LINGUOPOETIC FEATURES OF LEXICO-SEMANTIC TROPES IN ENGLISH PROVERBS

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Annotation: While lexico-semantic tropes have been extensively investigated in prose and poetry, their significance in proverbs has explored insufficiently. Consequently, the stylistic and semantic value of lexico-semantic tropes in proverbs gained limited scholarly attention. Therefore, the main aim of this study is to evaluate and present the linguopoetic features of 6 primary lexico-semantic tropes: metaphor, metonymy, synecdoche, personification, hyperbole and litotes within the most significant category of the English paremiological units - proverbs. By employing linguopoetic, continuous sampling, stylistic analysis and cognitive-semantic mapping methods, the results of the study demonstrates that these tropes function not only just as stylistic decoration, but also they contribute to cognitive economy, memorability, didactic efficacy and cultural encoding of the proverbs.
Keywords: paremiological units, proverbs, lexico-semantic tropes, metaphor, metonymy, synecdoche, personification, hyperbole, litotes

INGLIZ MAQOLLARIDAGI LEKSIK-SEMANTIK TROPLARNING LINGVOPOETIK XUSUSIYATLARI

Annotatsiya: Leksik-semantik trop (ko‘chim)lar nasr va she'riyatda keng tadqiq etilgan bo‘lsada, ularning maqollardagi ahamiyati yetarlicha o'rganilmagan. Oqibatda, maqollardagi lexico-semantik troplarning stilistik hamda semantik qiymati tilshunoslar e"tiboridan chetda qolib kelmoqda. Shu sababli, ushbu tadqiqotning asosiy maqsadi ingliz paremiologik birliklarining eng muhim kategoriyasi hisoblangan maqollarda 6 ta asosiy leksik-semantik trop — metafora, metonimiya, sinekdoha, jonlantirish (personifikatsiya), giperbola va litotaning lingvopoetik xususiyatlarini baholash hamda yoritib berishdan iborat. Lingvopoetik, uzluksiz tanlab olish (yig‘ish), stilistik tahlil va kognitiv-semantik xaritalash usullaridan foydalanilgan holda olingan natijalar shuni ko‘rsatadiki, bu troplar nafaqat stilistik bezak vazifasini bajaradi, balki maqollarning kognitiv tejamkorligi, yodda qolarliligi, didaktik samaradorligi va madaniy kodlanishiga ham munosib hissa qo‘shadi.
Kalit so‘zlar: paremiologik birliklar, maqollar, leksik-semantik troplar, metafora, metonimiya, sinekdoha, jonlantirish, giperbola, litota

ЛИНГВОПОЭТИЧЕСКИЕ ОСОБЕННОСТИ ЛЕКСИКО-СЕМАНТИЧЕСКИХ ТРОПОВ В АНГЛИЙСКИХ ПОСЛОВИЦАХ

АННОТАЦИЯ: Хотя лексико-семантические тропы широко исследовались в прозе и поэзии, их значение в пословицах изучено недостаточно. В результате стилистическая и семантическая ценность лексико-семантических тропов в пословицах привлекала ограниченное внимание исследователей. В связи с этим основная цель данного исследования — оценить и представить

лингвопоэтические особенности 6 основных лексико-семантических тропов: метафоры, метонимии, синекдохи, олицетворения (персонификации), гиперболы и литоты в рамках наиболее значимой категории английских паремиологических единиц — пословиц. С применением лингвопоэтического метода, метода сплошной выборки, стилистического анализа и когнитивно-семантического картирования результаты исследования демонстрируют, что эти тропы функционируют не просто как стилистическое украшение, но и способствуют когнитивной экономии, запоминаемости, дидактической эффективности и культурному кодированию пословиц.

Ключевые слова:паремиологические единицы, пословицы, лексико-семантические тропы, метафора, метонимия, синекдоха, олицетворение, гипербола, литота

I.Introduction.

