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AN INTERCULTURAL COMPARATIVE STUDY ON PERSIAN AND AMERICAN EMBODIMENT PROVERBS INCLUDING DOUBLE SENSORY ORGANS

Abstract: This paper explores Persian and American embodiment proverbs including at least two main sensory body organs in each proverb. The aim of this research was to examine the frequency, framing, speech act functions, and figurative parts of proverbs related to embodiment proverbs including at least two sensory body organs. Data were collected from the Persian and the American Dictionary of Proverbs. The data analysis showed that the framing of American proverbs is more gain-framing than loss-framing or avoidance-framing, but the framing of Persian proverbs is more avoidance-framing than gain-framing or loss-framing. The speech act functions of Persian and American proverbs are indirect advice and statements. The results showed that the figurative parts of both Persian and American embodiment proverbs include more metaphors than metonymy. Finally, the frequency of American proverbs which included at least two sensory body organs, was higher than Persian proverbs. The results showed that the human body parts ‘hand’ and ‘eye’ as the sensory organs can be considered the most important and most salient body parts used more than other sensory body organs in Persian or American proverbs.

Keywords: American proverb, Persian proverb, Embodiment proverbs, sensory body organ, framing, speech act function, figurative part

1. Introduction

There are five main sensory organs: hand, eye, ear, nose, and mouth. In cognitive linguistics, embodiment involves recognizing how an individual's physical body significantly influences their daily cognitive functions (Gibbs 2006). Eyes, ears, hands, nose, and mouth, including the tongue, are considered defining features of human beings and play a pivotal role as essential body parts that interact with the external world. Both internal and external stimuli using parts of the body can be analyzed and interpreted (Halprin 2002). Heine mentioned that “the human body provides one of the most salient models for understanding, describing, and denoting concepts that are more difficult to understand, describe, and denote” (2014: 17). This perspective highlights the interconnected development of both the “mind and body” (Maalej and Yu 2011: 12).

Although the origins of using proverbs remain mysterious, the proverbs have slowly become part of everyday language, and are frequently used in conversations in some cultures. While some recent studies have investigated how specific body parts like the heart, hand, foot, and head affect our thinking (Firman and Ratna 2019), there has not been much research on proverbs related to our different main sensory body organs. Also, previous studies have not compared proverbs involving two body parts related to our senses in both Persian and American languages. This study aims to fill these gaps by examining embodiment proverbs in Persian and American, analyzing their frequency, framing, functions in speech, and figurative aspects.

There is a Persian proverb including one sensory body organ and the analysis shows the framing, speech act function, and figurative parts.

کف دست مو ندارد

Kaf-e dast mu nadārad

Palm-EZ hand hair NEG.have.PRS.3SG

Lit. The palm of the hand has no hair

‘You cannot get blood from a stone’

In the given instance, the Persian proverb ‘palm has no hair’ carries a literal meaning, which is analogous to the English proverb

'You cannot get blood from a stone.' In this case, the Persian proverb serves the function of a statement, while the English proverb serves as 'direct advice'. Notably, a disparity in framing between the Persian and English proverbs is discernible: the Persian proverb employs loss-framing, while its English counterpart employs avoidance-framing. In the Persian proverb, the source and target domains are related to the 'human body' and incorporate metonymical imagery components. Conversely, the English proverb's source domain and target domain pertain to 'liquid vital body fluid' and 'object,' respectively. Consequently, the figurative part of the English proverb is both metaphorical and rooted in a metonymic basis, where 'blood' stands for life. Thus, this paper provides framing, speech acts of function, and figurative parts of Persian and American embodiment proverbs which include double main sensory body organs.

2. Figurative Parts, Speech Act of Function and Framing

A proverb may contain a metaphor when it employs a creature from one level to represent a creature at a different level (Kövecses 2002). Lakoff and Johnson (1980) presented a conceptual metaphor analysis model that underscores three key components: the source domain, the target domain, and a collection of mapping relationships or correspondences. Some scholars have observed that metonymy might be a more fundamental cognitive process compared to metaphor (Panther and Radden 1999). Metonymic mapping is characterized as primarily reference-based. It functions within a single conceptual domain or between two domains that are connected by closeness or proximity (Kövecses and Radden 1998). The categorization of metaphor and metonymy is not clearly defined but instead exists on a scale of mapping processes (Barcelona 2000b). Additionally, in numerous instances, the metaphor could be inspired or driven by metonymy (Barcelona 2000c).

According to Lakoff (1987), there are three main classifications of metaphor. The first is 'conventional metaphors', which link multiple concepts from the source domain to various concepts in the target domain. The second is 'generic metaphors', which allows us to grasp a generalized situation by drawing from

the specific, relying on our capacity to extract the general from the specific. The third is ‘image metaphors’, which are based on perception and connect one image to another. In this case, not only does the source domain include images or mental representations of a specific concept, but so does the target domain. For example, when two completely different concepts share the same physical traits, they represent the mental characteristics by maintaining the same image in mind. They are also called ‘attributional metaphors’, because “they attribute physical properties to concepts” (Manasia 2016: 4).

