

## **A comparative study between Arabic and English proverbs based on cross cultural differences (selected examples)**

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### **ABSTRACT**

It is obvious that the aim of a comparative study is to shed light on the likeness and dissimilarities between nations and cultures. Proverbs reflect the culture of nations and because of their prevalence in everyday language, a comparative study based on cultural differences of these metaphorical expressions is inevitable since without understanding the culture and proverbs of the target language, understanding that language will be difficult. The aim of this study is to show the origin of Arabic proverbs and to compare them with English proverbs. Thereby, Arabic proverbs have been divided into two categories of religious and popular sayings; each category reviews different fields in which the proverbs are embedded. Examples of Arabic proverbs are then given along with their origins and meanings then we mention what has been stated in the holy Quran and holy texts about their meanings before comparing them to the English equivalent types, followed by a discussion of the metaphor in proverbs of both languages. The result of the study has shown that Arabic proverbs have English Equivalent types with the same messages. On the other hand, different metaphors in Arabic and English proverbs are evidence of different cultural impacts on building and using metaphors.

**Keywords:** *proverbs, compare, pragmatics, culture, text analysis*

### **1. Introduction**

#### **1.1 Aim of the study**

This research aims to explore some widely used Arabic proverbs and their close match in English language to explain some semantic and apparent socio-cultural likeness and differences. To find the differences between these proverbs in Arabic and English and the cultural dissimilarities reflected by these proverbs a descriptive approach is adopted. The choice of samples of popular proverbs was on the basis of a thematic approach. This approach contrasts the effect of proverbs on the individuals of both languages for the common cases to support and strengthen their opinions when using them.

#### **1.2 Research Questions**

Knowing proverbs from both languages can change the views and values of a particular person and helps to get a deeper understanding of cultures, for this purpose three questions were suggested

1. What is the extent of the usage of proverbs in the Arabic and English languages emphasizes on the cultural and social features?
2. In the instance of using proverbs in Arabic and English language, what is the likeness?
3. How differently do proverbs are treated in Arabic and English?

Language and culture are entangled. Language is a means of communication used to communicate and express basic and complex opinions and ideas, which gives us an idea of the domineering culture in the society. The language differences might make people have different perspectives while sharing the exact same culture and society. Proverbs are a reflection of social and everyday life, and they are one of the foundations that draw the relationship between people, and they are a witness to the impact of ancestors' upbringing of new generations. Proverbs have gained fame in the use of their social meanings. Hofstede states, culture will always be a social phenomenon because it is transmitted, shared and taught with people who are in the same environment. Culture is not hereditary in human genes; rather, it stems from the social environment of the individual, and a distinction must be made

between culture and the nature of human on the one hand, and from the character of the individual on the other (Hofstede, 1991, p. 4). From the same intellectual context, Susan Basnett explains that “language cannot be unless it is emanating from the depths of culture, and likely culture cannot be unless natural language is at its core” (Basnett, 2002, p. 22). It is the reflection of the body for the soul according to Plato, the culture as the soul in the language as the body, and their unification ensures “the prolongation of the life force” (Basenett, 2202, p. 22).

### **1.3 Definitions and viewpoints**

Proverbs are the prevailing brief technical phrase that is formulated to depict a situation or an incident and extract a human experience that can be retrieved in another similar case.

Likewise, it can be defined as a sentence that was said on a special occasion, and then it became mentioned on every similar occasion.

## **2. Literature Review**

Rasul S.H. (2018, pp. 121-141) examined the translation of idioms across different languages (Arabic, English, French, Kurdish, Persian, and Turkish), by using Baker's (1992/2011) terminology translation strategies. In his research he tested Baker's strategy first to reveal whether it could be considered a practical model for illustrating proverbs? Second, given the type of strategies used, attempts to see if the examples can be treated as a culture-specific or a global phenomenon, in contrast to our current research, where Rasul S.H (2018, pp. 121-141) primarily focuses on translation.

Fahmy (2016) examined some common proverbs in Arabic and their English counterparts to highlight important social and cultural differences. In her research, she relied on the objective selection of samples of proverbs. She has only examined eight of the proverbs and stated that these proverbs are allegorical or popular sayings that have been circulated on moral bases, and therefore, proverbs are prominent formal acts that mediate meaning, and negotiate the importance of pragmatics. So Fahmi also focuses on proverbs related to similarities and differences between cultures. Unlike this paper, it does not take into account the religious aspects of Arabic proverbs.