The study of the paremiological units in modern cultural linguistics, anthropocentric linguistics and cognitive typology is profoundly significant. The significance of this selected topic stems from a key question in modern linguistics: how can proverbs include such a great deal of profound meaning within just a few words? This balance is called linguistic economy. In the process of investigation of how a culture uses figures of speech, we can see exactly how people turn abstract ideas into concrete, easy-to-understand images with the help of stylistic devices. Devices like metaphor, metonymy, synecdoche, personification, hyperbole, and litotes are not only decorative tools which make folk speech sound pretty, but also they function as cognitive patterns making a proverb memorable, easy to passdown through generations, and highly persuasive.

II.Literature review.

In global linguistics, the study of proverbs as specialized language units is connected with names of famous figures in paremiology such as Archer Taylor, Wolfgang Mieder, G.L. Permyakov, Alan Dundes, Naciscione and A.V. Kunin. Firstly, modern comparative paremiological analysis is founded by Archer Taylor. He considers that proverbs should be defined by their receptive recognition. Taylor (1931, as cited in Mieder, 2014), explains that "the definition of a proverb is too difficult to repay the undertaking; and should we fortunately combine in a single definition all the essential elements" (p. 3). Additionally, he defines the incommunicable quality as the collection of structural and stylistic devices such as metaphor, rhythm and alliteration. He firstly divides proverbial lores into systematic groups: proverbs proper, proverbial phrases, comparisons according to their grammatical and structural adaptability and he also highlights the role of lexico-semantic tropes to achieve didactic authority. Similarly, Wolfgang Mieder (2012) emphasizes the linguocultural aspect by analysing and evaluating how history, social class and other unique national mindset of English people are encoded within proverbs. Mieder (2019) also claims ""That is why so many proverbs have found a wide distribution be-yond national borders and why there are so many equivalent proverbs that might have different images and structures, but that mean the same thing!" (p. 34). Concurrently, the structural-syntactic aspects are highlighted by Dundes. According to Dundes (1975, as cited in Bromber, 2020) "A proverb is wise; it belongs to many people; it is ingenious in form and idea; and it was first invented by an individual and applied by him to a particular situation" (p. 3). A.V. Kunin (1996,) categorizes proverbs as communicative phraseological units which are characterized by their semantic stability and he primary emphasizes the phraseological aspect of proverbs in his scientific research. The paremiological modeling is established by Russian structuralist Permyakov. He considers proverbs as logical and semiotic models of real life situations rather than mere lexical items. Permyakov (1979, as cited in Hrisztova-Gotthardt & Varga, 2014) outlines that "proverbs and sayings are signs of situations or certain relations between things" (p. 19), which serve as both

linguistic units and structural models. Doyle et al. (2012) outlines that true English proverbs are characterized as full, formulaic sentences which express general observations or propositions to convey cultural wisdom. Although many scholars have studied English proverbs, they rarely analyze the exact artistic tools (stylistic devices) used inside them. Specifically, there is very little research on how English proverbs use exaggeration (hyperbole) versus understatement (litotes), or how they use word associations (metonymy and synecdoche). Therefore, the object of this research is the collection of traditional English proverbs. The subject of the study is the artistic and stylistic features of the main figures of speech found in these English proverbs.

III.Methods.

The methodology of this paper is designed in order to analyze and categorize the stylistic features of English proverbs. To keep the research systematic, The study was conducted systematically in three main stages: data collection, stylistic classification, and semantic analysis.

1. Data Collection (Research Material)

The research material consists of a corpus of traditional English proverbs. We collected these proverbs through applying the continuous sampling method from authoritative lexicographical sources, especially

- The Oxford Dictionary of English Proverbs
- The Penguin Dictionary of Proverbs

In this stage, more 100 English proverbs which contain clear lexico-semantic tropes were choosen for gaining close analysis and proverbs which only have MXliteral meanings (such as "Honesty is the best policy") were excluded from this corpus.