In most languages, body-related terms may have shared meanings and functions across languages, but their perception of how the body influences metaphors can vary. Speech acts are forms of communication in which the speaker intends to convey specific content (Sharifi and Ebrahimi 2012). Proverbs are powerful tools, succinctly conveying messages with few words, and they serve a range of functions (Nippold et al 1988). This research focuses on categorizing speech act functions as statements, complaints, direct and indirect advice, or warnings. In addition, framing will be classified as “gain framing”, “loss framing”, and “avoidance framing” (Brdar-Szabó et al 2023: 288). In different languages, there is a possibility that certain abstract ideas could be linked to various body parts or experiences. Similarly, similar body parts or experiences across languages might express different abstract concepts (Kövecses 2005; Yu 2008).

3. Methodology

This research employs both qualitative and quantitative methods. A dictionary of Persian proverbs written by Yusuf Jamshidipour and a dictionary of American proverbs written by Wolfgang Mieder have been used as two popular dictionaries for data collection. The famous dictionary of American proverbs written by Wolfgang Mieder, editor in chief, and Stewart A. Kingsbury and Kelsie B. Harder, Editors, was published by Oxford University Press in 1992 and it includes 15000 American proverbs which is the initial significant compilation of English proverbs derived from spoken rather than written sources.

The dictionary of Persian proverbs includes proverbs, sayings, and superstitions, and both common and obsolete folklore. It was first published in 1968 by Foroughi Publications in Iran. The dictionary, which contains 295 pages, lists proverbs alphabetically based on Persian alphabets, with brief explanations of their meanings and usage provided alongside each entry. This historically significant yet frequently republished Persian dictionary has been selected to emphasize the rich history of Persian Proverbs which dates back many years before the publication of this Persian dictionary of proverbs. While the dictionary is old, the majority of the proverbs it contains are still used in daily conversations by Iranians, with only a few having become obsolete.

The compilation of this Persian proverb dictionary draws from a spectrum of esteemed sources. It encompasses the extensive gatherings of Ali Akbar Dehkoda in 1931, spread across four substantial volumes. Additionally, it integrates Saeed Nafisii's 'Farnoodsad' dictionary from 1931, Suleiman Hayyim's bilingual compilation of Persian and English proverbs from 1955, Seyed Kamaluddin Mortazaviyan's 1961 publication narrating proverbial tales, Seyyed Mohammad Ali Jamalzadeh's catalog of slang words compiled in 1921, Mohammad Hossein Ibn Khalaf Tabrizi's "Decisive Proof" dictionary published in 1963, Sa'di's renowned literary works 'Golestan' and 'Bostan' from the seventh century, and a curated anthology of proverbs by Amirqoli Amini in 1960. The above-mentioned sources have also been used on the proverbs collection of double main perception verbs (Sharifrad 2024).

3.1. Research Questions

The study aims to explore the following questions:

RQ1: What are the frequency distributions of Persian and American embodiment proverbs including at least two sensory body organs?

RQ2: What are the most frequent sensory body organs used in Persian and American embodiment proverbs including at least two main sensory body organs?

RQ3: What is the most frequent framing of Persian proverbs and American proverbs including at least two main sensory body organs?

RQ4: What are the most frequent speech act functions of Persian proverbs and American proverbs including at least two main sensory body organs?

RQ5: What are the most frequent figurative parts of Persian proverbs and American proverbs including at least two main sensory body organs?

3.2. Data Collection

The proverbial data have been collected by considering all pages of the dictionary of Persian proverbs and American proverbs. Firstly, all embodiment proverbs including five main sensory body parts; eye, ear, hand, nose, and mouth, including tongue, have been collected. In the second phase, all proverbs including at least two sensory body parts, were selected separately from the Persian and American dictionary of proverbs. In the third phase, those Persian collected embodiment proverbs were first transliterated, then they were glossed and translated literally into English. In the fifth phase, the framing, speech acts of function, and figurative parts of a collected embodiment of Persian and American proverbs were analyzed. Finally, all Persian collected proverbs were compared with American proverbs. Some proverb stories have been added to enhance the meaning of some proverbs. All the phases of data collection draw from the same method that was applied for collecting proverbs including double main perception verbs (Sharifrad 2024).

All collected proverbs have been classified separately and analyzed in order. The Persian proverbs have been specified by adding the name of the dictionary of Persian proverbs written by Yusuf Jamshidipour (hereinafter Jamshidipour) as well as writing the page number for each proverb in the dictionary. The American proverbs have been specified by adding the name of the Dictionary of American Proverbs written by Wolfgang Mieder (hereinafter Mieder) as well as writing the page number for each proverb in the American Dictionary of Proverbs. To answer five research questions, a comparison was made between Persian and American embodiment proverbs including two same or different sensory body organs - hand, tongue, ear, eye, and nose.