Hashem and Mohi (2021) examined a sum of 50 proverbs about love (25 in Arabic and English) from the perspective of pragmatism. The analytical structure in explaining the proverbs relied on the concept of implicature and the distinction between utterance-type implicature and utterance-token implicature. In this part, the study relied on the new neo-Gricean model of Culpeper and Howe (2014). This analysis applies Linell's pragmatic approach of conceptualization of recontextualization (1998). The analysis showed that when the proverb is used in a new context, the proverb can go through a process of recontextualization which may serve two pragmatic functions.

Ibrahim (2003) in his paper deals mainly with a contrastive pragmatic study of proverbs in both English and Arabic and how this helps a second language learner - whether an Arab studying English or vice versa - to master his target language. The study starts with the objectives as well as the difficulty encountered during tackling it. Then, the methodological framework of both Firth and Malinowski's Context-Dependent Utterance Theory has been discussed. Finally, the analysis resulted in some factors determining the use of Egyptian Arabic proverbs. An appendix of both varieties in English and Arabic proverbs has been given at the end followed by some pedagogical implications for teaching English to Arab students. Egyptian proverbs were italicized in the appendix whereas their English semantic equivalents were not.

Sameer (2016) in the study compares and analyzes certain kinds of animal English proverbs with Arabic. These kinds are dogs and horses. The study is based on elected model gathering Lakoff and Turner (1989) and Sperber and Wilson (1986) approach as well as Hsieh's (2006) approach to recognize the interpretation of these proverbs and know their cultural background. The research aims were to study the relevance theoretic notion of enrichment to be the procedure for deriving implicature /explicature from what is said. Two forms of this

procedure were discussed .Grammatical motivation and conceptual motivation enrichment were tackled .This effect was insufficient to account for all cases but it cooperated with other cognitive mechanisms such as metaphoric and metonymic mappings .It also aimed to apply cognitive linguistics on these proverbs and investigate the type of metaphors and metonymy manifested in them. For this purpose, 20 English and Arabic proverbs were collected; ten of each kind were analyzed in both languages . They are cultural, and social values passed down and transmitted from a generation to another.

All of the above studies have researched and examined the proverbs and idioms in many areas with different perspectives which will help the current paper to further enlighten the topic and to present a different outcome. The research paper at hand mainly finds the similarities in using proverbs comparing them with the similarity in case of using their counterparts. It also shed light on certain proverbs in Arabic and English Culture which have not been studied in the past.

### 3. Methodology

Researchers adapt a combined approach which is qualitative descriptive. This paper applies the qualitative methodology in the data collection in which it collects data from all the available different sources that would eventually lead to its conclusion. The study attempts to list the data as quasi- corpora. In tackling the first question, it will be dealt with systematically as the research analyzes each proverb thoroughly in detail shedding light on cultural aspects of both language and culture. To seek an answer to the second question researchers adapted the above mentioned approach to find out if there are any likeness in Arabic and English regarding the usage of proverbs in the light of cultural aspects or not. As for the Third question which would find about how different these two cultures are, including how different the proverbs are treated in Arabic and English languages. The purpose of this study is to collect proverbs from old sources to justify the proverbs and also in the modern books. Later we will compare it to the religious texts which denote the same meaning. Finally we compare them to the Existing English equivalent proverbs

### 4. Result

#### 4.1. Data Analysis

##### Similarities AND differences in case of using proverbs:

Proverbs semantically and culturally are a universal phenomenon. The table below has been constructed solely for the purpose of the illustration of the usage of Arabic and English proverbs which are identical or close in meaning or have similar meaning:

Table 1: Similar/close Arabic and English Proverbs

Arabic Proverbs	Literal translation	meaning	English (Equivalent) Proverbs	meaning
نعم المؤدب الدهر	The best educator is time	By time people will learn things	Age and wedlock tame man and beast	Somewhat similar: Getting old and marriage makes anyone docile
في العجلة الندامة	There are regrets in haste	Avoid haste do things with patience	Always in a hurry, always behind/has te makes waste (idiom)	A proverb which means if you do things hastily you can't complete the thing in the right way and you will fall behind. The Idiom is closer to the meaning
من شب على شيء شاب عليها	He who grows up in doing something will	People seldom give up	Old habits die hard	similar

