

Anna T. Litovkina

Teaching Proverbs and Anti-Proverbs





Selye János Egyetem
Tanárképző Kar

Anna T. Litovkina

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Szakmai lektorok / Reviewed by:

Prof. PaedDr. Zdenka Gadušová, CSc.

Doc. PaedDr. Barta Péter, CSc.

PaedDr. Puskás Andrea, PhD.

Nyelvi lektorok / Language review by:

Doc. PaedDr. Barta Péter, CSc.

PaedDr. Puskás Andrea, PhD.

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Preface

Organization and the Aim of the Book

The textbook “*Teaching Proverbs and Anti-Proverbs*” consists of the Introduction, two parts, and Reference. In the introduction at first I discuss the topics of contradictory proverbs and people’s doubts in the truthfulness of proverbs, then I review the background of anti-proverb research and terminology; and I address the proverbs most frequently parodied, as well as internationally spread anti-proverbs. Furthermore, I explore different mechanisms of proverb variation and main topics emerging in proverb alterations. In the first part of the book one will find seven chapters. In the first chapter I discuss ways in which Anglo-American proverbs can be used in the language classroom, I also focus on some of my studies on this topic, and I explore the value of incorporating Anglo-American proverbs into language-teaching situations, and I offer various exercises which can be used in order to facilitate and promote conversational and writing skills. The second chapter comments briefly upon my experience in teaching courses on *Anglo-American Proverbs* and *Proverbs in an American Cultural Context* in various Hungarian universities and colleges. The focus of the third chapter is on four of my books on the theme under consideration. The fourth chapter treats proverb collections and proverbs to be used in the language classroom, and the fifth chapter demonstrates activities in which anti-proverbs can be incorporated into the language classroom. The last two chapters address tales, fables and stories. While the sixth chapter discusses proverbs in tales, fables and stories, the seventh chapter addresses various types of activities with the help of which tales, fables and stories, along with proverbs could be incorporated into the language classroom. The second part of the book contains nine appendices, which are followed by a list of bibliographical data.

The book “*Teaching Proverbs and Anti-Proverbs*” is directed towards the student of English, the teacher, the folklorist, the linguist, and anyone interested in entering the magical world where tales and proverbs over-

lap. It is hoped that “*Teaching Proverbs and Anti-Proverbs*” will encourage the use of proverbs and anti-proverbs in the language classroom, and that teachers will use some of suggestions offered here, as well as find new ways to include proverbs and anti-proverbs in their curricula. Although this book focuses on the introduction of Anglo-American proverbs and anti-proverbs into second-language education, the main ideas expressed above could be easily transferred to other languages and cultures as well.

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0. Introduction

At the beginning of the introduction (sections 1–5) I consider briefly the topics of contradictory proverbs and people's doubts in the truth of proverbs; I also review the background of anti-proverb research and terminology, as well as the occurrence of anti-proverbs. The focus of the sixth section is on those proverbs that are most popular for variation, while the seventh section discusses the most frequently parodied proverb in my corpus, *Old soldiers never die*, they simply fade away. The eighth section touches the question of internationally spread anti-proverbs. In the ninth section of the introduction I explore different mechanisms of proverb variation, while in the tenth section I address the main topics that emerged in proverb alterations.

0.1. Contradictory Proverbs

There are many proverbs about proverbs. More than any other topic, such expressions stress the truthfulness of proverbs, e.g. *The proverb is true* (English, Irish, Gaelic, Welsh, Hebrew, Yiddish, and Indian); *Common proverb seldom lies*; *Every proverb is truth*; *Old proverbs are the children of truth* (English); *A proverb never tells a lie* (Lebanese); *Mad folks and proverbs reveal many truths* (American); *Old proverbs are the children of truth* (Welsh); *The proverb doesn't lie* (Russian, Estonian, Lebanese); *The proverb is like a horse, when the truth is missing, we use a proverb to find it* (African /Yoruba/); *Közmondás nem hazug szólás* (Hungarian). Such proverbs also assert that proverbs cannot be contradicted or judged, e.g., *Proverbs cannot be contradicted* (Irish); *A proverb can't be judged*; *You can't argue against a proverb, a fool, or the truth*; *The proverb cannot be disputed* (Russian). Nevertheless, proverbs have never been considered as absolute truths. While people have appreciated the didactic wisdom of these sapiential gems¹ (e.g., *Proverbs are the wisdom of the streets*; *The wisdom of the proverbs cannot be surpassed* (English); *The proverb is wisdom of*

¹ See Mieder 1985b.

the street (German); *Proverbs are the wisdom of nations* (American)), they have certainly also noticed the limited scope of proverbs when interpreted as universal laws of behavior. The folk do not consider proverbs sacrosanct, and people are well aware of the fact that proverbs at times are simply too rigid and limited in their prescribed wisdom.

The proverbs *Too many cooks spoil the broth*; *Too many commanders cause confusion in the ranks*; *Everybody's business is nobody's business* stress that when too many people try to do the same job at the same time it's never done properly, chaos reigns. But the proverb *Many hands make light work makes* a directly contradictory assertion: the more people there are to carry out a task the more easily it is completed. While the proverbs *Out of sight, out of mind*; *Absence is love's foe: far from the eyes, far from the heart*; *What the eye doesn't see the heart doesn't grieve for* say that absent friends and lovers are soon forgotten, a proverb *Absence makes the heart grow fonder* has completely opposite meaning: people feel more affection when they are parted. A proverb that makes both assertions possible is: *Absence kills a little love but makes the big ones grow*.

Anybody can quickly tell that many more proverbs contradict each other, as can be seen by the juxtaposition of such frequently cited proverb pairs as:

Like attracts like. – Two of a trade seldom agree.

Fine feathers do not make fine birds. – Fine feathers make fine birds.

Clothes make the man. – Clothes do not make the man.

Barking dogs don't bite. – A dog will bark before it bites.

Look before you leap. – He who hesitates is lost.

(for more examples, see Chapter 1)

The last pair of contradictory proverbs listed above is discussed in the satirical essay "Better Safe than Sorry When It Comes to Sayings" by Charles Osgood:

I have decided not to live by the wise old sayings anymore. It's not that the wise old sayings don't have a lot of truth and distilled experience in them, it's just that they never quite seem to fit a given situation.

Look before you leap is sound advice, all right. You can get into lots of trouble by leaping before looking.

But if you do too much pre-leap looking, you violate another and completely contradictory wise old saying:

He who hesitates is lost.

It's certainly not going to do you much good looking before leaping, if, in the process, you end up lost because of the inherent hesitating.²

But such proverbial dueling with opposite or contradictory proverbs is only one of the many ways in which people have reacted humorously or satirically to this storehouse of folk wisdom. As Wolfgang Mieder states:

Upon reading such “attacks,” it always becomes immediately obvious that the satirist is contextualizing the proverb in one very definite situation for which the proverb does not hold true. Any one of us could, of course, at once think up a different situation for which the proverb would be a perfect fit.³

Vernon Rendall also comments on the problem of contradictory proverbs: “Whoever paused over the warning of a proverb? The next minute, if he had a fairly good head, he might think of another that contradicted it”⁴. The poem “Paradoxical Proverbs” by Frank H. Woodstrike (see Chapter 1), juxtaposing 16 proverb pairs that possess opposite meanings and demonstrating the contradictory nature of proverbs – which can be ‘wise’ or ‘absurd’, depending on how a given situation is presented – supports Rendall’s statement. Taken separately, each proverb in this series sounds persuasive enough; but the juxtaposition of contradictory proverbs may raise serious doubts concerning the trustworthiness of both assertions.

As Mieder states, “Since proverbs reflect human experiences of all types, they are bound to contradict each other just as life is made up of a multitude

² See Mieder 1989b: 273.

³ See Mieder 1989b: 240.

⁴ Rendall 1929: 443.

of contradictions. Used in a very particular context any proverb will express some short wisdom of sorts that comments or reflects on a given situation, even though the truth of it could be put into question when looked at from a larger philosophical framework. Proverbs are context-bound and so is their wisdom, no matter how minute that kernel of truth might be”⁵.

We could end this discussion of proverb contradiction with the following proverb: *When the occasion comes, the proverb comes* (African/Oji/).

0.2. Doubts Concerning the Truthfulness of Proverbs

Being a generalization, a proverb in itself can’t be defined as ‘true’ or ‘false’. A person chooses a proverb according to the demands of the situation – not due to its universal, abstract sense, and any situation can be interpreted in more than one way. The relevance of proverbs and their meaning emerges only in their application and use in specific contexts. As Wolfgang Mieder points out, ‘We can thus characterize the particular choice of proverbs in any given context by the popular proverb ‘If the shoe (proverb) fits, wear (use) it’”⁶.

There exists a long tradition of parodying individual proverbs by adding a statement which puts its wisdom into question or negates it completely. Often such short commentaries are introduced by the conjunction “but,” thus immediately flagging the contradictory intent of the message:

Half the world doesn’t know how the other half lives, but not in a small town.⁷ {Half the world doesn’t know how the other half lives}⁸

A fool and his money are soon parted, but seldom by another fool.⁹ {A

⁵ Mieder 1993: 26.

⁶ Mieder 1989b: 239.

⁷ Esar 1968: 744.

⁸ For the reader’s ease all anti-proverbs in this book are followed by their original forms, given in { } brackets. The vast majority of the anti-proverbs quoted in this textbook were taken primarily from American and British written sources.

⁹ Esar 1968: 318.

fool and his money are soon parted}

Doubts about the truthfulness of a proverb may be also expressed by adding “may be” to a positive statement, or “may not” to a negative statement, in the original proverb, followed by a commentary (usually introduced by the conjunction “but”) questioning the truth of the proverb:

The way to a man’s heart may be through his stomach, but a pretty girl can always find a detour.¹⁰ {The way to a man’s heart is through his stomach}

Money may not buy happiness, but most of us are willing to make the experiment.¹¹ {Money does not buy happiness}

Some proverb variations question the truth of a proverb by posing a naive question – thus, once more, presenting a single situation in which the proverb may sound wrong, or doesn’t fit:

Still waters run deep – but how can they run if they are still?¹² {Still waters run deep}

If ignorance is bliss, why aren’t more people happy?¹³ {Ignorance is bliss}

When a person perceives that the “truth” of a proverb does not fit his or her own observations on life, he or she will simply transform the proverb into its opposite. Since proverbs tend to express wisdom in an authoritative way, the coiners of anti-proverbs undermine that authority to express changing attitudes towards proverbial wisdom today. In some cases a positive proverb statement may be changed into a negative:

¹⁰ Esar 1968: 217.

¹¹ Esar 1968: 286.

¹² Esar 1968: 856.

¹³ Berman 1997: 200.

A friend that isn't in need is a friend indeed.¹⁴ {A friend in need is a friend indeed}

In the underworld, money isn't the root of all evil, but evil is the root of all money.¹⁵ {Money is the root of all evil}

And vice versa, a negative statement might be changed into a positive:

Crime pays – be a lawyer.¹⁶ {Crime doesn't pay}

Crime pays, but you've got to be careful.¹⁷ {Crime doesn't pay}

The opposite view may also be achieved through employing antonyms, for example, "save" instead of "spoil," "unfamiliarity" instead of "familiarity":

Spare the rod and save the child.¹⁸ {Spare the rod and spoil the child}

A president likes to keep on good terms with the press corps because unfamiliarity breeds contempt.¹⁹ {Familiarity breeds contempt}

Authors reworking traditional gems of wisdom may simply put the proverb in a context in which it doesn't sound truthful and then offer an explanation:

If God helped those who help themselves, those who help themselves wouldn't have to hire expensive lawyers.²⁰ {God helps those who help themselves}

Next time a man tells you talk is cheap, ask him if he knows how much a session of Congress costs.²¹ {Talk is cheap}

14 Barbour 1963: 99; Mieder et al. 1992: 233.

15 Esar 1968: 193.

16 Nierenberg 1994: 555.

17 Nierenberg 1994: 555.

18 Hubbard 1973: 150.

19 Berman 1997: 132.

20 Leo Rosten, in Berman 1997: 162.

21 Esar 1968: 170.

Coiners of anti-proverbs often introduce the traditional form of a proverb with such words or phrases as “used to,” “in the (good) old days,” “there was a time,” and then use the words “nowadays,” “then” or “now” to describe a single situation in which the proverb may sound wrong:

A picture used to be worth a thousand words – then came television.²²

{A picture is worth a thousand words}

There was a time when a fool and his money were soon parted, but now it happens to everybody.²³ {A fool and his money are soon parted}

As Mieder states, “proverbs are no longer sacrosanct bits of wisdom laying out a course of action that must be adhered to blindly. Instead proverbs are considered as questionable and at best apparent truths that are called on if the shoe (proverb) happens to fit. When that is not the case, they are freely changed to express opposite points of view”²⁴.

0.3. Background of Research and Terminology

Proverbs have frequently been used as satirical, ironic or humorous comments on a given situation. For centuries, they have provided a framework for endless transformation. In the last few decades they have been perverted and parodied so extensively that their variations have been sometimes heard more often than their original forms. Mieder has coined the term “*Antispruchwort*” (anti-proverb) for such deliberate proverb innovations (also known in English as *alterations*, *mutations*, *parodies*, *transformations*, *variations*, *wisecracks*, *deliberate proverb innovations*, or *fractured proverbs*) and has published several collections of anti-proverbs in both German²⁵ and English²⁶. Mieder’s term “*Antispruchwort*” has been

²² Esar 1968: 599.

²³ Adlai Stevenson, in Metcalf 1993: 119.

²⁴ Mieder 1993: 90.

²⁵ See Mieder 1982, 1985a, 1989a, 1998.

²⁶ See T. Litovkina & Mieder 2006; Mieder 2003; Mieder & Tóthné Litovkina 1999.

widely accepted by proverb scholars all over the world as a general label for such innovative alterations of and reactions to traditional proverbs: *anti-proverb* (English), *anti(-)proverbe* (French), *антипословица* (Russian), and *anti(-)proverbium* (Hungarian)²⁷.

The vast majority of anti-proverbs are the products of the playfulness of a solitary author; they do not catch on, and thus will be found in just one source. There are some texts, however, which appear in many sources, exactly in the same form²⁸. For some anti-proverbs numerous variants have been found. The difference may lie in the use of an article, conjunction, or punctuation mark, or in the substitution of one more or less synonymous term for another.²⁹ Let us view the variants of the proverb “To err is human, to forgive divine” below:

To err is human – to totally muck things up needs a computer.³⁰

To err is human, but to really foul things up requires a computer.³¹

To err is human, but it takes a computer to completely fuck things up.³²

To err is human, but to really screw things up you need a computer.³³

Some anti-proverbs have even become proverbial in themselves and have been frequently included in recent proverb collections, for example, *A new broom sweeps clean, but the old one knows the corners* {*A new broom sweeps clean*}; *Absence makes the heart grow fonder – for somebody else* {*Absence makes the heart grow fonder*}.

Anti-proverbs may contain revealing social comments (*American money talks in just about every foreign country*³⁴ {*Money talks*}; *A condom a*

27 See the general discussion of the genre of anti-proverbs in Mieder 2004, 2007; T. Litovkina 2005, 2007b, 2015; T. Litovkina & Mieder 2006: 1–54.

28 For more, see T. Litovkina & Mieder, 2006: XV–XVI.

29 For more, see T. Litovkina & Mieder, 2006: XVI–XVII.

30 Kilroy 1985: 220.

31 Bloch 1990: 140.

32 Nierenberg 1994: 552.

33 Metcalf 1993: 41.

34 McKenzie 1980: 343.

*day keeps AIDS away*³⁵ {An apple a day keeps the doctor away}), but they may also be based on mere wordplay or puns, and they may very often be generated solely for the goal of deriving play forms (*A fool and his monkey are soon parted*³⁶ {A fool and his money are soon parted}; *Monkey is the route to all people*³⁷ {Money is the root of all evil}).

Although the collection and the study of anti-proverbs nationally and internationally have just begun, both pursuits are becoming increasingly popular in the field of paremiology (proverb research) and paremiography (proverb collection). Indeed, just thirty-three years have passed since the first collection of German anti-proverbs was published³⁸. The first such collection in the English language, the book “Twisted Wisdom: Modern Anti-Proverbs”, written by Wolfgang Mieder in cooperation with Anna Tóthné Litovkina, was published only 16 years ago³⁹.

0.4. The Century of the Anti-Proverb

In Europe and North America the genre of transformed proverbs is becoming more and more popular, especially due to the mass media and the Internet. In fact, one may easily believe that the Century of the Anti-Proverb is now in progress. Consider the following catalogue of anti-proverb collections that have seen print, as well as panels on anti-proverbs presented at conferences, during the last decade. In the course of 2005, four anti-proverb collections were published, including the first two to appear in Hungarian (“*Viccében él a nemzet*”. *Magyar közmondás-paródiák* [“The Nation Lives in Its Jokes”: Hungarian Proverb Parodies]⁴⁰ and “*Éhes diák pakkal álmodik*”. *Egyetemisták közmondás-elváltoztatásai* [“A Hungry Student

35 Mieder 1991: 99.

36 Margo 1982.

37 Rees 1980: 91.

38 Mieder 1982.

39 See Mieder & Tóthné Litovkina 1999. See the discussion of this collection in Chapter 3.

40 See T. Litovkina & Vargha 2005b. The book contains about 1,500 anti-proverbs based on 324 original Hungarian proverbs. While the vast majority of the sources came from the Internet, recent Hungarian newspapers, fiction, and advertisements, some texts were recorded orally.

Dreams about a Parcel”: Twisted Proverbs of Students]⁴¹ by Anna T. Litovkina and Katalin Vargha). Also, a collection of Russian anti-proverbs and aphorisms (*Антипословицы русского народа* by Harry Walter and Valerij Mokienko⁴² was published in St. Petersburg, and a new German collection (*Besser Arm dran als Bein ab: Anti-Sprichwörter und ihresgleichen* by Erika Gossler⁴³) saw print in Vienna.

