

## Specific features of proverbs in language teaching

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### Abstract

The urgency of the topic proverbs teaching in language education is due to the possibility of studying proverbs as linguistic units that enlarge the students outlook and worldview. Proverbs do reflect reality and do express the activities of the inhabitants of a certain language, which has some fragments of the world, although they reproduce from generation to generation the activities and cultural and national traditions of the people, its indigenous inhabitants. The scientific value of this is determined by the need to organize proverbial words and is determined by the fact that it allows you to make statements about certain aspects of what you are actively studying! There are currently problems in the relationship between language and culture that naturally reinforce the ideas found in proverbs and their relevance in philosophy. The notorious material allows one to penetrate into the area of mental activity of a linguistically determined society and opens up wide opportunities for conducting comparative research. A study of the system of proverbs and its educational role in language teaching, allowing to observe universal and national cultures in mentalities and contribute to the theoretical problems and general practices of applied linguistics in general, to solve methodological issues for carrying out linguocultural and methodological analysis.

There are many ways to inculcate national education in future generations. One way is to shape the national consciousness by teaching proverbs and sayings that have been preserved from one generation to the next and have preserved the culture, identity, and traditions of the nation.

This research studies the linguistic and cultural features of English proverbs. Therefore, in order to strengthen international relations, to introduce traditional proverbs, it is necessary to qualitatively determine their linguistic and cultural features. It is important to read texts with cultural coloring, phraseological phrases, catchphrases, real words, proverbs, legends and stories that reveal the identity of the people, as well as works which have a significant place in the history of fiction in shaping a person's national consciousness. The people's life and world view are preserved in proverbs, metaphors and symbols. They are the sources of the most valuable information about the culture and mentality of the people.

**Key words:** specific, features, proverbs, language, teaching, saying, learning, foreign, idioms

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### Introduction

Proverbs and sayings, which are considered a small group of national heritage belonging to folk literature, occupy a special place in the spiritual life of a nation. As a source of folk philosophy, proverbs, collocations and sayings are an indicator of the nation's thinking.

Proverbs are not only the spiritual wealth of the nation, an artistic expression of centuries-old culture, but also a vivid chronicle of the level of thought, intelligence and wisdom of a certain people (Ajoke, 2015). Academics has never lost their interest in proverbs. These linguistic units are a short, concrete, figurative way to show off the language's amazing potential to describe various events, people's attitudes to each other and to their environment in everyday life, personalities and emotions,

advantages and disadvantages (Mieder Ed., 2008). Proverbs are a bright expression of national culture, its originality and color. Proverbs are the keeper of the secrets of the victory and defeat of imperial dynasties in historical periods and of great battles. Proverbs are folk wisdom, folk ingenuity. The ability to use phraseological units correctly in speech has always been highly valued and is considered an indicator of knowledge and insight (Cooper, 1999).

The linguistic image of the world is one of the main concepts of linguistic and cultural studies.

For students, proverbs are a source of the people's cultural heritage. Proverbs are used more in folk literature than linguistically. However, proverbs sharing information about the cognitive and social level of the people are used as ready-made phraseological units during speech.

A proverb is associated with a stereotype; the means of expressing this stereotype is associated with a certain scene or image depicted in the proverb. In cognitive linguistics and ethnolinguistics, the term "stereotype" refers to the content side of language and culture, that is, the linguistic image of the world is understood as a reference mental stereotype. So, it is obvious to consider the linguistic image of the world and the linguistic stereotype as a part and a whole, and the linguistic stereotype is understood as "a subjectively determined representation of an object in which descriptive and evaluative characteristics coexist, a judgment or several judgments about a certain object of the non-linguistic world, socially developed cognitive models (Mieder, 2004).

Using language stereotypes saves the power of communicators and makes communication easier. In addition, in their semantics, they reflect the long-term development process of the people's culture and convey the national character, historical and cultural tone. Based on the internal form of linguistic unity, we can learn a lot about the life and mentality of the people. That is, proverbs are formed by stereotype. But when a stereotype is formed through proverbs, the opposite process can also take place.

Thus, the expression of stereotypes is very clear in proverbs, because only by matching images with statements and meanings can we determine the cultural and national importance of expression (Mieder, 1993).

When comparing phraseological units based on the aspect of cultural connotation, one can observe an interesting and important phenomenon - the special reading of the component in proverbs (Mohammad, 2014).

