

## ANALYSIS OF ARABIC, ENGLISH AND TATAR ANIMAL PROVERBS WITH COMPLEX AND COMPOUND SENTENCE STRUCTURE

Enzhe Kharisovna Shamsutdinova <sup>1</sup>, Nailya Gabdelkhamitovna Mingazova <sup>1</sup>, Diana Rustamovna Sabirova

<sup>1</sup> Kazan Federal University, Institute of International Relations, History and Oriental Studies  
e-mail: enzhe\_86@mail.ru  
Tel.: +79179343595

### ABSTRACT

The paper analyzes Arabic, English and Tatar proverbs, in particular animal proverbs of complex and compound sentence structure. It should be mentioned here that the present paper deals with a contrastive study of proverbs of three different languages, typologically and genetically unrelated, that Arabic, English and Tatar truly are. The purpose of this study is to reveal the types of composite sentence structure of the proverbs under study. Firstly, general introduction to proverbs related to animals is given. In addition, definitions of proverbs in the analyzed languages are mentioned. Secondly, the quantitative analysis of animal proverbs in the three languages is presented. Thirdly, the syntactic structure of Arabic, English and Tatar proverbial sentences is analyzed. Furthermore, the literature on syntax of proverbs in Arabic, English and Tatar is overviewed. In conclusion, the paper focuses on the amount of the types of sentence structure of animal proverbs in Arabic, English, and Tatar.

**Keywords:** linguistics, proverb, proverbial sentence structure, complex sentence, compound sentence, Literary Arabic, English, Tatar.

### INTRODUCTION

Proverbs have always played a great role in description of people. It was the language that had been accumulating treasures of human thought and experience for centuries. In the ethnic culture of the peoples animal proverbs are a statement about a human-being, his life, his character and outlook. Due to proverbs, we understand how people evaluate events, actions and behavior. Moreover, they reveal the moral and spiritual qualities of national traits and values.

Long before writing and books were in common use, proverbs were the principal means of imparting instruction. In modern times there is not so much need to apply these old sayings as a means of educating people, but they are still frequently found in newspapers and literature, and they are rightly considered as “the texts of common life”. [1]

The proverbs in Arabic are considered to be a mirror that reflects values and morals of the peoples, their characteristics, their customs, traditions and their development from one period to another. They have always played an important role in the Arabs’ life. [2]

In English the proverb is defined as a well-known phrase or sentence that gives advice or says something that is generally true. [3] Professor Th. Preston outlines that the late Earl Russell very aptly described a proverb as “the wisdom of many and the wit of one”. Then, he adds that we value proverbs chiefly as moral maxims teaching some practical lesson set forth in concise, pithy sentences, which are fixed in the memory without effort, and retained without being burdensome. [1]

In the Tatar linguistics, proverbs are concise folk statements told to illustrate a moral and instructive point. They use linguistic means of speech, considered to be the most perfect form of expression, which is understood in different eras by representatives of all dialects. They absorb the perfect artistic and compositional features of colloquial speech that embodies its best traits: liveliness, expressiveness, precision, clarity, simplicity and brevity. [4] Metaphoric nature, brevity, precision, and expressiveness of proverbs are achieved by the means of their syntactic structure. [5]

