

## COMPARATIVE LINGUISTIC AND CULTURAL CORPUS OF ENGLISH AND TURKISH PROVERBS INTERRELATED IN CHILDREN

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### ABSTRACT

Proverbs, which have been evaluated as a very rich heritage of collective wisdom and experience in society, are loved by people who prefer spicing up a conversation with the tips of wisdom to 'convince' others to 'prove' their point of view and actions. The paper explores semantic models of proverbs which denote the status of children in the family as well as issues connected to the process of child-raising in Turkish and English languages and cultures. Semantic models were interpreted, compared and the morals of the proverbs were identified. We see that proverbs have a crucial role in the growth and development of young people and not only the parents but also the whole community should remember vivid images portrayed in those proverbs.

**KEYWORDS:** Proverbs; culture; children; equivalent; cross-language

### 1.) MATERIAL AND METHOD OF THE RESEARCH

The proverbs are common to all communities and though each culture has its own set of proverbs, the same wisdom can usually be recognised in a different culture. In spite of religious and cultural differences, nations still reveal similarities regarding everyday life situations which, among many others, include family life and child-rearing as well as the values to which a family should adhere while raising their children as valued members of society(Gozpinar,2014).

There are number of proverbs in each culture explaining children and their upbringing according to their own cultures. This means that the well-being of children and their education is very important for the society. I wanted to show general conceptions in proverbs about children, how and when the proverbs of the both cultures (English and Turkish) studied in this research give messages or attitudes towards the disciplining of children. (Gözpinar, 2011)

I believe that children are very vital for deciding how the world will be after some years. So as educators, we should keep in mind that if we can do some good in the life of a child then there can be at least a slightest change in the world. If educators think on same lines then we can hope of a better future ahead. Children are so much important for the family and society in the proverbs as well and cultures are similar from the point of child development. Education has to be aimed at the overall development of a child.

As the teachers, we should always remember that the things children learn during school years play a very important role in the proper development of them because those years are the time when children learn by exploring their environment and watching people in everyday life.

In this research, in order to collect enough data for English proverbs about "children", Rosalind Fergusson's dictionary of Proverbs (Fergusson,1983), and "A dictionary of Turkish Proverbs" by Metin Yurtbaşı are used (Yurtbasi, 1993).

## 2.) ANALYSIS OF ENGLISH AND TURKISH PROVERBS ABOUT "CHILDREN"

In order to explore the paradigm of the proverbs related to children in English and Turkish languages and cultures we conducted the research in several stages:

1. We identified relevant proverbs in the corpus of these languages. In this process we relied on several points:
  - a) The definition of proverb: "A proverb is a common metaphorical summary which initially originates locally but subsequently achieves a level of universal usage. A proverb is a reflection by people, based on events they have encountered, containing wisdom for the future generations. In addition to accuracy and relevance poignancy makes them easily remembered and repeated"(Gozpinar,2014).
  - b) The proverbs which include the relevant family lexemes such as son, daughter, mother, father, child and their equivalents in all of the languages were identified.
2. We analysed the proverb data relying on the pragma-semantic model of the proverb suggested by Rusieshvili (Rusieshvili, 2005). According to this theory, the semantic model of a proverb consists of three interdependent layers - explicit, implicit and presuppositional - each of them having its own status, function and playing a definite role in the creation of a general meaning of a proverb.

## 3.) SEMANTIC MODELS

Altogether, twenty-five (25) relevant proverbs were identified in Turkish and fifty-seven (57) proverbs in English which were grouped in nine semantic models. The most important models are discussed in the paper. **TP:** Turkish Proverb; **EP:** English Proverb

### 3.1. Families Place a High Value on Children.

In Turkish and English cultures, a family is considered incomplete without a child. Children live up the home and they are the wealth of a family. The child is seen as the future of a family and the birth of a child brings hope and dreams into the families. We can imagine the importance of a child in the family by the amount of happiness it brings in. The proverbs below stress the importance of children by emphasising the happiness there is when they have children.

1. **TP:** A house with children is like a marketplace and a house without children is like a graveyard. (Çocuklu ev pazar, çocuksuz ev mezar.)
2. **TP:** A father without children is like a fruitless tree. ( Çocuksuz baba meyvesiz ağaca benzer.)
3. **EP:** Where children are not, heaven is not.
4. **EP:** Children are the keys of paradise.
5. **EP:** The best smell is bread, the best savour salt, the best love that of children.
6. **EP:** Children are poor mens richness.

### 3.2. There's Only One Perfect Child in the World

Parents constantly exaggerate the importance of their children. Every mother thinks that her child is perfect, and better than every other child. The children who seem different to others are perfect for their parents.