2. Main Linguistic Methods Used

In this process, the following three main linguistic methods were applied in order to investigate these selection of proverbs:

- Linguopoetic and Stylistic Analysis This is the primary method of the study. It is used to analyse the specific stylistic devices such as metaphor, metonymy, synecdoche, personification, hyperbole, and litotes within the English proverbs and it helps to explain how these devices make the proverb more expressive and persuasive.
- Semantic Analysis: This method is applied to study how word meanings shift from literal to figurative within the short frame of a proverb. It riches our understanding of the hidden, deeper meaning behind the physical words.
- Descriptive Method: We used this method in order to examine the structural characteristics of the proverbs and categorise them into clear thematic groups based on the type of tropes used.

3. Step-by-Step Procedure of the study

A clear, three-step process were followed during these analysis to make sure that the results are reliable

Step 1: Selection ->Choosing more than 100 figurative proverbs of English nationfrom dictionaries.

Step 2: Identification ->Tagging each proverb by its dominant trope such as litotes or hyperbole.

Step 3: Analysis ->Explanation of how great deal of role and significance these tropes play to deliver the proverb's main moral lesson.

IV.Results and discussion.

The selected proverbs were analyzed for primary stylistic devices which occur mostly within English proverbs: metaphor, metonymy, synecdoche, personification, hyperbole and litotes.

Table 1. Stylistic devices with proverb examples for each:

Metaphor	Metonymy/synecdoche	Personification	Hyperbole	Litotes
Every cloud has a silver lining. A bird in the hand is worth two in the bush. Barking dogs seldom bite. Don't count your chickens before they are hatched. Don't put all your eggs in one basket. Strike while the iron is hot. A stitch in time saves nine. The path of true love never did run smooth. Look before you leap. All roads lead to Rome.	The pen is mightier than the sword. Two heads are better than one. Many hands make light work. The crown will find its king. A hungry belly has no ears. Blue blood will always show. Gold goes in at any gate. All eyes are on the prize. The tongue is not steel, yet it cuts. A clear conscience fears no accusation. The cowl does not make the monk. Blood is thicker than water.	Fortune favors the bold. Hunger is the best cook. Time and tide wait for no man. Love is blind. Truth will out. Necessity is the mother of invention. Actions speak louder than words. Fear has big eyes. Walls have ears. Pride goes before a fall. Hope is a good breakfast but a bad supper. Haste makes waste. Experience is the best teacher.	A thousand probabilities do not make one truth. It is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle, than for a rich man to enter into the kingdom of God. A small leak will sink a great ship. Give him an inch and he'll take a mile. One picture is worth a thousand words. A drowning man will clutch at a straw. If wishes were horses, beggars would ride.	Experience is no bad teacher. Truth is no flatterer. Wisdom is no burden to carry. A miss is as good as a mile. It is no small matter. Rome was not built in a day. No man is born wise. One is never too old to learn.

As the next steps of the analysis, metaphors were investigated. In this process, metaphorical proverbs were divided into 4 main groups according to their meaning:

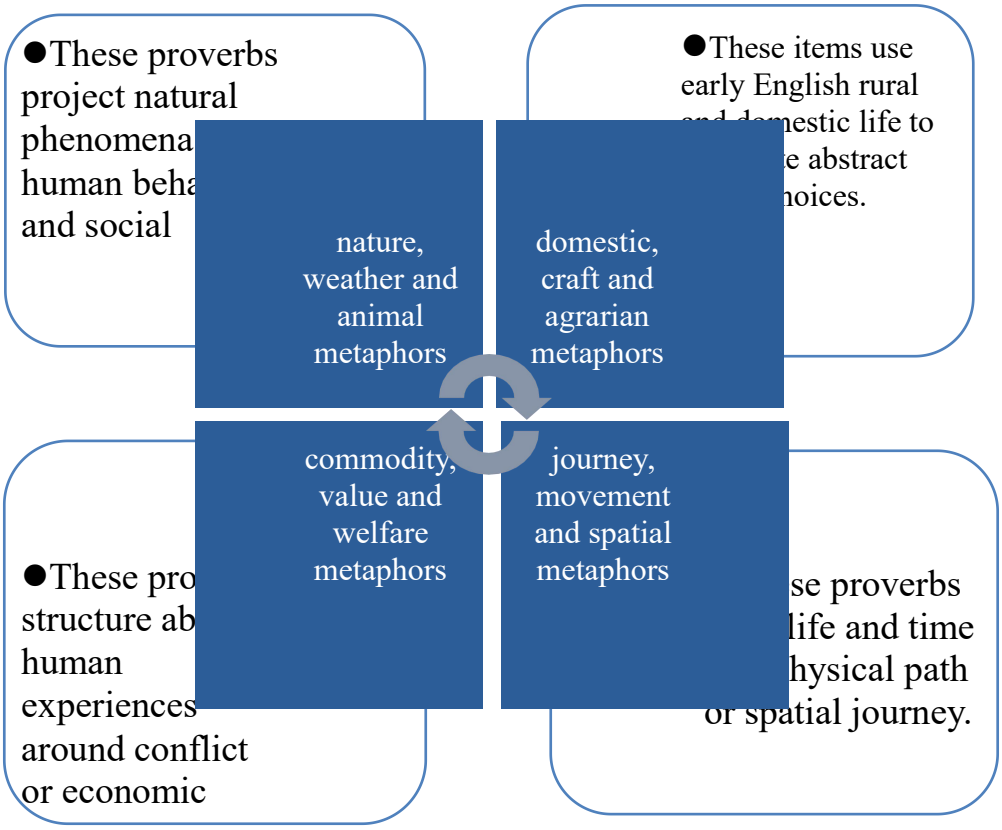


Figure 1. Categorization of metaphor in proverbs according to the meaning they convey

The subsequent analysis is devoted to the differences between metonymy and synecdoche in the usage, core formula and linguistic target with some examples for each:

Table 2. The usage of metonymy and synecdoche in English proverbs and features

Feature	Metonymy in proverbs	Synecdoche in proverbs
Type of relationship	Qualitative Contiguity: Connection based on association, symbol, cause, or instrument.	Quantitative Contiguity: Connection based on structural scale, size, or physical parts.
Core formula	Object A is associated with Concept B.	Part A is a literal component of Whole B.
Linguistic target	Shifts from a physical thing to an abstract institution, system, or power.	Shifts from a localized physical part to the entire physical entity.
Proverb example 1	"The pen is mightier than the sword." (Pen is not a literal physical part of a writer; it is an associated tool).	"Many hands make light work." (The hand is a literal, physical part of the human body).
Proverb example 2	An empty sack cannot stand upright (A sack is not a component of a human being. The physical condition of the container (empty sack) is transferred to the socio-economic status of a human being (poor).	The mouth of a governor is a great matter. (The mouth is the part of the governor's physical body. By using this strict quantitative relationship, the synecdoche highlights the immense, consequences of a ruler's verbal declarations)
Proverb example 3	Gold goes in at any gate. (Gold represents wealth or bribes, and gate represents laws, legal systems. The relationship is entirely qualitative)	A hungry belly has no ears. (belly and ears represent a person's entire physical and mental state. It explicitly shows that when a specific part of the body (the stomach) is empty, the other part completely stops working)

In the next step of the study, there is given the analysis of personification with examples for each and these examples were investigated for abstract target, attributes, types and didactic purpose:

PROVERB	ABSTRACT TARGET	HUMAN ATTRIBUTE GRANTED	TYPE OF PERSONIFICATION	DIDACTIC PURPOSE/MORAL LESSON
Walls have ears.	WALLS	Hearing	Anatomical/Sensory	Warns the listener to exercise extreme caution when sharing secrets.
Hunger is the best cook.	HUNGER	Culinary Profession	Social/Professional	Explains how physical need enhances appreciation for basic things.
Fortune favors the bold	FORTUNE	Intentional preference	Moral Volition/Will	Encourages decisive, courageous action in the face of uncertainty.
Actions speak louder than words	ACTIONS	Speech / Verbal capacity (speak)	Anatomical / Communicative Faculty	Directs the listener to judge individuals by their tangible behavior rather than their verbal promises or superficial claims.
Pride goes before a fall.	PRIDE	Physical locomotion (goes /walks)	Physical Agency / Independent Will	Serves as a stark warning that self-blindness and arrogance inevitably lead to a sudden, catastrophic loss of status or moral ruin.