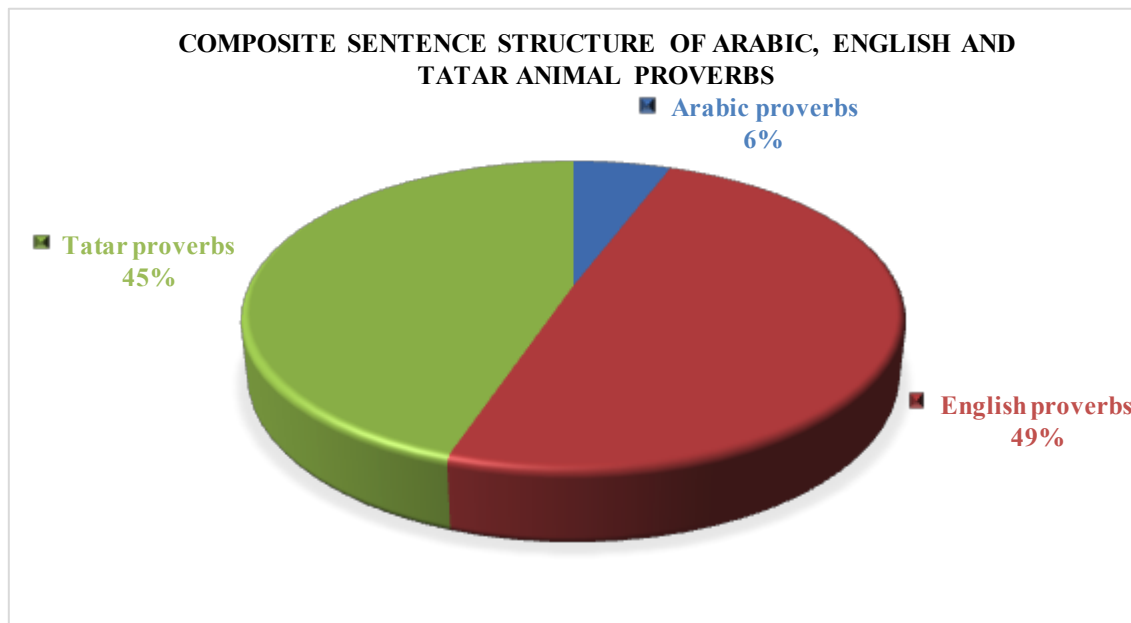
Proverbs have always attracted scientists' attention. Despite the fact that proverbs' study has a long history, it was in the 20<sup>th</sup> century when proverbs in different languages became the object of the linguistic studies from various perspectives, including their structure and syntax.

Expressing a proposition or judgment, a proverb represents a syntactic whole. Therefore, it can be analyzed as a sentence. Proverbs appear in a variety of different sentence types; from a syntactic perspective, these sentences may be classified into four distinct types according to the number of clauses and sub-clauses they contain. These sentence types are: simple, compound, complex, and compound-complex. [6] The present paper is aimed at examining Arabic, English and Tatar animal proverbs with complex and compound sentence structure.

## METHODS

When fulfilling the research, the following scientific methods have been applied: continuous sampling method, the method of statistical analysis, the method of structural analysis of linguistic data.

The 261 proverbs under study have been collected from "Arabic-Russian dictionary" by Kh.K. Baranov, "Dictionary of Arabic Proverbs" by al-Maydani, "Tatar folk proverbs" by N. Isanbet, "Oxford dictionary of English Proverbs" by W.G. Smith, "Tatar-Russian dictionary of proverbs" by R.G. Gizatullina-Startseva, I.G. Gizatullin, etc. The quantitative analysis of composite (complex and compound) sentence structure of Arabic, English and Tatar proverbs related to animals reveals 15 Arabic proverbs, 129 English proverbs, and 117 Tatar proverbs. (Fig. 1)



**Fig. 1** Total amount of complex and compound sentence structure of Arabic, English and Tatar animal proverbs

## RESULTS

### *Complex sentence structure*

In linguistics, a complex sentence is an independent clause joined by one or more dependent clauses. A dependent clause either lacks a subject or a verb or has both a subject and a verb that does not express a complete thought. Additionally, a complex sentence always has a subordinator (as, because, since, after, although, when) or relative pronouns (who, that, which).

Animal proverbs with conditional sentence structure can be found in the three languages. So, Arabic proverbs with conditional sentence structure contain conjunction **إذا** (if): Eg. **إِذَا أَخَذْتَ بِذَنبِ الصُّبِّ أَغْضَبْتَهُ** (Lit. If you catch the tail of a lizard, you will make it angry). English proverbs which have conditional sentence structure contain **if** or **when** conjunction: Eg. **When** the cat's away, the mice will play. **If** the beard were all, the goat might preach. In Tatar proverbs with conditional sentence structure the main clause is connected to the subordinate clause by means of affixes **-са/-сә**: Eg. **Эт симерсә иясен тешли**. (Lit. If the dog becomes fat, it bites its owner).

Arabic proverbs of complex sentence structure with adjective clauses involve relative pronoun **مَنْ** (who): Eg. **مَنْ يُطْعِمُ نَمْرَةً يَفْقِدْ ثَمَرَهُ** (Lit. He, who listens to the lion, will lose its fruit).