	get old in doing this thing	their old habits		
عصفور في اليد خير من عشرة على الشجرة	A bird in hand is better than ten on tree	What you have now is better than what you wish to have	Better an egg today than a hen tomorrow/ A bird in hand worth two in the bush	similar
الطيور على أشكالها تقع	Birds will fall on their types	People will join groups with people who have similar tastes and interests	Birds of a feather flock together	similar
القرود في عين أمه غزال	A monkey is a deer in her mother's eye	A mother thinks her child is the most beautiful and can't see their faults	The crow thinks her own birds fairest	similar
على قدر لحافك مد قدميك	According to your quilt stretch your leg	Do what you can with what you have, or spend according to your budget which means don't exaggerate	Cut your coat according to your cloth	Similar to the Arabic meaning
قول بلا عمل كشجرة بلا ثمر	A word without a deed is a tree without a fruit	Only speaking is nothing, it should be supported by action	Deeds are fruits, words are but leaves	Similar: Action is more important than words
لا يفل الحديد إلا الحديد	Nothing cuts Iron only iron	People of the same caliber could win against	Diamond cut diamond	Similar: When two smart or cunning people meet, they have found their match

		each other		
فَرَّقَ تَسَد	Divide and you will be the leader	Divide and rule	Divide and rule	similar
من جعل نفسه عظما أكلته الكلاب	He who makes himself a bone would be eaten by a dog	He who humiliates himself will get humiliated by low people	Don't make yourself a mouse, or the cat will eat you	Similar: Don't belittle yourself or you will get deceived or bullied by others
من طلب العلاء سهر الليالي	He who asks for greatness pulls all-nighters	If someone wanted to achieve great things. He/she should work hard	He that would have the fruit, must climb the tree	Similar meaning

All of the above data are collected from different sources mentioned in the reference section. So this number of proverbs in Arabic and English culture and language with the different utilization indicates that both languages have a little similarity. But at the same time they have a lot of differences too.

## 5. Discussion

This Arabic proverb “نعم المؤدب الدهر” (*Sheikho 1 25*) tells us that time is enough to teach a person and give him/her lessons about life and how to deal with events, because they are practical and realistic experiences that he/she lived by himself/herself and not like a saying that is said or advice or a wisdom, and it was mentioned in the texts of the Holy Qur'an that a person should learn from the history of the ancient peoples, so they do not fall into the mistakes they fell into, “and thus time becomes a lesson,” (Atiya 6) including the Almighty's saying: “Indeed, there was a lesson for those who understand in their stories” (Quran, Yusuf: 111). And in another verse: “Similarly, there came not to those before them any messenger except that they said, A magician or a madman.....And remind, for indeed, the reminder benefits the believers.” (Quraan, Adh-Dhariyat: 55)

The English equivalent “age and wedlock bring a man to his nightcap” means marriage, as age, drains the excitement out of a man's life. They both suppress the spirit, dull the mind, and generally have a soporific effect. They both share some similarities, but they are not exactly the same.

It also appears that there is a specific case between the two proverbs and life, including that they give lessons to a person, whether or not the person is admonished by them.

There is a difference between the two proverbs in many ways, including the Arabic proverb has a positive connotation, and it focuses on time, while the English proverb focuses on marriage, and time is more general and comprehensive than marriage.

This Arabic proverb “في العجلة الندامة” and it has been stated that the haste is the source of regret (*al-Qayrawani 4 942*) urges us to slow down and not to rush into making decisions in matters of which we are not sure of, so a person might regret doing something because of a mistake or having a better opportunity (Atiya 6). Therefore, the complement of the proverb was: There is safety in patience, and many verses were mentioned in the Holy Qur'an urging patience and not to rush, including: “Be not deceived by the [uninhibited] movement of the disbelievers throughout the land. It is but a small enjoyment; then their [final] refuge is Hell, and wretched is the resting place.” (Quran Aal-Imran 196-197) The verse indicates the necessity of being

patient with the state of the enemies of the infidels with their capabilities and luxury, and not making a hasty decision that results in the replacement of the fleeting, short life of luxury in this world with a happy, eternal life in the hereafter. (*Al-Zajaj 1 500*)

The English proverb “Always in a hurry, always behind” means when you do things in a hurry you will work less efficiently and will take a longer time to do it.

