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Contrastive Studies on Proverbs

Kanat Syzdykov^{a*}^a*Suleyman Demirel University, 1/1 Abylaikhan Str, Kaskelen/Alamty, 040900, Kazakhstan*

Abstract

Folk proverbs and sayings are an integral part of the spiritual treasures of the culture and language of the people, the age-old wisdom and skills used by them - an important part of the culture of human language. In fact, the main purpose of the article is interpretations of English and Kazakh folk proverbs, which can artistically embody various aspects of life, social experience, outlook, the originality of artistic attitudes and tastes, mental and ethical and aesthetic values. Also in this article are considered several methods and descriptive techniques such as analysis, synthesis, analogy, and observation. Additionally, the author tried to identify in his research whether British and Kazakh proverbs with similar content, but due to different historical conditions express similar thoughts in different ways, thus reflecting the different social structures and lifestyles of their respective peoples, and often are only roughly equivalent. While interpreting English and Kazakh proverbs the author divided them into four categories. This paper focuses on the learning of: pedagogic practices that operate from an approach that emphasizes learners' strengths, rather than deficits, and critically interrogates learners' experiences as a resource for learning which were the most successful in enabling this translation. Moreover, this article deals with the analysis of methodical and methodological value of using proverbs in English classes (that is to classify English proverbs in relation to the Kazakh equivalents, to consider the difficulties of translation from English proverbs into Kazakh language, and to conduct a comparative description of translation of English proverbs in Kazakh).

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1. Introduction

Everyone knows that the wisdom and spirit of the people are manifested in its proverbs and sayings, and acquiring proverbs and sayings of one's own nation or other nations, not only contributes to a better knowledge of

*Corresponding Author: Kanat Syzdykov. Tel.: +7-701-478-3877
E-mail address: kanat_asy1@mail.ru

the language, but also promotes a better understanding of the way of thinking and the nature of the people who speak it. Proverbs and sayings are pearls of folk wisdom. In fact, as people interpret artistically various aspects of life, social experience, their outlook is revealed, the originality of artistic attitudes and tastes, mental and ethical and aesthetic values, and social ideals cultivate new generations from century to century. The main purpose of proverbs is to give people's assessment of the objective reality of phenomena as an expression of the world. In proverbs and sayings are expressed the peculiar store or mindset of the peoples' intelligence; way of judgment; view of features; indication of the way of life and everyday life; the spirit and character of the people; their manners and customs, and beliefs and superstitions. Hence, proverbs and sayings most clearly illustrate lifestyle, and geography, and history, and traditions of a community united by a single culture. On this subject, have been written many scientific papers. The national specific character of proverbs is most clearly revealed in the comparison of different languages. It is known that the Kazakh and British people who live in different social and natural conditions have a different history, religion, morals, principles, morality, psychology, etc. Basically, the study of proverbs is called paremiology (from Greek *παροιμία* - *paroimía*, "proverb") and can be dated back as far as Aristotle (Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia). According to Kindstrand (1978) & Russo (1983) "the definition of a proverb has caused scholars from many disciplines much chagrin over the centuries. Many attempts at definition have been made from Aristotle to the present time, ranging from philosophical considerations to cut-and-dried lexicographical definitions" (Meider, 2004, p. 1). V. Dahl examines the proverb as a product of the extremely popular medium of communication: "What kind of proverbs and sayings have to go to the people, this one will not be argued, in an educated and enlightened society, there is no proverb. Finished the proverbial high society does not accept, because it is alien to him a picture of everyday life, and not his tongue, but it's not resigned, [composed] perhaps out of politeness and propriety of the secular: the proverb splits the nail, and right in the eye"[2,10]. Meider (1985: 119) has defined the proverb as "a short, generally known sentence of the folk which contains wisdom, truth, morals, and traditional views in a metaphorical, fixed and memorisable form and which is handed down from generation to generation". An Iranian scholar H.Mollanazar (2001: 53) has conveyed his own notion about the proverb as "a unit of meaning in a specific context through which the speaker and hearer arrive at the same meaning." Linguist N.R. Norrick (1985, p.78) has proposed the following definition for the proverb: "The proverb is a traditional, conversational, didactic genre with general meaning, a potential free conversational turn, preferably with figurative meaning." In proverbs the rich historical experience of the people, the ideas connected with work, life and culture of the people are reflected. The correct and appropriate use of proverbs and sayings give speech a unique identity and special expressiveness. Consequently, the proverb is a large subject which can be considered from many angles.