3.3. Proverbs including two same sensory body organs

A. Double Hand

(1) Persian Proverb

از هر دست بدهی، از همان دست پس می‌گیری (Jamshidipour-P.22)

Az har dast bedahi, Az hamān dast pas migiri

From each hand give-PRS.2SG, from the same hand give back- PRS.2SG

*Lit. From whatever **hand** you owe, you will receive from the same **hand***

'What goes around, comes around'

'Every action is followed by a reaction'

'A good deed is never lost'

Framing: gain-framing

Speech Act Function: indirect advice

This proverb highlights the effects of good and bad deeds on a person's life. Here, the hand is a metaphor for good or bad deeds. Two verses in the holy Quran refer to this proverb, stating "anyone who has done even an iota of good, they will see it, or even if anyone who has done an iota of bad, they will see it in another world or even in this world" (Quran 99: 599).

There is a nice story translation¹ related to this proverb: one day, a generous dervish with limited financial means sold his wife's hand-sewn cloth for one dirham to buy food. On his way back home, he encountered two individuals engaged in a fierce fight over a dirham. Curious about the cause of the dispute, the dervish inquired, and they explained that their fight had erupted over that very dirham. The dervish, moved by their strife, decided to end the quarrel by giving them the one dirham he had just earned from selling his wife's clothes. Thus, he came back home empty-handed and told the story to his wife. Instead of protesting, his wife was delighted by his compassionate act. She found an old cloth and offered it to her husband to sell in place of the one he had given away. Despite his efforts, the dervish couldn't find a buyer for the cloth, but he encountered a fisher-

¹ <https://magerta.ir/culture/literature/from-every-loss-you-get-back-from-same-hand-proverb/>

man in need of a customer. He proposed an exchange: the cloth for the fish. The fisherman agreed, and the dervish brought the fish home for his wife to prepare. When the wife cut the fish, she discovered a large pearl inside. Overjoyed, the dervish and his wife took the pearl to a jeweler friend who purchased it at a high price. Through this unexpected turn of events, God rewarded the dervish's generosity and transformed him from poverty to prosperity in exchange for the one dirham he had lost due to his benevolent act.

(2) Persian Proverb

گر حنظل خوری از دست خوشخوی به از شیرینی از دست ترش روی (Jamshidipour- P.26)

Agar hanzal xori az dast-e xos ruy, beh az širirni az dast-e torš ruy

If bitter watermelon eat from hand kind person, better than sweet from hand grumpy man

*Lit. If you eat bad food from a cheerful **hand**, it will be better to eat sweet from **hand** of a grumpy man*

'It's the thought that counts'

Framing: avoidance-framing

Speech Act Function: indirect advice

This poem excerpt transforms into a proverb advising that it is better to savor a bitter watermelon than ask for a sweet one from someone stingy or ill-tempered, knowing they would refuse it. It metaphorically highlights the value of relishing a simple meal with zest over a luxurious one received begrudgingly.

The story² related to this proverb is taken from Golestan-e Sadi, 3rd Section, talking about a man who was injured in the Tatar War, and someone suggested that a particular merchant had remedies available if he wanted them. However, that merchant had a reputation for being very miserly. The injured man firmly decided "Whether I receive the medicine or not, it's of no consequence. Asking for it is a kind of poison that kills the spirit. As the wise have said, even if they sell the elixir of life, don't be so eager for it, for life can become a source of disgrace and

² <https://ganjooor.net/saadi/golestan/gbab3/sh9>, retrieved on 10 December 2023

humiliation, just like in the proverb where water is compared to wisdom”.

(3) Persian Proverb

پا پای خر، دست دست یاسه، با اینکار عظم نمی ماسه (Jamshidipour-P.76)

Pā pāy-e xar, dast dast-e yās-e, bā inkār aqlam nemimāse
Foot foot-EZ donkey, hand hand-EZ Yas-e, with this wise
NEG.understand.1SG

*Lit. Foot is Donkey's foot, **Hand** is Yase's **hand**; I do not understand this.*

'You can't make a silk purse out of a sow's ear'

Framing: loss-framing

Speech Act Function: statement

This proverb's origin tale³ tells of a Kurdish mother-in-law who owned grape juice called “Khmi Doshab.” One day, her daughter-in-law, Yase, accidentally spilled a considerable amount of water on the house floor. While leaving, Yase sat on a donkey and, while leaning down to pick up some bowls, left her handprint on the curve of the donkey's back. Upon the mother-in-law's return and noticing both the donkey's tracks and the handprint, she was puzzled. She mused, “The footprints are from the donkey, and the handprint is Yase's. I can't understand this.”

In the Persian narrative, this proverb finds use when an event occurs outside the usual or natural order, surpassing comprehension. The metaphorical use of 'hand' or 'foot' conveys a feeling of frustration when we are faced with a situation that seems purposeless.

