

## Features of Proverbs: Meaning and Structure

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### ABSTRACT

*This article will consider what makes proverbs special, namely their semantic load and structure. The main principles of their construction will be analyzed, as well as how they work as means of expressing folk wisdom and moral values. Particular attention will be paid to the study of their roles in language and culture, as well as consideration of how they can change depending on the context and time.*

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Proverbs are an integral part of the folklore and cultural heritage of any nation. They are short and expressive statements that convey folk wisdom, life observations and values. Proverbs have their origins in the depths of centuries, and with each generation they continue to retain their relevance, enriching speech and shaping views of the world.

The peculiarities of proverbs lie not only in their unique structure and brevity, but also in their ability to convey deep philosophical, moral and everyday meanings through images and metaphors. They can be considered as a special form of folk thinking, which in a concise and accessible form reveals the characteristic features of the mentality, moral guidelines and cultural traditions of the people.

The purpose of this article is to explore the features of proverbs in terms of their meaning, structure and role in language. We will consider how proverbs influence speech, how they are constructed and what their function is in preserving and transmitting values, moral norms and lifestyle.

Proverbs have a number of unique and interesting genre characteristics for study, some of which are listed below:

1. Proverbs are short and concise. Proverbs are usually very short and concise, which makes them quick and easy to remember. Often, these are just a few words or short phrases, but they contain deep meaning and wisdom;
2. Proverbs express a broad and deep meaning;
3. Folk proverbs can be poetic and prose in form. But prose proverbs also resemble poetic verses. For example: «Ko'za kunda emas, kunida sinadi» (A pitcher (jug) breaks not every day but on one day; It chanceth in an hour that happeneth not in seven years).
4. Proverbs express a firm judgment about life events. This judgment is reflected in positive or negative content;

5. A proverb generalizes a personal situation in a person's life from the point of view of the people, society and life;
6. The text of a proverb is a generalized sentence in linguistics;
7. Imagery. Many proverbs contain vivid images and metaphors that make proverbs memorable and expressive. They are useful for conveying certain ideas or moral lessons from images of nature, wildlife, everyday life, etc.;
8. Universality. Proverbs are often universal in nature and can be applied to different situations and cultural contexts. They reflect universal human values and realities of life that belong to representatives of different nations and cultures;
9. Persistence. Many proverbs have existed for many centuries and have retained their relevance and importance over time. They are used both in colloquial speech and in literary speech, as they penetrate into various aspects of life and language.

In proverbs, morphologically, nouns, adjectives, numbers and verbal lexemes are chosen as basic lexemes. Of course, nominal lexemes occupy a leading place in the semantic structure of a proverb. Because for a brief expression of an idea, the possibilities of nominal lexemes are much greater than the possibilities of other types of lexemes. Personal nouns and somatic organs, names of plants, animals and their organs, household items, as well as anemones, cosmonyms and nouns with abstract concepts mainly served to form the structure of proverbs.

In proverbs, such *adjective* lexical units as deaf, blind, bald, dumb, white, black, motley, red, yellow, blue, wide, narrow, far, close, light, heavy, smart, wise, stupid, ignorant, dexterous, beautiful, ugly, damp, fat, thin, stingy, generous, sick, healthy denote quality, size, character, physical wealth or deficiency, etc. For example: «Kal o‘zini ovutar, Qo‘ltig‘ini sovutar» (He himself is bald, he cools his armpits).

The most commonly used *verbs* in proverbs are the following: to eat, to come, to look, to crawl, to walk, to sit, to give, to take, to draw, to appear, to see (verbs of action); to think, to know, to study (verbs of thinking); to cry, to be sad, to grieve, to be bored, to be offended, to be offended, to sadden, to upset, to die (verbs of state); to tell, to ask, to praise, to say, to read (speech verbs); to press, to sow, to water, to weed, to hold, to hear, to pity, to save, to write, to wash, to stretch, to measure, to live (verbs of activity).

The use of *numbers*, *pronouns* and *adverbs* in proverbs is very limited. The following numbers are used in proverbs: one, two, three, seven, eight, ten, double, half, six, sixty, one hundred, forty, eighty, ninety, one thousand; pronouns: he, this, that, I, you, we, own, each, someone, who, what; The active lexemes of these categories include adverbs: little, much, fast, slow, today, early, day, before, after, before.

