

a) refers to people who praise everyone including their enemies.

b) refers to a warning that when you praise your enemies they will soon defeat you.

c) refers to someone who warns people not to praise their enemies.

d) refers to people who seem to be nice but are not, and therefore someone should not praise them.
18) Koh har kadar boland bashad baaz ham sare khod

[ Mountain as much high is always top of it]

rah darad

path is ]

No matter how high a mountain is, there is always a path on the top of it.

a) refers to dreams that cannot be realized, but if someone is determined enough, he or she will make his or her dreams come true.

b) refers to complicated problems or situations which are not likely to be solved; however, one might always find a solution to a complicated problem or situation.

c) refers to someone who is proud, but makes a mistake that will lead to his or her defeat.

d) refers to pilgrims who think that the higher the height of an object, the nearer they are to god.

19) Qassab ke ziad shod gao mordar mesha

[ Butchers when too many get cow off will be ]

When too many butchers get together, the cow will probably be off.

a) refers to many people who come together and ruin the dish.

b) refers to butchers who cannot slaughter at all.

c) refers to something that gets worse when butchers interfere.

d) refers to a thing that gets worse when too many people have a say in that thing.

20) Nosh daru ke pas az marg ba sohrab raseed,

[ Medicine when after dying to Sohrab got]

zar ferestadane mahmood badan memanad.

jewel sending Mahmood that looks alike ]

The medicine reached Sohrab after dying, Mahmood’s sending of jewels is similar to that.

a) refers to the importance of timing in situations which are perfectly clear, but which provide unnecessary loss of time that results in being late with something.
b) refers to the fighter Sohrab who died in a battle against Mahmood’s son.

c) refers to a situation where a happening called A is similar to a happening called B, thus A = B.

d) refers to a disaster which occurs when a lot of people interfere.

21) Pahlawan ke khaweed mega nikarem tang bud

[ Wrestler when defeated says underwear tight was ]

When the wrestler is defeated, he says “my underwear was tight”

a) refers to someone who is not admitting his weakness.

b) refers to a person with a record of failing who looks for reasons in other things but his own.

c) refers to someone who is strong but can still be defeated.

d) refers to people who think that they will never lose and act very overconfident.

22) Kheshte awal gar nehad memar kaj, ta soraya

[ Brick first if does architecture not straight till sky merawad diwar kaj

will go wall not straight ]

If the first brick is not put straight by the architecture, the wall won’t go straight till the sky.

a) refers to the first step of something which someone should consider as very important.

b) refers to something that goes wrong from the beginning until the end.

c) refers to people who should always choose the correct or right direction in their lives.

d) refers to someone who should evade, correct, change something or someone as early as possible in order to prevent something or somebody from making a mistake in the future.
23) Khanaye yak booddoz maqbul maloom meshawad

[House of a shoemaker beautiful looks does]

A shoemaker’s house looks beautiful

a) refers to something that looks nice but is not.

b) refers to a shoemaker’s house that looks nice.

c) refers to somebody of whom someone would not think to be rich.

d) refers to somebody whose house looks beautiful from outside but not from inside.

24) Degaran ra az ayenaye khod nabin

[Others from mirror your own not see]

Don’t see others from the mirror of your own.

a) refers to mirrors which are said to bring bad luck in other peoples’ lives.

b) refers to people who are gullible and naïve.

c) refers to people who see others the way they want to see in order to alleviate their own deeds.

d) refers to bad things that occur in someone’s life and someone should not wish the same to other people.

25) Ya nee nee, ya dee dee

[Either no no or give give]

Either no no or give give a lot.

a) refers to someone who never gives something to someone, but when he or she gives something, then he or she gives a lot.

b) refers to happiness which does not come as often in people’s life as people think, but when it comes it comes all together.

c) refers to something which actually rarely happens, but if it happens, it occurs to the largest extent.

d) refers to beggars who once get nothing from people as people say “no, no” to them, but sometimes they do get a lot from people as people “give, give” a lot.
26) Poshte har abre tareek roshnayist

[ Behind every cloud dark is light ]

Behind every dark cloud, there is brightness.

a) refers to something that is not identifiable as it looks like a cloud, but suddenly becomes more visible as one recognizes it.

b) refers to the situation that when the sun shines upon a cloud, it seems that it has some kind of light inside it, whereas it does not have anything like that. Someone’s eyes are deceived by something.

c) refers to a bad situation that has a good aspect to it.

d) refers to people who should know that everything has its drawbacks or opposites.

27) Az abre siah matars az reeshe daraaz, az abre

[ From cloud black not afraid from beard long from cloud safeed betars az kossa taraash white afraid from someone shaved ]

Don’t be afraid of a black cloud and someone with a long beard, be afraid of a white cloud and someone, who is shaved.

a) refers to something which seems to be ugly, instead of something which looks beautiful.

b) refers to something which someone expects to be extremer than something else, but turns out not to be.

c) refers to the black cloud and long beard of imams who someone actually fears, but should not fear, since imams lead people to the right direction in life as opposed to people without any beard who lead people to atheism and destruction.

d) refers to something bad which won’t occur in someone’s life.

28) Dashta ayad ba kaar, gar chu bashad zahre maar

[ Having will in need, even if is poison snake ]

It is better to have something which someone will need even if it is poison snake.

a) refers to poison snake which someone should always have in life in order to keep away enemies.
b) refers to the fact that someone should keep something bad for the future in order to protect him or herself from bad people or bad happenings in life.

c) refers to something that should be kept for possible emergencies in the future.

d) refers to people who should keep at least a little money for their future.

29) Waqte ke shaman mezand bargha shor mekhorand

[ When wind blows leaves shake ]

When the wind blows, the leaves shake.

a) refers to the fact that when the wind blows the leaves shake.

b) refers to when something bad happens other things will have to deal with the consequences of the bad happening.

c) refers to something which is very easily scared by something else.

d) refers to something which is bigger and scarier than something smaller.

30) Saber talkh ast wa leek mewaye shirin darad

[ Waiting bitter is and but fruit sweet has ]

Waiting is bitter, but its fruit has sweetness.

a) refers to fruits which will ripen and get sweet, if people are more patient.

b) refers to two contrasts that are made between two things.

c) refers to something that should be done or started when circumstances are most favourable.

d) refers to the fact that waiting for someone or something is not good, but once the waiting is over someone will enjoy the sweetness of the thing or someone.