(4) American proverb

*Busy **hands** are happy **hands** (Mieder-P.275)*

Framing: gain-framing

Speech Act Function: indirect advice

This proverb shows how people, especially children, are happy when their hands are occupied with food or toys. So, the hand is metonymy, and it shows that when there is a lack of meaningful

³ <http://masal-asal.blogfa.com/1388/11>, retrieved on 10 December 2023

engagement, it can have feelings of unhappiness and dissatisfaction on people.

(5) American proverb

*He has three **hands**; a right **hand**, a left **hand**, and a little behindhand (Mieder-P.275)*

Framing: gain-framing

Speech Act Function: statement

This metaphor expresses that while everyone has a right or left hand, mentioning the “little behind hand” refers to someone who approaches tasks in an extra or innovative way, thinking outside the box.

(6) American proverb

*Never let your left **hand** know what your right **hand** is doing (Mieder-P.276)*

Framing: avoidance-framing

Speech Act Function: direct advice

This proverb shows that charity and good deeds should be done privately and humbly, without seeking acknowledgment. The proverb uses ‘hand’ as a metaphor to show generosity. So, it emphasizes the idea that when individuals perform charitable deeds, it is good to keep these actions private, because all acts of kindness are known to God.

(7) American proverb

*One **hand** is better than no **hand** at all (Mieder-P.276)*

Framing: gain-framing

Speech Act Function: indirect advice

This proverb is used when something is not ideal or perfect, but it is better than having nothing. It employs the concept of a ‘hand’ as a metonymy for wider opportunities when contrasted with having nothing at all. This proverb is similar to a Persian equivalent in that its literal translation is: something is better than nothing, so it puts emphasis on what we have, and we should be thankful.

(8) Persian Equivalent

کاجی بهتر از هیچی

Kāci behtar az hīci

Food better than nothing

Lit. Kachi (simple Iranian food which is served as dessert) is better than nothing

'Half a loaf is better than none'

(9) American proverb

*The **hand** that rocks the cradle is the **hand** that rules the world (Mieder-P.276)*

Framing: gain-framing

Speech Act Function: statement

This proverb is used for admiration for women, especially mothers, as they raise and care for the next generation. This proverb uses the hand as a metonymy. William Ross Wallace penned a poem titled “The Hand That Rocks the Cradle Is the Hand That Rules the World,”⁴ celebrating the importance of motherhood. Although originally published in 1865 under the title “What Rules the World,” the complete poem might not be widely acknowledged today, yet its recurring phrase remains a well-known proverb.

B. Double Tongue

(10) Persian Proverb

از صد زبان زیان خموشی رساتر است (Jamshidipour-P.19)

Az sad zabān, zabān-e xamuši rasātar ast

From hundred tongue-PL, tongue off louder be-PRS.3SG

*Lit. of a hundred **tongues**, the **tongue** of silence is the most expressive.*

'Silence is more eloquent than words'

Framing: avoidance-framing

Speech Act Function: indirect advice

⁴ [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/The_Hand_That_Rocks_the_Cradle_\(poem\)](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/The_Hand_That_Rocks_the_Cradle_(poem)), retrieved on 10 December 2023

This proverb emphasizes that there are situations where silence can have greater influence than speech and silence can convey a message more effectively than words. For instance, when someone has undergone a significant tragedy, their unspoken grief can be more revealing, as words may inadequately show the depth of their inner suffering. So, the metaphor of “a hundred tongues” represents the multitude of languages or words that can be spoken. It contrasts this with “silence” as a metaphorical choice, suggesting that choosing to stay quiet can be even more influential than verbal expression.

There is no double tongue as sensory body organ in the American dictionary.

C. Double Ear

(11) Persian Proverb

از این گوش می‌گیرد از آن گوش در می‌کند (Jamshidipour-P.15 , 23)

Az in guš migirad az ān guš dar mikonad

From this ear listen-PRS.3SG from that ear exit- PRS.3SG

*Lit- he listens from this **ear** and exits it from that **ear**. or*

Goes in one ear and out the other

Framing: loss-framing

Speech Act Function: complaint

There are idiomatic expressions and proverbial saying that convey the idea of not paying attention to advice or the opinions of others, such as: “Deaf to advice”, “Turn a deaf ear”, or “Hard of hearing when it comes to advising.”⁵ This proverb employs both metaphorical and metonymic elements. The ears are used metaphorically to represent the act of hearing and listening. The ears are used metonymically to represent the process of communication and selective hearing. This proverb characterizes individuals who receive information but promptly forget or ignore it.

There is no double ear as a sensory body organ in the American dictionary.