The year 2006 began with the publication of a new collection of Russian anti-proverbs (*Прикольный словарь (антипословицы и антипоговорки)* by Harry Walter and Valerij Mokienko⁴⁴, the appearance of the second collection of Anglo-American anti-proverbs, titled *Old Proverbs Never Die, They Just Diversify: A Collection of Anti-Proverbs* by Anna T. Litovkina and Wolfgang Mieder⁴⁵, as well as the republication of an earlier collection of Hungarian proverb transformations by Anna T. Litovkina and Katalin Vargha⁴⁶, under the title “*Viccében él a nemzet*”. *Válogatott közmondás-paródiák* [“The Nation Lives in Its Jokes”: Selected Proverb Parodies]⁴⁷.

In the course of 2006 two conferences held in Hungary featured panels on anti-proverbs: the XVI. Hungarian Congress of Applied Linguistics “Nyelvi modernizáció – Szaknyelv, fordítás, terminológia” [Language Modernization – Professional Language, Translation, Terminology] held at Szent István University (Gödöllő, Hungary, April 10–12, 2006); the International Conference “Disciplinary and Interdisciplinary Phraseology” held at the Pannonian University of Veszprém (Veszprém, Hungary, June 9–11, 2006).

In 2007 a special issue of *Acta Ethnographica Hungarica* on *Anti-Pro-*

41 See T. Litovkina & Vargha 2005a. The collection contains over 1,700 proverb parodies based on 287 Hungarian proverbs. The sources were collected by Anna T. Litovkina’s students attending her classes on socio-linguistics and folklore at Illyés Gyula College of Education, University of Pécs (Szekszárd) from their friends, relatives, etc. in 2004–2005; some were created by them.

42 See Walter & Mokienko 2005.

43 See Gossler 2005.

44 See Walter & Mokienko 2006.

45 See T. Litovkina & Mieder 2006. See the discussion of this collection in Chapter 3.

46 See T. Litovkina & Vargha 2005b.

47 See T. Litovkina & Vargha 2006.

verbs in Contemporary Societies saw print in Budapest. The issue, co-edited by Anna T. Litovkina and Carl Lindahl, and published in four languages (English, German, French and Russian) contains 10 articles and 12 reviews by 16 contributors⁴⁸.

Clearly, anti-proverb research has been experiencing a boom in the last three decades. Moreover, this new field has become a gold mine not only for individual paremiologists (proverb researchers) and paremiographers (proverb collectors), but particularly for researchers working in pairs, based on the principle expressed in the proverb *Two heads are better than one* (especially if they are anti-proverbialists' heads).

Thus, Germany-born Wolfgang Mieder and Russia-born Anna T. Litovkina have assembled two compilations of Anglo-American anti-proverbs⁴⁹, and they have also co-authored a monograph, one chapter of which focuses on Hungarian and Anglo-American anti-proverbs⁵⁰.

A productive anti-proverb collaboration in the field of Russian anti-proverbs has occurred between V. M. Mokienko from Russia and Harry Walter from Germany⁵¹.

Anna T. Litovkina and Katalin Vargha from Hungary have undertaken a number of anti-proverb projects together. One of them was to collect Hungarian anti-proverbs. Now their corpus of anti-proverbs includes over 7,000 examples, some of which have already been published in anti-proverb collections⁵². Vargha and T. Litovkina have also written a number of co-authored articles analyzing various types of transformation and humour devices in Hungarian anti-proverbs⁵³. The co-authors have also conducted a survey exploring popular views of proverbs and anti-proverbs in contemporary Hungarian society.⁵⁴

48 See T. Litovkina & Lindahl 2007, 52(1).

49 T. Litovkina & Mieder 2006; Mieder & Tothne Litovkina 1999. See the discussion of these collections in Chapter 3.

50 T. Litovkina & Mieder 2005: 150–176.

51 Walter & Mokienko 2001, 2005, 2006.

52 See T. Litovkina & Vargha 2005a, 2005b, 2006.

53 T. Litovkina & Vargha 2009, 2012; Vargha & T. Litovkina 2007b.

54 For a more detailed analysis of the results of their survey, see T. Litovkina & Vargha 2009; T. Litovkina, Vargha & Boronkai 2012; Vargha & T. Litovkina 2007. Each participant in the survey received a questionnaire containing 30 questions. The task

Anna T. Litovkina and Dóra Boronkai from Hungary have conducted socio-linguistic surveys in the USA and Hungary⁵⁵. The main purpose of the surveys was to employ the methods of correlational and quantitative sociolinguistics to assess how age and sex (in case of Hungarian respondents, educational level as well) influence the appreciation of humor in anti-proverbs.⁵⁶ Following T. Litovkina and Boronkai's line of research, Bulgaria-born researcher residing in Hungary, Hrisztalina Hrisztova-Gotthardt, Melita Aleksa Varga from Croatia and Anna T. Litovkina have analyzed the reception of humour of anti-proverbs in Germany, Austria and Switzerland⁵⁷.

Apart from the productive partnerships already mentioned, other scho-

of the informants was to respond to 14 questions concerning the use of proverbs and ten touching upon anti-proverbs. Additionally, the questionnaire contained questions concerning respondents' gender, age, educational level, profession, place of residence (county), and type of residence (city/town, village) at birth and at present. This survey focused on three major questions. First, the authors' aim was to establish the lists of the proverbs most popular for variation. Their second goal was to discover our subjects' thoughts about the use of anti-proverbs, as well as about their views of the people who use them. Thirdly, they compared what people say about their own usage of anti-proverbs against what they think about the ways in which other people use them (for more, see T. Litovkina & Vargha 2009; T. Litovkina, Vargha & Boronkai 2012; Vargha & T. Litovkina 2007).

55 See Boronkai & T. Litovkina 2007, 2009, 2010; T. Litovkina & Boronkai 2009, 2011; T. Litovkina, Vargha & Boronkai 2012.

56 Each participant in the survey received a list of anti-proverbs (which were identified as "proverb transformations" in English, or "közmondás-paródiák" [proverb parodies] in Hungarian). The task of respondents was to read the anti-proverbs and to evaluate each item according to its "rate of funniness," from 0 to 10 (0 = the least funny, 10 = the most funny). Additionally, participants were asked to provide minimal personal background information: their sex, age, etc. The survey focused on three major questions. First, how do sex and age (in Hungarian survey one more variable was added, educational level) influence the overall response to the questionnaires? The second goal was to consider the ways in which differences of the variables discussed in the survey influenced responses to the thematic categories treated in the anti-proverbs, particularly sexuality, obscenity, males, females, and family. Finally, the aim of the authors was also to establish and analyze the lists of the most funny and least funny anti-proverbs (for more, see Boronkai & T. Litovkina 2007, 2009, 2010; T. Litovkina & Boronkai 2009; T. Litovkina, Vargha & Boronkai 2012).

57 See Aleksa, Hrisztova-Gotthardt & T. Litovkina 2009, 2010; Hrisztova-Gotthardt, Aleksa & T. Litovkina 2009.

larly teams have recently formed to conduct various anti-proverb projects (in particular, comparative studies concentrating on anti-proverbs in different languages and social and cultural contexts). Thus, a group residing in Hungary, consisting of Anna T. Litovkina, Katalin Vargha, Péter Barta and Hrisztalina Hrisztova-Gotthardt, has been working on the types of alteration and humour devices most frequently employed in Anglo-American, German, French, Russian and Hungarian anti-proverbs⁵⁸.

0.5. Occurrence of Anti-Proverbs

Like traditional gems of wisdom, anti-proverbs appear in a broad range of generic contexts, from personal letters to philosophical journals, from public lectures and sermons to songs, from science fiction to comics and cartoons⁵⁹. Anti-proverbs are also found in great abundance on the Internet⁶⁰, in the titles of books and articles, and in magazine and newspaper headlines. They are commonly quoted in collections of puns, one-liners, toasts, wisecracks, quotations, aphorisms, maxims, quips, epigrams and graffiti⁶¹.

Transformed proverbs are extremely frequently used in advertising.⁶² Since the vast majority of people read only the headline of an advertisement, it is very important to attract the reader's attention. This can be easily achieved by using proverbs, which more often than not are altered. Sometimes it is enough to mention only part of a popular proverb to allow a consumer to recognize the proverb and understand the advertiser's message. Some of the most commonly known proverbs are particularly popular in advertisements: for example, *Different strokes for different folks*, in which

58 See Barta, T. Litovkina, Hrisztova-Gotthardt et al. 2008, 2009a, 2009b; Hrisztova-Gotthardt, T. Litovkina, Vargha et al. 2009; T. Litovkina, Vargha, Barta et al. 2007, 2008; Vargha, T. Litovkina, Barta et al. 2007; etc.

59 Mieder 1989b, 2007.

60 Mieder 2007.

61 See the lists of bibliography in T. Litovkina 2005: 211–228; T. Litovkina & Mieder 2006: 349–357; Mieder & Tóthné Litovkina 1999: 246–254.

62 Mieder 1989b, 2007.

the word “strokes” is replaced by a word that draws attention to the product being peddled by the advertiser: *Different hopes (spokes, smokes, slopes, toasts, Volks) for different folks*⁶³.

Anti-proverbs have also found their way into poetry; thus, John Robert Colombo in his “Proverbial Ruth” takes about 30 proverbs and replaces one of their key words with the name “Ruth”, for example: *A good Ruth makes good company; A good Jack makes a good Ruth; A good Ruth for a bad one is worth much, and costs little*⁶⁴.

Proverb parodies are also used in fables, tales and stories (see Chapter 6). There is no sphere of life where anti-proverbs are not used.

But the anti-proverb is not a new genre born in the era of mass media and the Internet⁶⁵; rather, it can be traced back to the distant past. Proverb alterations are as old as proverbs themselves: they flourished in classical times and in all subsequent eras. Thus, in the eighteenth century the traditional wisdom of many proverbial gems was questioned by a number of philosophers, writers and poets (to name just a few: G. C. Lichtenberg, I. Kant, F. Schiller, Goethe, Voltaire), who created and inspired many proverb transformations.

0.6. Proverbs Most Popular for Variation

Typically, an anti-proverb will elicit humour only if the traditional proverb upon which it is based is also known, thus allowing the reader or listener to perceive the incongruity (violation of expectation) between the two expressions. Otherwise, the innovative strategy of communication based on the juxtaposition of the old and “new” proverb is lost. The juxtaposition of the traditional proverb text with an innovative variation forces the reader or listener into a more critical thought process. Whereas the old proverbs acted as preconceived rules, the modern anti-proverbs are intended to activate us

63 For further discussion of the role of proverbs in advertising, see Mieder 1989b: 293–332; 1989c; 1990; Mieder & Mieder 1977; Prahlad 2004.

64 For more on proverbs in poetry, see Mieder 1989b: 171–194.

65 Mieder 2007.

into overcoming the naive acceptance of traditional wisdom.

While surprisingly only one or two anti-proverbs have been found for some well-known Anglo-American proverbs (e.g., *A place for everything and everything in its place*; *Better the devil you know than the devil you don't know*; *Business is business*; *Do as I say, not as I do*; *Don't cut off your nose to spite your face*; *Easy come, easy go*; *He gives twice who gives quickly*; *If you want peace, prepare for war*; *It pays to advertise*; *Like father, like son*; *Love conquers all*; *Love will find a way*; *Never say die*; *The squeaky wheel gets the grease*; *Waste not, want not*⁶⁶), the vast majority of proverbs in my corpus have given rise to 7–15 parodies (e.g., *An ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure*; *As you sow, so you reap*; *Beauty is in the eye of the beholder*; *Better late than never*; *Blood is thicker than water*; *Charity begins at home*; *Clothes make the man*; *Do unto others as you would have them do unto you*; *Eat, drink, and be merry, for tomorrow we may die*⁶⁷).

And, last but not least, there are extremely productive proverbs that have generated twenty-five or more anti-proverbs. The 26 Anglo-American proverbs most frequently transformed in my corpus are listed below. Each proverb is followed by a number in parentheses indicating the number of anti-proverbs that I have been able to locate for it:

Old soldiers never die, they just fade away. (79) (For numerous parodies of the 'champion,' see Section 0.7 below)

Money talks. (63)

If at first you don't succeed, try, try again. (53)

An apple a day keeps the doctor away. (48)

A bird in the hand is worth two in the bush. (48)

A fool and his money are soon parted. (46)

Never put off till tomorrow what you can do today. (45)

Early to bed, early to rise, makes a man healthy, wealthy and wise. (43)

Opportunity knocks but once. (43)

To err is human, to forgive divine. (43)

66 See T. Litovkina & Mieder 2006.

67 See T. Litovkina & Mieder 2006.

Two can live as cheaply as one. (41)
 A man is known by the company he keeps. (36)
 Money is the root of all evil. (36)
 The meek shall inherit the earth. (36)
 Behind every successful man there is a woman. (35)
 Here today, gone tomorrow. (34)
 Money doesn't buy happiness. (32)
 Money isn't everything. (31)
 Where there's a will there's a way. (31)
 You can fool some of the people all the time, all the people some of
 the time, but you can't fool all the people all the time. (30)
 It's better to have loved and lost than never to have loved at all. (29)
 Love is blind. (29)
 Laugh and the world laughs with; cry and you cry alone. (28)
 Two heads are better than one. (28)
 Honesty is the best policy. (26)
 People who live in glass houses shouldn't throw stones. (25)⁶⁸

The proverbs listed above are, of course, among the most popular in Anglo-American tradition. Indeed, all the proverbs for which I have identified three or more anti-proverbs (see Appendix 2) are extremely well known. Otherwise, if the reader or listener were unaware of the traditional proverb, the innovative strategy of communication based on the juxtaposition of old and "new" proverb would be lost.

As Mieder⁶⁹ points out, proverbs that possess binary structures⁷⁰ have provided especially popular formulas upon which to base multiple proverb variations, as for example "One X is worth a thousand Y's," "Where there's X, there's Y," "One man's X is another man's Y," "An X a day keeps the Y away," "A(n) X in the hand is worth Y in the bush," "An ounce of X is worth a pound of Y" and "Different X-s for different Y-s." Many anti-pro-

68 See T. Litovkina & Mieder 2006: 12–13 (for the list of 54 Anglo-American proverbs that have generated over twenty anti-proverbs in their corpus of Anglo-American anti-proverbs, see . Litovkina & Mieder 2006: 12–13).

69 Mieder 1989b: 241.

70 See Dundes 1975.

verbs are based on linguistic structures that remain the same even as slight verbal changes introduce dramatically new images and ideas. Let me illustrate it by listing below some typical proverb parodies based on the proverb *An apple a day keeps the doctor away*, (the proverb possesses a binary structure “An X a day keeps the Y away”):

- A chapter a day keeps the devil away.⁷¹
- A crisis a day keeps impeachment away.⁷²
- A joint a day keeps reality away.⁷³
- A laugh a day keeps the psychiatrist away.⁷⁴
- A strike a day keeps prosperity away.⁷⁵
- An effort a day keeps failure away.⁷⁶
- An onion a day gives your diet away.⁷⁷
- An onion a day keeps everybody away.⁷⁸

0.7. Old soldiers never die, they just fade away

In order to illustrate the popularity of the proverb *Old soldiers never die, they just fade away*, which generated the largest number of parodies in my corpus (79), I present in this section all the alterations I have found⁷⁹:

1. A mark master never dies he just fails to make his mark.⁸⁰
2. Charity stewards never die they only loose their covenants.⁸¹

71 Barbour 1963: 99.

72 Mieder 1991: 98.

73 Haan & Hammerstrom 1980.

74 Esar 1968: 461.

75 Indianapolis News, in Lawson 1924: 182.

76 Mieder 1991: 98.

77 Safian 1967: 30.

78 Barbour 1963: 100; Safian 1967: 30.

79 See T. Litovkina & Mieder 2006: 244–248. This most frequently parodied proverb is discussed in Litovkina & Mieder 2006: 15–17.

80 Bryan 1996: 63.

81 Bryan 1996: 80.

3. Contestant: "You know, bankers never die, they just lose interest."
Groucho Marx: "Not the bankers I know. They'd rather die than lose any interest."⁸²
4. Cowans never die they just never become regular.⁸³
5. During the Civil War, word reached a sleepy Maryland town that the Union troops were winning battles not far away and would soon be arriving. A drygoods merchant was disturbed at this because he had in stock a large quantity of gray material. He decided to take it up the street to an old friend of his who was a dyer, and have it dyed blue, so that he would be able to sell it to be made up into Union uniforms. Unfortunately, just after this had been done, word came that the fortunes of war had changed and that the town was shortly to be occupied, not by Union troops, but by Confederates. The merchant packed up his freshly dyed cloth and carted it down the street again, not to be redyed, but with the hope that his friend could at least spread it out in the sun and let it fade enough to pass as gray. But meanwhile his friend had gone off to join the Union army. Which just goes to prove that old dyers never fade, they just soldier away.⁸⁴ (from the BBC radio show "My Word",) "One feature of the program pits one member of each team in an applause-eliciting contest providing the "origin" of a famous saying or quotation given them during the program. The stories which the contestants create generally end in a pun on the quotation. Recently one contestant was given the task of providing the background for "Old soldiers never die, they only fade away."