The similarities between the two proverbs are that hastiness is a negative act. The meaning in the Arabic proverb is deeper than the English proverb. The meaning and outcome of the Arabic one is regret and not being late. In English language there is an idiom “haste makes waste.” Which means doing something hastily will result in mistakes and loss of time and resources.

The Arabic proverb “من شب على شيء شاب عليها” indicates getting used to life matters is one of the natures of man, whether it is good or bad, he repeats his steps every day in the same way. (*al-Qazi 592*) Personality and social traditions are applicable to man in his life, and it has been mentioned from the Qur’anic texts that refer to this aspect of human life, as in the Almighty’s saying: “Rather, they say, “Indeed, we found our fathers upon a religion, and we are in their footsteps [rightly] guided.” (Quran Az-Zukhruf 22) The verse refers to the bad and harmful beliefs and actions of a group of people that they inherited from their parents and are accustomed to since childhood, so they cannot leave them, knowing that they are not based on rational and logical evidence.

The English Idiom “Old habits die hard” means it is difficult to stop doing something that one has been used doing it for a long time.

The similarity between the two sayings in the two languages is in formulation and semantics, but the proverb in Arabic is more informative, descriptive and more negative, as it indicates that it is impossible to leave what you are accustomed to rather than English, as it is difficult to leave these habits and not impossible.

This popular proverb “عصفور في اليد خير من عشرة على الشجرة” refers to the greedy person who is not satisfied with what he has and always demands more. On the other hand, he warns a person to be content and satisfied with what he has and not to risk losing what he has with what is far from him (*Ziyadna 309*). As for religious texts, there are many instructions forbidding greed and Encouragement in the conviction, such as: “Whoever does righteousness, whether male or female, while he is a believer - We will surely cause him to live a good life, and We will surely give them their reward in the Hereafter according to the best of what they used to do.” (Quran An nahel 97) and the word believer here means to be content and accepting and in warning the bad outcome of the greediness there is the hadith of the Prophet, he said: “and the people of Hell are five: ... And the traitor who has hidden greed, and if he dealt with someone, he will betray him” (Sahih Muslim Hadith 2865).

The English one “A bird in the hand is worth two in the bush” means It is better to have a sure thing now than a possibility of more later. It also means it is better to have a small, safe, and secured advantage than the possibility of a bigger one. It’s better to stick with what you have even if it is small than risk it for something greater.

The context and connotation of the proverb between the two languages are similar; both of them condemn greed and encourage contentment, with more exaggeration of the Arabic proverb at the expense of the English. There is also a difference in numbers of the mentioned birds.

“الطيور على أشكالها تقع” Man has different natures, so each type of them tends to converge on his likeness according to his psychological, physical and material requirements and needs, or the way of thinking and visualization, his condition is like the case of birds. The birds will flock with their own kind (*Ziyadna 300*). The proverb urges us to search for those who agree with us from friends because it called for continuity and permanence, and it came in the Holy Qur’an that the types of people meet with each other, such as the Almighty’s saying: “Evil women are for evil men, and evil men are for evil women. And good women are for good men, and good men are for good women. Those [good people] are declared innocent of what

the slanderers say. For them is forgiveness and noble provision”.... (An-Noor 26) (Alqurtobi 12 211) In the case of choosing a friend, it was mentioned in the Prophetic hadith that he said: “A man is on the religion of his friend, so let one of you see who he is friendly with” (*Al-Tayalsi* 4 299 2696)

“Birds of a feather flock together” is an English proverb. The meaning is that beings of similar characteristic, statue, interest and feature tend to mutually associate.

The meaning and connotation in the two languages are quite similar with a slight difference in wording.

This popular Arabic proverb “القرء في عين أمه غزال” indicates that the mother sees her children in the best condition, even if they are not, or that a person does not see the faults of his relatives and loved ones, but rather sees him as beautiful and reasonable, and accordingly he may fall into mistakes and injustice and make unfair rulings against his violators, and that is why in the Holy Quran verses He warns against this affliction by saying: “O you who have believed, be persistently standing firm in justice, witnesses for Allah, even if it be against yourselves or parents and relatives. Whether one is rich or poor, Allah is more worthy of both. So follow not [personal] inclination, lest you not be just. And if you distort [your testimony] or refuse [to give it], then indeed Allah is ever, with what you do, Acquainted.” (An-Nisaa 135). The English proverb “The crow thinks her own bird is fairest” has the same connotation which is; every Mother Thinks Her Child Is the Most Beautiful.