English proverbs of complex sentence structure with adjective clauses have relative pronouns, such as **who**, **that**, **whom**, and relative adverb **where**: Eg. He **who** keeps company with the wolf will learn to howl. It is an ill bird **that** fouls its own nest. **Whom** a serpent has bitten, a lizard alarms. It is a sad house **where** the hen crows louder than the cock. Tatar proverbs of complex sentence structure with adjective clauses have affixes **-ган/-гән**, **-кан/-кән**, and the word **юк** (no): Eg. **Үзеңә тимәгән елан мең яшәсен** (Lit. The snake which doesn't touch you, let it live for many years). **Бүредән курыккан урманга бармас** (Lit. He who is afraid of a wolf won't go to the forest). **Әше юк чебен тотат** (Lit. He who has no work catches a fly).

In Arabic, sentences with adverb clauses have not been discovered. Clauses in English animal proverbs of complex sentence structure are connected with conjunctions, such as **after**, **as**, **before**, **till**, **when**, and **while**: Eg. It is too late to lock the stable **after** the horse has been bolted. Dogs bark **as** they are bred. Don't count your chickens, **before** they are hatched. Never fry a fish **till** it's caught. **When** the fox preaches, take care of your geese. **While** the grass grows, the horse starves. Clauses in Tatar animal proverbs of complex sentence structure are linked by means of affixes **-ганда/-гәндә**, **-канчы**: Eg. **Ат дагалаганда, бака ботын кыстырган ди**. (Lit. When the horse was harnessed, the frog squeezed its leg). **Эт жаны чыкканчы этлеген итә** (Lit. Before the dog dies, it will do you dirt).

### *Compound sentence structure*

A compound sentence refers to a sentence made up of two independent clauses (or complete sentences) connected to one another by means of coordination. The clauses of a compound sentence may be connected syndetically (by means of coordinating conjunctions or conjunctive adverbs) and asyndetically (without any conjunction or adverbs).

In Arabic animal proverb clauses connected by means of copulative conjunction **ف** (and) have been found. Eg. **لِكُلِّ قَوْمٍ كَلْبٌ، فَلَا تَكُنْ كَلْبَ أَصْحَابِكَ** (Lit. Among every nationality there is a dog, so don't be a dog for your friends).

In the English language, among proverbs of compound sentence structure there are two types of syndetic coordination:

- Copulative conjunction **and** connects the two independent clauses. Eg. Two dogs strive for a bone, **and** a third runs away with it.
- Adversative conjunction **but** connects the two independent clauses. Eg. Brag is a good dog, **but** Holdfast is better.

As for Tatar animal proverbs, compound sentence structure with syndetic coordination has not been detected.

Compound sentences with asyndetic coordination have mostly been encountered among Tatar proverbs: Eg. Эт өреп – буре йөреп (Lit. The dog barks, the wolf goes), whereas in Arabic only several proverbs with asyndetic coordination have been found: Eg. جَوْغُ كَلْبِكَ يَسْبُغُكَ (букв.) (Lit. Starve your dog, it will obey you). English animal proverbs to be connected asyndetically have been discovered as well. Eg. Corn him well, he'll work the better.

## DISCUSSION

As it was mentioned above, in the 20<sup>th</sup> century the new era of proverb study began. The Arabic linguists also followed this tendency. So, the scholar Muhammad al-Sulaiman al-Sudais (1976) in his thesis examined proverbs from syntactic and structural, stylistic and semantic points of view. [7] American scholar E.M. Bergman studied the sentence structure, noun phrase structure, verb use and negational structures of 250 Moroccan Arabic proverbs, proving that proverbs exhibit grammatical structures that differ from those of non-proverbial discourse. [8] Huda M.M. Ghali (2000) in her article “The Syntax of Colloquial Egyptian Proverbs” investigated six types of proverbial declarative sentences within the framework of the Minimalist Program of Chomsky (1995). [9] Another scholar Abdullah Ahmad Jaradat (2007) in his thesis devoted to a linguistic analysis of Jordanian Proverbs investigated their syntactic structure. He concludes that proverbs have limited syntactic formulae. Moreover, the dissertation provides evidence that some syntactic structures are purely proverbial. [10] In Russia N.G. Mingazova and R.R. Zakirov (2014) in their book “Comparative Typology of the Tatar and Arabic Languages” contributed to the comparative analysis of syntactical structure of Arabic and Tatar proverbs. [11] The article “Sahuri Wala Tburi: Elative structures in the colloquial Palestinian Arabic Proverbs” by W. Aqil (2016) is devoted to the study of three elative proverb structures in Palestinian Arabic compared to their parallels in Standard Arabic. [12] In addition, she points out that recently, a number of specialized studies focusing on the syntax of proverbs have appeared, such as الامثال العربية دراسة نحوية (Arabic proverbs: grammatical study) by M.J. Saqr (2000) and العربية الحذف في الأمثال (Ellipsis in Arabic proverbs) by A.F. al-Hammuz (2004). [12] Muhammad A. Badarneh (2016) investigates a special variety of rhetorical questions used as proverbs with metaphorical content in colloquial Jordanian Arabic. [13]