2. The Originality (Background) of Proverbs or Review of Literature

Sayings with a proverbial currency existed on earth as far back as ancient ages, as we know from historical materials preserved among centuries, perhaps better known as collected proverb materials. Proverbs in a more recognizable form occur in those homilies and chronicles of our early literature which were spoken and preached to the people. Regarding the origins of the proverbs Meider (2004), the famous paremiologist, states that: Proverbs, like riddles, jokes, or fairy tales, do not fall out of the sky and neither are they products of a mythical soul of the folk. Instead they are always coined by an individual either intentionally or unintentionally, as expressed in Lord John Russell's well-known one-line proverb definition that has taken on a proverbial status of sorts: 'A proverb is the wit of one and the wisdom of many' [1,9]. Proverbs – countless generations of unknown sages, seek to provide firm principles to guide us through life; not a set of dogmas or a book of laws, but precepts, norms, guidelines for securing a life of well-being, decency and dignity. Therefore, proverbs and sayings have a special place in the study of English and training up of the younger generation.

3. Translation of Proverbs

Currently, international cooperation is actively developing, and there is a gradual interpenetration of cultures through the exchange of information in various spheres of human activity.

Human communities belonging to different nations, countries and continents, are no longer isolated. Not only one planet Earth unites us, but also the common interests of survival on this planet, the development of civilization and the development of cultures. All of this requires cooperation, mutual understanding and collaboration. For this we need a basic understanding of each other, acquiring languages in order to get information about each other's nations,

cultures, traditions. There is contact with the culture of the people while studying a foreign language. An important historical and lexical layer of each language is folklore, including proverbs and sayings.

The comparison of proverbs of different nations shows how much in common they have, which in turn facilitates to their better understanding and rapprochement. It should be noted that many of the English and Kazakh proverbs and sayings are ambiguous, making them difficult to interpret and compare. Because, English language has its own rules, as does Kazakh. In English it's word order itself, and Kazakh has its own structure.

While finding the equivalent of proverbs from first into second language the following methods and measurement can be used:

- Method of analysis, synthesis, analogy, observation; deductive-inductive, inductive-deductive, classification methods used for systematic statement of the premises of the research;
- Contrastive method of folk pedagogy proverbs in terms of comparative approach to define analogy and contrast of investigated phenomena;
- Method of comparative frontal and fragmental analysis of the original work and equivalents used to justify the raised theoretical statements;
- Constitutive, definitional, component and interpretational used for defining the mechanisms of the representation of disharmony, adequacy, equivalency, harmony and to focus on verbal and non-verbal components;
- Contextual analysis of proverbs in the target language and original and method of compact selection in order to choose the required material for research.

However, it is important to remember that due to different historical conditions English and Kazakh proverbs expressing similar thoughts are often used in different ways, which reflect the different social structure and lifestyle of their peoples, and often are only roughly equivalent.

For instance, the proverb "The grass is always greener on the other side of the fence". The proverb properly goes like this: The grass always looks greener on the other side of the fence. Actually it means that people always think that others have it better in life, even if it's not the case. But in the Kazakh language there is no such proverb, but there is another proverb: "Baskanin aiyeli kizdai, tauigi qazdai koriner". In principle, these two proverbs are equivalent in meaning. But the literal translation of the Kazakh proverb would sound like this: "Someone's wife is beautiful and his hen's seems a goose". These all have the idea of others having it better off, even if it's not true. I think that many proverbs are common across the world, but even if they have the same meaning, they are sometimes used with different expressions or words in each country.