7. **TP:** To a crow her own young bird seems a falcon. (Kargaya yavrusu şahin görünür.)

8. EP: The crow/owl thinks her own bird(s)/young fairest/whitest.
9. EP: The ape thinks her own babes beautiful.

### 3.3. The Behaviour of the Child Will be Similar to That of the Parents

English and Turkish proverbs agree that parents play the vital role in raising their children and are important in their children's developments. Both parents must be concerned with raising their children because this period can determine the rest of their lives later. The Turkish proverb stresses the function of both parents in watching closely what the child is doing. The Turkish proverb means that children always imitate adults thus; the behaviour of the child in most cases will be similar to that of the parents. The English proverb mentions that parents are models who make the child; thus, parents play a key role in character development.

10. TP: Four eyes are for one child. (Dört göz bir evlat içindir.)
11. TP: Who stands by a grey horse will be affected either by his temper or by its water. (Kıratın yanında duran ya huyundan ya suyundan kapar.)
12. EP: Parents are patterns.

Proverbs from English and Turkish cultures below generally mean that a child grows up to be very similar to his parents, both in behaviour and in physical characteristics, so the passing of those traits and hereditary talent and character is also meant in proverbs.

13. TP: The pear does not fall far from the tree. (Armut dalının dibine düşer.)
14. EP: The apple never falls far from tree.
15. EP: Blood will tell.

As seen in the proverbs, children and parents everywhere, regardless of differences in race, culture, and gender tend to respond in exactly the same way when they perceived. Parents take care of them, entertain them, take responsibility for them, want to enjoy the children occasionally and handle most of the care, education and deal with any problems.

The fact that "mother" is likely to have a greater influence than the "father" on the child in both cultures (English and Turkish) has been revealed by the data. Because the way mothers show their love is always the best for the children and understands her child's problems best of all, mothers are accepted as the best friends for their children as seen in English and Turkish proverbs. Because mothers have such an influence on the child's development, the child must be judged by the qualities their mother displays in Turkish proverbs.

16. TP: Only its mother understands the young bird's song. (Yavru kuşun dilinden anası anlar.)
17. TP: No friend like a mother. (Ana gibi yâr olmaz.)
18. TP: Anasına bak kızını al, kenarına bak bezini al. (Look at the mother before marrying the daughter just as you examine the selvage before you buy the cloth.)
19. EP: A mother's love never ages.
20. EP: A mother's love is best of all.
21. EP: What the mother sings to the cradle goes all the way down to the grave.
22. EP: Men are what their mothers made them.
23. EP: Like hen, like chicken.

No matter how much the mother is involved in the care of their children and how close she is to them, the children become dependent on their fathers as well. Fathers are also often more implicated than mothers in the development of a child as is seen in the following proverbs. In the English proverbs, father's role is mentioned in shaping our personalities

as children and into adulthood and father's love contributes as much to a child's development as does a mother's love.

24. **EP:** One father is more than a hundred school masters.

25. **EP:** No love to a father's.

In both cultures (English and Turkish), the boys are expected to spend a lot of time with their fathers while the girls are trained by their mothers. Consequently, a boy learns to deal with the duties of men in a house from his father and a daughter- from her mother. The English proverbs state that sons tend to resemble their fathers in character and behaviour; and girls to fathers.

26. **EP:** Like mother like daughter.

27. **EP:** Like father like son, like mother like daughter.

28. **EP:** Take a vine of a good soil, and the daughter of a good mother.

Turkish proverb stresses that daughters will be good friends with the mothers whereas sons with the fathers but the English one stresses just the opposite. In the Turkish proverb, the source from whom the boy and girl learn how to perform their duties is indicated.

29. **EP:** A boy's best friend is his mother.

30. **TP:** The son is a friend to the father, and the daughter to the mother. (Oğlan babaya kız anaya yar olur.)

31. **TP:** A son learns from his father to earn a living, and a daughter learns from her mother how to cut out clothes. (Oğlan atadan/babadan öğrenir sofrayı kurmayı, kız anadan öğrenir bıçkı biçmeyi.)

In the following Turkish proverb, even grandfathers have responsibility for the grandchildren, and their behaviour in the society may have some positive and negative results which cause the children feel upset and happy in the future.

32. **TP:** Sour plum (Koruk) eaten by the father sets the children's teeth on edge - effected the children. (Babası ekşi elma yer, oğlunun dişi kamasır.)

### 3.4. Express Gratitude for the Parents' Devotion

Children are a huge responsibility and require a great deal of self-sacrifice on the part of their parents because they often sacrifice their own happiness to give it to their children. They not only try to fulfil every wish of their children but also they try to protect them from any adversities in the future. Thus, having been brought up well, it is the children's obligation to express gratitude for the parents' devotion and care and repay with the same. We are greatly indebted to our parents.