When comparing the two proverbs, we see that both are formulated in the same way, except that the Arabic proverb is using a mammal, unlike the English proverb, which is represented by a bird. The Arabic proverb have a deeper meaning were the mother covers all of her children's shortcomings.

“على قدر لحافك مد قدميك” This proverb is said when we see someone whose expenses exceed the material ability he has, and it comes for advice, pity and acting with realism, and it may be called the complaint, when a person complains about the financial deficit he has of daily income compared to his expenses (*Al-Shaarawi* 19 1212) and it is mentioned in religious texts that these meanings such as lack of Extravagance in life affairs: “O children of Adam, take your adornment at every masjid, and eat and drink, but be not excessive. Indeed, He likes not those who commit excess.” (Quran Al-A'raf: 31)

The English one “Cut your coat according to your cloth” means undertake only what you have the money or ability to do and no more. to make plans and decisions that are based on what you have and not what you would like.

We see that the formulation of the proverb in the two languages came in the same context to denote the desired meaning and goal, but the significance of the Arabic proverb is more comprehensive as it indicates advice, pity and complaint together, unlike the English proverb which indicates advice only. It also has differences in wording which is referred to at the table 1)

“قول بلا عمل كشجرة بلا ثمر” This Arabic proverb came to indicate that speech is useless if devoid of action. It is like a tree that does not bear fruit, and that recounting words is much easier than actions (Atiya 32). The Holy Qur'an condemns those who say what they do not do by saying: “O you who have believed, why do you say what you do not do? Great is hatred in the sight of Allah that you say what you do not do.” (Quran As-Saff: 2-3)

The English proverb “Deeds are fruits, words are but leaves” means doing something or taking action is better than words or just stating and talking about issues or undesirable conditions. I.e. words have no physical power except when they are supported by actions or deeds only then the word will have value and force.

The significance of the two examples is similar in that words are less valuable and important than actions, with minor differences in their aspects; One of them is that the Arabic proverb came in an indirect form, unlike the English one, which directly indicated the importance of the actions, and the English proverb is more eloquent and indicative of meaning than the Arabic; Because paper is less valuable and useful than a tree.

“لا يفِل الحديد إلا الحديد” is a proverb that is frequently used, and it means that nothing can bend iron only iron itself, and its use comes in many aspects of life, and it is used in cases where it indicates the capabilities of a person versus another person who meets him in valor and courage, that is, strength is matched only by strength (*Al-Asfahani 483*), and from this point of view can be referred to verses urging the believers to prepare equipment and gather strength to fight and deter their enemies from the infidels (*Al-Kassmi 5 315*); Because they have great power and influence, including: “And prepare against them whatever you are able of power and of steeds of war by which you may terrify the enemy of Allah and your enemy and others besides them whom you do not know [but] whom Allah knows. And whatever you spend in the cause of Allah will be fully repaid to you, and you will not be wronged”.... (Quran *Al-Anfal: 60*).

“Diamond cut diamond” used to describe a situation in which a smart person meets their match. It is used to describe the situation in which an intelligent person, or a deceiver and a cunning person, meet his or her counterpart., We find that the two proverbs are identical in signification and meaning from the side of strength and courage, as they are only beneficial to their counterparts; However, we find a difference between them in two respects. The first: the English proverb came to include the cunning and deceitful person as well opposite to the arabic which includes only brave, as it includes in the representation of the type of material and metal; The Arabic saying was represented by iron, while the English proverb was represented by diamond, and the diamond is stronger than iron in terms of hardness, durability and material value.

“فَرَّق تَسَدًا” This proverb has become a political, military and social term in our day, and it means fragmenting the capabilities of the competitor into multiple parts to be less powerful in a way that can be easily dealt with (*Atiye 34*). It was mentioned in the holy Qur’an in the story of Pharaoh, King of Egypt, that he used this method to weaken the people of the Children of Israel to control them (*Al-Maraghee 20 148*) “Indeed, Pharaoh exalted himself in the land and made its people into factions, oppressing a sector among them, slaughtering their [newborn] sons and keeping their females alive. Indeed, he was one of the corrupters.” (Quran *Al-Qasas:4*)

“Divide and rule” is a strategy used to control groups and populations under strict control so that they will not to regroup and gain influence in the future.