The gentleman who was presented this task, in his measured and cultured British accent, told the story of his encounter with the lady who scrubbed the floors and stairs of his office building, a woman known in England as a "charwoman," or just plain "char." Ascending the outdoor steps, he happened to step on the char's wrist, which the char related to him that she had "sold her body" to a medi-

82 You Bet Your Life, in Mingo & Javna 1989: 18.

83 Bryan 1996: 61.

84 Hockett 1972: 159.

cal association for fifteen quid, for a research project on “obesity.” She said all she had to do to earn the money was to demonstrate annually that she weighed “at least eighteen stone.” Noting that the woman was “thin as a rail,” the storyteller asked her how she was able to prove such an obvious fib. The char replied that she had her friend, Ada, who weighed a good nineteen stone, go to the weigh-in in her place. Asked by the gentleman how she could get away with such chicanery, the char replied that the actual sale of her body had been made seventeen years previously, and the hefty Ada has gone in for the mandatory annual weigh-in once year since, and the medical authorities had not caught on to the scheme yet. At this point the storyteller came to his conclusion: it just goes to show you that “Old sold chars never die, they only evade away.”⁸⁵

6. Good jokes never die; they only pass along. Example: The comedian’s wife sued for divorce, claiming he tried to joke her to death.⁸⁶
7. Grand officers never die they just let their aprons fade to a lighter blue.⁸⁷
8. Grand officers never die. They only forget to attend the Quarterly Communications.⁸⁸
9. Lodge treasurers never die they only lose their reconciliations.⁸⁹
10. Old accountants never die; they just lose their balance.⁹⁰
11. Old accountants never die – they just lose their balance.⁹¹
12. Old almoners never die they just have trouble opening their purses.⁹²
13. Old assistant secretaries never die they just take hours with the minutes.⁹³
14. Old brick layers never die, they just throw in the trowel.⁹⁴

85 Gruner 1997: 139–140.

86 Crosbie 1977: 182.

87 Bryan 1996: 80.

88 Bryan 1996: 81.

89 Bryan 1996: 121.

90 Anonymous 1965: 290.

91 Beck 2004: 11.

92 Bryan 1996: 123.

93 Bryan 1996: 29.

94 Prochnow & Prochnow 1987: 114.

15. Old cows never die, they just kick the bucket.⁹⁵
16. Old deacons never die they just forget to turn the tracing boards.⁹⁶
17. Old DIY enthusiasts never die. They just get plastered.⁹⁷
18. Old farmers never die, they just go to seed.⁹⁸
19. Old fairies never die, they merely blow away.⁹⁹
20. Old female lawyers never die; they just lose their appeals.¹⁰⁰
21. Old fishermen never die – they just smell that way.¹⁰¹
22. Old gardeners never die, they just spade away.¹⁰²
23. Old gardeners never die. They just spade away and then throw in the trowel.¹⁰³
24. Old golfers never die, they just lose their balls.¹⁰⁴
25. Old golfers never die, they just putter away.¹⁰⁵
26. Old golfers never die. They just tee off and putt away.¹⁰⁶
27. Old golfers never die, they merely lose their balls.¹⁰⁷
28. Old hippies never die. They just take a trip.¹⁰⁸
29. Old Hippies never die, they just trip away.¹⁰⁹
30. Old initiates never die, they only change their grips.¹¹⁰
31. Old inner guards never die they just exchange their organs for harps.¹¹¹
32. Old jokes never die, they just end up in every comic's brain file.¹¹²

95 Prochnow & Prochnow 1983: 115.

96 Bryan 1996: 81.

97 Chiaro 1992: 62.

98 Prochnow & Prochnow 1987: 115.

99 Reisner & Wechsler 1980: 98, 151.

100 Berman 1997: 379.

101 Rees 1980: 58; Beck 2004: 34.

102 Prochnow & Prochnow 1987: 115.

103 Herbert V. Prochnow, Sr., in Prochnow 1988: 265.

104 Beck 2004: 36.

105 Prochnow & Prochnow 1987: 115.

106 McKenzie 1980: 212.

107 Reisner & Wechsler 1980: 4.

108 Chiaro 1992: 62.

109 Reisner & Wechsler 1980: 186.

110 Bryan 1996: 49.

111 Bryan 1996: 125.

112 Adams 1959: 95.

33. Old jokes never die. They just smell that way.¹¹³
34. Old junior wardens never die they just go out of plumb.¹¹⁴
35. Old lawyers never die, they just lose their appeal.¹¹⁵
36. Old lodge chaplains never die they just close the VSL.¹¹⁶
37. Old lodge organists never die they just exchange their organs for harps.¹¹⁷
38. Old lodge secretaries never die they simply fail to dip their quills.¹¹⁸
39. Old lodge stewards never die their horns of plenty just run dry.¹¹⁹
40. Old lodges never die they just get renumbered.¹²⁰
41. Old lodges never die they only loose their warrants.¹²¹
42. Old mailmen never die – they just lose their zip.¹²²
43. Old masons never die they can't knock off their superfluities.¹²³
44. Old masons never die they just keep chipping away.¹²⁴
45. Old masons never die, they only drop their ashlar.¹²⁵
46. Old master masons never die they merely loose the keys to their clarinet cases.¹²⁶
47. Old masters never die, they simply lose their aprons.¹²⁷
48. Old physicians never die; they just lose their patients.¹²⁸
49. Old politicians never die – they just run once too often.¹²⁹
50. Old postmen never die. They just lose their zip.¹³⁰

113 McKenzie 1980: 276.

114 Bryan 1996: 132.

115 Metcalf 1993: 132.

116 Bryan 1996: 127.

117 Bryan 1996: 125.

118 Bryan 1996: 98.

119 Bryan 1996: 101.

120 Bryan 1996: 18.

121 Bryan 1996: 12.

122 Hodes 1982.

123 Bryan 1996: 95.

124 Bryan 1996: 30.

125 Bryan 1996: 56.

126 Bryan 1996: 54.

127 Bryan 1996: 86.

128 Berman 1997: 379.

129 McKenzie 1980: 401.

130 McKenzie 1980: 410.

51. Old postmen never die, they merely lose their zip.¹³¹
52. Old principals never die; they just lose their faculties. Old teachers never die; they just lose their principals.¹³²
53. Old professors never die, they simply lose their faculties.¹³³
54. Old regalia makers never die they just can't thread their needles.¹³⁴
55. Old quarterbacks never die; they just fade back and pass away.¹³⁵
56. Old quarterbacks never die, they just pass away.¹³⁶
57. Old rugby players never die. They simply have their balls taken away.¹³⁷
58. Old salesmen never die – they just get out of commission.¹³⁸
59. Old scuba divers never die, they just get their depth certificates.¹³⁹
60. Old secretaries never die they are usually merely murdered by aggravated lodge masters.¹⁴⁰
61. Old soldiers never die, but are given jobs in the Civil Service.¹⁴¹
62. Old soldiers never die just young ones.¹⁴²
63. Old soldiers never die – just young ones.¹⁴³
64. Old soldiers never die – they go on TV.¹⁴⁴
65. Old soldiers never die – they just leave the army to live with their boyfriend.¹⁴⁵
66. Old soldiers never die; they just run for political office, command huge lecture fees, or sign lucrative book deals.¹⁴⁶

131 Reisner & Wechsler 1980: 4.

132 Anonymous 1965: 290.

133 Beck 2004: 56.

134 Bryan 1996: 134.

135 McKenzie 1980: 476.

136 Prochnow & Prochnow 1987: 115.

137 Kilroy 1985: 361.

138 McKenzie 1980: 458.

139 Prochnow & Prochnow 1987: 115.

140 Bryan 1996: 52.

141 Daily Telegraph 1979, in Flexner & Flexner 1993.

142 Beck 2004: 65.

143 Brandreth 1985: 54; Graffito, in Metcalf 1993: 223.

144 USA Today, March 21, 2003, p. 19A.

145 Kilroy 1985: 284.

146 Liu & Vasselli 1996.

67. Old soldiers never die; they just smell that way.¹⁴⁷
68. Old soldiers never die; they simply keep on arguing.¹⁴⁸
69. Old soldiers never die. Young ones do.¹⁴⁹
70. Old taxes never die – they just change their names.¹⁵⁰
71. Old teachers never die they just grade away.¹⁵¹
72. Old teachers never die, they just lose their principals.¹⁵²
73. Old TV directors never die. They just fade to black and white.¹⁵³
74. Old volcanoes never die, they just blow their tops.¹⁵⁴
75. Plumbers don't die – they just go down the drain.¹⁵⁵
76. Senior lodge officers never die they just can't be reconciled.¹⁵⁶
77. Senior stewards never die they just become Inner Guards.¹⁵⁷
78. Television is a form of entertainment where old movies never die,
no matter how long ago they were shot.¹⁵⁸

0.8. Anti-Proverbs with International Distribution

When translated from one language to another, an anti-proverb more often than not will lose its message: the puns, parodies or wordplay characteristic of one language will seldom carry over successfully into another. Nevertheless, there are cases in which an internationally spread proverb inspires parallel anti-proverbs in two or more languages. This often represents a convincing example of the polygenesis of similar or even identical anti-proverbs. Here are some examples¹⁵⁹:

147 Anonymous 1965: 290; Mieder et al. 1992: 551.

148 New Yorker, 1957; Flexner & Flexner 1993.

149 IRT subway, New York City, in Reisner & Wechsler 1980: 18.

150 McKenzie 1980: 497.

151 Rogers 1982: 25.

152 Prochnow 1985: 104.

153 Chiaro 1992: 62.

154 Prochnow & Prochnow 1987: 115.

155 Beck 2004: 54.

156 Bryan 1996: 71.

157 Bryan 1996: 60.

158 Esar 1968: 802.

159 They were first quoted in T. Litovkina & Mieder 2006: 9–10. The texts of French anti-

English: *Don't do today what you can put off until tomorrow; Never do today what can be done tomorrow.*¹⁶⁰

Hungarian: *Amit holnap is megtehetsz, ne tedd meg ma!*¹⁶¹ *Amit ma megtehetsz, azt holnap is megteheted.*¹⁶² {Amit ma megtehetsz, ne halaszd holnapra}

Russian: *Не делай сегодня то, что можно сделать завтра.*¹⁶³ {Не откладывая на завтра то, что можно сделать сегодня}

German: *Was du heute kannst besorgen, das verschiebe nicht erst morgen.*¹⁶⁴ {Was du heute kannst besorgen, das verschiebe nicht auf morgen}

French: *Pourquoi remettre à demain ce qu'on peut faire la semaine prochaine*¹⁶⁵ {Il ne faut pas remettre au lendemain ce qu'on peut faire le jour même}; *Il faut savoir remettre à plus tard pour avoir le temps d'accomplir aujourd'hui ce qu'on aurait dû faire hier.*¹⁶⁶ {Il ne faut pas remettre au lendemain ce qu'on peut faire le jour même}

0.9. Types of Proverb Alterations

Although proverb transformations arise in a variety of forms, several types stand out. There are a number of mechanisms of proverb variation (which are by no means mutually exclusive). The most common mechanisms, with some representative examples will be demonstrated separately here.¹⁶⁷

proverbs were supplied by Péter Barta. For more on parallel anti-proverbs in four or more languages, see T. Litovkina & Mieder 2006: 9–10.

160 See Mieder et al. 1992: 601.

161 See T. Litovkina & Vargha 2005b: 49.

162 See Rónaky 1997.

163 See Walter & Mokienko 2001: 32.

164 See Mieder 1998: 117.

165 See Barta 2003.

166 See Barta 2003.

167 For detailed analysis of techniques of variation in Anglo-American anti-proverbs; see T. Litovkina 2005: 29–86, 2006, 2007a, etc; T. Litovkina & Mieder 2006: 17–26.

replacing a single word:

Handsome is as the photographer does.¹⁶⁸ {Handsome is as handsome does}

Matrimony is the root of all evil.¹⁶⁹ {Money is the root of all evil}

substituting two or more words:

A soft drink turneth away company.¹⁷⁰ {A soft answer turneth away wrath}

Great aches from little corns grow.¹⁷¹ {Great oaks from little acorns grow}

changing the second part of the proverb:

If at first you don't succeed, blame it on your wife.¹⁷² {If at first you don't succeed, try, try again}

He who laughs last doesn't get the joke.¹⁷³ {He who laughs last laughs best}

adding a tail to the original text:

"Out of sight, out of mind," said the warden as the escaped lunatic disappeared over the hill.¹⁷⁴ {Out of sight, out of mind}

Those who can, do; those who can't, teach. And those who can't teach, teach the teachers.¹⁷⁵ {Those who can, do; those who can't, teach}

168 Anonymous 1908: 23.

169 Edmund & Workman Williams 1921: 275.

170 Fuller 1943: 95.

171 Loomis 1949: 356.

172 Esar 1968: 292.

173 Kandel 1976.

174 Mieder & Kingsbury 1994: 120.

175 Feibleman 1978: 21.

adding literal interpretations:

Where there's smoke there's pollution.¹⁷⁶ {Where there's smoke there's fire}

Don't put all your eggs in one basket – try an incubator.¹⁷⁷ {Don't put all your eggs in one basket}

punning:

A friend in weed is a friend indeed.¹⁷⁸ {A friend in need is a friend indeed}

A miss is as good as a male.¹⁷⁹ {A miss is as good as a male}

word-repetition:

“Every little helps,” said Mr. Little and took the six little Littles out to help him saw a pile of wood.¹⁸⁰ {Every little helps}

The man who lives by bread alone, lives alone.¹⁸¹ {Man does not live by bread alone}

melding two proverbs:

A penny saved gathers no moss.¹⁸² {A penny saved is a penny earned; A rolling stone gathers no moss}

Necessity is the mother of strange bedfellows.¹⁸³ {Necessity is the mother of invention; Politics makes strange bedfellows}

176 Weller 1982.

177 Wurdz 1904.

178 Farman 1989.

179 Kilroy 1985: 260.

180 Mieder & Kingsbury 1994: 76.

181 Berman 1997: 260.

182 Henry Youngman, in Berman 1997: 320.

183 Berman 1997: 298.

word-order reversal:

A hard man is good to find.¹⁸⁴ {A good man is hard to find}
Let lying dogs sleep.¹⁸⁵ {Let sleeping dogs lie}

0.10. Themes Treated in Proverb Transformations

There is hardly a topic that anti-proverbs do not address. As Mieder states, “Just as proverbs continue to comment on all levels and occurrences in our daily life, so do anti-proverbs react by means of alienating and shocking linguistic strategies to everything that surrounds us”¹⁸⁶.

Numerous texts of anti-proverbs are sexually oriented¹⁸⁷:

It’s better to have kissed amiss than never to have kissed a miss. (Old postcard)¹⁸⁸ {It’s better to have loved and lost than never to have loved at all}
Make love slowly!¹⁸⁹ {Make haste slowly}

Like traditional Anglo-American proverbs in general (e.g., “Women and dogs cause too much strife”; “Women are the devil’s net”; “Women are the root of all evil”), many proverb parodies are antifeminist and demeaning to women¹⁹⁰:

184 Kilroy 1985: 262.

185 Berman 1997: 103.

186 Mieder 1989b: 244.

187 For more on techniques of creating sexual proverb parodies and themes in sexual proverb variation, see T. Litovkina 2005: 87–99, 2011c; T. Litovkina & Mieder 2006: 26–29; Tóthné Litovkina 1999a, 1999b.

188 Berman 1997: 251.

189 Kilroy 1985: 237.

190 For more on women in Anglo-American anti-proverbs, see T. Litovkina 2005: 100–106; 2011b; 2014a, 2014b, 2014c; T. Litovkina & Mieder 2006: 29–31.

A woman's place is in the home
That's why she's so eager to find a man to put her in her place.¹⁹¹
Behind every successful man is a woman complaining she has nothing to wear.¹⁹²

There are many anti-proverbs reducing women to the status of sex objects:

The breasts on the other side of the fence look greener.¹⁹³ {The grass on the other side of the fence always looks greener}
A girl had in bed is worth two in the car.¹⁹⁴ {A bird in the hand is worth two in the bush}

A number of anti-proverbs depict women as talkative and stubborn:

A woman's place is in the home because that's where the telephone is.¹⁹⁵ {A woman's place is in the home}
Many a woman never puts off till tomorrow the gossip she can spread today.¹⁹⁶ {Never put off till tomorrow what you can do today}

The overwhelming majority of Anglo-American anti-proverbs depicting women in a role deal with women as wives. One of the most deep-rooted stereotypes is that of the quarrelsome, stupid, demanding, manipulating, nosy and bossy woman.

A man's home is his wife's castle.¹⁹⁷ {A man's home is his castle}
'Tis better to have loved and lost than to marry and be bossed.¹⁹⁸ {It's

191 Safian 1967: 25.

192 Esar 1968: 163

193 Feibleman 1978: 73.

194 Mieder et al. 1992: 51.

195 Esar 1968: 799.

196 Esar 1968: 353.

197 Anonymous 1908: 12.

198 Esar 1968: 90.

better to have loved and lost than never to have loved at all}

Another object of ridicule in our corpus is the omnipotent mother-in-law.

Man proposes, and his mother-in-law opposes.¹⁹⁹ {Man proposes,
God disposes}

When mother-in-law comes in at the door, love flies out the window.²⁰⁰
{When poverty comes in at the door, love flies out of the window}

The figures of spinster and widow are also frequently ridiculed in our material:

Spinsters live longer than married women because where there's hope
there's life.²⁰¹ {Where there's life there's hope}

Widows rush in where spinsters fear to tread.²⁰² {Fools rush in where
angels fear to tread}

There is a wide range of professions and occupations depicted in our material²⁰³. Without any doubt, the lawyer is the most popular target of humor in our anti-proverbs²⁰⁴:

Where there's a will there's a lawyer's bill.²⁰⁵ {Where there's a will
there's a way}

There's honor among thieves – at least, until they begin to deal with
lawyers.²⁰⁶ {There's honor among thieves}

199 Safian 1967: 29.

200 Berman 1997: 338.

201 Esar 1968: 759.

202 Esar 1968: 865.

203 For more on professions and occupations addressed in Anglo-American anti-proverbs, see T. Litovkina 2005: 107–112; 2011a; T. Litovkina & Mieder, 2006: 31–33.

204 For more on lawyers treated in Anglo-American anti-proverbs, see T. Litovkina 2005: 107–112, 2011a: 82–96.

205 Safian 1967: 33.

206 Esar 1968: 393.

Politicians receive almost the same treatment as lawyers; their portrait is also very unflattering²⁰⁷:

A fool and his money are soon elected.²⁰⁸ {A fool and his money are soon parted}

Brevity is a foreign word to any politician's vocabulary.²⁰⁹ {Brevity is the soul of wit}

Among other themes treated in Anglo-American proverb alterations are money, love, marriage, divorce, friendship, education and learning, alcohol and drugs, children and parents, taxes, God and religion, telephones, cars and computers, and many others²¹⁰.