In proverbs, the main component according to their morphological characteristics and semantic structure are predominantly nominal lexemes. In proverbs, personal nouns have an advantage over other nouns, nouns of related gender are especially active in this regard. For example: «Bola – loy, ona – kulol» (The child is clay, the mother is the potter); «Odobli o‘g‘il – ko‘kdagi yulduz, Odobli qiz – yoqadagi qunduz» (A polite boy is a star in the sky, a polite girl is a beaver on a collar).

In most cases, nominal lexemes are used figuratively. In such proverbs, we can see the names of domestic animals and the participation of the lexeme "dog": «Ho‘kizning o‘tini yeb, Qo‘yning qilig‘ini qilma» (Eat grass like an ox, but don't act like a sheep); «Ot oyligin o‘ylar, tuya – yilligin» (The horse thinks about the month, the camel thinks about the year); «Itining fe‘li egasiga ma‘lum» (The dog's behavior is known to the owner).

When some folk proverbs express a relationship of comparison and contrast, one component of the proverb, formed in the form of a complex sentence, includes personal nouns, and the other – names of animals: «Ot kuchinni karvonda ko‘r, Mard kuchini maydonda» (See horsepower in a caravan, a brave man in a field). It is clear that the arrangement of the names of people and animals chosen for comparison in the components of a complex sentence is not fixed. Because the compared content or concepts are equivalent, and it does not matter which of them forms the initial sentence.

In comparative proverbs, not only the names of animals, but also the names of plants can be chosen as comparative equivalents of personal nouns: «Terakka qarab, tol o‘sar, Onaga qarab qiz o‘sar» (Looking at

the poplar, the willow grows, looking at the mother, the daughter grows); «Suv bilan ekin o'sar, Tarbiya bilan – odam» (Crops grow with water, people grow with education).

Adjective lexemes specify the meaning of the noun lexeme as a feature of a person, animal, plant, status: excellent, expensive, educated, uneducated, good, bad, correct, learned, oppressor, incapacitated, uneducated, learned. Attributive connection is formed in syntactic devices with the participation of an adjective, and relative connection occurs when adjectives express a feature of action.

Numerical lexemes are found in nominal-participial proverbs. The number *one* is the leader in this. Lexemes *one* and *two* serve to form proverbs of comparative content. *Three, seven, forty, one hundred, a thousand* are also used in proverbs in which the number one is used.

Proverbs display a number of polysemantic features. In a proverb, a noun and an adjective enter into a syntagmatic relation of *determiner-definite*. In proverbs formed with the participation of adjectives, the main lexemes are the signs of character and physical defect. This function is provided by the majority of conversions. For example: «Kalning nimasi bor – temir tarog'i, Ko'ring nimasi bor – eski tayog'i» (What a bald man has is an iron comb, what a blind man has is an old stick). The structure of this proverb is unique. According to the structure of the proverb, it is formed in the form of a dialogue, only in this place both the speaker and the listener are expressed as one person, that is, the meaning of a common person.

In proverbs, the grammatical basis of the sentence is the verb group. In this case, the valencies of the verbs serve for the syntactic formation of the sentence. In proverbs, verbs are mainly characterized by the participial function. The forms of the infinitive adjective and the noun of action adapt the verb to the syntactic function of other word groups.

Proverbs as a vocabulary of the people serve as a rich source for a detailed study of the phonetic, lexical, morphological and syntactic features of the literary language. The semantic characteristics of proverbs are divided into semantic groups based on the archisemes of lexical units, which, in addition, are the leading components of the proverb text. Their compact size and meaning are a product of people's spirituality and intellect. The use of proverbs in speech enriches the content, increases efficiency and at the same time shows the beauty of the language, ensures that speech is close to colloquial speech. The text of the proverb is short, laconic, requires clear thinking and precise expression, proverbs are usually created through repeated use, proving their correctness. No matter how briefly the proverb is achieved, complex sentence forms have an advantage over simple sentence forms in order to fully express the content. However, the need to condense parts of a complex sentence is to express the second component of the sentence incompletely or to form fragments of the sentence in the form of central fragments of the sentence in the form of explanatory content, which requires brevity of expression. For example, in the following proverbs the second component is used as an incomplete sentence: «Nomarddan najot kutma, Itdan – hojat» (Don't expect salvation from a coward, from a dog – needs); «Mard bir marta o'lar, Qo'rqoq yuz marta» (A brave man dies once, a coward dies a hundred times); «Yomonning do'sti ko'p, Piyozning – po'sti» (A bad man has many friends, but an onion has a skin). The peculiarity of such proverbs is that the non-complete components used in them can sometimes be placed at the beginning of the sentence. In such cases, it is noted that there is more than one component in a complex sentence: «Mard – kurashda, do'st – tashvishda, dono – g'azabda bilinar» (A brave man is known in battle, a friend is known in anxiety, a wise man is known in anger).