The investigation of English proverbs syntax is one of the most thoroughly studied fields in comparison with Arabic and Tatar. A. Dundes (1975) [14], N.R. Norrick (1991) [15], A.T. Litovkina, W. Mieder (2006) [16], and other scholars contributed greatly to the issue examined. Nowadays researchers also go on developing this field of scientific research. So, Chilukuri Bhuvaneswar (2009) makes a survey of the syntactic structure of English proverbs: 1) the simple sentence, and 2) the complex sentence, with coordination (syndetic, asyndetic, and quasi-coordination) and subordination (four types of nominal, adverbial, comparative and comment clauses) to be discussed. [17] M. Mac Coinnigh (2015) investigates simple, compound, complex, and compound-complex sentence structure of English proverbs alongside with Italian, French, Spanish, Finnish and Arabic ones. [6]

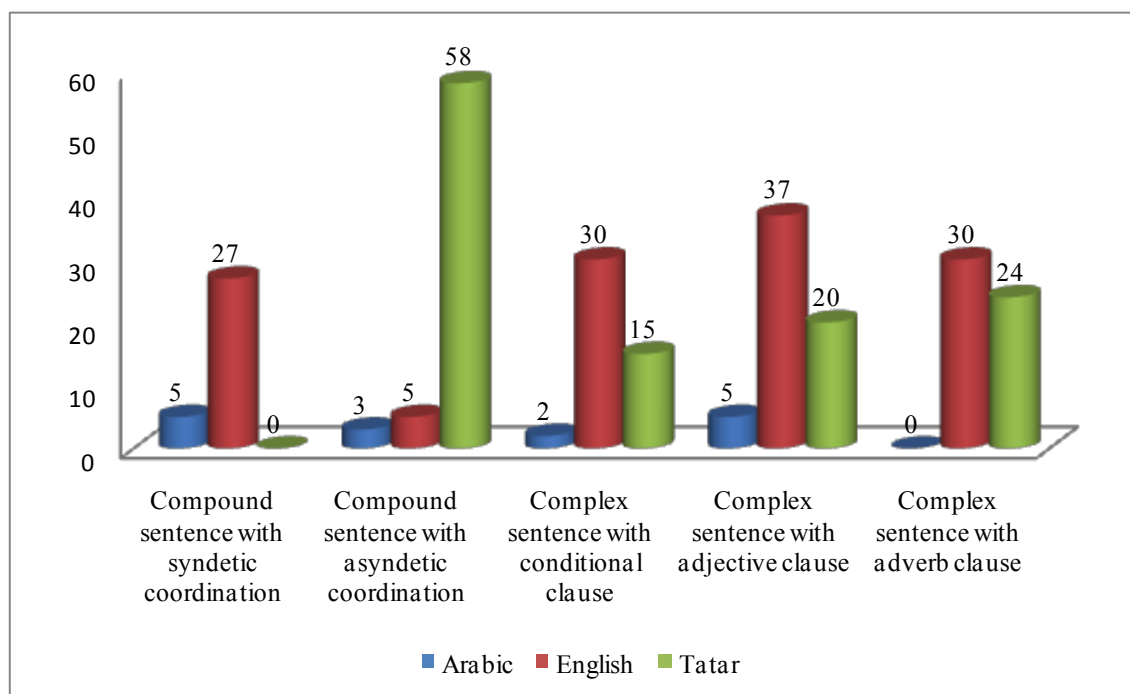
Over the past few decades, the interest to Tatar proverbs, to the study of proverb language, their rhythmic and structural peculiarities keeps growing. The issues related to Tatar proverbs have been studied in the works by G.A. Nabiullina (2002), F.Kh. Tarasova (2012), E.O. Krylova (2013), G.R. Mugtasimova (2014), E.N. Denmuhametova (2014) and other scientists. So, one of the outstanding research concerning structure of Tatar proverbs has been carried out by G.A. Nabiullina (2002) in her PhD thesis devoted to syntax of compound and complex sentence structure of Tatar proverbs. [18] Later she continues working on structure of Tatar proverbs, she pays attention to the analysis of complex structures, their productive structural models, and the semantic specificity of the data structure. [19] F.Kh. Tarasova (2012) conducts research on 1) simple sentence structure of Tatar, Russian and English proverbs, in particular mononuclear sentence, impersonal sentence, infinitive clauses 2) complex and compound sentences in the given proverbs. [20]

