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## **THE IMPORTANCE OF PROVERBS WITH A NUMBER COMPONENT IN TEACHING FOREIGN LANGUAGES (ON MATERIAL OF THE KAZAKH AND ENGLISH LANGUAGES)**

### *Abstract*

*This article examines the role and the importance of national and cultural features of phraseological units in teaching foreign language; explores the nuances of teaching for foreign students reading and using of phraseological units. The authors define a series of numbers which are considered to be sacred ones according to some religious beliefs.*

**Key words:** proverb, number, sacred, language

**Ключевые слова:** пословицы, число, сакральный, язык

The language from anthropocentric concept, namely «when human being is regarded as the main factor of the language» is being investigated nowadays, and it is obvious that it gives a chance to reveal some new aspects. The role of national self-consciousness and cognition that depicts objective reality foundation by estimating and reasoning natural phenomena is crucial in a human being perception from linguistic aspect. They are considered to be a priceless treasury of specific and unique qualities, values and beliefs of the nation and individuals as well.

In every day conversations people use a great number of language units of lexical stock that are better known in lexicology as phraseologisms and proverbs and sayings.

In such kind of “ready made” language units traditional and sacred digits are also frequently in use as well.

This article examines the role and the importance of national and cultural features of phraseological units in teaching foreign language; explores the nuances of teaching for foreign students reading and using of phraseological units. In the article we also find it is important to make a sort observation on phraseologisms and proverbs that have the numerals. Although phraseologisms and collocations have been carefully studied for many years we can definitely say that there are some specific features need to be investigated today.

The names of the numerals frequently appear in phraseological units. Collocations in Kazakh and English languages relating to religious beliefs, customs and traditions have been collecting from the early times depict all specific features of wealthy sentience and considered to be a word-hoard.

Numbers had frequently been practiced from the first days of baby’s life. In human’s life from the early times numbers had a specific function of the time and square measurement. Ex.: earlier there were five days in a week; today the week is longer for two days.

Among the numerals some numbers represent not only digits but also bear other meaning. These numerals specified by the usage in collocations which can be found in legends, zhurs, customs and traditions and other world outlook. Certainly the history of the phenomena lays back in time.

Numbers also affect style in the form of witticisms, sayings, and idioms. Such phrases as being on “cloud nine,” feeling “all sixes and sevens,” and getting “behind the eight ball” have specialized meanings within American culture. The words “lucky seven” and “third time’s a charm” conjure mystical qualities long associated with those numbers. We use idiomatic expressions such as “killing two birds with one stone” and having “two strikes against you.” The journalistic “30” signals the end of an article or essay.

There is a great variety of linguistic materials deriving from the peculiarities of specific outlook, customs and traditions of the national conception. There are different numerals used in proverbs (one, two, four, seven, nine, forty, ninety and so on). For example: Between two stools one goes to the ground; first thrive, then wife: Once bitten twice shy; there are two sides to every question ; fool at forty is a fool indeed; horse stumbles that has four legs; keep a thing seven years and you will find a use for it ; old men are twice children; rain before seven, fine at eleven. As Kunin A. has pointed out, there are a great number of proverbs and sayings with one and two numerals in English language [1, 45].

If we consider history facts of the research there are some scientific works in both languages devoting to the subject raised above. But they fail to settle mind in concerning the nature of sacred numerals. According to Kenesbayev I. “three”, “seven”, “nine”, “forty” are considered sacred in Kazakh language [2, 14], However Gabyt Khanuly K., points out, “three”, “seven”, “nine”, “forty”, “twelve” numbers differ from other numerals in bearing additional meaning [3,110]. He believes that this idea can be proved that these numbers applied in collocations, legends, customs and traditions and other world outlooks.

In fact these numerals in comparison with other types give a certain picture of the early history of every nation, its specific customs and traditions which had been formed in overall mindset.

Connative meaning of the sacred numbers is rich due to a great number of collocations fixed in the language and Kazakh conception in the form of phraseologisms and proverbs.

In general, proverbs are simple and concrete sayings popularly known and repeated, which express a truth, based on common sense or the practical experience of humanity. They reflect dreams, wisdom, life experience, mindset of humanity left for generation as a heritage. «Proverbs do not only imply the mindset of the community but also help to define national spirit, vulgar superstitions, character, profession, aesthetic value of world language picture. Proverbs are also considered as old sayings left by ancestors. Proverbs has been and remains a most powerful and effective instrument for the transmission of culture, social morality, manners and ideas of a people from one generation to another. The reason behind the efficacy of the proverb is that it is an aphorism, a wise saying based upon people's experience, and is a reflection of the social values and sensibility of the people. That is a great power of the mother tongue» [4, 121].