Naturally, many other important questions connected with proverbs and anti-proverbs could have been touched upon here as well, but it would have stretched the length of the introduction past the limits of patience. The introduction focused on anti-proverbs (deliberate proverb innovations, alterations, parodies, transformations, variations, wisecracks, fractured proverbs, or proverb mutations). It reviewed the background of anti-proverb research and terminology, as well as the occurrence of anti-proverbs. The topics of contradictory proverbs and people's doubts in the truth of proverbs were considered briefly. I also addressed the proverbs that are most popular for variation, and touched the question of proverbs with international distribution. Last but not least, the most frequent types of proverb alteration (e.g., adding a tail to the original text, replacing a single word, substituting two or more words, changing the second part of the proverb, adding literal interpretations, melding two proverbs, reversing word order, punning), as

207 For more on the figure of politician in Anglo-American anti-proverbs, see T. Litovkina 2013.

208 Bloch 1990: 224.

209 Liu & Vasselli 1996.

210 For a more detailed analysis of themes treated in Anglo-American proverbs, see T. Litovkina 2005: 87–119; T. Litovkina & Mieder 2006: 17–26.

well as the most common themes (sexuality, women, professions and occupations) were demonstrated separately here.

As it was pointed out by Mieder in the introduction to their second collection of Anglo-American anti-proverbs:

“In fact, the “anti” component in the term “anti-proverb” is not directed against the concept of “proverb” as such. Proverbs and their wisdom continue to be of much value and relevance in modern society. But some so-called anti-proverbs have become new proverbs with their own wisdom that is perfectly appropriate for the modern age.”²¹¹

Since proverbs are considered by many of us sacrosanct, their reinterpretation in innovative ways can create humor. We laugh at some anti-proverbs because they skew our expectations about traditional values, order, and rules. We are, however, sometimes struck by the absurdity of some situations portrayed in proverb parodies, especially when they rely purely upon linguistic tricks employed for the sole purpose of making punning possible. Very often, however, anti-proverbs move beyond the realm of fun and wordplay to commenting on important aspects of society, e.g., AIDS, education, politics, work, love, sex, money, air-pollution, etc. As Mieder points out, “In this respect even the anti-proverbs become moralistic if not didactic statements to a degree...”²¹². As he states elsewhere:

These alterations of existing proverbs might be mere humorous wordplay, but more often than not such anti-proverbs represent a critical reaction to the worldview expressed in seemingly antiquated proverbs... The juxtaposition of the traditional proverb text with an innovative variation forces the reader into a more critical thought process. Whereas the old proverbs acted as preconceived rules, the modern anti-proverbs are intended to activate us into overcoming the naive acceptance of traditional wisdom.²¹³

211 T. Litovkina & Mieder 2006: 5.

212 Mieder 1989b: 243.

213 Mieder 1993: 90.



PART I



Chapter 1

Incorporation of Anglo-American Proverbs into the Language Classroom

In Chapter 1 I explore the value of incorporating Anglo-American proverbs into language-teaching situations.

1.1. Proverbs as an especially effective pedagogical medium for the teacher of American English

Proverbs can be an especially effective pedagogical medium for the teacher of American English for many reasons. First, proverbs are an important part of the American cultural heritage. The person who does not acquire competence in using proverbs will be limited in conversation; will have difficulty comprehending a wide variety of media – printed matter, radio, television, songs, advertisements, comics and cartoons²¹⁴ – and will not understand anti-proverbs, which presuppose a familiarity with a stock proverb. Furthermore, proverbs are ideally suited to pedagogical purposes because they are easy to learn. Proverbs are relatively pithy, and often contain rhyme²¹⁵ or word-repetition²¹⁶ which facilitate their recall²¹⁷. Al-

214 See Mieder 1989b.

215 E.g., *East or West, home is best; A friend in need is a friend indeed; A whistling girl and a crowing hen always come to no good end; An apple a day keeps the doctor away; A moment on the lips, forever on the hips.*

216 E.g., *Easy come, easy go; A penny saved is a penny earned.*

217 Sometimes both word-repetition and rhyme occur: *Early to bed, early to rise, makes a man healthy, wealthy and wise; A friend in need is a friend indeed.*

literation²¹⁸ also makes them quite easy to memorize²¹⁹. Proverbs contain frequently-used vocabulary and exemplify the entire gamut of grammatical and syntactic structures²²⁰.

In previous studies and books (see discussion of the books in Chapter 3 below), I have considered various ways in which language teachers can employ well-known American proverbs in the language classroom. The articles “An Analysis of Popular American Proverbs and Their Use in Language Teaching”²²¹ and “Incorporating of Anglo-American Proverbs into the Language Classroom”²²² present exercises in which proverbs may be used to enhance the learning of grammar and syntax, phonetics, vocabulary development, culture, reading, speaking, and writing. E.g.,

- 1) Use proverbs you know in situations on your own (e.g., *Look before you leap*).
- 2) Answer questions using proverbs, e.g.: What might you say when too many people work together on a project? (e.g., *Too many cooks spoil the broth*; *Two heads are better than one*)
- 3) Discuss a single proverb in a class.
- 4) Discuss proverbs on one theme (e.g., about women, men, dogs, time, etc.).
- 5) Give a situation suggesting a view contrary to the one implicit in the proverb.
- 6) Contrast a narrative which demonstrates the wisdom or fallacy of a given proverb.²²³

218 E.g., *Money makes the man*; *Curiosity killed the cat*; *He who laughs last, laughs best*; *What is good for the goose is good for the gander*; *Where there's a will there's a way*; *When the going gets tough, the tough get going*; *It takes two to tango*; *Oh, what a tangled web we weave when first we practice to deceive*; *Willful waste makes woeful want*; *Rob Peter to pay Paul*; *Live and let live*.

219 For the detailed discussion of metaphor, word-repetition, rhyme, alliteration and pithiness in American proverbs see Tóthné Litovkina 1994, 1996a, 1998.

220 See Tóthné Litovkina 1998, 1999c.

221 See Tóthné Litovkina 1998: 140–150.

222 See Tóthné Litovkina 1999c.

223 See Tóthné Litovkina 1998: 149.

My article “A Proverb a Day Keeps Students Awake”²²⁴ discusses exercises that employ proverbs to facilitate and promote creative writing skills (e.g., transforming proverbs into parodies; using proverbs in advertisements; writing stories, fables, tales, or dialogues to illustrate proverbs) (see also Chapters 5 and 7 below). Last but not least, my study “Old Proverbs Never Die: Anti-Proverbs in the Language Classroom”²²⁵ focuses on proverb-transformations created by the students who have attended my courses on Anglo-American proverbs at JPTE and ELTE (see also Chapter 5 below).

1.2. Exercises to Facilitate and Promote Conversational and Writing Skills

Let us focus here only on some exercises which can be developed for usefulness of proverbs in facilitating and promoting conversational and writing skills:

1.2.1. Use 2 contradictory proverbs in situations of your own.

Proverbs to be used:

Haste makes waste. – Procrastination is the thief of time.

Caution is the parent of safety. – He that is too secure is not safe.

Fling dirt enough and some will stick. – Sticks and stones may break my bones, but names will never hurt me.

Like attracts like. – Two of a trade seldom agree.

Fine feathers do not make fine birds. – Fine feathers make fine birds.

Clothes make the man. – Clothes do not make the man.

Barking dogs don't bite. – A dog will bark before it bites.

Look before you leap. – He who hesitates is lost.

²²⁴ See Tóthné Litovkina 1996a.

²²⁵ See T. Litovkina 2004b.

Frank H. Woodstrike

Paradoxical Proverbs

If wisdom supreme you really desire,
Just heed the philosophers' word;
Be sure that you act as the proverbs require
And you will be wise, or absurd.

"Look before you leap.
Hesitate and all is lost.

"Stick with the ship.
Wise rats desert a sinking ship.

"Return good for evil.
Pay him back in his own coin.

"As you sow, so shall you reap.
A bad start, a good finish.

"In peace prepare for war.
Never cross a bridge until you come to it.

"When in Rome do as Romans do.
Do only that which is right.

"An honest man cannot be bought.
Every man has his price.

"Never howl until you are hit.
A stitch in time saves nine.

“A rolling stone gathers no moss.
A setting hen lays no eggs.

“Never judge by appearances.
Every bird is known by its feathers.

“Strive not against the stream.
To reach the top you must climb the hill.

“Better half bad than all bad.
A lie that is half-truth is blackest.

“Love never dies.
When poverty enters the door, Love leaps out the window.

“Everybody feels for the under dog.
When a man is down everybody jumps on him.

“Live while you live.
Put by for a rainy day.

“It is never too late.
When a thing is lost, it is too late to lock it up.”²²⁶

1.2.2. Use synonymous proverbs in situations of your own.

Proverbs to be used:

1. One hand washes the other; Scratch my back and I shall scratch yours; Dog does not eat dog.
2. To err is human; Even Homer sometimes nods; No man is infallible; Nobody is perfect.

²²⁶ See Mieder 1989b: 187–188.

3. A house divided cannot stand; Union is strength; United we stand, divided we fall.
4. Let the dead bury the dead; Let bygones be bygones; Forgive and forget.
5. You cannot have it both ways; You cannot have your cake and eat it; You cannot run with the hare and hunt with the hounds; You cannot sell the cow and drink the milk.
6. Cut your coat according to your cloth; Stretch your legs according to the [your] coverlet.
7. He who fights and runs away may live to fight another day; Discretion is the better part of valor.
8. There is many a slip 'twixt (the) cup and (the) lip; Man proposes, God disposes; Don't count your chickens before they are hatched; Don't halloo till you are out of the wood; Never fry a fish till it's caught; First catch your hare, than cook it; Catch your bear before you sell its skin.
9. Waste not, want not; Waste makes want; Willful waste makes woe-ful want; Save for a rainy day.
10. A good beginning makes a good ending; A good beginning is half the battle; Well begun is half done; It is the first step that costs.
11. After a storm comes a calm; It is always darkest before the dawn; It is a long lane that has no turning; Always look on the bright side; Never say die; While there is life, there is hope.
12. Neither a borrower nor a lender be; He that goes a-borrowing goes a-sorrowing; Lend your money and lose your friend; Lend money and you get an enemy; When I lent I had a friend; when I asked he was unkind.
13. Enough is enough; Enough is as good as a feast; Moderation in all things; More than enough is too much; Too much puding will choke a dog; Too much water drowned the miller.
14. Like begets like; Like father, like son; A tree is known by its fruit; Like mother, like daughter; As the tree, so the fruit; An apple never falls far from the tree; What is bred in the bone will come out in the flesh.

15. Never trouble trouble till trouble troubles you; Let well enough alone; Let sleeping dogs lie; Don't play with fire.
16. Nothing venture, nothing have; Faint heart never won fair lady; Fortune favours the bold.
17. More haste, less speed; Haste makes waste; Patience is a virtue; Rome wasn't built in a day; Slow but sure (wins the race); Make haste slowly; The oak is not felled with one stroke.
18. The pot calls the kettle black; You can see a mote in another's eye but cannot see a beam in your own; People who live in glass houses shouldn't throw stones.

1.2.3. Use Biblical proverbs in situations of your own.

Proverbs to be used:

A good name is better than gold [great riches]. (Proverbs 22,1; Ecclesiastes 7,1)

A house divided (against itself) cannot stand. (Mark 3,24–25; Matthew 12,25; Luke 11,17)

A live dog is better than a dead lion. (Ecclesiastes 9,4–5)

A prophet is without honor [is not without honor save] in his own country. (Luke 4,24; Matthew 13,57; Mark 6,4; John 4,44)

A soft answer turns away wrath. (Proverbs 15,1)

A [The] tree is known [judged] by its fruit. (Matthew 12,33; Luke 6,44)

An eye for an eye, and a tooth for a tooth. (Leviticus 24,20; Exodus 21,24; Matthew 5,3; Deuteronomy 19,21)

As a tree falls, so shall it lie. (Ecclesiastes 11,3)

As you sow, so you reap. (Galatians 6,7–8; II Corinthians 9,6)

Better a dinner of herbs where love is than a stalled ox and hatred therewith. (Proverbs 15,17)

Better a dry morsel and quietness with it, than a house full of feasting with strife. (Proverbs 17,1)

Birds of a feather flock together. (Ecclesiasticus 27,9)
 Do as I say, not as I do. (Matthew 23,3)
 Do not throw pearls before [to] swine. (Matthew 7,6)
 Do unto others as you would have them do unto you. Do as you would
 be done by. (Luke 6,31; Matthew 7,12)
 Don't muzzle the ox when he treads out the corn. (I.Timothy 5,18;
 Corinthians 9,9; Deuteronomy 25,4)
 Eat, drink, and be merry. (Ecclesiastes 8,15; Luke 12,19)
 Every man must carry his own cross. (Galatians 6,4–5)
 Faith will [can] move mountains. (Matthew 17,20)
 Gift blinds the eyes. (Exodus 23,8)
 He that touches pitch shall be defiled. (Ecclesiasticus 13,1)
 He who digs a pit for others falls in himself. (Psalms 7,15; Proverbs
 26,27; Ecclesiastes 10,8; Ecclesiasticus 27,26)
 He who lives by the sword dies by the sword. (Matthew 26,51–52)
 Health is better than wealth. (Ecclesiasticus 30,15)
 Hear all, see all, say nothing. (James 1,19)
 If [when] the blind lead the blind, both shall fall into the ditch. (Mat-
 thew 15,14)
 If you won't work you shan't eat. (II Thessalonians 3, 10)
 It is better to give than to receive. (Acts 20,35)
 It is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle than it is for
 a rich man to enter the kingdom of heaven. (Matthew 19,24; Mark
 10,25)
 Judge not and you won't be judged [that you be not judged]. (Mat-
 thew 7,1–2)
 Let the dead bury the dead. (Matthew 9, 21–22; Luke 9,60)
 Let us eat and drink, for tomorrow we shall die. (Isaiah 22,13; 1 Cor-
 inthians 15,32)
 Like mother, like daughter. (Ezekiel 16,44)
 Like tree, like fruit. (Matthew 7,18; Luke 6,43)
 Love your [thy] neighbor as yourself. (Leviticus 19,18; Matthew
 19,19; Mark 12,31; Romans 13,9; Galatians 5,14; James 2,8)
 Man does not [cannot] live by bread alone. (Deuteronomy 8,3; Mat-

thew 4,1–4; Luke 4,4)
 Man proposes, God disposes. (Proverbs 16,9)
 Many are called, but few are chosen. (Matthew 20,16; 22,14)
 Measure for measure. (Matthew 7,1–2; Mark 4,24; Luke 6,38)
 Money [The love of money] is the root of all evil. (I Timothy 6,10)
 No man can [A man cannot] serve two masters. (Matthew 6,24; Luke 16,13)
 One sows and another reaps. (John 4,37)
 Physician, heal thyself. (Luke 4,23)
 Pride goes [comes] before a fall. (Proverbs 16,18–19)
 Red sky at night shepherd's delight, red sky in the morning shepherd's warning. (Matthew 16,2–3)
 Render unto Caesar the things which are Caesar's. (Matthew 22,21; Mark 12,17; Luke 20,25)
 Seek and you shall find. (Matthew 7,7–8)
 Spare the rod and spoil the child. (Proverbs 10,13; Proverbs 19,29; Proverbs 26,3)
 Stolen waters are sweet. (Proverbs 9,17)
 Stretch your legs according to your coverlet. (Isaiah 28,20)
 The devil can cite [quote] scripture for his purpose. (Matthew 4,6)
 The laborer is worthy of his hire. (Luke 10,7)
 The leopard does not change his spots. (Jeremiah 13,23)
 The Lord gives, and the Lord takes away. (Job 1,21)
 There is a time for everything. (Ecclesiastes 3,1–9)
 There is nothing new under the sun. (Ecclesiastes 1,9)
 There is safety in numbers. (Proverbs 11,14; 24,6)
 They that sow the wind shall reap the whirlwind. (Hosea 8,7)
 Where(soever) the carcass [carcase] is, there will the eagles [ravens] be gathered together. (Matthew 24,28; Luke 17,37; Job 39,30)
 Wisdom is better than strength. (Ecclesiastes 9,14–16)
 You can see a mote in another's eye but cannot see a beam in your own. (Matthew 7,3–5; Luke 6,41–42)
 You can't put new wine in old bottles. (Matthew 10,16–17)²²⁷

227 See "Unit 1.1. 2, *Love Thy Neighbor as Yourself: The Bible*" in T. Litovkina 2000: 7–14.

1.2.4. Use proverbs of Latin origin in situations of your own.

Proverbs to be used:

A friend in need is a friend indeed. (lat. Amicus certus in re incerta cernitur)

A pitcher that goes to the well too often is liable to be broken. (lat. Ollula tam fertur ad aquam quod fracta refertur)

A rolling stone gathers no moss. (lat. Musco lapis volutus haud obducitur)

A word to the wise (is sufficient [enough]). (lat. Verbum (sat) sapienti)

All roads lead to Rome. (lat. Mille vie ducunt hominem per secula Romam)

All that glitters is not gold. (lat. Non omne quod nitet, aurum est)

Better late than never. (lat. Potius sero quam nunquam)

Eat to live, not live to eat. (Oportet edere ut vivas, non vivere, ut edas)

First come, first served. (lat. Qui primus venerit, primus molet)

Fish and guests smell in three days. (lat. Post tres saepe dies vilescit piscis et bospes)

Fish begins to stink at the head. (lat. Piscis primum a capite foetet)

Fortune favors the brave. (lat. Audentes fortuna iuvat)

Idleness is the root of all evil. (lat. Omnium malorum origo otium)

Lend your money and lose your friend. (lat. Qui dat mutuum, amicum vendit, inimicum emit)

Let the cobbler stick to his last. (lat. Ne sutor ultra crepidam)

Love is blind. (lat. Amor est caecus)

Man is a wolf to man. (lat. Homo homini lupus)

Man proposes, God disposes. (lat. Homo proponit, (sed) Deus disponit)

Money has no smell. (lat. Pecunia non olet)

Necessity knows no law. (lat. Necessitas non habet legem)

Never look a gift horse in the mouth. (lat. Noli equi dentes inspicere donare)

Nothing comes of nothing. (lat. Ex nihilo nihil fit)

Opportunity makes a [the] thief. (lat. Occasio facit furem)
 Rome was not built in a day. (lat. Roma non fuit una die condita)
 Silence gives consent. (lat. Qui tacet, consentire videtur)
 Speak well of the dead. (lat. De mortuis nil nisi bonum)
 The exception proves the rule. (lat. Exceptio firmat regulam)
 The mills of God grind slowly (, yet they grind exceeding small). (lat.
 Sero molunt deorum molae)
 The voice of the people, the voice of God. (lat. Vox populi, vox Dei)
 There is no accounting for tastes. (lat. De gustibus non est disputan-
 dum)
 There's no rule without an exception. (lat. Nulla regula sine excep-
 tione)
 Time flies. (lat. Tempus fugit)
 Time is a great healer. (lat. Tempus dolorem lenit)
 Time reveals all things. (lat. Tempus omnia revelat)
 Variety is the spice of life. (lat. Varietas delectat)
 Where there's life there's hope. (lat. Dum anima est, spes esse dicitur)
 Whom the gods love die young. (lat. Quem Di diligunt, adolescens
 moritur)
 Whom the gods would destroy they first make mad. (lat. Quos Deus
 vult perdere, prius dementat)²²⁸

228 See "Unit 1.1. *Of Two Evils Choose the Lesser*: Latin Origin" in T. Litovkina 2000: 2–6.

Chapter 2

The Courses on Anglo-American Proverbs and Proverbs in an American Cultural Context

The best-known Anglo-American proverbs should definitely play an important role in the teaching of American English, American civilization, and American literature. Anyone wishing to communicate or read in American English should have an active knowledge of the most popular American proverbs. In Chapter 2 I will concentrate briefly on my courses on Anglo-American proverbs and on how proverbs can be connected within the frame of an English language class. I will comment upon my experience in teaching courses on Anglo-American Proverbs and Proverbs in an American Cultural Context in three Hungarian universities and one college (Janus Pannonius Egyetem, or JPTE [Pécs]; Eötvös Lóránd Egyetem, or ELTE [Budapest]; University of Veszprém [Veszprém]; Illyés Gyula Teacher's Training College [Szekszárd]) in 1993–2000.