What is interesting is that this specific proverb was used in an American song called, "The Grass is always Greener in the other Fellow's Yard" by Egan and Whiting (1924).

The grass is always greener	But if we all could wear
In the other fellow's yard.	Green glasses now,
The little row	It wouldn't be so hard
We have to hoe,	To see how green the grass is
Oh boy that's hard.	In our own back yard.

Many proverbs are easily translated into Kazakh language (Better late than never. – Eshten kesh jaksy). Others need explanation, as they have nothing to do with our Kazakh expressions, though it is possible sometimes to guess what the British want to say.

As we can see, proverbs and sayings can be divided into the following categories:

1. English proverbs and sayings that are fully translated into Kazakh language, English version of the fully corresponds to the Kazakh. For example: Better late than never. – Eshten kesh jaksy;

2. English proverbs and sayings that are partially translated the same on Kazakh language, English version of some different from the Kazakh. For example: "To kill two birds with one stone". – Eki koyandi bir okpen atu; The literal translation is "To kill two rabbits with one shoot".

3. English proverbs and sayings that are totally different translation into Kazakh language, English version does not match the Kazakh. For example: Look before you leap. – Jetti olshep, bir kes. The literal translation of this proverb would sound like this "Measure seven times before you cut"

Centuries of experience of the people speaking and writing in different languages, shows that a good translator must not only understand the meaning of the source text, but also he needs access to a rich source of expressions and their meaning.

Always, there arise difficulties in finding equivalents of proverbs between languages. And, considering all the features of a language, to translate what is considered part of the culture of one nation to another language is very

difficult. For example, the English proverb “If the cap fits, wears it”. The literal translation of this proverb goes like this: If the cap fits you, wear it. If the English meaning of the proverb is clear, that for a Kazakh proverb that seems to be something new, so the meaning is not always fully disclosed. So, to Kazakh and understood what we wanted to say in English proverb, we must seek Kazakh equivalent: a) Sezikti sekiredi, b) Urinin arti kuis. This is more understandable and closer to the Kazakh people. But if you translate it into English, you get the following: a) A guilty person is not calm, b) The thief leaves traces behind. As we see, the original version of the proverb is far from the end.

Exploring the proverbs in English and Kazakh languages, it can be concluded that the availability of easy ways to find English equivalent from Kazakh is not plentiful and while trying to find the proverbs interpretations there we can confront with large number of challenges. This is connected with the adequate transfer of not only the semantic content, also expressive and stylistic coloring of proverbs and sayings, which in turn encourages interpreters to search for optimal solutions.

4. Conclusion

Proverbs and sayings are a part of the culture of a people and always have been and remain relevant, despite the development of economy and technology, progress. Culture is the most important aspect in intercultural communication. Eventually, a new linguistic concept as lingua cultural studies emerged, which gives explanations to this or that cultural feature of the language. At any time, proverbs and sayings will be characteristic of a people and the object of attention and research:

1. Some English proverbs a) fully correspond to the Kazakh, b) partially translated equally into Kazakh, c) which are completely different interpretations into Kazakh language.
2. Proverbs and sayings in English are rather difficult to translate into other languages
3. Analysis of the collected materials which I have been researching showed that some proverbial education, traditionally presented in dictionaries and references as variants of larger units, are in fact, independent.
4. Proverbs and sayings develop creativity, enrich students' vocabulary, help them to learn the structure of the language, and to develop memory and the emotional expressiveness of speech

Thus, proverbs and sayings are multifunctional tools for teaching English. Their lexical and grammatical fullness allows the teacher to use them not only to explain and enhance many grammatical phenomena and enrich vocabulary, but also for the development of language skills. Using well-known proverbs and sayings greatly facilitates communication, helps to overcome the language barrier and reach a new level of cross-cultural communication by addressing the problems of understanding without explanation, namely to form communicative competence.

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