⁵ <https://www.persian-star.org>, retrieved on 10 December 2023

D. Double Eye

(12) Persian Proverb

به چشم برادری، به چشم خواهری (Jamshidipour-P.53)

Be cašm-e barādari, be cašm-e xāhari

With eye-EZ brotherhood, with eye-EZ sisterhood

Lit. In the eyes of brotherhood, in the eyes of sisterhood

Framing: gain-framing

Speech Act Function: statement

There is no direct American proverb equivalent to this Persian proverb. In this expression, the admirer might compare the person's beauty or qualities to those of their sibling. The use of "the eye" as metonymy symbolizes a person.

(13) Persian Proverb

چشم چشم را نمی بیند (Jamshidipour-P.104)

cašm cašm rā nemibinad

eye eye OM NEG.SEE.3SG

Lit. One eye does not see the other eye

'It's as dark as night'

Framing: loss-framing

Speech Act Function: complaint

This proverb is used metaphorically when there is too much dark. There is no American proverb as an equivalent to this Persian proverb but there is an idiom, It's as dark as night, that conveys the same message.

(14) American proverb

An eye for an eye, a tooth for a tooth (Mieder -P.190)

Framing: gain-framing

Speech Act Function: indirect warning

This proverb is metaphorical. It suggests that when someone inflicts harm, the fitting response is to mete out a comparable harm in return. In Islam, this principle is known as Qiṣās, as outlined in Quran 2:178: "O you who have believed, it is ordained for

you to seek legal retribution (Qisas) for those who have been murdered – life for life, slave for slave, and female for female”.

(15) American Proverb

Blue eyes, true eyes (Mieder-P.190)

Framing: Gain-framing

Speech Act Function: Statement

This proverb conveys the idea that individuals with blue eyes are often regarded as trustworthy and reliable. This proverb includes metonymy, using the color of one’s eyes (blue eyes) to symbolize their integrity and character. Similarly, there is a Persian equivalent indicating that outward appearances may not necessarily mirror someone’s true character or inner goodness.

(16) Persian Equivalent

سینه سپید، دل نیکو، پوستین سیاه، عکس دل و دین بد

Sineh sepid, del niku, pustin siāh, aks-e del o din bad

Chest white, heart good, skin black, image heart and religion bad

Lit. A white chest, a good heart; a black cloak, a bad reflection of heart and religion

(17) American proverb

It is better to get something in your eye and then wink than to wink and then get something in your eye (Mieder-P.190)

Framing: avoidance-framing

Speech Act Function: indirect advice

This proverb uses a metaphor to emphasize the significance of taking proactive steps to prevent potential negative outcomes. There is a Persian proverb that shows the importance of preparation before a problem comes up.

(18) Persian Equivalent

علاج واقعه را قبل از وقوع باید کرد

ʔalâḏḡ-e vâqeʔe rā qabl az voquʔ bāyad

Remedy-EZ incident OM before occurrence must

SUBJ.do.3SG

*Lit. The incident must be remedied before it occurs
'It is better to avoid trouble'*

(19) American proverb

*No **eye** like the master's **eye** (Mieder-P.191)*

Framing: avoidance-framing

Speech Act Function: indirect advice

This proverb is used when an individual in a position of authority or possessing the most expertise is well-informed and in control of a situation. This proverb contains a metaphor that shows that people with high rankings and powers can easily guide others just with their supervision.

E. Double Nose

There is no double nose in Persian dictionary of Jamshidi-pour.

(20) American proverb

*A person who looks down his **nose** at people will never see beyond that **nose** (Mieder- P.432)*

Framing: Loss-framing

Speech Act Function: indirect advice

This proverb expresses that there are some individuals who look at others from a high position. There is a corresponding Persian proverb that metaphorically shows an identical message but with only one nose available in the proverb. It is frequently used to criticize someone who is displaying shortsightedness and is unable to foresee the future.

(21)

نوک دماغش را می بیند

Nok-e damāq aš rā mibinad

Head-EZ nose POSS.ADJ OM IPFV.see.3SG

Lit. He/ she can just see his/her tip of nose

'He can't see beyond the end of his nose'

3.4. Proverbs including two different sensory body parts

A. Hand and Mouth

(22) Persian Parable

(Jamshidipour-P.55) به درویش گفتند بساط برچین دست بر دهان گذاشت

Be darviš goftand basāt barcin dast bar dahān gozāšt

Lit. They told to the dervish to take your stuff, he put his

hand over his **mouth**

Framing: avoidance-framing

Speech Act Function: indirect advice

This proverb offers guidance and puts emphasis on the hypocrisy of advocating humility without practicing it oneself.

(23) Persian Proverb

(Jamshidipour-P.131) دستش به دهنش می رسد

Dastaš be dahānaš miresad

Hand-POSS.ADJ to mouth-POSS.ADJ reach

*Lit. His **hand** reaches his **mouth***

'He's got a knack for it'

Framing: gain-framing

Speech Act Function: statement

This proverb includes a metaphor to describe someone's high level in financial status. So, it shows a person who does not need the help of others because s/he is prosperous, self-reliant, and rich.