Since the proverb in both languages is taken from the Greek (*divide et impera*); Therefore, they came with the same wording, meaning and significance, and there is no difference between them

من لم يكن ذنبا اكلته الذئاب There is no doubt that a person in his life goes through many stages and harsh conditions and people of different natures and tendencies, and since the stages of life are generally harsh; This proverb indicates that we must be like wolves, strong among people, and not allow anyone to take away our rights and betray us (*Ibn al-Jawzi 3 80*); Because the weak is easy to be subjugated and oppressed by the strong, and this does not mean that we are the initiators of aggression against others, and that is why the proverb was complemented (*Al-Ghazee 11 289*): “من جعل نفسه عظما أكلته الكلاب” whoever made himself a bone, dogs ate it, means If you are timid, you are likely to be overpowered by or taken advantage of by others. If you belittle yourself, people will take advantage of you. Stand up for yourself. It was also mentioned in the Prophetic Sunnah: “A )mentally and physically( strong believer is better and more beloved to God than a weak believer” (*Sahih Muslim 4816*)

We find that the English proverb “Don’t make yourself a mouse, or the cat will eat you” urges us to not underestimate ourselves; because others exploit you. As for the Arabic proverb, it urges man to be strong so that others do not exploit him.

In the end, we find that the two proverbs are compatible in meaning and significance, but differ in formulation with the animal type of the proverb; As the wolf in ancient Arab culture symbolizes courage and strength; As for the cat and the mouse in the English proverb, it indicates that the big eats the small.



It is the moral nature of man to be lazy about work and seek his needs with the least movement and effort (*Ahmad* 1 348), so this proverb “من جد وجد” came to reveal the fact that reaching high ranks in this world of knowledge and other things can only be achieved by staying up late, fatigue and continuous effort. There is a verse in Quran which differentiates between lasy and active people “Indeed, those who have believed and done righteous deeds - indeed, We will not allow to be lost the reward of any who did well in deeds.” (Quran Al-Kahf 30)

The English proverb “He that would have the fruit, must climb the tree”

One must work for what one wants. In order to enjoy something, you should first make the effort to win it.

We find that the English proverb used fruits as a metaphor for benefit. It can only be obtained by climbing the tree and making an extra effort; As for the Arabic proverb, it came more eloquent and comprehensive for the intended meaning, as (found) includes everything that a person desires

## 6. Conclusion

Proverbs are a mirror to a culture and also at the same time are a part of the culture of a group of people so that proverbs will always remain pertinent, regardless of the development of society, economy, technology, and culture. Proverbs will always be the center of attention likewise for people and researchers all around the world. What we found could be summed up in three points: 1. Some Arabic proverbs are completely identical to the English proverbs whether it is in their usage, or notion, while some are partially identical. 2. Proverbs in Arabic are difficult to translate into English language 3. Analysis of the data which we have been studying showed that some of the Arabic proverbs’ equivalent saying could be found as idioms in English language. 4- All the proverbs used in the study are culturally appropriate having both negative and positive connotations. Thereby, the proverbs must be dealt with utmost caution and should not be perceived literally with due consideration to the cultural, religious and historical background of the proverbs so as to maintain the essence of meaning.

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## الملخص

لا شك أنّ الهدف من المقارنة بين الثقافات هو تسليط الضوء على التشابه والاختلافات بينهم.

الامثال بصورة عامة تعكس ثقافة القوم، وبما انها كثيرة الاستعمال في الحياة اليومية ؛ فلا يمكن دراسة هذه التعبيرات المجازية دون معرفة ثقافة هذا القوم، كما أن فهم لغتهم يكون صعبا. إن الهدف من دراستنا هو بيان معاني وأصول الأمثال العربية ثم مقارنتها مع الأمثال الانجليزية، لذلك قمنا بعرض الأمثال العربية الشعبية بما يؤيدها من النصوص الدينية واللغات تشتملان على أكثر الجوانب الحياتية للإنسان. بداية نأتي بالأمثال العربية الشعبية ونبين اصلها ومعانيها، ثم نذكر ما ورد في معانيها في النصوص الدينية قبل مقارنتها بالامثال الانجليزية. واستنتجنا من دراستنا أن الأمثال في كلتا اللغتين لها نفس الدلالات والاهداف، ومن ناحية اخرى فإن المعاني المجازية للأمثال في اللغتين دليل على تأثير الثقافات المختلفة على نشوؤها واستعمالاتها.