In spite of the fact that scholars of different language backgrounds have frequently proposed incorporating proverbs in second-language education²²⁹, foreign language teachers seldom use proverbs in the classroom. Even if proverbs are involved in teaching, they are usually introduced unsystematically and randomly selected from dictionaries that contain obsolete proverbs and miss many new ones. Teachers often insert proverbs as a time-filler at the end of the lesson, and merely ask their students to memorize these expressions without integrating them into context. Such methods ignore the fact that it is essential to learn when and how to apply a proverb appropriately. My experience in over twenty-seven years as a teacher of English as a second language in Hungary, Slovakia and Poland has shown that even university or college students enter the classroom with almost no prior knowledge of the proverbs current in the language they are studying. Thus, in 1993, in the introductory lesson of my first course on Anglo-American proverbs at Janus Pannonius University (Department of English, Pécs) I asked my students to write down seven English or Ameri-

229 See bibliography in Tóthné Litovkina 1998: 156–158.

can proverbs. To my great surprise, half of them (they were mainly 4th- and 5th-year students majoring in English) could not write the required number of proverbs; moreover, seven students were unable to list even a single proverb.

My courses on Anglo-American Proverbs and Proverbs in an American Cultural Context in Hungarian colleges and universities (Janus Pannonius University [Pécs], ELTE [Budapest], Illyés Gyula Teacher's Training College [Szekszárd], University of Veszprém) have been designed to study American thought, life, and philosophy through proverbs. The syllabi have covered the following topics, among others:

- What is the proverb?;
- The most powerful markers of proverbiality (metaphor, word-repetition, rhyme, alliteration, etc.);
- What constitutes a real American proverb?;
- The role of proverbs in modern American society;
- Proverbs about speech;
- Proverbs about love;
- Medical, legal, and weather proverbs;
- Contradictory proverbs;
- Proverbs in advertisements, comics, cartoons, popular songs, and poems;
- Wellerisms;
- Proverb parodies;
- Proverbs in prose literature;
- Proverbs in the language classroom;
- The use of proverbs in psychological testing.

By the end of the course all students have to submit a research paper and to take a test that measures their knowledge of 300–400 well-known Anglo-American proverbs and their ability to use them (see Appendices 1–5).

Wolfgang Mieder's numerous books (see References), and in particular, "American Proverbs: A Study of Texts and Contexts"²³⁰ have always been

230 See Mieder 1989b. The book is divided into fifteen chapters: "The proverb", "American

the most important source for my courses on Anglo-American proverbs²³¹. When I first taught the course on Anglo-American proverbs, I realized a need of a textbook for students. (Unfortunately, Wolfgang Mieder's book, mentioned above, would have been too expensive for Hungarian students to purchase). "A Proverb a Day Keeps Boredom Away"²³² (see its discussion in Chapter 3) is the result of more than seven years of painstaking research and work in the ocean of American and English proverbial wisdom.

proverbs", "Proverbs of the immigrants", "Proverbs current in the various states", "Proverbs of the Native Americans", "Afro-American proverbs", "Benjamin Franklin's 'Proverbs'", "Proverbs in prose literature", "Proverb poems", "Proverbs in popular songs", "Wellerisms", "Proverb parodies", "Proverbs in advertisements", and "Different strokes for different folks". Numerous examples of proverbs in their contexts and illustrations conclude almost every chapter.

231 See its review in Tóthné Litovkina 1996b: 356–364.

232 See T. Litovkina 2000.

Chapter 3

Books on Anglo-American Proverbs and Anti-Proverbs

In Chapter 1 and Chapter 2 I have explored the value of incorporating Anglo-American proverbs into language-teaching situations, I have briefly touched upon some of my studies, and I have also concentrated on my courses on Anglo-American proverbs. In Chapter 3 I will focus on four of my books on this topic: two collections of Anglo-American anti-proverbs, written in cooperation with Wolfgang Mieder (“Twisted Wisdom: Modern Anti-Proverbs”²³³ and “Old Proverbs Never Die, They Just Diversify: A Collection of Anti-Proverbs”²³⁴), a textbook “A Proverb a Day Keeps Boredom Away”²³⁵, and a collection of tales, fables and stories, “Once upon a Proverb: Old and New Tales Shaped by Proverbs”²³⁶.

3.1. “Twisted Wisdom: Modern Anti-Proverbs”

The first collection of Anglo-American anti-proverbs, “Twisted Wisdom: Modern Anti-Proverbs,” written in cooperation with Wolfgang Mieder²³⁷, contains 320 well-known Anglo-American proverbs, their meanings, references to some of the standard proverb dictionaries, and more than 3,000 transformations. The twisted proverbs were located in dozens of books and articles on puns, one-liners, toasts, wisecracks, quotations, aphorisms, toasts, maxims, quips, quotes, epigrams, and graffiti. Many examples are also based on advertisements, caricatures, cartoons, comic strips, and headlines from magazines and newspapers. About 75 illustrations from the mass media are also included.

233 Mieder & Tóthné Litovkina 1999.

234 See T. Litovkina & Mieder 2006.

235 See T. Litovkina 2000.

236 See T. Litovkina 2004a.

237 Mieder & Tóthné Litovkina 1999.

3.2. “Old Proverbs Never Die, They Just Diversify: A Collection of Anti-Proverbs”

The second collection of Anglo-American anti-proverbs, “Old Proverbs Never Die, They Just Diversify: A Collection of Anti-Proverbs”²³⁸, written in cooperation with Wolfgang Mieder, includes over 5000 texts based on 580 traditional Anglo-American proverbs.

The book provides a much longer and detailed introduction²³⁹ than the first compilation, the collection “Twisted Wisdom: Modern Anti-Proverbs”²⁴⁰. At the beginning of the introduction (sections 1–4) T. Litovkina and Mieder consider briefly the topics of contradictory proverbs and people’s doubts in the truth of proverbs; they also review the background of anti-proverb research and terminology, as well as the occurrence of anti-proverbs. The fifth section touches the question of internationally spread anti-proverbs. The focus of the sixth section is on those proverbs that are most popular for variation, while the seventh section discusses the most frequently parodied proverb in our corpus, *Old soldiers never die, they simply fade away*. In the eighth section of the introduction the authors explore different mechanisms of proverb variation, while in the ninth section they consider the main topics that emerged in proverb alterations. Finally, the tenth section discusses ways in which proverbs and anti-proverbs can be used in the classroom. The bibliography at the end of the introduction includes complete bibliographical data to which the authors refer in the introduction.

The largest part of the book is the corpus of anti-proverbs²⁴¹. The compilation gives over 5000 texts based on 580 traditional Anglo-American proverbs. The anti-proverbs selected for the compilation “Old Proverbs Never Die, They Just Diversify: A Collection of Anti-Proverbs” were found primarily in American and British written sources. The texts were located in hundreds of books and articles on puns, one-liners, toasts, wisecracks, quotations, aphorisms, maxims, quips, epigrams, and graffiti²⁴², most of

238 See T. Litovkina & Mieder 2006.

239 pp. 1–54.

240 Mieder & Tóthné Litovkina 1999.

241 pp. 55–348.

242 See the list of references at the end of the book, pp. 349–358.

which are part of Wolfgang Mieder's international archive of proverbs in Burlington, Vermont.²⁴³

The organization of more than 5,000 anti-proverbs for 580 traditional proverbs is based on the following pattern: The actual proverbs are arranged in alphabetical order, followed by well-known variants, annotations from some of the standard proverb dictionaries, and whenever it is needed, a short statement concerning the meaning of the proverb. The anti-proverbs themselves are arranged alphabetically, and for each text a precise reference is provided.

The corpus of anti-proverbs is followed by a word-index²⁴⁴ that helps the reader find a given proverb according to any of its major words (principally nouns, verbs, adverbs, and adjectives). The bibliography²⁴⁵ at the end of the book contains complete bibliographical references to which the authors refer in the corpus of anti-proverbs.

3.3. "A Proverb a Day Keeps Boredom Away"

The book "A Proverb a Day Keeps Boredom Away"²⁴⁶ helps familiarize the reader with more than 450 proverbs frequently used in American English today. The main intent of the book is not merely to give the language learner a list of some commonly used proverbs to memorize per se, but rather to provide a series of activities and exercises that help the learner discover what each proverb means and how to apply it in particular situations. Along with the 450 or so commonly known American proverbs, the book contains more than 1000 rarer American proverbs, as well as scores of proverbs from other world cultures. The exercises bring the proverbs alive with short illustrative quotations from hundreds of books, newspapers, and magazines

243 The vast majority of the examples were found when Anna T. Litovkina was in the USA and Great Britain, being supported by a Fulbright research grant and by a Hungarian State Eötvös Scholarship which enabled her to conduct research at the Department of Anthropology at the University of California at Berkeley (1998–1999) and at Oxford University Press (2003).

244 pp. 359–396.

245 pp. 349–358.

246 See T. Litovkina 2000.

as well as from poems, fables, and narratives. The following exercises may vary from one unit to another:

Match the proverbs from each column that are equivalent (or opposite) in meaning;

Use the given proverbs in situations of your own;

Match the American proverbs with their Hungarian (international) equivalents;

What incidents from your life confirm or contradict the moral of the proverbs of this unit?;

After reading the anti-proverbs below transform some proverbs of this unit into parodies;

Write a story, fable or tale to illustrate the proverbs of this unit;

Using any proverbs of this unit, write an ad;

Try to identify the proverbs from the initial letters given below;

Sum up the fable below by using a proper proverb;

Construct a narrative which demonstrates the wisdom or fallacy of a given proverb;

Give a situation suggesting a view contrary to the one implicit in the proverb;

From the following proverbs select the one best suited to the jokes below, etc.

The book also focuses on proverb humor: the reader will find a number of jokes, wellerisms, fables, twists and parodies based on familiar proverbs (see also Appendices 7-9). The book's approach has been thoroughly tested in my seminars on Anglo-American proverbs.

Many of the proverbs listed in the book, especially the best known and most widely recognized proverbs in America, are of English origin and were brought to America by the early British settlers; many were registered for the first time in the works of Geoffrey Chaucer, William Shakespeare, and other British authors. Some of them have found the way into American speech from Classical Greek or Latin languages, the Biblical world, or medieval and sixteenth-century Europe. There are a few texts which are loan

translations from foreign language proverbs brought by immigrants from other nations²⁴⁷. Hundreds of proverbs, however, are of American origin. One of the most difficult tasks for me was to select the most appropriate proverbs for the book, especially the best-known American proverbs. The vast majority of the 450 proverbs most frequently used in American culture during the latter half of the 20th century and familiar to most Americans today have been found at least in three of the following sources:

1. “A Dictionary of American Proverbs” by Wolfgang Mieder et al.²⁴⁸ – approximately 1,000 proverbs which were found in use in more than five states of the United States (indicated in the dictionary as U.S.).
2. Barlett Jere Whiting’s large collection of “Modern Proverbs and Proverbial Sayings”²⁴⁹ – 486 most frequently listed proverbs (see Appendix 3);
3. 251 proverbs most frequently listed in the Folklore Archive at the University of California at Berkeley (with the number of occurrence from 169 to 4²⁵⁰; see Appendix 1).
4. 41 proverbs most frequently mentioned by the respondents to my survey exploring some popular views of the proverb in contemporary American society and some aspects of the perception of proverbs and familiarity with them among 40 native English-speaking Americans²⁵¹.
5. 155 proverbs most frequently used in American newspapers, news and popular magazines and television and radio news transcripts over the past twenty or so years (see Appendix 4).
6. A list of approximately 500 of the best-known English proverbs, compiled by John Simpson in 1995 and based on his proverb collection “A Concise Oxford Dictionary of Proverbs”²⁵².

247 Examples which are cited from languages other than American English come primarily from Wolfgang Mieder’s collection “The Prentice Hall Encyclopedia of World Proverbs: A Treasury of Wit and Wisdom Through the Ages” (Mieder 1986).

248 Mieder et al 1992.

249 Whiting 1989.

250 Tóthné Litovkina 1998.

251 See Tóthné Litovkina 1994.

252 See Simpson 1993.

The book consists of 47 units arranged into four chapters²⁵³. The first and the shortest chapter cites proverbs while focusing on their origin, dealing specifically with proverbs of Latin origin, as well as ones originating in the Bible²⁵⁴. In the second chapter²⁵⁵ proverbs are grouped into fifteen units according to different internal and external features, structures, patterns, or “markers”, e.g., rhyme and alliteration, oppositions, word-repetition, paradox, ellipsis, pithiness, metaphor²⁵⁶ (see Unit on metaphorical proverbs in Appendix 6).

The eleven units making up the third chapter²⁵⁷ emphasize the words most frequently used in American proverbs, e.g., man and woman, God and the Devil, numbers, body parts, animals, food and drink, time (see Unit on proverbs with the word “time” in Appendix 6). The fourth and the longest chapter of the book, divided into nineteen units²⁵⁸, covers the main topics of proverbs, e.g., money, love, knowledge and wisdom, children and parents, speech and silence, words and deeds, necessity and adversity. Seven tests help readers to check their acquisition of the proverbial material. The key supplies the answers to exercises given both in the units and the tests²⁵⁹. The proverb-finder index indicates the number of the unit in which the required proverb is discussed²⁶⁰. The selected bibliography contains mainly British and Anglo-American proverb collections, as well as the books and articles most frequently cited throughout the book, primarily concerning anti-proverbs²⁶¹.

253 pp. 1–355.

254 pp. 1–14.

255 pp. 15–115.

256 According to Shirley Arora, metaphor is “one of the most effective indicators of proverbiality” (Arora 1984: 12). The metaphor is one of the most common devices (among personification, hyperbole, etc.) which helps to achieve figurativeness in proverbs. The metaphor belongs to the most powerful markers of proverbiality, and it is exactly this vivid imagery of many proverbs which makes them so appealing to us. Thus, metaphorical proverbs are remarkably common and typically used metaphorically.

257 pp. 116–197.

258 pp. 198–355.

259 pp. 361–381.

260 pp. 356–360.

261 pp. 382–384.

3.4. “Once upon a Proverb: Old and New Tales Shaped by Proverbs”

The book “Once upon a Proverb: Old and New Tales Shaped by Proverbs”²⁶² consists of two parts. In the first part, Part I: Tales, Fables and Stories Illustrated by Proverbs²⁶³, one will find the most enjoyable reading materials created by the students attending my course on Anglo-American proverbs. Along with world famous classic fairy tales and fables (e.g., “Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs”, “Cinderella”, “Little Red Riding Hood”, “The Elves and the Shoemaker”, and many others) reshaped with proverbs, the book contains some absolutely new stories that my students have shaped by using proverbs. The traditional tales chosen by the students are, by and large, so well known that their status in Western culture has become nearly proverbial. Such tales as “Snow White” (which appears in 5 versions in the book²⁶⁴), “Cinderella” (2 versions²⁶⁵), “Little Red Riding Hood (2 versions²⁶⁶), “The Shoemaker and the Elves” (2 versions²⁶⁷), and “The Princess and the the Frog”²⁶⁸ and “Hansel and Gretel”²⁶⁹ (1 version each) are known throughout the world through the collection of the Brothers Grimm, which was first published in 1812 and achieved its best-known form in the seventh edition of 1857. The students who chose to adapt “Cinderella” relied on versions of the story descended from the French adaptor Charles Perrault (1697). “The Ugly Duckling”²⁷⁰ (1 version) has no history in folk tradition; rather, it was penned by comes from Hans Christian Andersen in 1843. “Jack and the Beanstalk”²⁷¹ is the most famous English folktale, appearing in chapbooks dating back to the eighteenth century and especially famous through its the storybook version of Joseph Jacobs (1890). Almost all of

262 See T. Litovkina 2004a.

263 pp. 17–92.

264 pp. 18–29.

265 pp. 35–41.

266 pp. 41–44.

267 pp. 30–35.

268 pp. 76–77.

269 pp. 80–82.

270 pp. 61–62.

271 pp. 70–72.

these tales have also been translated into other artistic forms. “Cinderella” and “Hansel and Gretel,” respectively, have become the subjects of operas by Rossini and Humperdinck, and “The Ugly Duckling” and “Cinderella” have been adapted into Broadway musicals. Animated films have been especially influential in spreading the tales to contemporary audiences. The Walt Disney studios, for example, has produced extremely popular animated versions of “Snow White,” “Cinderella,” and “Jack and the Beanstalk.” The fables chosen by the students are also part and parcel of the European cultural environment. Such tales as “The Fox and the Crow”²⁷² and “The Hare and the Tortoise”²⁷³ trace their history to Greek and Latin versions dating back as far as 2000 years. These tales are also well known in oral versions collected by folklorists throughout Europe in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. Most of these fables have been associated with a mysterious blind slave named Aesop, said to live in Greece 2500 years ago. Scholars have long debated over how many, if any, of the fables can be attributed to Aesop, and most question whether such a figure ever existed, because the tales attributed to him have long been widely dispersed throughout the oral cultures not only of Europe, but also of South and East Asia, the Middle East, and North Africa.