Subsequently, 6 examples for the usage of hyperbole with deep analysis were provided:

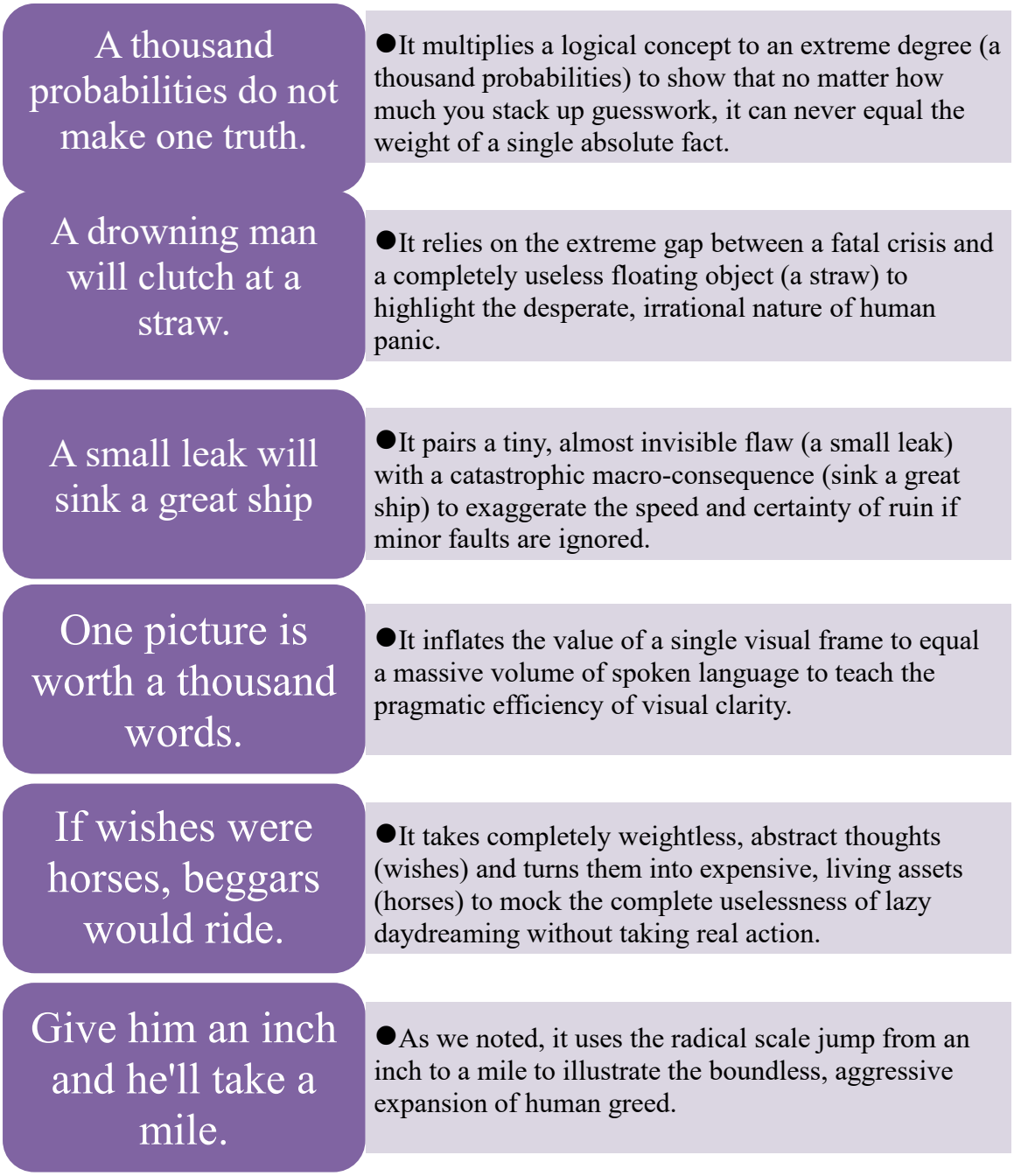


Figure 2. Examples for the usage of personification in proverbs