The peculiarity of the linguistic sign consists in the motivation of the linguistic sign connected with the image of the world, background knowledge. Components with a symbolic reading again add "often abstract meaning" to the figurative content of phraseological units. That is, their designation (usually a specific object is designated) represents an abstract representation or an abstract idea. Such components with a different ontological status fall into the notion of sign.

There is a long history of studying proverbs in languages. It has taken different directions, contributing to the active development of the science of proverbs. Despite the significant contribution of Kazakh and Chinese academics to phraseological science, it still has unresolved general theoretical problems. We found that there is still no single conclusion on the subject and composition of proverbs.

In this study, a proverb is considered to be a fixed, short and concise phrase spread from oral literature. The content of proverbs is full, direct, concrete, and also has a literal and figurative meaning. A comprehensive analysis of the opinion of researchers about proverbs was made. As a result of this research, it was found that the words proverb and saying are used separately and have two different meanings in the language (Kilicheva, 2023).

A proverb criticizes and collects traditions and folk experience. Its content depicts life events, customs, and the behavior of certain people.

The problem of classifying proverbs will remain one of the most difficult problems. The most common types of classification are: alphabetical, thematic, genetic and by keyword.

Linguistic and cultural definitions of proverbs coincide with cognitive interpretations. Proverbs arise in the process of cognitive activity. Each nation develops spiritually in its national proverbs. Proverbs should be studied by taking into account the concepts of consciousness, cognition, and mentality. Each country has its own development characteristics, each nation has its own perception of the world, and in this process a characteristic of the whole society's mentality is formed. For the formation of national mentality, it allows a deeper understanding of history and of the features of national culture. The national mentality, which describes the features of everyday life, customs, history and culture, is mainly reflected in the structural units of the language, including proverbs. Mentality is a system of peculiarities of the mental life of people belonging to a certain culture, a qualitative set of features of their perception and assessment of the surrounding world (Razzoqovna, 2021).

Mentality means "thinking", "way of thinking", "mind", "intelligence". Mentality includes basic ideas about a person and society through concepts such as soul, worldview, opinion, attitude. Along with the concept of mentality or instead of it, other terms close in meaning are also used. Mentality comes from the Latin word "mind, thinking, way of thinking, storehouse of the mind". The concept of mentality reflects a general spiritual attitude, a relatively complete set of thoughts, beliefs, and spiritual skills that create an image of the world and strengthen the unity of cultural traditions, as well as people's lives and practical attitudes (Nguyen Thi, 2024).

"Further study of the relationship between language and culture is connected with the development of linguistic and cultural studies. It talks about the linguistic image of the world, the expression of national mentality in language, the conceptual character of the image of the world in national languages, etc. focused on issues".

The concept of national character indicates the socio-psychological condition of a certain nation, people, and its citizens, which includes the results of long-term and permanent effects of ethnic, natural, geographical, social and economic living conditions. Mentality is related to national character; it is not an a priori system of values. The spiritual experience of many generations has focused on the value mentality or the value of attitudes. It is formed during the period covering the long-term history of a certain people. The meaning of national mentality is determined historically; it is a socially conditioned system of ethnic stereotypes. In order to sufficiently know and understand the mentality of the people, it is necessary to study its history, culture, most important customs and traditions. It shows that the mentality and spiritual culture of the people is represented primarily by the figurative content of the language units (Boykhanov, S.M., 2020). One of the vivid visual tools that can reveal the secrets of national consciousness is constant comparison. Mental words, phrases, proverbs, linguistic expressions, anecdotes, folklore texts are presented in the language. Understanding the proverbs of this or that nation contributes not only to a good knowledge of the language, but also to a better understanding of the way of thinking and behavior of the people. It is noted that proverbs allow the most clear, appropriate and concise expression of the attitude towards the world and nature related to man and society, the whole complex of cultural meanings (Promislo, Giacalone, & Welch, 2012). Proverbs show the people's worldview and call for evaluation of real phenomena. When reconstructing features of mentality on the basis of proverbs, common features characteristic of the mentality of a certain language community are distinguished. Proverbs have been around for a long time; their frequency of use in modern language varies, and they define stable features of mentality over a long period of time (Cotter, Hinkelman, 2019).

Proverbs are a perfect example of expressing a broad idea in a single word and drawing a conclusion (Spratt, 2005). Proverbs are written both artistically and concisely, and contain deep thoughts and broad content.