Two of the students’ tales are adapted from classics of children’s literature. “How the Camel Got Its Hump”²⁷⁴ is a retelling from the “Just So Stories” (1902) of Rudyard Kipling, an author of British ancestry born in India. “Eeyore’s Birthday Present”²⁷⁵ is based on an episode in the book, “Winnie-the-Pooh” (1925), by English author A.A. Milne; Milne’s work, like many of the folktales earlier discussed, has become enormously popular in recent years as a result of Disney cartoon treatments.

The second part of the book, *Part II: Proverbs Explained*²⁷⁶, contains all the proverbs used (192) in the tales, fables, and stories, together with their meanings. The Selected Bibliography is given at the end of the book²⁷⁷.

272 pp. 47–48.

273 pp. 51–52.

274 pp. 90–92.

275 pp. 48–49.

276 pp. 93–104.

277 pp. 105–106.

Chapter 4

What Proverbs and Proverb Collections to Use?

In Chapter 4 I share ideas concerning what proverbs and proverb collections suited for classroom use. Many traditional dictionaries fail to meet the demands of this assignment because they contain obsolete proverbs and omit some new proverbs. Moreover, students of English as a second language may be overwhelmed by the number of proverbs included in huge compendia. Although I encourage my students to look for proverbs in different standard proverb collections²⁷⁸, my suggestion to a teacher is to supply students with a list of not more than 500 well-known proverbs, preferably accompanied by brief interpretations of their meanings.

Where does one find the proverbs best suited for classroom use?

First of all, Appendices 1–4 present four lists of proverbs commonly used in American culture in the closing decades of the 20th century; these lists are highly recommended for use as tools in proverb acquisition. Here I summarize the contents of the four appendices:

1. Appendix 1: the list of 250 proverbs most frequently-listed in the Folklore Archives at the Department of Anthropology at the University of California at Berkeley. The proverbs range from 169 citations of *A whistling girl and a crowing hen always come to no good end*²⁷⁹ to 3 citations of *You can't win them all*. I compiled the list on my study trip at Berkeley in 1994.
2. Appendix 2: the list of 384 proverbs from my corpus (containing over 5000 texts of anti-proverbs based on 600 traditional Anglo-

278 See Taylor & Whiting 1958; Mieder et al. 1992; Wilson 1970; Simpson 1993; Whiting 1989; Bertram 1994; Titelman 1996; for more sources, consult bibliographies in T. Litovkina 2000; Mieder 1989b; Mieder et al. 1992.

279 The Berkeley list is extremely uncharacteristic in citing so many occurrences of the proverb of “the whistling girl.” I suspect this proverb owes its popularity in this particular context to the fact that Professor Alan Dundes, whose students have supplied all of the proverbs in the Berkeley archives, frequently mentioned the “whistling girl” in his lectures and articles (see Dundes 1976).

American proverbs²⁸⁰) which have generated three or more anti-proverbs.

3. Appendix 3: the list of 486 proverbs and sayings most frequently used in books, newspapers and magazines published in the 20th century in the Anglo-American world. The list was compiled by me based on Barlett Jere Whiting's collection of "Modern Proverbs and Proverbial Sayings"²⁸¹. At the top of the list there is *Two heads are better than one* (number of occurrences 40) and on the bottom of the list there is *With a Hungarian for a friend one does not need an enemy* (number of occurrences 7).
4. Appendix 4: the list of 169 proverbs most frequently used in the American media during the last 20 years of the 20th century. In compiling this list, I drew upon Kimberly J. Lau's list of proverbs most frequently used in American newspapers, news and popular magazines, television and radio news transcripts; see Lau's "It's about Time": The Ten Proverbs Most Frequently Used in Newspapers and Their Relation to American Values²⁸². The list starts with *Enough is enough* (15,808 citations), and ends with *Truth lies at the bottom of a well* (2 citations).

Second, the book "A Proverb a Day Keeps Boredom Away"²⁸³, discussed above, is highly recommended for this purpose. Although the book illustrates more than 450 commonly known and 1,000 rarer American proverbs, it has a 5-page list of about 450 of the proverbs most frequently used by Americans during the last half century and thus familiar to most Americans today²⁸⁴.

Third, the collections "Twisted Wisdom: Modern Anti-Proverbs"²⁸⁵ and "Old Proverbs Never Die, They Just Diversify: A Collection of Anti-Pro-

280 See T. Litovkina & Mieder 2006.

281 Whiting 1989.

282 See Lau 1996.

283 See T. Litovkina 2000.

284 See T. Litovkina 2000: 356–360.

285 See Mieder & Tóthné Litovkina 1999.

verbs”²⁸⁶, written in cooperation with Wolfgang Mieder and discussed above, may prove quite helpful, as one of the indicators of proverb knowledge is the frequency with which a certain proverb is parodied or transformed. Under most proverb headings in the books a dozen or so parodies are listed. The most popular proverbs have generated two or more pages of anti-proverbs (e.g., *An apple a day keeps the doctor away; The early bird catches the worm; A fool and his money are soon parted; A man is known by the company he keeps; Money talks; Never put off till tomorrow what you can do today; Two can live as cheaply as one; To err is human (, to forgive is divine); Where there’s a will, there’s a way; Behind every great man there’s a woman; If at first you don’t succeed, try, try again; A bird in the hand is worth two in the bush; It’s better to have loved and lost than to never have loved at all; Early to bed and early to rise, makes a man healthy, wealthy, and wise*) (see the list of the most popular proverbs in section 0.5 of the Introduction). Thus, the vast majority, if not all, of the proverbs presented in “Twisted Wisdom: Modern Anti-Proverbs” and “Old Proverbs Never Die, They Just Diversify: A Collection of Anti-Proverbs,” should be mastered by students of ESL.

Fourth, 192 proverbs listed in the second part of “Once upon a Proverb: Old and New Tales Shaped by Proverbs”²⁸⁷, discussed above, together with their meanings provide a most suitable selection for this purpose. With just a few exceptions, the proverbs used by non-native speakers in their stories correspond with those most frequently used in American English today.

According to G. L. Permyakov, no student of a foreign language can gain cultural literacy in the target language without the knowledge of its paremiological minimum (proverbs, proverbial expressions, proverbial comparisons, riddles, slogans, and weather signs).²⁸⁸ The vast majority of the proverbs given in Appendices 1 and 4 (particularly the ones at the heads of

286 See T. Litovkina & Mieder 2006.

287 See T. Litovkina 2004a: 93–104.

288 Permyakov urged that the best-known Russian paremias (i.e., proverbs, proverbial expressions, proverbial comparisons, riddles, slogans, and weather signs) should be translated into many languages. Two books containing the 300 best-known Russian proverbs and proverbial expressions appeared posthumously for German and Bulgarian readers (Permyakov 1985, 1987).

these lists), as well as at least a third of the proverbs given in Appendices 2 and 3, may approximate the proverbial minimum of the Anglo-American language.²⁸⁹

289 See Mieder 1992.

Chapter 5

Incorporation of Anti-Proverbs into the Language Classroom

Like proverbs, anti-proverbs can provide an especially effective pedagogical medium for the teacher of a foreign or native language²⁹⁰. Chapter 5 presents exercises in which anti-proverbs can be incorporated into the language classroom. While Subchapter 5.1 demonstrates different exercises that I use in order to test my students' knowledge of common proverbs (see also Appendix 5 of the textbook), Subchapter 5.2 focuses on how anti-proverbs might be involved in creative writing, and in particular, creating anti-proverbs, as well as writing ads.²⁹¹

5.1. Exercises to be used in order to test students' proverbial knowledge

Subchapter 5.1 demonstrates different exercises that can be used to test students' knowledge of common proverbs (see also Appendix 5).

5.1.1. What proverbs are being parodied?

1. Pessimist: one who, when he has the choice of two evils, chooses both.²⁹² {Of two evils, choose the lesser}
2. To itch is human, to scratch divine.²⁹³ {To err is human, to forgive divine}

290 See Tóthné Litovkina 1996a; Forgács 1997; T. Litovkina 2000; T. Litovkina 2004b; T. Litovkina & Vargha 2005a.

291 The exercises appeared in their full length in the book "A Proverb a Day Keeps Boredom Away" (see T. Litovkina 2000: 59, 284, 348–355) and have also been published in T. Litovkina 2004b.

292 Oscar Wilde, in Berman 1997: 104.

293 Berman 1997: 119.

3. Alcohol can now be produced from acorns, and the song will soon be: “Tall larks from little acorns grow“.²⁹⁴ {Mighty oaks from little acorns grow}
4. Give him a dekameter and he’ll take a decimeter.²⁹⁵ {Give him an inch, and he’ll take a yard}

5.1.2. What proverbs are being parodied in the reference below?

Vernon Howard: *Our Famous Proverbs*

Character: A scholarly lecturer (male or female).

I thought perhaps you would be interested in hearing a few facts about the proverbs that we so glibly quote every day. You know, *Experience is the best teacher*; *Beauty is only skin deep*; *Don’t hold a lighted firecracker between your toes...*

One of our most famous proverbs was born when two boys of ancient Greece came upon a bottle of glue in the road. “It’s mine!” shouted one. “It’s mine!” shouted the other. And so was born the proverb, *It takes glue to make a quarrel*. {It takes two to make a quarrel}

Another famous proverb first appeared in Spain. An orange grower was crating up his oranges. He piled crate, crate upon crate until the crates were twenty feet high. A gust of wind suddenly blew the whole works down on his head, and so we have the proverb, *Everything comes to him who crates*. {Everything comes to him who waits}

Another noted proverb was originated in a dog kennel. Their trainer was teaching them to jump over a high fence when a lady came in. “Those dogs can’t jump that fence,” she insisted. The man quietly replied, “*Let leaping dogs try*.” {Let sleeping dogs lie}

Speaking of animals, by the way, I just heard what I think is a fairly new proverb. It all started when a road hog was squeezing into the last parking place at the curb. Another motorist drove up and said, “I’ll fight you for it.”

²⁹⁴ Loomis 1949: 356.

²⁹⁵ Colombo 1975.

“Don’t be silly,” said the other. “*A parking hog never fights.*” {A barking dog never bites}

A famous proverb was first uttered when an Indian mother complained to her husband that she had no washing machine, kitchen stove, or television set. So the poor man went out and invented them. Thus was born the proverb: *Mother is the necessity for inventions.* {Necessity is the mother of invention}

One afternoon in ancient Rome another housewife complained to her husband that there was no water in the house. He angrily turned on her and shouted, “Remember, woman, *Rome wasn’t built on a bay.*” {Rome wasn’t built in a day}

A chicken coop is responsible for another famous proverb. It seems that a hen saw some choice corn beneath a board. The hen tugged and tugged until it got the board out of the way. A watching farmer casually remarked, “*The hen is mightier than the board.*” {The pen is mightier than the sword}

A famous poet was responsible for one of our greatest proverbs. He wrote poetry all day long but was unable to sell it. He sadly remarked, “*Rhyme does not pay.*” {Crime doesn’t pay}

One old proverb originated differently than we hear it today. It seems that Bill was so much in love with May that he followed her wherever she went. People said, Where there’s a Bill, there’s a May. Someone twisted it around in later years to: *Where there’s a will, there’s a way.*

One day a small boy tried to rake leaves, but they piled up faster than he could work. And so was born the saying, *You can’t have your rake and beat it, too.* {You can’t have your cake and eat it too}

Finally, you have all heard the proverb, *A word to the wise is sufficient.* Well, I just heard someone down there telling me to leave. (start to leave) And if I know what’s good for me, I’ll get out of here! (quickly exit)²⁹⁶

296 Mieder 1989b: 256–257.

5.1.3. What proverbs are connected in the anti-proverbs below?

1. A penny saved gathers no moss.²⁹⁷ {A penny saved is a penny earned; A rolling stone gathers no moss}
2. A sleeping dog never bites.²⁹⁸ {Let sleeping dogs lie; A barking dog never bites}
3. Behind every successful man is a fish with a bicycle.²⁹⁹ {Behind every successful man there is a woman; A woman without a man is like a fish without a bicycle}
4. Better late than sorry.³⁰⁰ {Better late than never; Better safe than sorry}

5.1.4. Match the two parts of the anti-proverbs below.³⁰¹

- | A | B |
|--|---|
| 1. Lightning never strikes the same place twice | a....but a faint whisper often catches her. |
| 2. Faint heart never won fair lady | b....and four is a bridge game. |
| 3. Do unto others as you would have them do unto you | c....but better not expect others to do unto you what you do unto them. |
| 4. Two is company, three is a crowd | d....but it's nevertheless good practice to steer clear of the locality where it's been in the habit of hitting. (Berman 1997.) |

297 Henry Youngman, in Berman 1997: 320.

298 Berman 1997: 103.

299 Haan & Hammerstrom 1980.

300 Mieder et al. 1992: 361.

301 Key: 1d; 2a; 3c; 4b.

5.1.5. Match the two halves of the wellerisms.³⁰²

- | A | B |
|--------------------------------------|--|
| 1. "One good turn deserves another," | a. quoth the wife when she farted at the thunder. |
| 2. "Overcome evil with good," | b. as the preacher said when he knocked a rascal down with the Bible. |
| 3. "Tit for tat," | c. as the boy said who had been whipped by a grocer while he was stealing his sugar. |
| 4. "Revenge is sweet," | d. as the alderman said when he discharged the thief who voted for him. |

5.1.6. Below you will find the beginnings of proverbs completed by small children. Correct their answers.

1. Don't cross your bridges before you...pay the toll. {Don't cross your bridges before you come to them}
2. Strike while the...bug is close. {Strike while the iron is hot}
3. Still waters...will get you nowhere. {Still waters run deep}
4. Don't bite the hand that... looks dirty. {Don't bite the hand that feeds you}
5. A miss is as good as a...Mr!³⁰³ {A miss is as good as a mile}

5.1.7. Complete half-stated proverbs

Completing half-stated proverbs has become a party game of sorts, and teachers have also used this method to see whether children still know proverbs or simply to encourage their imaginative thoughts³⁰⁴:

³⁰² Key: 1d; 2b; 3a; 4c.

³⁰³ Stark 1982.

³⁰⁴ For more on proverb knowledge of American children, as well as exercises to teach

1. As you shall make your bed, so shall you...mess it up. {As you shall make your bed, so shall you lie on it}
2. Never underestimate the power of...spinach [termites]. {Never underestimate the power of women}
3. 'Tis better to be safe than...punch a sixth grader. {'Tis better to be safe than sorry}
4. It's always darkest before...daylight savings time. {It's always darkest before the dawn}
5. If you sing before breakfast, ... you'll have music in your mouth. {If you sing before breakfast, you will cry before sunset}
6. Sticks and stones will break your bones, but...not if you hide. {Sticks and stones will break your bones, but words will never hurt me}
7. He who marries for money...better be nice to his wife. {He who marries for money earns it}
8. Love all, trust...me. {Love all, trust few}
9. You can lead a horse to water but...how? {You can lead a horse to water but you can't make him drink}
10. No news is...impossible. {No news is good news}
11. Two's company, three's...the musketeers. {Two's company, three's a crowd}
12. Don't put off until tomorrow what...you put on to go to bed. {Don't put off until tomorrow what you can do today}
13. Money is the root of...the bank of America. {Money is the root of all evil}³⁰⁵
14. Ask me no questions and I'll tell you...the answers. {Ask me no questions and I'll tell you no lies}
15. The pen is mightier than...the pencil. {The pen is mightier than the sword}
16. Man does not live by...getting married. {Man does not live by bread alone}
17. A rolling stone...plays a guitar. {A rolling stone gathers no moss}

Anglo-American proverbs, see Monteiro 1968; Stark 1982; Mieder & Holmes 2000.
 305 Examples 1–13, see Stark 1982.

18. A fool and his money are...very attached. {A fool and his money are soon parted}
19. A bird in the hand is...warm. {A bird in the hand is worth two in the bush}
20. Early to bed and early to rise makes a man...not watch T.V. {Early to bed and early to rise makes a man healthy, wealthy and wise}³⁰⁶

5.2. Varying Proverbs for Humorous Effect

The Subchapter 5.2 focuses on proverb-transformations created by students who have attended my courses on Anglo-American Proverbs and Proverbs in an American Cultural Context at JPTE and ELTE. Section 5.2.1 describes how I was inspired to assign exercises that require students to vary proverbs for humorous effect. In Section 5.2.2 I explore different mechanisms of proverb variation used by my students, while in Section 5.2.3 I consider some major topics that emerge in their proverb alterations.³⁰⁷

5.2.1. How I was inspired to assign exercises that require students to vary proverbs for humorous effect

Although I quote parodied proverbs in the course of almost all of my class meetings, I devote a few lessons of each course entirely to the topic of anti-proverbs; in so doing I create a relaxed learning atmosphere and also show how proverbs are used nowadays. I assign exercises that require students to vary proverbs for humorous effect. I was inspired to incorporate this exercise into my teaching practice 20 years ago by one of the students attending my course on Anglo-American proverbs. Attila Lengyel (ELTE) was impressed by Hungarian anti-proverbs that I had quoted during one of my lessons on cultural literacy (e.g., *Ha megdobnak kövel, dobd vissza*

³⁰⁶ Examples 14–20, see Monteiro 1968: 128.

