



THE PROVERBS AND SAYINGS AS REFLECTION OF SOCIO-CULTURAL REALIA

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<https://doi.org/10.5281/zenodo.7494034>

ARTICLE INFO

Received: 21st December 2022

Accepted: 29th December 2022

Online: 30th December 2022

KEY WORDS

Proverbs, sayings, classification, types, national character, English language, language picture.

ABSTRACT

The article aims to investigate the semantics and pragmatics of the English proverbs and sayings from the point of view on linguo-cultural aspects. To reach the goal the researchers applied such methods of investigation as descriptive method of English proverbs. Being a valuable object of linguo-cultural investigations proverbs realize not just functions of the language but that of culture as well. Proverbs and sayings are an integral part of the national language picture of the world. As linguo-cultural texts proverbs and sayings explicit a definite layer of culture of a separate ethnic group, reflect spiritual and physical activity of culture representatives, the peculiarities of mentality and world perception of a definite linguo-cultural society.

A proverb is known as a type of saying that contains a piece of advice or simply contains truth or any other universal value. It is often a short statement that is popular which aims to express the feelings of people [4.194]. A proverb can say a lot more than a thousand words. Morality, truth, wisdom, friendship, loyalty, etc. are the values that are glorified with the use of these proverbs.

According to Mieder, the proverb as "a short, generally known sentence of the folk which contains wisdom, truth, morals, and traditional views in a metaphorical, fixed and memorizable

form and which is handed down from generation to generation"[6.119].

In accordance with Bacon, proverbs are popular sayings which contain advice, generally accepted truth. Because most proverbs have their origins in oral tradition, they are generally worded for easy remembrance and they change slightly from one generation to other[7.287].

Furthermore, Louis, claimed that "proverbs are a kind of linguistic instrument, a rhetoric device by which people attempt to get other members of their culture and society to see the world and behave in a common way". This means that proverbs are well-known saying, simple and



concrete, popularly known and repeated with the aim of expressing basic truth in common sense and practical experience of humankind. They are employed for their rhetoric, allusive, ironic, and sarcastic potential. Finally, from the research point of view proverbs are a mirror that reflects a cultural experience of a people in a particular region[2.179].

In addition to the above-given definitions, Folly defines proverbs based on the two categories that structurally we are examining a traditional linguistic unit with tendencies toward certain identifiable characteristics e.g. topic/ comment and single statement. Functionally, proverbs are typically conversational and spoken: and often through metaphor, they offer a solution to a particular problem. They can be viewed as a rhetorical strategy for resolving a problem by creating a metaphorical scenario in which the same type of problem is solved. They tend to be impersonal, didactic, and sometimes humorous"[1.35-36].

The above-given definitions of proverbs by scholars identify both the structural and functional elements of proverbs. Proverbs are considered as tools for social regulation. Besides, proverbs are useful devices in literary productions. The main purpose of proverbs is to reach out to individual / societal needs at any point in time. Proverbs have been variously called: sayings, idioms, metaphors, maxims and so on. Among these, sayings are wise statements which often have meanings beyond ordinary meanings of the words used to express them.

According to Meider W., proverbs by their meaning and motivation can be divided into six basic types:[6].

Synonyms is a proverb in which both lines say essentially the same thing but expressed in a slightly different way.

Example: "Deeds are fruits, words are but leaves".

"The Generous soul will be made rich, and he who waters will also be watered himself."

"Whoever brings blessing will be enriched, and one who waters will himself be watered".

Antithetical. It comes from two words: Anti means not, opposed to, opposite of; and thetic means laying down or setting forth a positive statement. Hence, stating the opposite of a positive statement. This is a proverb whereby the teaching is presented in the first line, and the negative of the teaching or opposite is presented in the second line. A lot of the antithetical proverbs informs the reader in the first line if you do this, you will be blessed; but if you don't, this is what will happen. The second negative line emphasizes the positive one. It is usually found the word "but" in an antithetical proverb because two different ideas are being contrasted..

Example: "A tranquil heart gives life to the flesh, but envy makes the bones rot.

"A sound heart is the life of the flesh: but envy the rottenness of the bones."

"A merry heart does good like a medicine: but a broken spirit dries the bones."

"Actions speak louder than words"

"Wherefore I will not be negligent to put you always in remembrance of these things, though ye know them, and be established in the present truth."

"Whoever hides hatred has lying lips, and whoever spreads slander is a fool."

Synthetic. Not often found in the book as the other kinds are more common. The word synthetic comes from the word



synthesis, which is defined as a composition or combination of parts, elements, etc. so as to form the whole. In a synthetic proverb, both lines seem to express a totally different thought—even opposites—yet have one common theme.

Example: “The one who conceals hatred has lying lips, and whoever utters slander is a fool.”

Out of sight, out of mind – once you lose sight of a thing, you can forget it altogether. Birds of the same feather flock together – people with common characteristics always end up together.

Integral. The second line of the proverb completes the first line. The thought often flows so well that it looks like one continuous thought.

Example: “Listen to advice and accept instruction, that you may gain wisdom in the future.” The second line emphasizes the result of applying the first line.

“Don’t trouble troubles until troubles trouble you!”

“Train up a child in the way he should go; and when he is old, he will not depart from it.”

“Cast out the scorner, and contention shall go out; yea, strife and reproach shall cease.”

Parabolic. The first line illustrates the second line. The teaching is found in the second line while the first line is an analogy. The word analogy means similarity.

Example: “Like a gold ring in a pig’s snout is a beautiful woman without discretion”.

“As a jewel of gold in a swine’s snout, so is a fair woman which is without discretion.”

“All is well that ends well”.

“Well begun is half done” – just starting a venture successfully is enough to fulfil it completely.

“You reap what you sow” – your results are just consequences of your own actions.

Comparative. Compares one thing with another to illustrate a common trait or theme. In some comparative proverbs, the first line expresses something which is better or more desirable than what is listed in the second line.

Example: “Better is a little with the fear of the Lord than great treasure and trouble with it.

“Blood is thicker than water”

Better late than never – it is better to delay something than not doing it at all.

“A bird in hand is better than two in the bush” – better to have something than having nothing at all.

“It is better to dwell in a corner of the housetop, than with a brawling woman in a wide house.”

Analyzing these given examples, it is obvious that proverbs are commonly used both in written and speech forms.

Conclusion. Taking into account the above-mentioned data it can be concluded that proverbs are the shortest, most instructive, and maybe most often utilized messages. Furthermore, proverbs may verify culture from culture which means that proverbs symbolize cultures’ identities. We may learn about the people’s culture, traditions, and history as well as what is good and evil. Therefore, proverbs and sayings are considered as cultural identity elements. The result of the research depicts that proverbs and sayings are important elements in language and culture.



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