E.O. Krylova (2013) explores simple, compound and complex sentence structures of English, Russian and Tatar proverbs about labour. [21] G.A. Nabiullina, E.N. Denmuhametova, G.R. Mugtasimova discuss lexical and grammatical peculiarities of Tatar proverbs, highlighting common and specific features of the structural-semantic organization of paremiological units. [5] The present paper has contributed to Arabic, English and Tatar animal proverbs study with complex and compound sentence structure.

## SUMMARY

The paper deals with structural analysis of Arabic, English and Tatar animal proverbs with complex and compound sentence structure. It is worth stressing that the paper is an attempt to carry out a contrastive study of proverbs in typologically and genetically unrelated languages: Arabic, English and Tatar. The research is aimed at revealing complex and compound sentence structure of the animal proverbs, which is illustrated on the examples. As proverbs present a syntactic whole, they can be described as sentences. Consequently, composite proverbial sentences are divided into compound and complex. The results of the investigation can be implemented in the sphere of lexicology, ethnolinguistics, grammar, phraseology, and corpus linguistics.

## CONCLUSIONS



**Fig. 2** Quantity of types of complex and compound sentences in Arabic, English and Tatar proverbs related to animals.

The diagram (Fig. 2) illustrates the amount of Arabic, English, and Tatar animal proverbs with composite sentence structure. Overall, it is seen that relation of above mentioned structures are various. It is evident from the chart that Tatar proverbs with compound sentence structure with asyndetic coordination are presented the most, while the amount of compound sentence structure with asyndetic coordination in Tatar proverbs and complex sentences with adverb clause in Arabic is zero.

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

**The work is performed according to the Russian Government Program of Competitive Growth of Kazan Federal University.**

## BIBLIOGRAPHY

- Preston, Th. The Project Gutenberg EBook of Dictionary of English Proverbs and Proverbial Phrases. Available at <https://www.gutenberg.org/files/39281/39281-h/39281-h.htm> (accessed January 2017).
- Mingazova, N., Shamsutdinova, E. (2014). The review of Arabic proverb studies by the Arabs and Non-Arabs. *Journal of Language and Literature*; 5(3), pp.71-75.
- Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary. Available at [http://www.oxfordlearnersdictionaries.com/definition/english/proverb#proverb\\_\\_4](http://www.oxfordlearnersdictionaries.com/definition/english/proverb#proverb__4) (accessed February 2017).
- Nabiullina, G. A., Yusupova A. Sh. (2011). Aktualnyie voprosy izucheniya tatarskih paremiy (Topical issues of studying of the Tatar Proverbs). *Ural-batyir i duhovnoe nasledie narodov mira: Materialy II Mezhdunarodnoy nauchno-prakticheskoy konferentsii, posvyaschennoy Godu ukrepleniya mezhnatsionalnogo soglasiya v respublike Bashkortostan*. Sibay. 10-11 June 2011. Ufa: IYAL Ufimskogo nauchnogo tsentra AN, 2011. pp. 218-220.