³⁰⁷ The subchapter is condensation of material that has already been published in T. Litovkina 2004b.

kenyérrel, de lehetőleg ne tegnapelőttivel {Ha megdobnak kővel, dobd vissza kenyérrel}; *Akkor becsüli meg az ember az egészségét, ha nincs TB kártyája* {Akkor becsüli meg az ember az egészségét, ha nincs}³⁰⁸), and being in a cheerful and playful mood, he created anti-proverbs in English by drawing upon the list of Anglo-American proverbs from the Folklore Archives at Berkeley University that I had assigned my class (see the top 151 proverbs from Appendix 1). As he read them aloud at the following class meeting, the students responded with bursts of laughter. Let me offer here just some of his transformations³⁰⁹:

Too many cocks spoil the brothel. {Too many cooks spoil the broth}
 If you lie down with too many cooks you'll wake up with an aching
 ass. {If you lie down with dogs, you'll get up with fleas; Too many
 cooks spoil the broth}
 If you lie down with dogs you must be Cicciolina.³¹⁰ {If you lie down
 with dogs, you'll get up with fleas}
 Money makes the mean. {Money makes the man}

All the students in my group found this exercise extremely exciting; they volunteered to create similar rewritings of well-known proverbs for the next class meeting. It goes without saying that this class was just fantastic. Since 1995 humorous rewriting of proverbs, along with writing tales shaped by proverbs³¹¹ has become one of the favorite activities of students attending my courses on Anglo-American proverbs (some of their witty parodies are listed in Appendix 7³¹²).

Writing an ad with the help of proverbs has also been one of the favorite tasks of my students. Many students have created striking and innovative advertisements, by manipulating standard proverbs and changing them into anti-proverbs. Let us view the following ad in which 6 proverbs (*It takes a*

308 See Tóthné Litovkina 1993.

309 Some of Attila's anti-proverbs have already been published in Tóthné Litovkina 1996a.

310 A porno-star of Hungarian origin.

311 See T. Litovkina 2004b.

312 Some of the students' witty parodies have already been published in Tóthné Litovkina 1996a and T. Litovkina 2004b.

thief to catch a thief; Don't put all your money in one pocket; Let bygones be bygones; A friend in need is a friend indeed; He who hesitates is lost; Don't put off till tomorrow what you can do today) are used, some of which are transformed:

It takes a PICK-POCK to catch a thief!

Robbed again? For the second?...third?...fourth time? And you still don't know how to protect your purse? *Have you tried not putting all your money in one pocket?* Yes? Well, we know it doesn't work...

We have a better solution for you. *Let bygones be bygones* and turn a new leaf! Try out our new pickpocket alarm. It's small, cheap and effective, and it's *the best friend in need!*

Use your PICK-POCK and save your money. *Don't put off till tomorrow, call now because he who hesitates is robbed.*

Tel.: 111231435 (Andrea Mačković, ELTE)

Sometimes the students themselves create the illustrations for their mock advertisements, but more often they clip pictures from magazines or newspapers. Although only one ad is usually required, some of my students are so enthusiastic that they bring ten or more creations (some of my students' advertisements are listed in Appendix 8³¹³).

5.2.2. Mechanisms of Proverb Variation Used by My Students

The most frequent techniques of proverb alteration used by my students will be demonstrated separately here, through just a few representative examples (some more witty parodies are also listed in Appendix 7).

Many proverb transformations retain the actual text of the original without any change, but then add new words, or a tail, to it. Very rarely only one word is added to the original text of a proverb:

313 Some of my students' advertisements have already been published in Tóthné Litovkina 1996a and T. Litovkina 2000.

You can't judge a book by its cover price. (Zsófia Kovács, ELTE)
{You can't judge a book by its cover}

In the vast majority of cases a phrase or even a sentence is added to the proverb text:

A little learning is a dangerous thing. Can you imagine what'll happen if you study a lot? (Orsolya Gólya, ELTE) {A little learning is a dangerous thing}

Here today, gone tomorrow – said the burglar at 23.59 p.m. (Pál Kocsis, ELTE) {Here today, gone tomorrow}

Very popular are proverb parodies that pervert the basic meaning of a proverb by simply replacing a single word:

All work and no play makes Jack a rich boy. (Gergely Horváth, JPTE)
{All work and no play makes Jack a dull boy}

If you can't be good, be evil. (Zoltán Jeszenszky, JPTE) {If you can't be good, be careful}

Students often try to find a word phonologically similar to one from the original proverb:

There's no fool like a bald fool. (Pál Kocsis, ELTE) {There's no fool like an old fool}

Laugh makes the world go round. (Judit Gyenes, ELTE) {Love makes the world go round}

Of particular interest are those transformations in which a single letter of alphabet is substituted, added or omitted. The most frequent here is the substitution of one letter for another:

A new groom sweeps clean. (Zoltán Jeszenszky, JPTE) {A new broom sweeps clean}

‘Bed news’ travels fast. (Éva Frauhammer, JPTE) {Bad news travels fast}

Very frequent are anti-proverbs in which the second part is entirely changed. It is amazing with what ease some proverbs have been extended into a great number of twists of this kind. Let me offer here just a few examples for the proverb If at first you don’t succeed, try, try again:

If at first you don’t succeed, call the mechanic. (Orsolya Gáspár, ELTE)

If at first you don’t succeed, curse and curse again. (Mirtill May, ELTE)

If at first you don’t succeed, you are unskillful. (Horváth Eszter, JPTE)

If at first you don’t succeed, you should give it up. (Szilvia Csábi, ELTE)

In many examples from our material the meaning of a metaphorical proverb is narrowed by putting it into a context in which it is to be interpreted literally:

If the shoe fits, buy it. (Emese Nagy, JPTE) {If the shoe fits, wear it}

The bigger they are the more they weigh. (Brigitta Stalter, ELTE)
{The bigger they are, the harder they fall}

When the truth of some proverbs doesn’t seem to the students to fit their own observations of human life, they simply transform the proverbs into their opposites:

Nothing succeeds like unsuccess. (Ágnes Kiss, JPTE) {Nothing succeeds like success}

The worst things in life are free. (Pál Kocsis, ELTE) {The best things in life are free}

The mixing of two proverbs (contamination) is also a quite popular technique with my students, who tend to combine the beginning of one proverb with the ending of another proverb:

Better late than early to rise. (Mirtill May, ELTE) {Better late than never; Early to bed and early to rise, makes a man healthy, wealthy and wise}

If you lie down with too many cooks you'll wake up with an aching ass. (Attila Lengyel, ELTE) {If you lie down with dogs, you'll get up with fleas; Too many cooks spoil the broth}

In many alterations several techniques are simultaneously. In the examples below, the use of polysemous or homonymous words (e.g., “strike,” “right,” and “crown”) is combined with some other kind of alteration (e.g., change of the second part of the proverb, replacement of a single word, or addition a tail to a proverb – all of which have been previously discussed):

Strike while the boss is away. (Kinga Köberl, JPTE) {Strike while the iron is hot}

Two lefts don't make a right. (Anikó Juszel, ELTE) {Two wrongs don't make a right}

A crown is no cure for a headache, when an aspirin costs five crowns. (Gergely Horváth, JPTE) {A crown is no cure for a headache}

Certain proverbs are especially popular models for variation among my students, e.g., *An apple a day keeps the doctor away*; *Where there's smoke, there's fire*; *If you can't stand the heat, get out of the kitchen*; *The early bird catches the worm* (see Appendix 7). To illustrate the popularity of the last proverb, let us refer to its numerous alterations:

An early bird is a tired one. (Judit Szabó, ELTE)

The early bird catches the cold. (Livia Horváth, ELTE; Mariann Moncsek, JPTE; Zoltán Jeszenszky, JPTE)

The early bird catches the headache. (András Richter, ELTE)

The early bird catches the worm, But the early worm feeds the bird!...
(Zsófia Kovács, ELTE)

The early bird doesn't catch a single worm. They stay in bed late.
(Ildikó Vágújhelyi, ELTE)

The early bird gets tired early. (Zsuzsanna Haraszti, ELTE)

The early bird is a real nuisance when you want to sleep. (Dávid Szabó, ELTE)

The early bird remains sleepy. (Alexa Dékán, JPTE)

The early bird suffers from insomnia. (Orsolya Burián, ELTE)

The early bird wakes up the whole neighborhood. (Orsolya Gólya, ELTE)

The early worm will be caught by a bird. (Dávid Szabó, ELTE).

5.2.3. Themes Discussed in Students' Proverb Transformations

In the previous section various mechanisms of proverb alteration used by more students have been demonstrated, with some representative examples. Now let us consider briefly the themes most often manifested in the proverb alterations of my students of English (some more witty parodies are also listed in Appendix 7):

–sex

When the husband's away the wife will play. (Andrea Tóth, ELTE)
{When the cat's away, the mice will play}

The bad lover always blames his tool. (Anikó Tóth, JPTE) {The bad workman always blames his tools}

–relationships between men and women, marriage:

Man proposes – woman refuses. (Márta Palojtay, ELTE) {Man proposes, God disposes}

Absence makes the marriage longer. (Hajnalka Kertai, JPTE) {Absence makes the heart grow fonder}

–alcohol:

A whiskey a day keeps sadness away. (Hajnalka Kertai, JPTE) {An apple a day keeps the doctor away}

Being drunk every day, keeps hangovers away. (Orsolya Burián, ELTE) {An apple a day keeps the doctor away}

–education:

The only good examiner is the dead examiner. (Bernadett Molnár, ELTE) {The only good Indian is a dead Indian}

Lots of homework a day keeps the student away (from school). (Orsolya Jánosik, JPTE) {An apple a day keeps the doctor away}

–appearance:

Pretty is as pretty looks. (Szilvia Csábi, ELTE) {Pretty is as pretty does}

With age come wrinkles. (Anita Németh, JPTE) {With age comes wisdom}

–food:

Don't count your chickens before they are hatched, use the eggs and make a good scrambled egg instead. (Orsolya Gólya, ELTE) {Don't count your chickens before they are hatched}

When in Rome eat pizza. (Hajnalka Kertai, JPTE) {When in Rome, do as the Romans do}

–pollution:

Where there's smoke, there's Budapest's downtown. (Orsolya Gáspár, ELTE) {Where there's smoke, there's fire}

There is plenty of oil in the sea. (Katalin Török, ELTE) {There are plenty of fish in the sea}

–love:

Love is the root of many evils. (Katalin Blatviczky, ELTE) {Money is the root of all evils}

She who loves first loves best. (Éva Kriszt, ELTE) {He who laughs last laughs best}

–politics:

With a Hungarian for a friend you had better join NATO. (Barbara Varga, JPTE) {With a Hungarian for a friend you don't need an enemy}

Honesty is the best policy; Politics is the death of honesty. (Barbara Csapody, ELTE) {Honesty is the best policy}

–cars:

Use your car and save your feet. (Orsolya Gáspár, ELTE; Horváth Eszter, JPTE; Emese Nagy, JPTE) {Use your head and save your feet}
A man is known by the car he drives. (Livia Vágó, JPTE) {A man is known by the company he keeps}

–money:

Money conquers all. (Gergely Horváth, JPTE) {Love conquers all}
East or West, money is never at rest. (Márta Palójtay, ELTE) {East or West, home is best}

Chapter 6

Proverbs in Tales, Fables, and Short Stories

Chapter 6 discusses how proverbs are used in tales, fables and stories. Proverbs and traditional tales interact and complement each other in many ways. Such common American proverbs as *If at first you don't succeed, try, try again* and *The third time's the charm* reflect one of the most common structural traits of folktales: its series of threefold repetitions, through which the hero, after failing twice, finally achieves his goal. In English and Anglo-American fairy tales, the most common villain is a giant: the proverb, *The bigger they come, the harder they fall*, aptly sums up what becomes of the giant when the boy Jack chops down the beanstalk causing his much larger opponent to plunge from the sky and die. At least one of the proverbs in this collection can be traced directly to a fairy tale: *You have to kiss a lot of toads before you meet a handsome prince* refers to the famous Grimm fairy tale, "The Frog Prince." Certain features of fairy tale diction have entered the realm of proverbial. *Once upon a time* and *They lived happily ever after*, the typical opening and closing phrases of English-language fairy tales, have themselves attained the status of proverbs, applied daily in everyday conversation to situations in which life resembles a fairy tale or to comment on someone who is not being realistic, or *Living in a fairy tale world*. Similarly, fables and proverbs have gone hand in hand since ancient times.³¹⁴

It is typical to end a fable with a proverbial moral: for example, Aesop's fable "The Hare and the Tortoise" (see below) is usually followed by the proverb, *Slow and steady wins the race*:

Aesop: *The Hare and the Tortoise*

A Hare was one day making fun of a Tortoise for being so slow upon his feet. "Wait a bit," said the Tortoise; "I'll run a race with

314 A number of scholars have discussed the relationship between the fable and the proverb. See bibliography in Carnes 1986; Carnes 1988; Carnes 1991.

you, and I'll wager that I win." "Oh, well," replied the Hare, who was much amused at the idea, "let's try and see"; and it was soon agreed that the fox should set a course for them, and be the judge. When the time came both started off together, but the Hare was soon so far ahead that he thought he might as well have a rest: so down he lay and fell fast asleep. Meanwhile the Tortoise kept plodding on, and in time reached the goal. At last the Hare woke up with a start, and dashed on at his fastest, but only to find that the Tortoise had already won the race.³¹⁵

Two more Aesop's fables:

Aesop: The Fox and the Lion

WHEN first the Fox saw the Lion he was terribly frightened, and ran away and hid himself in the wood. Next time however he came near the King of Beasts he stopped at a safe distance and watched him pass by. The third time they came near one another the Fox went straight up to the Lion and passed the time of day with him, asking him how his family were, and when he should have the pleasure of seeing him again; then turning his tail, he parted from the Lion without much ceremony.

"FAMILIARITY BREEDS CONTEMPT."³¹⁶

Aesop: The Fox and the Cat

A FOX was boasting to a Cat of its clever devices for escaping its enemies. "I have a whole bag of tricks," he said, "which contains a hundred ways of escaping my enemies."

"I have only one," said the Cat; "but I can generally manage with that." Just at that moment they heard the cry of a pack of hounds coming towards them, and the Cat immediately scampered up a

315 Aesop 1994: 92, 95.

316 <http://www.bartleby.com/17/1/34.html> (downloaded 10 June, 2015).

tree and hid herself in the boughs. “This is my plan,” said the Cat. “What are you going to do?” The Fox thought first of one way, then of another, and while he was debating the hounds came nearer and nearer, and at last the Fox in his confusion was caught up by the hounds and soon killed by the huntsmen. Miss Puss, who had been looking on, said:
“BETTER ONE SAFE WAY THAN A HUNDRED ON WHICH
YOU CANNOT RECKON.”³¹⁷

Sometimes the action of the fable itself gives rise to a proverb or proverbial phrase, as in the case of “The Fox and the Grapes” by Aesop: the fox, unable to reach the grapes, must go hungry. In his bitterness, the fox proclaims that the grapes were sour anyway.

Aesop: The Fox and the Grapes

ONE hot summer’s day a Fox was strolling through an orchard till he came to a bunch of Grapes just ripening on a vine which had been trained over a lofty branch. “Just the things to quench my thirst,” quoth he. Drawing back a few paces, he took a run and a jump, and just missed the bunch. Turning round again with a One, Two, Three, he jumped up, but with no greater success. Again and again he tried after the tempting morsel, but at last had to give it up, and walked away with his nose in the air, saying: “I am sure they are sour.”

“IT IS EASY TO DESPISE WHAT YOU CANNOT GET.”³¹⁸

Today, the proverbial phrase Sour grapes is used by millions of Americans, most of whom are not aware of the fable at the root of the expression. Aesop’s fables, which contain many proverbs, are familiar to all of us. Being translated to many languages, the fables have helped to spread proverbs. A proverb is often used to sum up the fable or tale, e.g., as in Ruth Stot-

317 <http://www.bartleby.com/17/1/38.html> (downloaded 10 June, 2015).

318 <http://www.bartleby.com/17/1/31.html> (downloaded 10 June, 2015).

ter's tale anthology *Golden Axe*³¹⁹. In some modern fables the moral of the fable is framed as a parodied proverb. Thus, James Thurber perverts well-known proverbs in his fables, which end with such pronouncements as the following: "Moral: Early to rise and early to bed makes a male healthy and wealthy and dead" ("The Shrike and the Chipmunks"³²⁰), and "You can fool too many of the people too much of the time" ("The Owl Who Was God"³²¹):

James Thurber: *The Shrike and the Chipmunks*

Once upon a time there were two chipmunks, a male and a female. The male chipmunk thought that arranging nuts in artistic patterns was more fun than just piling them up to see how many you could pile up. The female was all for piling up as many as you could. She told her husband that if he gave up making designs with the nuts there would be room in their large cave for a great many more and he would soon become the wealthiest chipmunk in the woods. But he would not let her interfere with his designs, so she flew into a rage and left him. "The shrike will get you," she said, "because you are helpless and cannot look after yourself." To be sure, the female chipmunk had not been gone three nights before the male had to dress for a banquet and could not find his studs or shirt or suspenders. So he couldn't go to the banquet, but that was just as well, because all the chipmunks who did go were attacked and killed by a weasel.

The next day the shrike began hanging around outside the chipmunk's cave, waiting to catch him. The shrike couldn't get it because the doorway was clogged up with soiled laundry and dirty dishes. "He will come out for a walk after breakfast until after dark. Then he came out for a breath of air before beginning work on a new design. The shrike swooped down to snatch up the chip-

319 See Stotter 1998.

320 Thurber 1940: 22.

321 Thurber 1940: 36.

munk, but could not see very well on account of the dark, so he battered his head against an alder branch and was killed.

A few days later the female chipmunk returned and saw the awful mess the house was in. She went to the bed and shook her husband. "What would you do without me?" she demanded. "Just go on living, I guess," he said. "You wouldn't last five days," she told him. She swept the house and did the dishes and sent out the laundry, and then she made the chipmunk get up and wash and dress. "You can't be healthy if you lie in bed all day and never get any exercise," she told him. So she took him for a walk in the bright sunlight and they were both caught and killed by the shrike's brother, a shrike named Stoop.

Moral: *Early to rise and early to bed makes a male healthy and wealthy and dead.*³²²

James Thurber: *The Owl Who Was God*

Once upon a starless midnight there was an owl who sat on the branch of an oak tree. Two ground moles tried to slip quietly by, unnoticed. "You!" said the owl. "Who?" they quavered, in fear and astonishment, for they could not believe it was possible for anyone to see them in that thick darkness. "You two!" said the owl. The moles hurried away and told the other creatures of the field and forest that the owl was the greatest and wisest of all animals because he could see in the dark and because he could answer any question. "I'll see about that," said a secretary bird, and he called on the owl one night when it was again very dark. "How many claws am I holding up?" said the secretary bird, "Two," said the owl, and that was right. "Can you give me another expression for 'that is to say' or 'namely'?" asked the secretary bird. "To wit," said the owl. "Why does a lover call on his love?" asked the secretary bird. "To woo," said the owl.