(24) American proverb

*Divine are many **hands**; cursed are many **mouth*** (Mieder-P.275)

Framing: gain-framing

Speech Act Function: statement

This proverb shows the importance of engaging in acts of kindness rather than merely speaking or making promises. Conversely, using words to make empty commitments can lead to negative consequence. In this proverb, "many hands" and "many mouths" refer to people's actions and words, respectively, suggesting a

comparison between the divine and cursed aspects of human behavior. There is a Persian idiom conveying a similar message.

(25) Persian Equivalent

به عمل کار برآید به سخنانی نیست

be amal kar barayad be soxanrani nist

Lit. Deeds are better than words

(26) American proverb

*The man with the lazy **hand** has an empty **mouth** (Mieder-P.277)*

Framing: loss-framing

Speech Act Function: indirect advice

This proverb shows that individuals who lack motivation (symbolized by the “lazy hand”) are less likely to achieve success and may have little to show for their lack of action (an “empty mouth” denoting a lack of tangible results). So, in this proverb, “lazy hand” shows the idea of a lack of effort, and “empty mouth” shows a lack of success.

(27) American proverb

*When the **hand** ceases to scatter, the **mouth** ceases to praise (Mieder-P.277)*

Framing: loss-framing

Speech Act Function: statement

This proverb shows that if a person becomes more selfish and stops sharing their resource, they receive less of the positive recognition and appreciation. In Persian, there is an equivalent that shows that generosity is a mutually beneficial act that positively affects both the giver and the receiver.

(28) Persian Equivalent

دست بخشش را بستن، دل گشاینده را بستن

Dast-e baxeš rā bastan, del-e gošāyande rā bastan.

Closing the hand of giving is closing the heart of receiving

(29) American proverb

*When you get your **hand** in a bear's **mouth**, you'd better work easy until you get it out (Mieder-P.277)*

Framing: avoidance-framing

Speech Act Function: Indirect warning

This proverb indirectly warns against acting without thinking by comparing it to the danger of putting your hand in a bear's mouth. It shows that one should avoid making quick decisions without considering the consequences.

B. Hand and Eye

(30) Persian Proverb

دست کار می کند چشم می ترسد (Jamshidipour-P.131)

Dast kār mikonad cašm mitarsad

Hand work-PRS eye fear-PRS

Lit. The hand works, the eye is afraid

'Walking on eggshells'

Framing: avoidance-framing

Speech Act Function: statement

This proverb shows that despite being physically engaged in a task, someone's mind is preoccupied with anxiety, worry, or fear. So, "the hand works" and "the eye is anxious" straightforwardly symbolize the physical actions and the emotional state of an individual.

(31) American proverbs

*The **eye** of the master does more than his **hand**= The **eye** of a master will do more work than both his **hands** (Mieder-P.191 & P.276)*

Framing: Gain-framing

Speech Act Function: statement

In this proverb, 'the eye of the master' shows the ability of masters to oversee and guide, and the hand of the master represents the work the master does. There is a similar Persian saying which emphasizes that supervision is important for achieving success.

(32) Persian Equivalent

چشم و راه پدر می افکند

*Cašm o rāh-e pedar rah mifekand**Lit. The eye and guidance of the father paves the way*

(33) American proverb

*The **hand** is quicker than the **eye** (Mieder-P.276)**Framing: gain-framing**Speech Act Function: statement*

This proverb expresses that the human hand, during physical activity, can be exceptionally swift and proficient, making it difficult for observers to perceive and fully understand the intricacies of the hand's actions solely through visual observation. In this proverb, "the hand" directly represents physical actions, while "the eye" directly represents the act of seeing or visual perception.

C. Hand and Ear

(34) Persian Proverbial Saying

دست بر سر و گوش کسی کشیدن (Jamshidipour-P.130)

*Dast bar sar o guš-e kasi kešidan**Hand on head and ear-EZ someone touch. GERUND**Lit. to put one's **hand** on someone's head and **ear****'to have someone eating out of your hand'**Framing: gain-framing**Speech Act Function: statement*

This proverb seems to imply a situation where one person assumes the role of a mentor, leader, or holds authority over another. It uses metaphor to illustrate the idea of power and guidance. Additionally, it can also be used ironically to slightly improve someone's image or to fix and tidy something up.

D. Hand and Tongue

(35) American proverb

*A long **tongue** has a short **hand**= A long tongue is a sign of a short hand (Mieder-P.603)*

Framing: Loss-framing
Speech Act Function: compliant

This proverb shows that “a long tongue” and “a short hand” are used directly to symbolize excessive talk and a lack of action.

(36) American proverb
*He who has not a good **tongue** needs to have good **hands***
(Mieder-P.604)
Framing: Loss-framing
Speech Act Function: Indirect advice

This proverb shows that if someone does not have the ability to persuade others through speech, they should ensure they possess the necessary skills to achieve their goals through practical actions. Here, “a good tongue” and “good hands” directly symbolize effective communication and practical abilities.

