

## PROVERBS AND SAYINGS AS A SOURCE OF CULTURE IN LANGUAGE

*Uzbek State World Languages University  
Seytimbetova Aykumar Pulatbaevna*

**Annotation:** This article explores proverbs and sayings as an essential source of cultural knowledge in the English language. Proverbs and sayings are examined as fixed expressions that reflect the historical experience, moral values, and worldview of a people. The study analyzes their linguistic features, classification, semantic structure, and cultural significance. Special attention is paid to the works of prominent linguists such as V.V. Vinogradov, A.V. Koonin, N.N. Amosova, and I.V. Arnold, whose theories contributed significantly to the understanding of phraseology. The article also provides examples illustrating how proverbs and sayings convey cultural norms, social behavior, and collective wisdom. It concludes that proverbs and sayings serve as valuable linguistic tools for preserving and transmitting cultural identity across generations.

**Key words:** Proverbs, sayings, phraseology, cultural linguistics, English language, idiomatic expressions, national culture, folklore, linguistic worldview, semantics

Language is not only a means of communication but also a repository of cultural knowledge. Among the various linguistic units that embody culture, proverbs and sayings occupy a special place. They are concise, memorable expressions that encapsulate the collective wisdom, moral values, and social norms of a community.

Proverbs and sayings in English have developed over centuries, influenced by historical events, religious traditions, and everyday life. As noted by scholars, proverbs are “short, well-known expressions that convey general truths or advice based on common sense or experience” (Mieder, 2004).

The study of proverbs and sayings is closely related to phraseology, a branch of linguistics that deals with fixed expressions. These units are characterized by stability, reproducibility, and figurative meaning, making them an important object of linguistic and cultural analysis.

Proverbs and sayings are often treated together, but they have distinct features.

A **proverb** is a complete sentence expressing a general truth, moral lesson, or practical advice. For example:

- *“Actions speak louder than words.”*
- *“The early bird catches the worm.”*

A **saying**, on the other hand, is a fixed expression that may not convey a complete thought but reflects a commonly accepted idea:

- “Better late than never.”
- “Easier said than done.”

According to A.V. Koonin, proverbs belong to communicative phraseological units because they function as complete utterances. N.N. Amosova emphasizes their fixed structure and cultural context, while I.V. Arnold highlights their expressive and stylistic value.

Proverbs and sayings are deeply rooted in culture. They reflect:

- Social norms
- Ethical values
- Historical experiences
- National traditions

As V.V. Vinogradov points out, phraseological units, including proverbs, serve as “a mirror of the people’s life and culture.”

Many English proverbs emphasize moral behavior:

- “Honesty is the best policy.”
- “Do unto others as you would have them do unto you.”

These expressions reflect the ethical principles of English-speaking societies, particularly influenced by Christian teachings.

Proverbs often guide social interaction:

- “When in Rome, do as the Romans do.”
- “Too many cooks spoil the broth.”

They teach conformity, cooperation, and moderation.

English culture traditionally values hard work and efficiency:

- “No pain, no gain.”
- “Time is money.”

These proverbs highlight the importance of diligence and productivity.

### **Thematic Classification**

Proverbs can be grouped according to themes:

- **Work and labor** – “Practice makes perfect.”
- **Time** – “Time heals all wounds.”
- **Wisdom** – “Knowledge is power.”
- **Nature** – “Every cloud has a silver lining.”

### **Structural Classification**

Structurally, proverbs may be:

- Simple sentences – “Silence is golden.”
- Complex sentences – “If you sow the wind, you will reap the whirlwind.”
- Elliptical structures – “The sooner, the better.”

### **Semantic Classification**

According to Vinogradov’s approach:

- Fully motivated (clear meaning)
- Partially motivated (metaphorical meaning)
- Non-motivated (idiomatic meaning)

### Historical Origins

Many English proverbs originate from:

- The Bible (“*Pride goes before a fall*”)
- Literature (e.g., works of Shakespeare)
- Folk traditions

Scholars emphasize different aspects:

- **Koonin** – classification and structure
- **Vinogradov** – semantic analysis
- **Amosova** – contextual approach
- **Mieder** – cultural and folkloric perspective

Wolfgang Mieder defines proverbs as “traditional statements that express general truths based on experience.”

Modern linguistics also studies proverbs through cognitive and cultural frameworks, viewing them as conceptual metaphors.

### Examples and Analysis

#### Example 1:

“*A stitch in time saves nine.*”

Meaning: solving a problem early prevents bigger issues

#### Example 2:

“*Barking dogs seldom bite.*”

Meaning: people who threaten often do not act

#### Example 3:

“*Where there’s smoke, there’s fire.*”

Meaning: rumors usually have some truth

These examples illustrate how proverbs encode practical wisdom.

Proverbs and sayings are an invaluable source of cultural knowledge in the English language. They reflect the history, values, and worldview of English-speaking people while serving as effective tools for communication and education.

Their stability, expressiveness, and cultural richness make them a unique linguistic phenomenon. Despite changes in modern society, proverbs continue to play a significant role in preserving cultural identity and transmitting collective wisdom across generations.

### The list of used literature:

1. Mieder, W. (2004). *Proverbs: A Handbook*. Greenwood Press.
2. Koonin, A.V. *Phraseology of Modern English*. Moscow.
3. Vinogradov, V.V. (1977). *Russian Phraseology*. Moscow.

4. Amosova, N.N. (1963). *English Contextology*. Leningrad.
5. Arnold, I.V. (1986). *The English Word*. Moscow.
6. Norrick, N.R. (1985). *How Proverbs Mean*. Mouton.
7. Taylor, A. (1931). *The Proverb*. Harvard University Press.
8. Crystal, D. (2003). *The Cambridge Encyclopedia of the English Language*. Cambridge University Press.

