

**TRANSLATION PROBLEMS OF ENGLISH PROVERBS AND SAYINGS INTO  
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**Annotation.** A proverb is a brief saying that presents a truth or useful wisdom. It is usually based on common sense or practical experience. The effect of proverb is to express wisdom as self-evident. The same proverb often occurs among several different people. True proverbs are sayings that have been passed from generation to generation primarily by word of mouth, or may have been put in written form.

**Key words:** translation, saying, proverb, usual, put in

The book of proverbs in the Old Testaments of the Bible includes notable collection of such sayings as: "Hope deferred makes the heartsick", "A good name is rather to be chosen than great riches. The Book of proverbs according to (Benjamin 1958) is very useful to ancient Israelites who were educated primarily at home. The values of these proverbs reflect the teaching of parents trying to raise their children to become successful and responsible adults. Every language has its own stock of proverbs, and proverbs in one language today reflect every age and time. It contains keen observation of everyday life, constitute popular philosophy of life, and provide an insight into human behavior and character. According to an Internet Source on English Proverbs (2010) Url: [www.phrases.org.uk/.../proverbs.htm](http://www.phrases.org.uk/.../proverbs.htm), proverbs are popularly defined as short expressions of popular wisdom. Homelier than aphorisms, proverbs generally refer to common experience and are often expressed in metaphor, alliteration, or rhyme. A proverb (from the Latin proverbium) is a simple and concrete saying popularly known and repeated, which expresses a truth, based on common sense or the practical experience of humanity (Latin, 2011).

The above definitions suggest definitely that, a proverb is short, true, old and repeated sayings that portray the experience of human life through observation and challenges that have been expressed in images and songs for quick remembrance. Writing on proverbs, Morris-Brown (1993) defines proverb as short excerpts from stories about life's lessons. They are stuffed with cultural symbolism which expresses important ideas about the human nature, health and social relations that often transcend their culture of origin. Proverbs are timeless, succinct, clever, often funny and usually memorable. According to Abdulai (1995) proverbs are wise sayings and used in Africa as a form of communication. Most of these wise sayings usually employ symbols like animals, trees, the human body and objects present in the human environment using them as metaphors to communicate a message, for example in "Akan," Ghanaian proverb "aboaonidua, Nyamenaopra ne ho" which literally translates as the animal that has no tail, God drives away its flies. This implies that even for those in life that are helpless, God will always provide for them. It is a message of hope for everyone. A proverb is a concise and picturesque expression of a well-tryed wisdom. Such statements made convey a general truth. Ampem (1998) also talks about the outlook of the people's life, life after death, arts and science which forms the level of intelligence. Every country has its own proverb that are used in their everyday life through speeches or conversations and that is a hallmark of their linguistic culture and can be acknowledged in their language naturally. Bacon (2001) is of the view that proverbs are popular sayings which contain advice, generally accepted truth. Because most proverbs have their origins in oral tradition, they are generally worded for easy remembrance and they change slightly from one generation to other. Lange (2006) describes

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proverb as not only a short statement that reflects the thought and insight of a people into the realities of life but also, a technique of oral expression. The writer further made mention of proverbs being tradition, custom, heritage and also narrates the traditional background of the people as a seed nurtured and passed from generation to generation through ancestors. The definitions given by the authors revealed that proverbs originated from stories about life lessons, nature, and social relations. When transcribed into symbolic forms, they communicate the identity of the people and their immediate environment. Proverbs define the wisdom of a group of people and these become their tenets in life. However, according to Mieder (1993), a proverb: is a short, generally known sentence of the folk which contains wisdom, truth, morals, and traditional views in a metaphorical, fixed and memorable form which is handed down from generation to generation. While Folly (1991) defines a proverb as: “Structurally we are examining a traditional linguistic unit with tendencies toward certain identifiable characteristics e.g. topic/ comment and single statement. Functionally, proverbs are typically conversational and spoken: and often through metaphor, they offer a solution to a particular problem. They can be viewed as a rhetorical strategy for resolving a problem by creating a metaphorical scenario in which the same type of problem is solved. They tend to be impersonal, didactic, and sometimes humorous”. (Folly, 1991: 35-36) The different definitions of proverbs above identify both the structural and functional elements of proverbs. Proverbs are tools for social regulation. Besides, proverbs are useful devices in literary productions. The main purpose of proverbs is to reach out to individual / societal needs at any point in time. Proverbs have been variously called: sayings, idioms, metaphors, maxims and so on. Sayings are wise statements which often have meanings beyond ordinary meanings of the words used to express them. Louis (2000:177), claimed that “proverbs are a kind of linguistic instrument, a rhetoric device by which people attempt to get other members of their culture and society to see the world and behave in a common way”. This means that proverbs are well-known saying, simple and concrete, popularly known and repeated with the aim of expressing basic truth in common sense and practical experience of humankind. They are employed for their rhetoric, allusive, ironic, and sarcastic potential. Finally, from the research point of view proverbs are a mirror that reflects a cultural experience of a people in a particular region. The origin of proverbs varies from society to society because of the differences in the culture of the various ethnic groups that use them. The Encarta (2003) believes that proverb is century old, dating back probably from time when wisdom and percepts were transmitted by story. In another attempt to comment on the origin of proverb, Okonkwo (1974:99) emphasizes the fact that proverbs are the experience and wisdom of several ages gathered and summed up in one expression. According to him, some proverbs are older than others but all reflect the experience of a people over a period of time. Another view on the origin of proverb from the Yoruba perspective according to Osoba (2005:279) cited in Usman (2008:9) is that in addition to other sources, proverbs can originate from tales. An example is given of the wealthy father who prepares his will and in it instructs that his only son take only one item from all his property and the rest is given to his head slave. The story has it that the son is terribly disturbed by his father’s instruction and thought he wants to obey; he is not sure if it is fair on him. After his father’s death, he seeks counsel from one person to another. He comes across an elder eventually who advises him after convincing him of his father’s good intention in his will, to take the head slave as his pick and that by that singular choice, the rest of the property that would have belonged to the slave automatically becomes his. The proverb that comes at the end of the tale states that one should be cautious not to haltingly condemn the decision of an elder.