E. Mouth and Tongue

(37) Persian Proverbial Saying
زبان دهان کسی گذاشتن (Jamshidipour-P.146)
Zaban be dahān-e kasi gozāstan
Tongue to mouth-ez someone put
Lit. To put someone's tongue in someone's mouth
'To put words in someone's mouth'
Framing: avoidance-framing
Speech Act Function: complain

This proverb figuratively signifies speaking on behalf of someone or advocating for them, often without their consent or against their wishes.

(38) American proverb
*Whosoever keeps his **mouth** and his **tongue** keeps his soul*
from trouble
Framing: gain-framing
Speech Act Function: indirect advice

This proverb implies that exercising self-discipline and being careful with one's words can prevent and sidestep various problems and conflicts. There is a Persian equivalent conveying the same message.

(39) Persian Equivalent

هزار لب خموش بهتر از یک لب خندان

Hezār lab-e xāmuš behtar az yek lab-e xandān

Lit. A silent mouth is better than a smiling mouth a thousand times

F. Mouth and Eye

(40) American proverb

*Keep your **mouth** shut and your **eyes** open (Mieder- P.190 & P.420)*

Framing: gain-framing

Speech Act Function: direct advice

This proverb advises people to be cautious and refrain from speaking impulsively or disclosing excessive details. In addition, there is an idiom in Persian culture that puts emphasis on speaking only when necessary and being mindful about divulging excessive information.

(41) Persian Equivalent

گوش بزنی، چشم ببند

Guš bezan, cašm beband,

Lit. Listen, but close your eyes.

G. Eye and Ear

(42) American proverb

*It is better to trust the **eye** than the **ear** (Mieder- P.190)*

Framing: gain-framing

Speech Act Function: Indirect advice

This proverb implies that direct experience and personal observation hold more reliability and trustworthiness compared to information gained through spoken words or rumors, and it emphasizes the superiority of firsthand, experiential knowledge over secondhand or verbal information.

(43) American proverb

One eye has more faith than two ears (Mieder- P.190)

Framing: gain-framing

Speech Act Function: indirect advice

This proverb expresses that seeing something with your own eyes is often a more reliable and credible source of knowledge because it is less susceptible to the inaccuracies and biases of spoken words. There is a Persian proverb that conveys the idea that visual evidence and firsthand observation are more trustworthy and purer compared to information received through the ears or verbal communication.

(44) Persian Equivalent

چشم از گوش پاکتر است

cašm az guš pāktar ast

Lit. The eye is cleaner than the ear

H. Ear and Tongue

(45) American proverb

A pair of good ears will drain dry a hundred tongues (Mieder- P.173)

Framing: gain-framing

Speech Act Function: indirect advice

This proverb highlights the strength of listening, as more valuable than talking. There is a Persian proverb that conveys a similar concept, emphasizing that listening and understanding are more valuable than talking excessively.

(46) Persian Equivalent

یک گوش بهتر از صد زبان

Yek guš behtar az sad zabān
Lit. One good ear is better than a hundred tongues

(47) American proverb
*The **tongue** offends, and the **ears** get the cuffing (Mieder-
 P.605)*
Framing: loss-framing
Speech Act Function: statement

In this proverb, “cuffing” metaphorically shows the opposite consequences or reactions that might result from unkind words spoken by humans.

(48) American proverb
*Have a wide **ear** and a short **tongue** (Mieder- P.173)*
Framing: gain-framing
Speech Act Function: direct advice

The metaphor in this proverb is the “wide ear” which shows the skill of being an attentive and open-minded listener, and the “short tongue” shows the act of speaking thoughtfully.

I. Ear and Mouth

(49) American proverb
*An open **ear** and a closed **mouth** is the best known substitution for wisdom (Mieder- P.173)*
Framing: gain-framing
Speech Act Function: indirect advice

This proverb shows that an individual who takes others’ advice, and refrains from unnecessary actions, is often considered wise. The “open ear” shows the ability to listen attentively while the “closed mouth” shows the importance of speaking thoughtfully and with self-restraint.

4. Data Analysis

To answer the first and second questions, a total of 38 embodiment proverbs were analyzed in this research, including 12 Persian embodiment proverbs and 26 American embodiment proverbs. According to Table 1, the total number of Persian embodiment proverbs including double hand, tongue, ear, eye and nose are 3, 1, 1, 2, 0, respectively. For the American embodiment proverbs including double hand, tongue, ear, eye and nose, the corresponding numbers are 5, 0, 0, 4, 1, respectively. This indicates that 17 (out of 38) proverbs included the same sensory body organs.