Proverbs are basically conversational, but occur commonly in both spoken and written communication, e.g. lectures, newspapers, speeches, books, fables and poetry. Proverbs are used in a wide range of situations and there are no limits to the use of the proverb [5, 124].

Durbin Rowland points at some arguments pro the use of proverbs in language studying. Rowland says that proverbs “stick in the mind”, “build up vocabulary”, “illustrate admirably the phraseology and idiomatic expressions of the foreign tongue”, “contribute gradually to a surer feeling for the foreign tongue” and proverbs “consume very little time”. Proverbs are therefore useful in the students’ discussions of cultural ideas when they compare the proverbs’ equivalents in different languages [6, 89].

Proverb is effective instrument for the transmission of culture, social morality, manners and ideas of a people. It is a short meaningful popular saying, expresses a truth of experience or an observation in a strikingly figurative language. Every country transmits its reality and experience through proverbs as a sample for future generation. It is known that proverbs in lexicology of Kazakh and Russian languages have been investigated in some way. If we review the number of authors who have devoted their works to the linguistic nature of proverbs and their similarities or specific features, they are Baitursynov A., Kenesbayev I., Sarsenbayev R., Adambayev B., Kaidar A., Nuryshev S., Musabayev G., Gabdullin M., Turbayeva G.. The next scientists explored the issue of proverbs using comparative approach: Nurmakhanov A., Mukysheva E., Donbayeva A., Begalykyzy D.

In English language the tradition of collecting national rich heritage trace back to ancient times. According to the research the first volume of a large collection of proverbs «Book of proverbs in the Testament» was published in the fifth century. Such scholars as N. Barley, A. Dundes, A.Krickman, G. Milner, A. Taylor, G. L. Apperson, Linda and Rodger Flavelder extensively researched the fixed expressions and proverbs closely related with national existence and consciousness in English.

The researches devoting to the nature of fixed expressions in English closely connected with the name of A.V. Kunin. He revealed the semantic features of English proverbs unknown before, and greatly contributed to the development of general lexicology and made first steps in comparative analyses. The scholar in his researches called proverbs as «communicative phraseological units» and described its semantical features and function as well.

English proverbs are widely used in the sacred book Bible. As far as it was so popular in the community, the lines from Bible fitted into daily life, and word combination which were extracted from the book turned into fixed expressions.

Proverbs are perceived as the most content-rich heritage, writers use them frequently to make their thoughts shorter and concrete and more literal. English proverbs were widely used as in Bible as in Shakespeare works. Thereby a number of scholars believe that “the golden age” of proverbs contemporary the time of Shakespeare [7, 12].

The incorporation of proverbs in the foreign language classroom is rare. The suitability of proverbs in studying is due to their form; they are pithy and easy to learn, they often rhyme and contain repetition figures like alliteration and assonance, and “they contain frequently used vocabulary and exemplify the entire gamut of grammatical and syntactic structures”.

As for the meanings of sacred numerals existing in different languages are various. The numeral considered the sacred in one language, in other language may define negative meaning. For example, The number thirteen is considered to be an unlucky number in some countries as England, German, Israel, there are no houses with the number thirteen or the thirteenth row in the cinema. The number six hundred and sixty six is also sometimes thought to be the number of Satan

For muslims, including the Kazakhs Friday the thirteenth is really respected day. Friday is the best day of the week. It is also recommended that Muslims clean and wash themselves and make sure they smell nice when they attend Friday Prayers. Every Muslims should make attending Friday Prayer as his top priority. It is at this point that a person becomes a teenager. They say that «at the age of thirteen a teenager is mature enough to build a family».

Number four is considered an unlucky number in Chinese because it is nearly homophonous to the word "death". Seven is considered spiritist or ghostly. The word for "eight" sounds similar to the word which means "prosper" or "wealth" that is why this number brings luck.

The number seven has ever been regarded as having a peculiar mystic significance, and its manifold virtues have been the theme of elaborate monographs. Alike in Holy Writ and among the earliest historic peoples, in classic antiquity and in the mythologies of many nations, this number has been most prominent, and to this fact may reasonably be attributed a portion of the luck associated with odd numbers in general.

There are a number of scholars who tried to explain the sacred power of the number “seven”. For many countries all over the world the number ‘seven’ is sacred one. For example, it is sacred in Muslim religion too. It is Allah who has created seven heavens and of the earth the like.

