

Contextual Functions of Paremiological Units in Discourse

Shakhzada Saymanova

Doctoral student of Karakalpak State University, Uzbekistan

Received: 27 May 2025; **Accepted:** 23 June 2025; **Published:** 25 July 2025

Abstract: In this article, we will determine the contextual flexibility, semantic multi-layeredness, and communicative-discursive modification of proverbs and sayings, which are paremiological units in the English and Karakalpak languages, in various discourse genres. Through the research, it is analyzed how proverbs acquire new semantic meaning and content in the context, undergo stylistic changes, and appear in a new axiological content.

Keywords: Paremiology, contextual function, discourse, proverbs and sayings, metaphor, linguoculturological, tropes, stylistic figures.

Introduction: Proverbs, despite being a small genre within oral folk art, encompass all spheres of our life in their content. It is the spiritual treasure of the people. Proverbs and sayings serve to enhance the spiritual strength of our people, to give a new look at our customs, traditions, and national values, and to educate the younger generation as devoted children of the nation. Therefore, their comprehensive study is considered one of the most important issues of science. In this regard, as Professor Sh.Abdinazimov noted, folklore, including proverbs and sayings, has been widely studied by literary scholars. However, the issue of studying folklore works, which are an inexhaustible treasure that provides rich material for the history of the Karakalpak language, in linguofolkloristic, linguopoetic, and linguocultural aspects is one of the lagging areas of Karakalpak linguistics.

The study of the linguistic features of folklore works in Karakalpak linguistics still requires a lot of research. Therefore, in this work, we study the language of proverbs.

The writer or speaker widely uses the artistic means of language to ensure the conciseness, artistic and figurative nature of the thought that is intended to be expressed in writing and speech. Especially in a poetic work, through language, the poet conveys his intended thought to the reader figuratively, concisely, and clearly, without prolonging the sentences to artistically

illuminate a certain event, phenomenon, object, or its characteristic depicted in the work, but by using words figuratively, he achieves a concise and effective conveyance of that thought. Language tools in such a service are called figurative or artistic tools in linguistics. They serve the imagery of language. Descriptive means in language are divided into two large groups.

1. Tropes.
2. Stylistic figures.

Tropes are of great importance in language and literary works. The imagery and expressiveness of the language of any work depend on the skillful and appropriate use of these tropes and their types. The main function of the trope is to ensure the imagery of the language. There are several types of tropes, including epithet, simile, metaphor, metonymy, synecdoche, irony, allegory, personification, periphrasis, and others.

In the language of a literary work, including the language of a poetic work, one of the most productive types of tropes is metaphor, metonymy, synecdoche. Through metaphor, metonymy, synecdoche, an object or phenomenon is compared with each other, and one of them is determined and explained by analogy with the other.

Based on some similarity of two objects or phenomena, it is a metaphor to connect a characteristic belonging to

one of them with another object in a figurative sense, and in this respect, it is very similar to the comparison, close, but in the comparison it is said that the second word series indicating the object, action, and what it is compared to, in the metaphor only the second one, that is, what it is compared to, is shown. In this respect, imagery in metaphors is strong.

Tropes are the general name of words used figuratively, and in order to create imagery, the transfer of the name, sign, action of a certain thing or action in a work of art to another, comparison, analogy, in general, the use of words in a figurative sense for a certain purpose is called a trop.

A.Bekbergenov writes about tropes: "The use of a word in some contexts in a figurative sense different from its main direct meaning, performing the function of various artistic means, is called a trop," while E.Berdimuratov writes: "To enhance the artistic value, imagery, expressiveness of a literary work, the transfer of the name of one thing to another or the use of the word for this purpose in a general, figurative sense is called a trop" .

The following analytical examples were selected from various reliable sources - collections of folk proverbs, modern mass media, social networks, literary texts, and political speech corpora. English proverbs are based on the Oxford Dictionary of Proverbs (Speake, 2015), and Karakalpak proverbs are taken from the research works of B.T. Yusupova (2021) and G.K. Kdirbaeva (2023), as well as from the list of proverbs in volumes 88-100 of Karakalpak folklore. Each narrative was selected and analyzed based on a typical situation or stylistic-functional transformation used in a real discourse context.

In the following table, proverbs in English and Karakalpak are analyzed based on contextual and discursive functions. Each article provides a contextual example and a methodological-axiological explanation. The selection of examples was based on the following methodological and scientific principles:

1) Semantic multi-layeredness: proverbs operate

simultaneously in several semantic fields (moral, aesthetic, social);

2) Discourse flexibility: proverbs can perform new functions in various genres (artistic, political, media discourse);

3) Pragmatic function: proverbs were selected for illocutionary purposes, such as warning, evaluation, ironic speech, promotion;

4) Axiological content: in each proverb, the attitude towards social values, mentality, or stereotypes was taken into account;

5) Linguocultural harmony: proverbs express values, images, and concepts characteristic of two language cultures;

6) Comparative content: English and Karakalpak proverbs were selected on a comparative basis, functionally or figuratively.