Another form of brevity in proverbs consisting of a complex sentence is the explanatory-interpretive and relational form of the sentence members. «Mard qalbi – gul, Nomardniki – kul» (The heart of a brave man is a flower, but the heart of a dull man is ashes). In this proverb, of course in the Uzbek language, both in its incompleteness and in the construction of its interpretation, the proverb is laconic in form and laconic in content. Since proverbs consist of complex sentences, rhyme plays an important role in their pronunciation and in fluent reading. For example, «Ona qilsa zo'rlikni, Bola tortar xo'rlikni» (If the mother commits violence, the child suffers humiliation); «Taquir yerdan chang chiqarma, Yo'q yerdan jang chiqarma» (Don't raise dust from the barren land, Don't raise war from nothing).

However, the rhyme issue in folk proverbs is not always resolved correctly. This can be explained by only one factor, that is, people's thinking has chosen a word form that is relevant and compatible with the

content of the text, and not phonetically appropriate. Since proverbs consist mainly of two-part complex sentences, the advantages of their rhymed structure are not very noticeable. For example: «Nomard yovga yalinar, Mard kuchiga suyanar» (The coward prays to the enemy, the brave hopes for strength); «Nolish bilan ish bitmas, Mard nomardga tiz cho'kmas» (Work does not end with complaints, the brave do not kneel before the poor); «O'tning yomoni – ola, Xotinning yomoni – balo» (Bad fire is colorful, bad wife is misfortune); «Shaharning qal'asi – qo'rg'on, Odamning yomoni – gap urgan» (The fortress of the city is a fortification, a bad person is one who talks a lot); «Og'ir yukni nor ko'tarar, El og'irin er ko'tarar» (The camel carries a heavy burden, the man carries the burden of the people). The phonetic structure of rhyming lexical units is completely consistent in syntactically parallel proverbs: «Og'izga kelgan so'z arzon, Ovulga kelgan bo'z arzon» (The word that came into the mouth is cheap, the canvas that came into the village is cheap); «So'zning onasi – quloq, Suvning onasi – buloq» (The ear is the mother of words, the spring is the mother of water). It can be said that there is no specific pattern in the thematic classification of proverbs, so they can be studied by dividing them into many topics. In addition, it is appropriate to group proverbs by means of artistic imagery, that is, to divide them into types by their rhyme, metaphor, comparison (antithesis), parallelism, anaphora, irony, causticity, idiom.

From the point of view of linguistics, there are several classifications of proverbs:

a) by structure;

b) by its semantic characteristics.

By their structure, proverbs are divided into two types: simple and complex. So, simple proverbs are built from at least two elements (parts of speech) and express a complete thought. Each proverb must have two parts of speech and they must be divided into two intonation centers. For example, despite the fact that in the phrase «Tegirmon navbati bilan» (Mill in turn) the participle is not expressed, there is a pause after the possessive, and the last syllable of this word is pronounced longer, the next part is a separate intonation - predicative intonation. Even when the possessive structure is not used in proverbs, the same intonation division is observed as above: «Suymaganga / suykalma» (Don't flatter a person who doesn't love you). Therefore, the notorious parameter forms at least two logical centers. The words that make up this logical center may or may not act as main sentences: «Bolalik – poshsholik» (Childhood is a reign); «Pokliging – sog'liging» (Your cleanliness is your health); proverbs like «Oltin zanglamas» (Gold does not rust) consist of a possessive participle, such proverbs as «Sanamay, sakkiz dema» (Don't count, don't say eight), «Tanimasni sylimas» (Don't show respect to someone you don't know) consist of participles, they have two logical centers. Simple proverbs can be classified by the number of sentences they consist of:

a) two-part: «Davlating – ota-onang» – «**No pain, no gain**»;

b) three-part: «So'raganning aybi yo'q» – «**Practice makes perfect**»;

c) four-part: «Elidan ayrilganni ayiq yer» – «**Barking dogs seldom bite**»;

d) five-part: «Minnatli oshdan beminnat musht yaxshi» – «**Blood is thicker than water**»;

e) six-part: «Qorni to'qning qorni ochdan xabari yo'q» – «**He who laughs last, laughs best**»;

f) of seven or more: – «Birovning mis qozonidan o'zingning qora qozoning yaxshi» – «Past ko'chadan topilgan do'stdan rost ko'chadan topilgan dushman yaxshi» – «**A picture is worth a thousand words**»; «**An apple a day keeps the doctor away**».