Then the last part of the analysis is devoted to the significance of litotes in proverbs:

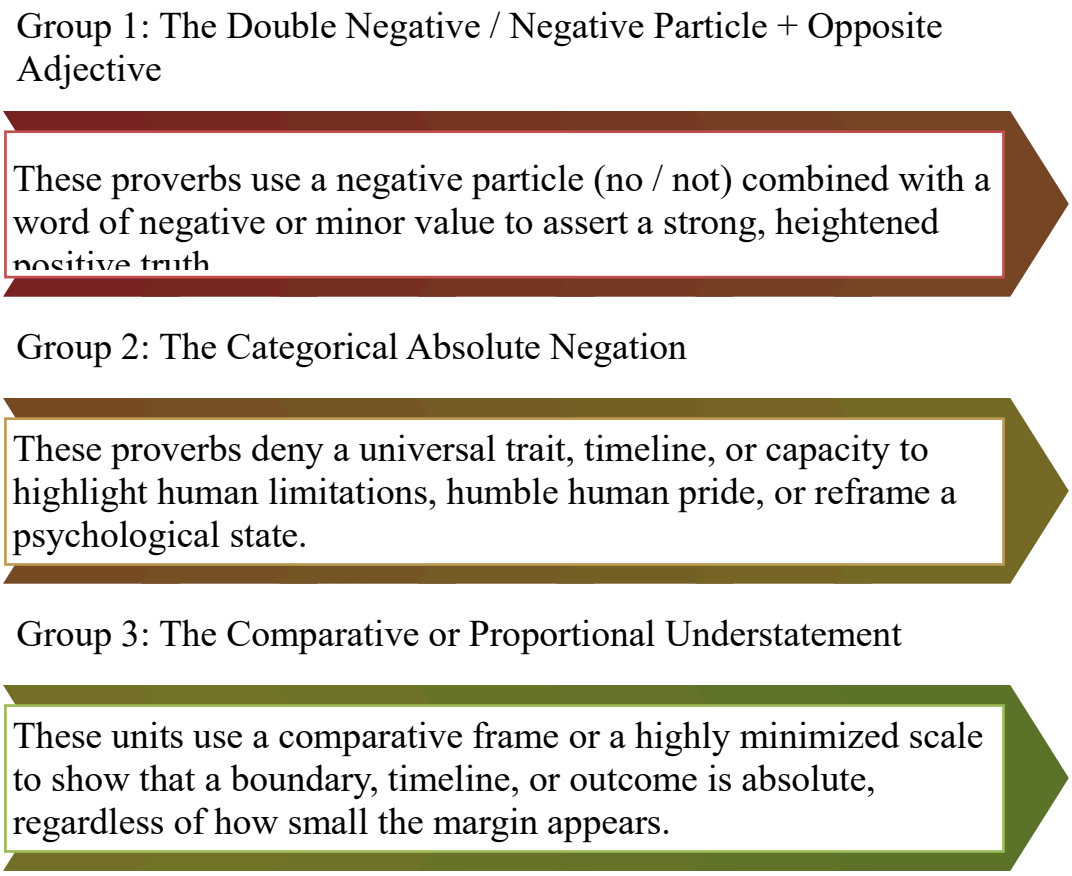


Figure 3. The main categories of litotes in proverbs.