Because of this, according to English and Turkish proverbs, parents' (especially the mothers') efforts and commitment should be seen, appreciated and respected by children. The model reveals the idea that parents bring children up well so they do not expect rebellion and hatred from them but they deserve honourable treatment from the children.

33. **TP:** The father's blessing takes effect, and a mother's sigh. (Atanın duası tutar, ananın ahı.)

34. **EP:** A father's goodness is higher than the mountains; a mother's goodness is deeper than the sea.

35. **EP:** God, and parents, and our master, can never be requited.

We see in the following Turkish proverbs that the pain caused by the loss of the property is nothing when compared to the grief a person carries after the death of his child. Parents have additional burdens of despair and grief over the death of a child.

36. **TP:** If anyone would cry for me, it is only my mother, the others would do so only feignedly. (Ağlarsa anam ağlar, kalanı yalan ağlar.)

37. **TP:** The grief for one's child is deplorable. (Evlat acısı içler acısı.)

## 3.5.Children Bring Happiness and Misery

In Turkish culture, family ties are strong which obliges children to respect and help parents in their old age. Consequently, when children do not do so, they are considered ungrateful. If you expect children to make you happy, you will be disappointed as seen in the following proverbs:

38. **TP:** A good child makes his parents proud, a bad one makes them ashamed of him. (İyi evlat (anayı) babayı vezir eder, kötü evlat rezil eder.)
39. **EP:** A wise son maketh a glad father, but a foolish son is the heaviness of his mother.

In Turkish and English proverbs, it is meant that a good child gives happiness to parents whereas a bad one is a big burden on their shoulders. The characteristic traits emphasized are good children and parents are proud of them whereas badly-behaved children make their parents suffer as well. Although parents do everything for them in their lives, children may ignore parents when they are old.

40. **TP:** Babası oğluna bir bağ vermiş, oğlu babasına bir salkım üzüm vermemiş. (The father gave his son a vineyard, but the son did not offer him a bunch of grapes)
41. **EP:** One father is enough to govern one hundred sons, but not a hundred sons one father.
42. **EP:** A son is a son till he gets him a wife, but a daughter's a daughter all the days of her life.

The pleasure by a good child is the best of all according to the proverbs as in the following:

43. **EP:** Happy is he that is happy in his children
44. **EP:** A child's service is little, yet he is no little fool that despises it.
45. **EP:** Wise child is a father's bliss.

The comparison of good and bad children revealed that English and Turkish proverbs share the attitude towards the parents that having children is a blessing from the creator.

## 3.6. It is Hard Work for Parents to Raise up and Take Care of a Child

Proverbs used for the care and concern of the education of the children in the cultures show that raising children is so hard. But the parents patiently and gladly put up with all the difficulties for the sake of their child as seen in English and Turkish proverbs. It is hard to raise children properly by comparing the process to hard work. Because it is hard to raise children properly, proverbs state that parents should be ready for expected hardships.

46. **TP:** Raising children is like gnawing at Stones. Çocuk büyütme taş kemirmek.
47. **TP:** If you have children you will have a thousand worries, if you have no children you will have one worry. (Evladın varsa bin derdin var, evladın yoksa bir derdin var.)
48. **EP:** Children suck the mother when they are young, and the father when they are old.
49. **EP:** Wife and children are bills of charges.
50. **EP:** Small birds must have meat.
51. **EP:** The first service a child does his father is to make him foolish.
52. **EP:** Children when they are little make their parents fools, when they are great they make them mad.
53. **EP:** Children are certain cares, but uncertain comforts.
54. **EP:** Children must be fed.

## 3.7.Education in Childhood Shape the Future Character

Everything has its own time and a child can be taught everything in their childhood. Because children acquire new habits in early childhood, so changing the old ones is difficult in adulthood. You can tell about a child in early ages whether he is going to be a well-mannered in the future or not. The English and Turkish proverbs below stress that the early period of a child's life is the best time to acquire habits and the way of living.

55. **TP:** A tree should be bent when young. (Ağaç yaş iken eğilir.)



56. EP: As the twig is bent, so is the tree inclined.

57. EP: Raw leather will stretch.

As seen in the proverbs above, people's personalities form when they are children so a person will have the same qualities as an adult that he or she had as a child. At the youngest ages, parents should promote the participation of children in the lives of their families. During childhood, the family continues to play an important role which will have lifelong consequences. Parents should give support and guidance in the right way in order to make their children culturally more developed and a good member of the community.

### 3.8. Pampering Excessively Leads to Spoiled Children

One of the most unpleasant things a parent can encounter on earth may be a demanding and spoiled child because they do not understand the difficulties of life so they believe that they are entitled to whatever they want, whenever they want it.