It was a saying of Hippocrates that the number seven, by reason of its mystic virtues, tended to the accomplishment of all things, and was the dispenser of life and the fountain of all its changes; for as the moon changes its phases every seven days, so this number influences all sublunary beings. The phrase "to be in the seventh heaven" was derived from the seven planets, which were believed by the Babylonians to be carried around upon as many globes of crystal, the seventh being the highest. The number “seven” is also considered sacred in the Holy Bible. It says God created earth - seven days; one seven-day week is a reminder of our creator; God blessed the seventh day, making it holy. The number “seven” is usually equated with the idea of perfection.

The most part of proverbs based and associated with number seven. For example: zhet zheti agaiyndy-misfortune never comes alone (english equivalent); zheti ret olshep bir ret kes-second thought are best (english equivalent); aila altau, akyl zheteu- cunning is six, mind is seven (word for word translation).

In the many countries according their beliefs, customs and traditions the number three is special one known as sacred.

Kazakh people from ancient times while estimating different items and phenomenon tried to define specific features and find similarities with other things; carefully examined them and the most memorable ones were depicted in the folklore. In the storage of ethnical knowledge they were found in the following proverbs: Ush kunnen con adam korge de urenedi- in three days a person gets used to the grave (word for word translation); ush tagannyn biri kisaisa, kalgandary kulaudy- one of three column bends, the rest of them fall dawn (word for word translation).

The fixed expressions with number «three» appeared due to the belief that the world is considered to be a point in which three posts met and it denotes the stability in the world. In the work «The number is national and cultural basis for proverbs» the conception above is carefully explained and proved. Riad is a term used to describe many branches of organizations [8, 17].

According to some researches there a lot of fixed expression with the number “nine” in Kazakh language. It comes from the idea that is dated back to the ancient vulgar superstitions and traditions that the world consists of nine pieces or parts. For example: togyz ayp tartty; togyz sakka zhugirtti; togyz kumalak; togyz turyp, toksan tolgandy; togyz zholdyn toraby; togyz tatars and so on.

The number 'nine' has a high significance in the folk beliefs and mythology of Central Asian peoples. Nine is considered a good number in Chinese culture because it sounds the same as the word

"longlasting" and its also sacred for Arabic countries and Persians except Altai people. K.Gabitkhanuly cites that Chinese people examined the sky by dividing it into nine pieces [3, 135].

As we see from examples the traditions and customs including this number led to the development of the fixed expressions in the language. They were transmitted from one generation to another through oral literature.

In the proverbs about cattle breeding the number "four" is popular one. For example: Tort ayagy ten zhorga, sudigerge syrinedi; tort tuliktin toresi tuye. Proverbs about friends and enemies: Dushpan kozi torteu-enemy has four eyes (word for word translation); tort tulektin toresi tuie-the best and head of cattle is a camel (word for word translation).

So, the number "four" symbolizes the "unity" and "concord". It is based on the belief the universe is made up of a combination of four eternal "elements" or "roots of all": earth, water, air, and fire.

In English proverbs one and two number are more frequently used than others. For example: One body - no body – zhalgyzdun uni shykpas ....; one rotten apple injures its neighbours- bir karyn mai bir kumalak shertedi; it is the first step that costs- bassy katty bolsa, ayagy tatty bolady; one is never too old to learn- okusyz bilim zhok, bilimsyz kunin zhok; one foot is better than two crutches- kanagat karyn toigyzar; one drop of poison spoils the whole tun of wine - bir karyn mai bir kumalak shertedi.

Proverbs with the number "two": A bird in the hand is worth two in the bush – aspandagy sunkardan koldagy turymtay artyr; once bitten, twice shy - auzy kuygen urip ishedi; score twice before you cut once - zheti ret olshep bir kes; three women and a goose make a market - eki ayel bazar, ush ayel zharmenke; two heads are better then one - kenesip pishken tone kelte bolmas; custom is the second nature - aury ralsa da, adet kalmaydy.

In conclusion we mentioned that proverbs, besides being an important part of culture, are an important tool for effective communication and for the comprehension of different spoken and written discourses. Work with proverbs and sayings at the lessons not only helps to diversify educational process and to make its brighter and interesting. Moreover it helps to solve a number of very important educational problems: proverbs in the classroom can improve students' learning experiences, their language skills, and their understanding of themselves and the world.

In fixed expressions there are numerals certain number of the numerals that are used, such as «four», «seven», «nine». The numerals specified as far they can be used in different connotations and meanings in legends, customs and traditions and other types of folklore.

According to many scholars three, seven, nine are sacred ones. In our opinion we can continue this list with the following numbers fifty, twenty-five, sixty. In perspective we are planning to carefully examine them and their functions through analyzing linguistic materials.

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