Complex proverbs consist of two or more components. Such proverbs have the character of a complex sentence. Complex proverbs consist of two and four parts. Moreover, this is a great rarity. Complex proverbs can be divided into the following types by the number of parts:

a) two-part: – «Yov qochsa(1), botir ko'payar(2)» – «**East or West(1), the home is best(2)**»;

b) three-part: – «O'roqda yo'q(1), mashoqda yo'q(2), xirmonda hozir(3)» – «**Better the Devil(1) you know than the Devil(2), you don't(3)**»;

c) four-part: – «Elga bersang oshingni(1), yerlar silar boshingni(2), itga bersang oshingni(3), itlar g'ajir boshingni(4)» – «**Early to bed(1), and early to rise(2), makes a man healthy(3) wealthy and wise(4)**»;



d) five-part: – «Bog‘ni boqsang(1), bog‘ bo‘ladi(2), botmon-dahsar yog‘ bo‘ladi(3), boqimsiz bog‘ tog‘ bo‘ladi(4), yurak-bag‘ring dog‘ bo‘ladi(5)» – «Want to get married and live a long time(1), to each jean and each catherine(2), they are married(3) and they live a long time(4) and they would like to retrace their steps(5)»;

e) six-part: – «Tog‘ni baland dema(1), talab qilsang(2), chiqasan(3), yovni kuchli dema(4), g‘ayrat qilsang(5), yiqasan(6)» – «Women are saints in the church(1), angels in the streets(2), devils in the house(3), toads at the windows(4), feet at the door(5), goats in the gardens(6)».

The classification of proverbs by their semantic features is based on how their meaning is expressed - whether they have a figurative meaning or not. According to this feature, proverbs can be divided into three groups:

a) proverbs used only in a figurative sense («Sichqon sig‘mas iniga, g‘alvir bog‘lar dumiga» – «Dead as a stone»);

b) proverbs used both literally and figuratively («Arg‘amchiga qil quvvat, Ignachining ming urgani, temirchining bir urgani» – «Take the bull by the horns»);

c) proverbs used only in the literal sense («So‘raganning aybi yo‘q»; «Aql bozorda sotilmas» – «Having eyes bigger than your stomach»).

Proverbs used only in a figurative sense are not subject to syntactic analysis by dividing them into parts of sentences. If a sentence is divided into parts, their figurative meaning disappears and turns into a simple sentence - a free combination, as a result of which sentences of the type are formed «A honey tongue, a heart of gall».

Proverbs that are used both literally and figuratively are analyzed as simple sentences when used literally - free combinations, but when used figuratively, sentences are not divided into parts of speech.

The third type of proverbs is grammatically no different from free combinations and its components are easy to analyze. In some publications, proverbs based on figurative meaning are singled out as a separate thematic group. For example: “To have the sacred fire”; “To water down one’s wine”, “To kill two birds with one stone”, “To fall into the trap”; “Like two peas in a pod”, it is clear that such proverbs are figurative in nature. However, in the sources studied there are many examples where the semantic features of proverbs are confused and inappropriately combined into groups.

In conclusion, it can be emphasized that proverbs are an important element of cultural heritage and language structure, with deep meaning and multifaceted functions. They are concise, but filled with folk wisdom, sayings that convey important life lessons, moral norms and values in a laconic form. Proverbs, due to their imagery and universality, remain relevant over time, adapting to changes in society and language.

Particular attention in the article was paid to the linguistic structure of proverbs: their grammatical features, morphological characteristics and functional features. The simplicity and expressiveness of proverbs make them convenient for use in colloquial and written speech, as well as an important tool for expressing thoughts and formulating ideals. The structure of proverbs allows for concise and effective transmission of important information using metaphors, comparative images and syntactic compactness.

Thus, proverbs, due to their linguistic and cultural significance, play an important role in the preservation and transmission of folk wisdom, reflecting the traditions and worldview of different generations.

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