

## PROVERBS. TYPES OF PROVERBS AND THEIR IMPORTANCE IN THE LANGUAGE PROGRESS

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**Annotation:** Proverbs are important part of linguistics. This article presents information about the current role of proverbs in the field of linguistics, their importance in real life, and the division of proverbs into several types. Proverbs have an indispensable place in the life and culture of the people, and in this feature the proverbs of each nation differ from others. In this regard, the culture, lifestyle, customs and traditions of this people are vividly reflected in proverbs. In this regard, the study of proverbs is of great importance.

**Key words:** proverbs, phraseological units, sociocultural context, saying, linguistic product, phraseological components, lexical components

In the field of linguistics due to their consistent lexical components, conventional and frequently figurative meaning, proverbs share many characteristics with phraseological units. Proverbs and phraseological units should be examined simultaneously, according to V.V. Vinogradov<sup>1</sup>. Others such as J. Casares and N.N. Amosova believe that it is incorrect to include autonomous units of communication like sentences in the system of language because they do not consistently form portions of other sentences. According to N.N. Amosova “There is no more reason to consider them as part of phraseology than, for example, riddles and children’s counts. As we know phraseological units are the main and probably one of the most important part of the linguistics”<sup>2</sup>.

Proverbs and sayings must be distinguished from phraseological units. The clear structural difference serves as the first identifying characteristic. Phraseological units are described as a kind of ready-made blocks that fit into the structure of a sentence in order to form a certain syntactical function similar to how words do. Since proverbs are sentences when considered structurally, they cannot be employed in the same way that phraseological components are. For example, “Never trouble trouble until trouble troubles you.” Additionally, if we look at proverbs and phraseological units from the semantic perspective, we will see that proverbs and sayings summarize the shared experiences of a community. They signify an item or an action in speech and have just a nominative purpose. Proverbs have a communicational purpose, but they also influence specific types of knowledge.

Proverbs are special, fixed, unchanged phrases with special, fixed, unchanged meanings. They are distinct from idioms in that they reveal ingrained cultural knowledge. The first part of a proverb may occasionally be sufficient to convey the entire meaning, making them simple to understand. For example, “Do not count your chickens” is used instead of “Do not count your chickens before they have hatched”. Proverbs are often thought of as being culturally specific

<sup>1</sup> Vinogradov V.V, On the main types of phraseological units in the Russian language. Moscow Science, 1986.

<sup>2</sup> Amosova N. Basics of English Phraseology. Leningrad: Prosveshenie, 1989.

since they are so closely linked to culture, yet many proverbs have translations in other languages. For example, the English expression “Out of sight, out of mind” has a similar proverb in Uzbek “Ko’zdan nari, ko’ngildan nari”

Proverbs contain distinctive qualities that make them practical for daily use. They are employed as indirect comments and are often concrete, poetic, and brief. They execute categorization and pragmatic functions; they have the strength and knowledge of many individuals behind them.

According to Hernadi and Steen “Proverbs are found in all world languages and cultures and they are often borrowed from other languages and cultures. They enhance the efficacy of human cognitions, emotions and volitions by helping to streamline the mental and communicative processes through which beliefs, feelings and desires are articulated and shared in a species largely dependent for its continued survival on socially sanctioned individual decisions. Proverbs are needed to give us brief, memorable, intuitively convincing and socially sanctioned guidelines.”<sup>3</sup>

One of the famous Hungarian paremiologist, Paczolay states that when giving any definition to a proverb, the definition should differ proverbs from quotations and aphorisms. There should be recognized and necessary characteristics of proverbs. He states that “A proverb is short standard statement having an evident or implied general meaning, related to a certain field of general human conditions, attitudes or actions, where it is valid with implied limitations. It is known and often quoted in a period of time in a certain language community, sometimes in a short form. In common knowledge it has no known author or literary source. Proverbs appear in the form of short sentences.”<sup>4</sup>

Akmajian proposes that: “Proverbs offer an interesting challenge to theories of language use. Proverbs are traditional sayings having a fixed general sentential form, alluding to a common truth or general wisdom, with some literary value, used to guide action, explain a situation and induce a feeling or attitude. It seems that proverbs are not used both literally and directly, and they are often used both nonliterally and indirectly. If a proverb is used literally, it is used indirectly as well; and if a proverb is used directly, it is also used nonliterally.”<sup>5</sup>

Lyons proposes that “Proverbs are ready-made structures or utterances and from a grammatical point of view they are not regarded as sentences, even though they are distributionally independent and thus satisfy the definition of the sentence.”<sup>6</sup>

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<sup>3</sup> Hernadi, Paul & Francis Steen (1999). "The Tropical Landscapes of Proverbiality: A Crossdisciplinary Travelogue". Style. Vol. 33, pp. 1-20.

<sup>4</sup> Paczolay, Gyula (1995) "European Proverbs". A lecture presented at the conference on European Phraseology. Available at: [www76.phrase.lectures.com](http://www76.phrase.lectures.com)

<sup>5</sup> Akmajian, Adrian, Richard A. Demers, Ann K. Farmer & Robert M. Harnish (2001). Linguistics: An Introduction to Language and Communication. Cambridge: MIT Press.

<sup>6</sup> Lyons, John (1968). Introduction to Theoretical Linguistics. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Focusing on the application of proverbs in sociocultural contexts, Richard P. Honeck states “Proverbs are cultural linguistic products, created and used in social situations for social purposes. They entail the codification of important lessons in the culture”<sup>7</sup>

From the above-mentioned definitions offered by the most famous paremiologists, we can deduce that there is no specific or agreed-upon definition to proverbs and paremiologists vary in their comprehension of the concept of a proverb.