The main aim of this study was to analyze the semantic, and cognitive functions of six prominent stylistic devices, namely the metaphor, metonymy, synecdoche, personification, hyperbole, and litotes within English proverbs. As demonstrated in the preceding tables, figures and visuals, the empirical findings of the study reveal that figurative language not only function mere decorative role in paremiological units, but also it plays a significant role as the foundational cognitive mechanism and abstract cultural wisdom is conceptualized and transmitted through this mechanism.

1. The analysis of metaphor and personification in English proverbs

The frequent use of metaphors in the studied material shows one of the common human trait: people tend to express abstract moral concepts through concrete, physical experiences. Metaphorical Projection: As for the metaphorical analysis, some proverbs can be example for Category A (Figure 1):

Time is a great healer: the word time is target or abstract concept; and great healer is Human Attribute

Linguopoetic Analysis: The coldness or mechanical, chronological nature of "time" is stripped in this proverb and endowed with the intentional agency of a medical professional. The proverb suggests comfort by highlighting that emotional recovery is a natural and active process. This was shown by the transformation of time into a physical doctor who can actively cure psychological and emotional wounds.

Hunger is the best cook - The word hunger is target or abstract concept; and human attribute means a culinary expert or cook here.

Linguopoetic Analysis: This proverb personifies the basic biological state: hunger as a skilled chef. The main duty of a cook is to make food tasty through preparation. Therefore, the proverb argues that the physiological drive of starvation performs this exact labor internally, which alters the human perception of taste so that even the most basic food becomes desirable.

Personification as a Didactic Tool: Didactic and moral lessons are dramatized in some proverbs by changing human agency to inanimate objects or abstract concepts (e.g., "Actions speak louder than words" or "Hunger is the best cook") and this active agency makes the warning or advice feel immediate and relatable and also bridges the gap between passive observation and active moral instruction.

2. Semantic Economy and Part-Whole Relations: Metonymy and Synecdoche

Our structural classification highlights metonymy and synecdoche as primary instruments of linguistic economy. Proverbs must be brief for remaining memorable in minds. So these two devices allow for maximum cognitive retrieval with minimal linguistic effort.

Metonymy (Domain Contiguity): In proverbs such as "The pen is mightier than the sword," the instruments of writing ("pen") and warfare ("sword") stand in for the broader concepts of diplomacy/journalism and military force. This contiguous mapping reduces cognitive load while sharpening the contrast between intellectual and physical power.

Synecdoche (Part-for-Whole): The use of synecdoche, as seen in "Many hands make light work," focuses the listener's attention on the specific anatomical part ("hands") responsible for labor. This reinforces the cooperative nature of the task by isolating the exact physical element needed, grounding the abstract concept of teamwork in physical reality.

3. Pragmatic Scaling: Hyperbole and Litotes

While metaphor and metonymy manage conceptual mappings, hyperbole and litotes operate on a pragmatic scale of intensity, adjusting the communicative volume of the proverb to maximize psychological impact.

Hyperbole (Amplification): By intentionally overstating a reality, hyperbole creates a dramatic cognitive dissonance that emphasizes urgency. It acts as a mnemonic device, ensuring the logical consequence of an action is unforgettable.

Litotes (Understatement): Conversely, litotes (often utilizing double negatives, such as "No news is good news") operates through cognitive moderation. It softens potential anxiety and introduces a cautious, philosophical pragmatism. This device invites the reader to compute meaning through negation, engaging deeper cognitive processing to arrive at the intended reassurance.

V.Conclusion

Rather than viewing these six stylistic devices as isolated poetic tools, our classification demonstrates that they frequently operate in tandem. For example, a proverb may use synecdoche to establish its subject ("hands") while simultaneously utilizing metaphor to frame the action. This multi-layered figurative structure explains why proverbs possess such enduring cognitive stability across generations.

From an educational perspective, particularly within second language acquisition (SLA), understanding the stylistic architecture of English proverbs plays a significant role. This knowledge is especially crucial for language instructors, students of EFL (English as a foreign language) and ESL (English as a second language), scholars of the field and etc.

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