- Nabiullina, G. A., Denmuhametova, E. N., Mugtasimova, G.R. (2014). *Leksikaisintaksistatarskihposlovits*. (Vocabulary and syntax of the Tatar Proverbs). Available at <http://cyberleninka.ru/article/n/leksika-i-sintaksis-tatarskih-poslovits> (accessed April 2017).
- Mac Coinnigh, M. (2015). Structural Aspects of Proverbs. In H. Hrisztova-Gotthardt, & M. Aleksa Varga (Eds.), *Introduction to Paremiology: A Comprehensive Guide to Proverb Studies* (pp. 112-132). Berlin: de Gruyter.
- Al-Sudais, M.A. (1976). *A critical and comparative study of modern Najdi Arabic proverbs*, PhD thesis, the University of Leeds.
- Bergman, E. M. (1992). *What the old ones said: The Syntax of Moroccan Arabic Proverb* (Ph.D. Dissertation), Michigan: U.M.I.
- Ghali, H.M.M. (2000). *The Syntax of Colloquial Egyptian Proverbs*. Available at <https://www.ut.edu.sa/documents/182223/5072461/Diversity+in+Language-Contrastive+Studies+in+English+and+Arabic+Theoretical+Applied+Linguistics.pdf/7bc844ff-ac74-49bb-8f30-cf3f82af292d> (accessed April 2017).
- Jaradat, A.A. (2007). *A Linguistic Analysis of Jordanian Proverbs: A Syntactic, Semantic, and Contextual Study* <http://gradworks.umi.com/32/92/3292477.html> (accessed April 2015).
- Mingazova, N.G., Zakirov, R.R. (2014). *Comparative Typology of the Tatar and Arabic Languages*. Kazan Federal University Press, Kazan, Russia. p. 290.
- Aqil, W. (2016). *Sahuri Wala Tburi: Elative structures in the colloquial Palestinian Arabic Proverbs*. Available at [https://www.academia.edu/26426311/SAHURI\\_WALA\\_TBURI\\_ELATIVE\\_STRUCTURES\\_IN\\_THE\\_COLLOQUIAL\\_PALESTINIAN\\_ARABIC\\_PROVERBS](https://www.academia.edu/26426311/SAHURI_WALA_TBURI_ELATIVE_STRUCTURES_IN_THE_COLLOQUIAL_PALESTINIAN_ARABIC_PROVERBS) (accessed March 2017).
- Muhammad A. Badarneh (2016). *Proverbial rhetorical questions in colloquial Jordanian Arabic*. Available at [https://www.researchgate.net/publication/301825510\\_Proverbial\\_rhetorical\\_questions\\_in\\_colloquial\\_Jordanian\\_Arabic](https://www.researchgate.net/publication/301825510_Proverbial_rhetorical_questions_in_colloquial_Jordanian_Arabic) (accessed May 2017).
- Dundes, A. (1975). On the Structure of the Proverb. *Proverbium*, 25, pp. 961-973.
- Norrick, N. R. (1991). "One is none": Remarks of Repetition in Proverbs. *Proverbium: Yearbook of International Proverb Scholarship* 8, pp.121-128.
- Litovkina, A. T., & Mieder, W. (2006). *Old Proverbs Never Die, They Just Diversify: A Collection of Anti-Proverbs*. Veszprém: University of Veszprém Press.
- Bhuvaneswar, Ch. (2009). The Syntax of Proverbs: The Sentence In American English Proverbs: A Case Study in Quirk's Model'. *Al Mergib Journal of English Studies*, Vol.1. GhasarKhlar, Al Mergib University.
- Nabiullina, G. A. (2002). The syntax of compound and complex sentences of Tatar Proverbs: on the basis of a three-volume collection of Tatar proverbs "Tatar Halyk makallere" by N. Isanbet. Kazan State University. p. 262.
- Nabiullina, G. A. (2015). *Slozhnosochinennyye predlozheniya v sisteme tatarskih paremiy* (Compound sentences in the system of the Tatar Proverbs). Available at [www.science-education.ru/121-17228](http://www.science-education.ru/121-17228) (accessed September 2016).
- Tarasova, F.Kh. (2012). *Linguocultural and cognitive-pragmatic basis to Tatar Proverbs study compared to other languages*. Kazan Federal University. p. 404.
- Krylova E.O. (2013). *Semanticheskoe osmyslenie i strukturnaya organizatsiya poslovits o trude v ruskom, angliyskom i tatarskom yazyikah* (Semantic interpretation and structural organization of English, Russian and Tatar proverbs related to labour) Available at <https://www.scienceforum.ru/2013/128/2123> (accessed April 2017).