The most notable example is seen from the way the record of the wise sayings of the great King Solomon in the Bible which is titled “The Book of the Proverbs” and has over the years generated others that can be used in place of the original saying e.g. the proverb (from the Bible). “The love of money is the root of all evils;” has become “money is the root of all evils”. The transformation most of the time happens to suit social situations outside of religion. The origin of Uzbek proverb

according to Ibrahim and Ibrahim (2012) is derived from the interaction of traders of old that made the Uzbek people of that time get proverbs from their types of business. Apart from the fact that there have been various explanations about the origin of Uzbek proverbs, no one tells/says the exact origin, as it is as old as the language itself. But some scholars have gone to a limit in the forecast on its origin. Nevertheless, it is vital to appreciate how the Uzbek people make use of the technological elements of utterances in the language which involve wise thinking. Furthermore, this research has yielded some important results. Likewise, it is very important to get detail information on them, and the ways they could be derived are many among which includes: - Through old people - Through story telling - Tracing the early historical researches. The factors have yields vital information on the origin of Uzbek proverbs. Encyclopedia of Literature (2003), Proverb is among the oldest poetic works in Sanskrit, Hebrew, and Germanic etc. Coming to Africa, history has it that the documentation of proverb began with two general knowledge of African oral literature at the beginning of the second half of the nineteenth century. One of the publications by AjayiCrowther (1852) included over five hundred collections of proverbs. Secondly the German missionary Sigmund (1954) in his publication African Native Culture included sixty-two proverbs seventeen tales and nine narratives. Emenyonu (1987:212). Looking at this record, one would want to conclude that proverb indeed has been a part of man long before the need ever arose for them to be put down in writing for reference purposes. Norrick (1985) identifies two basic characteristics that differentiate proverbs generally from free formed utterances. First, proverbs are performed inventorised linguistic units; and second, they have traditional item of folklores. These characteristics have important consequences for the interactional meaning proverbs realize in context. He further asserts that an initial consequence in their very availability as performed utterances. By choosing a ready-made utterance with a standard ideational meaning and perhaps a standard textual and interactional meaning as well, the speaker avoids the necessity of formulating an original utterance of his own. Another consequence of proverbs being inventorised is their value in signaling group membership. Here proverbs are like clichés, jokes, especially inside jokes, allusions, quotes and the way of speaking generally, all of which can lead to bonding between people; Cohen (1978) cited in Norrick (1994) on cultivation of intimacy with metaphoric utterance generally. A speaker can signal his membership in identification with local village community by drawing on its stock of (dialect) proverbs. Another characteristic of a proverb, a speaker quotes a traditional item of the folklore of the community, as item quoted from this stock, proverbs carry the force of time-tested wisdom, and the speaker can draw on this authority. This correlates most commonly with proverbs that have evaluative function and a didactic tone in free conversation. Finally, proverbs have been repeatedly characterized as pithy or pregnant in meaning. Mieder (1977) among others all occurs on this point. Dolfovo (2011) opines that a proverbial sentence is a short but pithy, the few words that constitute it are as chosen and related as to convey their message with terseness and thrust. The pithy style of proverbs seems to be preferred term of reference by informants in differentiating proverbs from ordinary sentences.

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