There are very many types of proverbs and sayings. In this research, we analyzed specifically the type of proverbs relating to 'hydro', namely word combinations concerning water; some academics call it hydronyms.

Proverbs and sayings about water reflect many lessons and wise observations about the nature of water and its role in human life. They encourage us to pay attention to the power and influence of water, and teach us to appreciate and use water resources wisely. Water has extraordinary power and the ability to overcome obstacles. Proverbs tell us that even the hardest materials, such as stone, can be worn away by water. Thus, water teaches us to carry within us the strength and perseverance to overcome difficulties and achieve goals. Proverbs about water show that in order to achieve what you want, you need to make a lot of effort, because "water does not flow under a lying stone," and to drink water from a stream, you need to bend down. This reminds us of the importance of effort and dedication. Some proverbs and sayings about water speak of the need to be moderate and restrained, not to pour out empty words and not to waste energy (Cox, Malone, 2018). They teach us how to use our resources wisely. Proverbs reflect the changeability and unpredictability of water. It is important to remember that life is full of surprises and changes, and we must be prepared to adapt to them and find solutions. In general, proverbs about water remind us of the value, wisdom and changeability of life. They offer us lessons about valuing resources, being careful, temperate, and caring for others (Gajdacova, Kovacicova, 2016).

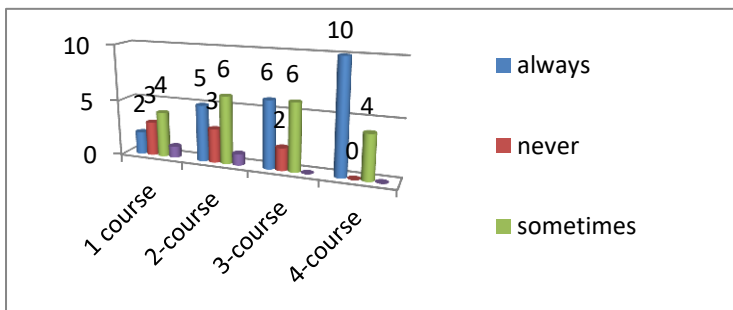
### **Methodology and results**

In this research we conducted a survey among students in order to identify how much effort students make to learn proverbs during their language study. During the experiment we interviewed 80 students of different specializations and now have a clear picture of the language-learning process and students' difficulties in using proverbs in their speaking. Below, we present some examples of proverbs and sayings with a water component.

1. We never know the value of water till the well is dry
2. A great ship asks deep waters
3. As welcome as water in one's shoes
4. Between the devil and the deep (blue) sea
5. Beware of a silent dog and still water
6. Blood is thicker than water
7. Every miller draws water to his own mill
8. Follow the river and you'll get to the sea
9. Fools grow without watering
10. He carries fire in one hand and water in the other
11. He will never set the Thames on fire

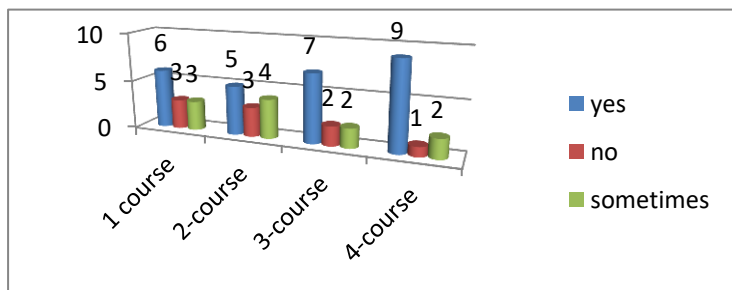
Below, we present the survey results with analyses on the usage of proverbs and sayings in communication.

1. How often do you use proverbs and sayings in your speech?

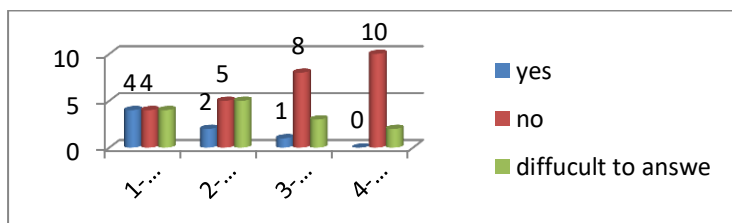


According to the answers of students, we can clearly see that this layer of language is mostly used in the 4-course students' speech.