An international proverb classification was created by Matti Kuusi and Outi Lauhakangas.<sup>8</sup> There are 13 major themes in it: practical knowledge of nature, faith and fundamental attitudes, fundamental observations and sociologics, the world and human life, sense of proportion, ideas about mortality, social life, social interaction, communication, social position, agreements and norms, coping and learning, time, and sense of time.

This part suggests that there are a lot of topics covered by proverbs. Proverbs cover a wide range of themes associated with human beings and their social roles in communities. It is safe to say that proverbs discuss issues ranging from the most trivial to the most complicated. “In support of this observation, proverbs, according to Valiulytė (2010) are classified into different topics as follows<sup>9</sup>:

1. Proverbs reflecting human beings' inner world
  - 1.1. Feelings
  - 1.2. Morals
  - 1.3. Spiritual beliefs
2. Proverbs revealing human beings' outer world
  - 2.1. Appearance and nature
  - 2.2. Actions and consequences
  - 2.3. Private troubles and public view
3. Proverbs dealing with human beings' social world
  - 3.1. Family members and relatives
  - 3.2. Friends and companions

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<sup>7</sup> Temple, Jon G. and Richard P. Honeck (1999) "Proverb Comprehension: The Primacy of Literal Meaning". Journal of Psycholinguistic Research, Vol. 28 No.1. pp. 41-70.

<sup>8</sup> Mieder, Wolfgang (1995). "The Grass is Always Greener on the Other Side of the Fence: An American Proverb of Discontent". De Proverbio Electronic Magazine, Vol. 1

<sup>9</sup> Hamzah Migdadi, A Study of Jordanian Proverbs Related to Food and Eating, Islamic University of Minnesota · June 2015, DOI: 10.13140/RG.2.2.26512.46082

### 3.3. Strangers

Proverbs reflecting human beings' inner world pay attention to the importance of the psychological side of personality. Hence, emotional aspects and spiritual beliefs are highlighted. This category can be exemplified by the following based on the researcher's observations and reading.

- 1.1. Feelings such as optimism: "Laugh, and the world will laugh with you; weep, and you weep alone." This proverb encourages people to have more positive view of life.
- 1.2. Morals such as gratification: "Contentment is a treasure which does not perish" Satisfaction with what one has is a source of happiness since one can shift his focus from what he has to what he wants, and contentment is basic for the existence of good feelings that make the change.
- 1.3. Spiritual beliefs such as reliance on God: "Trust in God, but tie your camel" in this proverb, one's job is to use his mind and try to solve his problems and trust in God.
2. Proverbs revealing human beings' outer world center on physical facets of human beings. Hence, one's sensible thoughts, suitable actions and personal troubles are encoded in some proverbs with relationship to the outer world. This type can be demonstrated in the following:
  - 2.1. Appearance and nature: "Appearances are deceptive" exemplifies and summaries the idea that one can be easily deceived by the appearance of certain people who are supposed to be kind but they are in the sharp contrast. Therefore, although appearance is a good source of information, it is not that reliable. However, appearances are considered inferior compared with inner value and ethical behavior.
  - 2.2. Actions and consequences: "As you sow, so shall you reap" exemplifies and summaries the idea that one's deeds affect his life greatly since benevolent actions are rewarded while malevolent ones are punished. In a similar way, some proverbs focus on good deeds such as: "Behave kindly and do not wait reward" This proverb guarantees for people that good deeds will be surely recompensed early or lately. Other proverbs focus on bad results such as "If you play with fire you get burnt" This proverb warns people not to engage in dangerous activities since their consequences are catastrophic.
  - 2.3. Private troubles and public view: "Who knows knows, and who does not know will say a full hand of lentils" This proverb illustrates that private problems cannot be discussed openly because people will gossip instead of sympathize or solve the problem, and one's response can be as such: "Let it wound your heart rather than go out and cause a scandal"
3. Proverbs that are concerned with the social world of humans focus on one's interactions with family, friends, and strangers. The following provides an illustration of this category:
  - 3.1. Family members and relatives: "Blood is thicker than water" focuses on the abandonment of disagreements in order to maintain the unity of the family, the importance and existence of unity stem from the blood relationship between members

which is associated with love and resemblance as in the following proverbs: “In the eye of his mother, a monkey is a gazelle, all her geese are swans”, “My brother and I against my cousin, my cousin and I against a stranger”

- 3.2. Friends and companions: “A friend in need is a friend indeed” and “Family isn't always blood” are illustrative of the nature of relationship between friends which is completely different from that of family members and relatives; it is based on mutual attitudes and likings. Since it is not based on blood, it can be easily affected by anything such as debt: “Lend your money and lose your friend” and that imposes certain rules between friends.
- 3.3. Strangers: Proverbs in this subsection show that behavior towards acquaintances and strangers should be more cautious and less intrusive due to the fragile nature of such relations, and this is shown in the proverbs given below: “Never get between a man and his wife”, “Address people in the language they can understand” “A man’s safety hinges on the sweetness of his tongue”

Proverbs in this section are shown to be related to a variety of topics that cover human life and its components whether they are associated with the inner, outer or social world. However, the purpose of this section is to highlight the idea that proverbs cover a wide range of topics, and this is applicable to proverbs with food theme.

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