For example, the English proverb "A little knowledge is a dangerous thing," depending on its context, can be used in the sense of warning, critical opinion, even ironic speech. In scientific discourse, it informs about the danger of a conclusion based on non-argumentative or unreliable information. In social network discourse, ironic speech is used in the context of naming, mocking certain "interested people."

In the Karakalpak language, "Bolar bala bes jasınan belgili" - That is, a person with strength or a capable, capable person finds an opportunity to solve the problem regardless of the situation. In journalism, it means describing a person with political power, and in artistic discourse, this proverb means a strong emotional assessment of a characteristic image.

In the interdiscursive context, the proverb "The squeaky wheel gets the grease" means that the person who actively expresses dissatisfaction in business and political discourse has an advantage in solving the problem. In the Karakalpak language, the corresponding proverb "Even if the mouth is crooked, let the rich man's child speak" is used, which means discontent and injustice in this context.

3.1-table

Functional features of proverbs in English discourse

№	English proverb	Context (discourse type)	Function/Description

1	Actions speak louder than words.	Political discourse	Practice is more important than words. Reducing rhetoric.
2	Don't judge a book by its cover.	Media discourse	Against evaluation based on appearance. Empathy
3	Easy come, easy go.	Social media	Criticizing those who value money and luck.
4	Every cloud has a silver lining.	Motivational text	Optimistic connotation. Stylistically strong expression.
5	Money doesn't grow on trees.	Parental advice	Formation of educational and economic consciousness.
6	Better late than never.	Bureaucratic discourse	Pragmatic choice from an unbiased perspective.
7	The grass is always greener on the other side.	Internet memes	Feeling, criticism, and unsatisfactory characters.
8	A stitch in time saves nine.	Accounting/corporate relations	The advantages of fast movement. Strategic advice.
9	You can't have your cake and eat it too.	Political discourse	Criticism of hypocrisy. Expressive evaluation
10	When in Rome, do as the Romans do.	Global culture	Call for cultural adaptation.

Proverbs, analyzed as a general analytical conclusion based on English proverbs, actively participate in discourse by adapting them to their semantic and pragmatic functions in various oral speech contexts. Many of them serve to express emotional-expressive, evaluative, warning, and cultural values. In political discourse, proverbs are used as a rhetorical force, and

in social networks, as a means of expressing irony and sarcasm. A proverb, as a short but complete structure, is considered important in expressing attitudes towards various social topics, expressing personal experience or collective values. They strengthen the semantic connection between language and culture and serve as a universal tool in determining pragmatic strategies.

3.2-table

Functional features of proverbs in Karakalpak discourse

№	Karakalpak proverb	Context (discourse type)	Function/Description
1	Bası bar adam basılmaydı.	Politics / Controversial text	Depicts the image of a strong person.
2	Ağası bardıń panası bar, inisi bardıń tınıshı bar.	Law-discourse	Jámiyetlik hám ierarxiyanıń áhmiyeti
3	Qızıl júzli jigittiń, qız qarındası bolmasın	Female-male stereotype	Defining behavior based on gender.
4	Maldı tapqanğa baqtır, otındı shapqanğa jaqtır	Motivational context	Unity of knowledge and practice.
5	Ata kórgen oq jonar, ene kórgen ton pisher	Upbringing discourse	Pay attention to the role of a father. Cultural code
6	Terek tamırınan nár aladı	Ecological discourse	Criticism of environmental devaluation.
8	Qazanshınıń erki bar, qaydan qulaq shıǵarsa	Freedom	About various opportunities.
9	Enesi bar kelin qarqaralı kelin, enesi joq kelin masqara kelin	National culture	In a cautionary image.
10	Júz somıń bolǵansha, júz dostıń bolsın	Friendship/social	The value of relationships.

Proverbs in the Karakalpak language reveal mental constructions inherent in the consciousness of the people in the context of discourse. Analysis shows that these proverbs receive a separate semantic and axiological load in each socio-cultural situation. They serve as a verbal expression of existing moral norms, stereotypes, and values in society. Especially in political and journalistic discourse, these proverbs are a

necessary tool for social evaluation, expression of a critical position, and re-actualization of basic concepts in collective consciousness. At the same time, through these proverbs, evaluation criteria based on the experience of the ancient people, life wisdom, and cultural consciousness are conveyed. In most of them, emotional-intonational strength and imagery are strong, which increases the power of communicative

influence.

Analytical analysis, showing the contextual functions of paremiological units in both discourses, shows that in English and Karakalpak discourses, paremiological units have different contextual functions, but mutually compatible features. While English proverbs are used more as a universal means of communication, Karakalpak proverbs reflect local cultural codes. Proverbs in both language discourses:

a) It has an evaluative functional weight - proverbs of both studied languages serve to assess moral, social, and aesthetic values. For example, the proverbs "Honesty is the best policy" (in English) and "Ağam barda, arqam tamda" (in Karakalpak) express moral ideals;

b) Warning and rhetorical means - the proverbs "Curiosity killed the cat" (in English) and "Ekkende joq, tikkende joq, qirmanda tayar"(in Karakalpak) have emotional-expressive power;

c) Contextual pragmatism - such proverbs as "The squeaky wheel gets the grease" and "Jılamağan balağa emshek qayda?" mean the pragmatics of obtaining profit through demand and dissatisfaction;

b) Reflecting mentality - proverbs in the Karakalpak language often express society, nature, and national values, while English proverbs are based on individualistic or global positions;

c) Adaptability to discourse - versions of both languages can easily adapt to political, media discourse, educational, and social media environments.