58. TP: A child thinks bread grows in the cupboard. (Çocuk ekmeği dolapta bitiyor/yetiştiriyor sanır.)

59. TP: A young bird's mouth is big. (Yavru kuşun ağzı büyük olur.)

60. EP: A growing youth has a wolf in his belly.

As seen in the following equivalents, it is stressed that pampering a child leads to bad results. Spoiling the children by pampering is not accepted and parents should not give all what they want as long as they we could. While educating their children, the parents should be careful not to spoil them because fulfilling all of their wishes may make them lazy.

61. TP: Do not spoil the child or he will sit on your head. (Çocuğu şımartma, başına çıkar )

62. EP: Woe to the kingdom whose king is a child.

63. EP: He that spoils (cockers) his child provides for his enemy.

64. EP: A child may have too much of his mother's blessing.

65. EP: Give a child while he craves, and a dog while his tail doth wave and you'll have a fair dog, but a foul knave.

66. EP: Too much liberty spoils all.

67. EP: Dawted (spoilt) daughter makes daidling (lazy) wives.

It is worth noting that several proverbs emphasise the necessity of strictness while bringing up children and suggest that being strict helps them grow up with discipline and good ethics in life. English proverbs state this trait and call for strictness.

68. EP: Kindness is lost that's bestowed on children and old folk.

69. EP: One should be strict with their children.

70. EP: Better children weep than old men.

71. EP: A pitiful mother makes a scabby (nasty) daughter.

72. EP: Rule youth well, and age will rule itself.

Turkish proverb and English proverbs specify the method of corporal punishment by also indicating that it is necessary to beat children for the parents not to suffer in their old age.

73. TP: He who doesn't beat his daughter will beat his knees. (Evladını dövmeleyen dizini döver.)

74. EP: Spare the rod and spoil the child.

75. EP: The kick of the dam hurts not the colt. (Said to point out that children do not feel angry or bitter when punished by their parents).

76. EP: Birchen twigs break no ribs.

77. EP: The rod doth not make less the mother's love.

### 3.9. Children Tell the Truth

Parents feel it is extremely important to teach children about the issue of secrets because kids tell it like they see without exaggeration and deception. They do not hesitate to repeat everything they hear, so parents do not have to talk about secrets with them. The following proverbs in English and Turkish let us see the same point of view in accordance with the honesty of the children.

78. **EP:** What children hear at home, soon flies abroad.

79. **EP:** Children and fools speak the truth.

80. **EP:** Children have wide ears and long tongues.

81. **TP:** Don't gossip while children are around. (Çocuğun bulunduğu yerde dedikodu olmaz.)

82. **TP:** Adults at home will say - children from the roof will be notified. (Büyükler evde söyler, çocuklar damda beyan eder.)

#### 4.) CONCLUSION:

- Proverbs have strong connection with people's philosophy on children and contain general observations of practical knowledge, situations and other various aspects of child development.
- Using metaphors in the proverbs increases the value of a proverb and takes the listeners to a situation directed by a true story. Proverbs of these nations serve as the rules of the unwritten constitution in the framework of family formation and parent-child relations, and particularly in raising and educating children.
- Parents should take these proverbs into consideration in order to set good examples for their children.
- The proverbs above provide an interesting and informative source of folk knowledge with their highly communicative and instructive value helping parents solve and understand the situations of conflict and stating what should, or should not be done and show conditions for certain actions and attitudes.
- The study of the proverbs related to children in both cultures (English and Turkish) has revealed the importance that these cultures give to upbringing children.
- Both cultures (English and Turkish) emphasize that a parent should be a good example and a wise teacher for their children.
- As is seen in English and Turkish proverbs above, both communities (English and Turkish) give great value and importance to the education of children because children are seen as the vital elements of the family's happiness and are very important for the future.
- Proverbs in English and Turkish cultures revealed that the people of these countries pay great attention to the concept of the family and to the proper grooming of their children. They assign an important role to the parents in the process of raising a good generation.
- Mother and father have duties and responsibilities while bringing up their children because the children learn by observing and imitating their parents, therefore, the parents must be a good example to them. Nothing is much more important than the love of child for the mother. Environment and heredity is also effective in the development of the child.
- If parents hesitate to show their children how to behave appropriately and children are allowed to behave however they want, they will certainly get themselves into trouble and embarrass themselves and their families.
- During the first years of life, education is very effective, so the behaviour, attributes and personality of the child will be shaped in a more permanent form.

- As seen from the data, from the cultural point of view, the proverbs from both (English and Turkish) cultures highlighted similar issues although they differ from cultural and religious points of view. The relation between proverb and culture is very strong and wit and spirit of a nation are discovered in its proverbs.

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