Table 1. Embodiment proverbs including two same body organs

Body parts	Hand	Tongue	Ear	Eye	Nose
Persian Proverbs	3	1	1	2	-
American proverbs	5	-	-	4	1
Total frequency	8	1	1	6	1

Thus, the total numbers of proverbs involving double *hand* and *eye* in American and Persian proverbs are 8 and 6, respectively. It shows that the hand and the eye appear more frequently than other sensory body organs. According to Table 1, the total number of Persian and American embodiment proverbs including two same body organs in each proverb is 17 out of 38 proverbs.

According to Appendices 1 and 2, there are 21 proverbs out of the 38 that include two different body organs, with the most frequent combinations being ‘hand & mouth’, ‘hand & eye’, ‘ear & tongue’ and ‘mouth & tongue’. The results suggest that *hand* and *mouth* are the most frequent different body organs that have been used in proverbs, indicating the hand’s ability to interact with all body organs especially other main sensory body organs such as the eye, ear, nose and especially mouth (tongue)

For research question 3, the speech act functions in Persian proverbs are statement (5), indirect advice (4), complaint (2), direct advice (1), and there was no direct or indirect warning. The speech act functions in American proverbs are indirect advice (12), statement (8), direct advice (3), indirect warning (2), complain (1), and no direct warnings.

Persian proverbs: statement > indirect advice > complaint > direct advice

American proverbs: indirect advice > statement > direct advice > indirect warning > complaint

To answer research question 4, the framing in Persian proverbs is avoidance-framing (5), gain-framing (4), and loss-framing (3), but the speech acts of function in American proverbs are gain-framing (16), loss-framing (6) and avoidance-framing (4).

Persian proverbs: Avoidance-framing > Gain-framing > Loss-framing

American proverbs: Gain-framing > Loss-framing > Avoidance-framing

To answer research question 5, the figurative elements in Persian and American proverbs predominantly include metaphor and metonymy. Body organs are used not only as parts of the whole (human) but also metaphorically to convey a broader meaning.

The data analysis also indicates that there are American and Persian proverbs that share the same meaning and the same body parts are used in the proverbs as demonstrated by the examples 20 (21), 27 (28), 31 (32), 43 (44), and 45 (46). However certain Persian proverbs share similar meanings with American proverbs, but they employ different body parts, as illustrated in example 15 (16). According to example 40 (41), it is interesting that the American proverb advises closing the ‘mouth’ and opening the ‘eye’ to be cautious, while the Persian proverb suggests closing the ‘eye’ and using the ear instead of the mouth to imply that if we hear or see something secret, we should act as if we have not observed it. There are also some Persian equivalents for American proverbs, as illustrated in examples 7 (8), 17 (18), 24 (25) and 38 (39). However, these Persian equivalents do not include any body organ but convey the same meaning as the American proverbs.

5. Conclusion

The analysis of the proverbs above show that the sensory body parts, the ‘hand’ and the ‘mouth’ are often regarded as the most crucial and prominent aspects of the human body in both Persian

and American proverbs. In certain cases, the human body is utilized to depict humanity more broadly. The metonymic parts of these proverbs involve associating the actions or characteristics of specific body parts with the broader behavior or nature of humans. However, all American proverbs include both metaphor and metonymy, while all Persian proverbs include only metaphor and not metonymy. The most common speech acts functions that are used in Persian proverbs are statements and indirect advice, while in American proverbs, indirect advice is predominant. There were no direct warnings in either Persian and American proverbs. The framing in Persian proverbs is avoidance-framing, while in American proverbs, it is gain-framing. However, the hand has been used with ear only in Persian proverbs and it has been used with the tongue only in American proverbs, but hand has not been used with nose either in Persian or American proverbs. The human body parts ‘hand’ and ‘eye’ as the *same* sensory body parts can be considered the most important and most salient parts of the body used both in Persian and American proverbs. However, ‘hand’ and ‘mouth’ as *different* body organs are the most frequently used body organs in Persian and American proverbs. Finally, the hand is the most frequent sensory body organ used with the sensory body organs mouth and eye in both Persian and American proverbs.

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Appendix 1.

	<i>Persian Proverbs</i>	<i>Frequency</i>
<i>Body Part</i>	<i>HAND & MOUTH</i>	<i>2</i>
	<i>HAND & EYE</i>	<i>1</i>
	<i>HAND & EAR</i>	<i>1</i>
	<i>MOUTH & TONGUE</i>	<i>1</i>

Appendix 2.

	<i>American proverbs</i>	<i>Frequency</i>
<i>Body Part</i>	<i>HAND & MOUTH</i>	<i>4</i>
	<i>HAND & EYE</i>	<i>2</i>
	<i>HAND & TONGUE</i>	<i>2</i>
	<i>MOUTH & TONGUE</i>	<i>1</i>
	<i>MOUTH & EYE</i>	<i>1</i>
	<i>MOUTH & EAR</i>	<i>1</i>
	<i>EYE & EAR</i>	<i>2</i>
	<i>EAR & TONGUE</i>	<i>3</i>

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