This analysis shows that paremiological units are one of the main elements of intercultural semantic and pragmatic exchange in the discursive environment.

At the same time, arguments were found for the opinion of G.K. Kdirbaeva that..."ancient stereotypes, archetypal images, and values in the consciousness of the people pass into new semantic connotations in modern discourse through units of the mythological conceptosphere, visible in some proverbs" , "Paremiological units in the Karakalpak language often become verbal expressions of group consciousness and mentality, relying on mythologemes" . Within the framework of discourse, it has been proven that proverbs, along with the activation of relics of mythological consciousness, become necessary markers of the cultural semiosphere.

Thus, paremiological units in discourse are constantly subjected to contextual modification, they leave their original lexico-semantic content and transition to a new content, adapting to new communicative needs, stylistic tasks, and axiological situations. A comparative analysis of English and Karakalpak proverbs shows that

the semantic and pragmatic meaning assigned to each proverb is determined precisely by the context of oral speech. At the same time, contextual analysis confirms the shift of proverbs at the linguosemantic level, the acquisition of new social significance, and their use as a communicative strategy.

The structural similarity of English and Karakalpak proverbs (binary oppositions, metaphorical expression, axiological evaluation) confirms their function as a universal means of communication. In both languages, proverbs allow conveying thoughts figuratively, concisely, and effectively, which leads to their widespread use in social discourse. They also serve as an effective tool in intercultural communication due to similar conceptual foundations. In particular, units built on a metaphorical basis - for example, "grass is always greener... (youth) " and "under a dark cloud" (bad mood) - universal human emotions and values. These similarities also reflect the commonality of their cognitive models.

The cognitive-discursive approach allows us to reconstruct the semantic map of the people's consciousness through proverbs, that is, to determine their internal conceptual structure, a hierarchy of values, and cultural codes. With the help of such an approach, the axiological approach reflected in each proverb, mental stereotypes, and semantic transfers corresponding to discourse are analyzed. Thus, not only the language itself is restored, but also the model of national consciousness and thinking formed through it.

Bilingual proverbs can be successfully used as material in the educational process (language teaching, intercultural communication, development of linguocultural competence). Through these proverbs, students become acquainted with the value system, imagery, universality, and models of national thinking reflected in different cultures, and improve their ability to use language in the context of discourse.

Proverbs act according to the context in strengthening values in society, exposing stereotypes, or repeating them. Their semantic and pragmatic content depends on the speech situation, and they can serve the dominant ideologies reflected in public consciousness or, conversely, be a means of expressing a critical attitude towards them. Therefore, proverbs appear not only as an expression of axiological evaluation, but also as a means of the ideological semiosphere.

These results confirm the need to evaluate proverbs not only as linguistic units, but also as subjects of discursive activity. In a discursive environment, they are actualized in accordance with the context, perform new semantic functions, and sometimes reinforce stereotypes or view them from a critical point of view.

A comparative study of proverbs in English and Karakalpak reveals their cultural specificity, their potential as a universal communicative model, and what semantic shifts individuality faces in national consciousness. At the same time, proverbs, ensuring interdiscursiveness, perform axiological, evaluative, emotional, stylistic, and communicative functions simultaneously in different speech environments. Such complex functional content is the basis for studying them not only as a linguistic, but also as a semiotic-cultural object.

REFERENCES

Алимурадов О.А., Милетова Е.В. Метафорические модели, вербализующиеся с участием имен прилагательных и реализуемые в современном англоязычном искусствоведческом дискурсе // Вопросы когнитивной лингвистики. – 2013. – №4(037). – С. 51–53.

Бердимуратов Е. Әдебий тилдің функционаллық стильлерінің раўажланыўы менен қарақалпақ тили лексикасының раўажланыўы. Нөкис, 1973.

Кдырбаева Г.К. Мифологик концептосфера бирликлари лисоний воқеланишининг когнитив-дискурсив хусусиятлари (инглиз ва қорақалпоқ тиллари мисолида): дисс. ... филол. фан. док. – Нукус, 2024. – Б. 133-137.

Левшикова Е.В., Рахунок А.М. Метафора в английских пословицах и поговорках // Актуальные вопросы современных научных исследований. – Минск, 2021. – С. 207–209.

Козырева О.А. Когнитивные аспекты исследования лингвокультурологического поля (на материале поля «дом/жилье»): дис. ... канд. филол. наук. – Москва, 2003. – 169 с.

Юдина И.Ю. Метафора в английской пословице: дис. ... канд. филол. наук. – Орехово-Зуево, 2008. – 130 с.