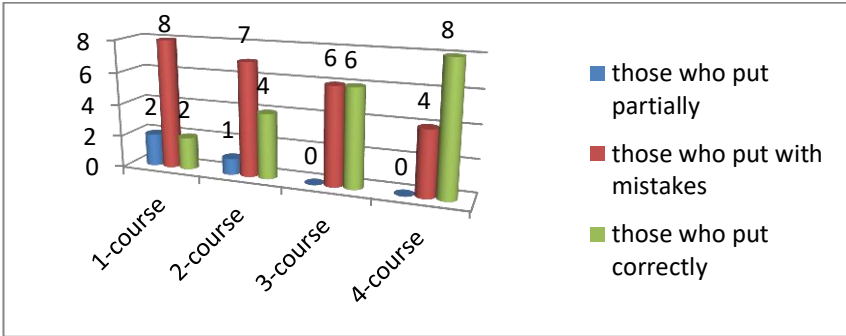
2. Is it difficult to read text without understanding proverbs?



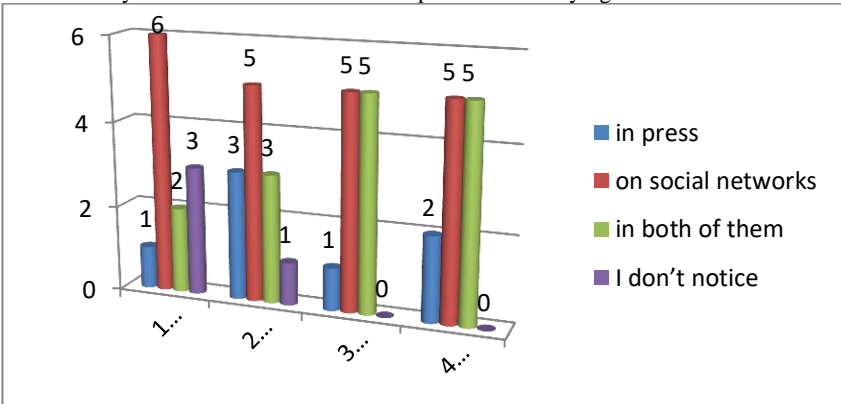
3. Is there any extra difficulty in the comprehension of proverbs and sayings? If there is, then specify.



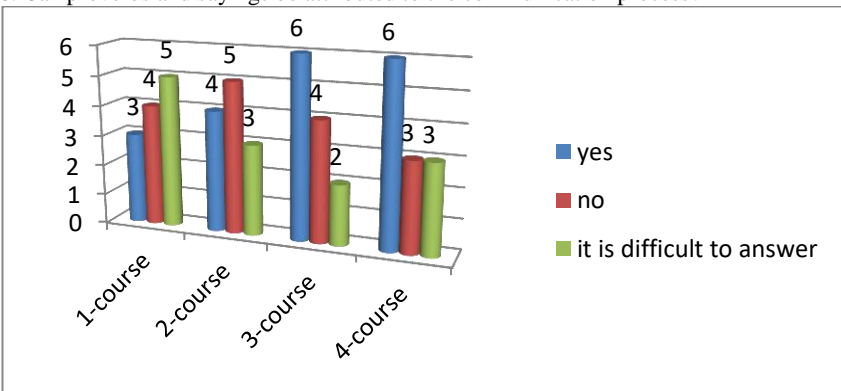
4. Put correct denotation of proverbs and saying in the text



5. Where do you often notice the misuse of proverbs and sayings?



6. Can proverbs and sayings be attributed to the communication process?



**Discussion**

In addition to the small size of the proverbs, the breadth of the content, the accuracy of the language, and the depth of the meaning, proverbs are equally impressive to all

people, common to all humankind (Rowland, 1926). Proverbs are a mirror of the soul, character, and life of every people. Therefore, they not only show the richness of the vocabulary of that people, but their value does not increase or decrease with the passage of time because proverbs depict commandment, exhortation, teaching, wisdom and virtue (Yorio, 1980).

The nature of proverbs is related to the function of reflecting the reality of life, the whole existence, because they are like a witness to past life and to the whole existence of a people who speak a certain language. They preserve their worldview and wisdom, and become a precious heritage, a spiritual treasure that is passed down from father to son, from generation to generation (Adedimeji, 2005).

The more proverbs students learn in a foreign language, the richer their foreign language vocabulary becomes (Sarioğlu, 2023). And the effectiveness of proverbs has a great influence on making those students well-rounded and moral citizens. Therefore, foreign language lessons should be attractive and interesting.

That is why it is useful to give Kazakh equivalents of proverbs to students in foreign language classes and to memorize them in the two languages. Comparing English proverbs and Kazakh proverbs and understanding their content expands the students' thinking.

As a result of a serious selection of proverbs, few words of commandment have acquired different meaning. The role of the "mother tongue" is important in making proverbs, and proverbs in a foreign language, more meaningful to the student. Proverbs can be studied in each text read during a foreign language class. The meaning of each proverb is revealed, analyzed and a conclusion is made. The gist of the text can be given by a proverb. Proverbs should not only be learned by heart, but should also be able to help students to use the spoken language while reading the text in foreign language classes, connecting it to its content and ideas. Another type of work that can be used to help students learn to use proverbs in a foreign language is to keep track of the proverbs memorized and learned by students. It is necessary to train students to recall the topics discussed in the chapter and to formulate ideas with proverbs.

When introducing proverbs, the teacher focuses on the fact that they cover all spheres of people's life and lifestyle, and their artistic character. At this point, in foreign language lessons, students should read proverbs of other people and talk about their ideological and artistic aspects. A number of foreign proverbs can be explained by the teacher themselves, and together with the students, they can be translated into the mother tongue, and proverbs with a similar meaning can be sought out.

Homework assignments, i.e. drawing pictures based on favorite proverbs, writing a short story on the topic of the proverb, and preparing for memorizing by heart are the main ways to learn the topic in depth.

Also, using proverbs, you can give students a follow-up task. Here, students should be able to use proverbs to answer questions. During the lesson, you can also use matching proverbs as a phonetic exercise.

As an example, we used the following proverbs. Then, we asked the students to find equivalents in their native language and try to explain the meaning in English, and to fill in the table.

N	English proverb	Mother tongue variant	Meaning
1.	Too much water drowned the miller	Sonsha sý aǵyp ketti	So much time has been passed

1. It is good fishing in troubled waters
2. Salt water and absence wash away love
3. Still waters run deep
4. The scalded dog fears cold water
5. To draw water in a sieve
6. To fish in troubled waters
7. To go through fire and water (through thick and thin)
8. To love somebody (something) as the devil loves holy water
9. To pour water into a sieve
10. Too much water drowned the miller

It is very interesting to use a tournament-type lesson for foreign language teaching. Usually, these types of lessons are used in reinforcement lessons. Of course, this can be done through proverbs, sayings and riddles. Using proverbs in foreign language lessons should not be a new type of work for students, and as such it is necessary to conduct such lessons often.

It is characteristic of a proverb to have a conclusion that expresses a lot of thought within a few words. Proverbs which are able to convey a concise thought in figurative and artistic words contain a great thought that helps shape a human, moral feeling in the child's mind and leads to goodness. A proverb is a guardian which adds wisdom to children's minds and guides them towards a bright future. That's why our people have rightly assessed that "the beauty of words is a proverb" and "proverbs are precious words, cheap words that cannot be seen." Thus, using proverbs in foreign language lessons can make the lesson interesting and transformative. The main achievement here is that the child actively participates in the lesson, learns to express his thoughts, and that is why it is the duty of every teacher to be able to use rational methods to provide them with a conscious upbringing and high-quality education (Stancampiano, 2020).

### **Conclusion**

Proverbs, as a unique expression of folk wisdom, as a phenomenon widespread in all languages of the world, have long attracted and continue to attract the attention of linguists.

There are a large number of dictionaries of proverbs in different languages, and a number of works that consider these sayings as part of folklore. However, their linguistic study from the point of view of modern science is just beginning.

In this work, this unique type of phraseological units in the English language was studied from the point of view of its pragmatic potential in the language system and pragmatic characteristics in speech implementation.

Since the functioning of all lexical units of a language is predetermined, on the one hand, by their systemic characteristics, and on the other hand, by the conditions and nature of the speech situation, in particular, by the speaker's intention, the first stage of the study was a nominative-cognitive analysis of the units under consideration.

A comprehensive examination of English proverbs from a cognitive-onomasiological perspective has to a certain extent made it possible to show that proverbs represent a unique structure of knowledge about universal and national-cultural values and phenomena.

The analysis of proverbs in a real communication situation confirmed the previously expressed idea that they all have a pragmatic orientation, which receives its final embodiment only in context. Features of the interaction between context and proverb depend on the communication situation. And this is predetermined, first of all, by the speaker's intention.



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