³²² Thurber 1940: 22.

The secretary bird hastened back to the other creatures and reported that the owl was indeed the greatest and wisest animal in the world because he could see in the dark and because he could answer any question. "Can he see in the daytime, too?" asked a red fox. "Yes," echoed a dormouse and a French poodle. "Can he see in the daytime, too?" All the other creatures laughed loudly at this silly question, and they set upon the red fox and his friends and drove them out of the region. Then they sent a messenger to the owl and asked him to be their leader.

When the owl appeared among the animals it was high noon and the sun was shining brightly. He walked very slowly, which gave him an appearance of great dignity, and he peered about him with large, staring eyes, which gave him an air of tremendous importance. "He's God!" screamed a Plymouth Rock hen. And the others took up the cry "He's God!" So they followed him wherever he went and when he began to bump into things they began to bump into things, too. Finally he came to a concrete highway and he started up the middle of it and all the other creatures followed him. Presently a hawk, who was acting as outrider, observed a truck coming toward them at fifty miles an hour, and he reported to the secretary bird and the secretary bird reported to the owl. "There's danger ahead," said the secretary bird. "To wit?" said the owl. The secretary bird told him. "Aren't you afraid?" He asked. "Who?" said the owl calmly, for he could not see the truck. "He's God" cried all the creatures again, and they were still crying "He's God!" when the truck hit them and ran them down. Some of the animals were merely injured, but most of them, including the owl, were killed.

Moral: *You can fool too many of the people too much of the time.*³²³

323 Thurber 1940: 36.

Some other examples of altered proverbs from James Thurber's fables include:

Moral: A word to the wise is not sufficient if it doesn't make any sense. (see the fable "The Weaver and the Worm"³²⁴) {A word to the wise is sufficient}

Moral: One man's mate may sometimes be another man's prison. (see the fable "The Bachelor Penguin and the Virtuous Mate"³²⁵) {One man's meat is another man's poison}

Moral: There is no safety in numbers, or in anything else. (see the fable "The Fairly Intelligent Fly"³²⁶) {There is safety in numbers}

Moral: Don't count your boobies until they are hatched. (see the fable "The Unicorn in the Garden"³²⁷) {Don't count your chickens until they are hatched}

Moral: Misery's love of company oft goeth unrequited. (see the fable "The Hen Party"³²⁸) {Misery loves company}

Moral: The male was made to lie and roam, but woman's place is in the home. (see the fable "The Stork Who Married a Dumb Wife"³²⁹) {Woman's place is in the home}

Moral: This truth has been known from here to Menander: what's sauce for the gosling's not sauce for the gander. (see the fable "The Father and His Daughter"³³⁰) {What's sauce for the goose is sauce for the gander}

Moral: Laugh and the world laughs with you, love and you love alone. (see the fable "The Lover and His Lass"³³¹) {Laugh and the world laughs with you, cry and you cry alone}.

324 Thurber 1956: 129.

325 Thurber 1956: 83.

326 Thurber 1940: 13.

327 Thurber 1940: 66.

328 Thurber 1956: 70–73.

329 Thurber 1940: 41.

330 Thurber 1956: 51–53.

331 Thurber 1956: 36–39.

John Farman uses an anti-proverb to provide the last words of each of the short stories in his book “You Can’t Tell a Rook by Its Cover”³³²:

You can’t get blood out of a stoat. {You can’t get blood out of a stone}
You can’t tell a rook by its cover. {You can’t tell a book by its cover}
There’s nothing new under the nun. {There’s nothing new under the
sun}

Garages are made in heaven. {Marriages are made in heaven}

Dove is Blind. {Love is blind}

Hell hath no fury like a woman shorn. {Hell hath no fury like a woman scorned}

A friend in need is a friend indeed. {A friend in need is a friend indeed}

Bad newts travel fast. {Bad news travel fast}

Give the devil his pew. {Give the devil his due}

If the cat fits wear it. {If the cap fits wear it}.³³³

Arnold Lobel³³⁴ either transforms popular proverbs (e.g., “*All’s well that ends with a good meal*”; see the fable, “The Cat and His Visions”), or he creates his own proverbs, some of which may resemble traditional proverbs: for example, “*A first failure may prepare the way for later success*” (“The Young Rooster”) and “*It is the high and mighty who have the longest distance to fall*” (“King Lion and the Beetle”).

332 Farman 1989.

333 Farman 1989.

334 Lobel 1980.

Chapter 7

Incorporation of Tales, Fables and Stories into the Language Classroom

Students might be asked to read folktales, fairy tales, or the fables of Aesop, La Fontaine, James Thurber, or Arnold Lobel and then to choose the proverbs that would make the most appropriate endings for these stories³³⁵. I sometimes assign this kind of exercise when I want to test students' knowledge of proverbs and their ability to use appropriate proverbs in a context³³⁶.

Consider as an example Aesop's fable, "The Lion and the Hare"³³⁷:

A lion found a Hare sleeping in her form, and was just going to devour her when he caught sight of a passing stag. Dropping the Hare, he at once made for the bigger game; but finding, after a long chase, that he could not overtake the stag, he abandoned the attempt and came back for the Hare. When he reached the spot, however, he found she was nowhere to be seen, and he had to go without his dinner. "It serves me right," he said; "I should have been content with what I had got, instead of hankering after a better prize."

(One proverb suitable for ending this fable is A bird in the hand is worth two in the bush.)

Students might be also encouraged to sum up fable, tales or stories by using a proper proverb. Let us have a look at the following exercise: Sum up the fable below by using a proper proverb. Proverbs to be used: *A wise son makes a glad father, but a foolish son is the heaviness of his mother. Children and fools speak the truth. Children are poor men's riches. Father*

335 See Tóthné Litovkina 1998; Tóthné Litovkina 1999c; T. Litovkina 2000.

336 See tests in T. Litovkina 2000.

337 Aesop 1994: 146.

knows best. An apple never falls far from the tree. Little children step on your toes; big children step on your heart. Mother knows best. When children stand quiet, they have done some harm.

Arnold Lobel: *The Bad Kangaroo*

There was a small Kangaroo who was bad in school. He put thumbtacks on the teacher's chair. He threw spitballs across the classroom. He sat off firecrackers in the lavatory and spread glue on the doorknobs.

"Your behavior is impossible!" said the school principal. "I am going to see your parents. I will tell them what a problem you are!"

The principal went to visit Mr. and Mrs. Kangaroo. He sat down in a living-room chair.

"Ouch!" cried the principal. "There is a thumbtack in this chair!"

"Yes, I know," said Mr. Kangaroo. "I enjoy putting thumbtacks in chairs."

A spitball hit the principal on his nose.

"Forgive me," said Mrs. Kangaroo, "but I can never resist throwing those things."

There was a loud booming sound from the bathroom.

"Keep calm," said Mr. Kangaroo to the principal. "The firecrackers that we keep in the medicine chest have just exploded. We love the noise."

The principal rushed for the front door. In an instant he was stuck to the doorknob.

"Pull hard," said Mrs. Kangaroo. "There are little globs of glue on all of our doorknobs."

The principal pulled himself free. He dashed out of the house and ran off down the street.

"Such a nice person," said Mr. Kangaroo. "I wonder why he left so quickly."

"No doubt he had another appointment," said Mrs. Kangaroo.

“Never mind, supper is ready.”

Mr. and Mrs. Kangaroo and their son enjoyed their evening meal. After the dessert, they all threw spitballs at each other across the dining-room table.³³⁸

Another exciting task for the students might be as follows: After reading the fable below, write a narrative, fable or tale to illustrate the proverbs of this unit. Let me illustrate this task by two fables by James Thurber:

James Thurber: *The Hen Party*

All the hens came to Lady Buff Orpington's tea party and as usual, Minnie Minorca was the last to arrive, for, as usual, she had spent the day with her psychiatrist, her internist, and her beak, comb, and gizzard specialist. "I'm not long for this barnyard," she told the other hens. "What do you suppose I've got now?" She went about the room, giving all the hens a peck except her hostess, who pecked her, without affection.

"I've got blue comb," Minnie went on.

A child had fallen upon the gathering, as it always did when Minnie Minorca began reciting her complains, old and new, real and hysterical. "Dr. Leghorn found out today that I am edentulous, and he told me so," said Minnie, triumphantly. "Of course I've always had chronic coryza, Newcastle disease, and laryngotracheitis."

"Minnie has so many pains she has given each of us one," said Lady Buff Orpington coldly. "Isn't that nice?"

"I love you girls," said Minnie, "and I love to share my troubles with you. You're such good listeners. I was telling my psychiatrist about my new ailments, including incipient dry feather, and he suddenly blurted out some of the things he has been keeping from me all these years. He said I have galloping aggression, inflamed ego, and too much gall."

338 Lobel 1980: 28.

“Now there’s a psychiatrist who knows what he’s talking about,” said Miss Brahma, and she tried to talk to her hostess about the weather, and the other hens tried to talk to one another, but Minnie Minorca kept on telling how charged with punishments her scroll was. As she rambled on, describing in detail the attack of scale foot she had had in Cadawcutt, Connecticut, one of the hens whispered, “I’ve just put some sleeping pills in her teacup.”

“You must have some more tea,” cried Lady Buff Orpington, as she refilled Minnie’s cup, and all her guest repeated, “You must have some more tea,” and Minnie Minorca, delighted to be the center of attention and, as she thought, concern, hastily drank the slugged tea. After she had passed out, one of the hens suggested that they wring her neck while the wringing was good. “We could say she broke her neck trying to see what was the matter with her tail,” the conspirator suggested.

Lady Buff Orpington sighed and said, “We’ll draw lots to see who wrings her neck at the next party someone gives. Now let’s go out and take a dust bath and leave old Fuss and Fevers to her nightmares.” And the hostess and her guests went into the road, leaving Minnie Minorca to dream of a brand new ailment, called Minnieties, or Mrs. Minorca’s disease.

Moral: *Misery’s love of company oft goeth unrequited.*³³⁹

James Thurber: *The Father and His Daughter*

A little girl was given so many picture books on her seventh birthday that her father, who should have run his office and let her mother run the home, thought his daughter should give one or two of her books to a little neighbor boy named Robert, who had dropped in, more by design than by chance.

Now, taking books, or anything else, from a little girl is like taking arms from an Arab, or candy from a baby, but the father of

339 Thurber 1956: 70–73.

the little girl had his way and Robert got two of her books. “After all, that leaves you with nine,” said the father, who thought he was a philosopher and a child psychologist, and couldn’t shut his big fatuous mouth on the subject.

A few weeks later, the father went to his library to look up “father” in the Oxford English Dictionary, to feast his eyes on the praise of fatherhood through the centuries, but he couldn’t find volume F-G, and then he discovered that three others were missing, too – A-B, L-M, and V-Z. He began a probe of his household, and soon learned what had become of the four missing volumes.

“A man came to the door this morning,” said the little daughter, and he didn’t know how to get from here to Torrington, or from Torrington to Winsted, and he was a nice man, much nicer than Robert, and so I gave him four of your books. After all, there are thirteen volumes in the Oxford English Dictionary, and that leaves you nine.”

*Moral: This truth has been known from here to Menander: what’s sauce for the gosling’s not sauce for the gander.*³⁴⁰

But what really excites and inspires my students is using proverbs to write their own stories or to rewrite well-known traditional tales. These stimulating exercises account for the genesis of the present book. Although shaping stories with proverbs is not new at all³⁴¹, the incorporating of this exercise into my teaching practice was inspired by one of the students attending my course on Anglo-American proverbs. Elvira Nagy (1995, Janus Pannonius University) was in a cheerful and playful mood when she used the Anglo-American proverbs that I had assigned my class to rewrite one of the most popular tales in the world, “Little Red Riding Hood.” As she read her proverb tale aloud at the next class meeting, the students responded bursts of laughter:

340 Thurber 1956: 51–53.

341 See Peter Curran’s book “Proverbs in Action” (1972), which contains stories written with the help of proverbs

Once upon a time, there was a little girl who lived with her mother in the middle of a forest. Sometimes they felt lonely, but they knew that *“Two is company, three’s a crowd,”* so they did not want anyone to join the family.

One day Little Red Riding Hood – this was the girl’s name – decided to visit her grandmother. She had been planning to do so for weeks. Probably she didn’t realize not to *“put off till tomorrow what you can do today,”* but eventually she set off. She wanted to bake something delicious for the old lady, but unfortunately all they had at home were some bread crumbs and a half jar of jam. Little Red Riding Hood knew that *“You can’t make chicken salad out of chicken shit,”* so she considered picking some flowers instead. On her way in the woods she started whistling a little tune. She must have forgotten her mother’s warning: *“A whistling girl and a crowning hen always come to no good end.”* Most likely this was the reason that she lost her way. *“Look before you leap,”* she remembered, but it was already late to *“...cry over spilt milk.”* All of a sudden a great big wolf was standing in front of her with a rather messy bouquet of flowers in his hand.

“Every dog has his day,” the wolf thought and started talking to the girl: “Hello, my dear. Where are you going?”

He is quite friendly, thought Little Red Riding Hood, but *“Better safe than sorry,”* so she answered cautiously, “I am going to Grandma, but I’d like to pick some flowers before.”

“Here you are,” the wolf said and handed over the faded bunch of flowers.

“Don’t look a gift horse in the mouth,” meditated the girl and thanked him for the present.

After that the wolf asked her about the exact location of Grandmother’s home, which made Little Red Riding Hood feel very suspicious. *“Honesty is the best policy,”* she remembered and told the wolf everything. *“You can catch more flies with honey than*

with vinegar,” said the wolf, and rushed immediately in the given direction.

As soon as he arrived at Grandmother’s house, he swallowed the poor old lady, disguised himself to look like Granny, and went to sleep. When Little Red Riding Hood arrived at the cottage, she found that Grandmother had changed a lot since she had seen her last. Well, “*Time flies.*” She greeted her, but she couldn’t stop asking questions concerning her altered appearance: she didn’t know yet that “*Curiosity killed the cat.*” Finally, the wolf had enough of the questions and simply swallowed the girl too. He became very happy and satisfied and started humming a little melody: “*Eat, drink and be merry, for tomorrow we die.*” He went to bed early, because: “*Early to bed, early to rise, makes a man healthy, wealthy and wise*”.

A short time later, a hunter came by and the wolf’s loud snoring caught his attention. He entered immediately and saw how dangerous the situation was. He cut open the wolf’s stomach, since “*The way to a man’s heart is through his stomach*” (!!!). Lo and behold, Little Red Riding Hood and Grandmother emerged happily from the wolf’s belly. The hunter put some heavy stones in the wolf’s belly and sewed it back up. “*He who laughs last laughs best,*” he remembered, so he changed his mind and left the wolf. When the wolf woke up, he felt rather thirsty and started to go to the store to buy something to drink. “*Why buy the cow when you can get the milk free?*” – he thought and off he went to Grandmother’s well. He leaned forward and the heavy stones inside his belly pulled him down. There he drowned, deep down in the well. His last thought was this: “*Life is like a shit sandwich, the more bread you have the less shit you eat.*”³⁴²

All the students in my group found this exercise extremely exciting and volunteered to create similar rewritings of well-known fables or fairy tales,

342 The tale was first published in Tóthné Litovkina 1998: 155–156, see also T. Litovkina 2004a: 41–43.

or to create their own stories, for our next class meeting. Let us read another version of Little Red Riding Hood

Orsolya Jánosik: *Little Red Riding Hood II*

Once upon a time Little Red Riding Hood was told by her mother that it was high time to go and see Grandmother. Little Red Riding Hood said *better late than never*, and off she went. But before she left her parents, her mother gave her a large basket full of food and drink, and she said: *eat, drink and be merry, for tomorrow we die*. But she *didn't put all the eggs she wanted to send to Grandma into the basket* since she remembered the proverb: *don't put all your eggs in one basket*.

On her way to Grandma's Little Red Riding Hood met the wolf (as she always did and always will). The wolf was extremely hungry. When he saw that Little Red Riding Hood was coming towards him with a basket full of foods, he was really happy to see her, and he said to himself: "*Carpe diem! – seize the day!*" So he started to beg for some food. Little Red Riding Hood was a very kind-hearted little girl so she took pity on him, and she gave a sandwich to him. The wolf tasted it and he said: "Yuck! It tastes awful!" This, of course, hurt Little Red Riding Hood very much, so she answered: *don't look a gift horse in the mouth*, besides *beggars can't be choosers* – and she made a sudden movement with her arm, in true indignation. But the wolf said, reproachfully: "*There is no accounting for taste!*" Meanwhile, because of this movement the milk poured out from the bottle. It made Little Red Riding Hood very sad, so she started to cry. The wolf wanted to comfort her, so he quoted the proverb: "*Don't cry over spilt milk, dear.*" When the girl calmed down she realized how late it was and she got up with the exclamation: "*Time is money*. I've got to go, but you can come with me, wolf." But the wolf did not want to accompany her since oil and water don't mix. So they parted at the next cross-road. But since the wolf was very hungry he stole a

chicken sandwich from the basket, and he said to himself: "*A fool and his money are soon parted.*" When Little Red Riding Hood realized that a sandwich had been stolen, she didn't get angry with the wolf. But she thought: "Ah well, *experience is the best teacher.*" And she continued on her way.

Soon she arrived at Grandma's house. Grandma, who was by the way a mean, ugly old woman, wasn't too happy to see her grandchild so she said to Little Red Riding Hood: "Oh, here you are again: *a bad penny always turns up.*" But still, she ate and drank everything that was in the basket.³⁴³

It goes without saying that this class was just fantastic. And I can't agree more with Ruth Stotter's remark that "...stories are what is in that pot of gold at the end of the rainbow"³⁴⁴. The proverbs that stud my students' stories might even be considered the source of much of what glitters in that pot of gold. It is my wish that the magic of storytelling, combined with proverbial wisdom, could enter every classroom to transform attitudes, enhance the atmosphere, and intensify students' excitement and creativity in ways similar to those that I have witnessed in my own classes.

Since 1995 the use of proverbs to shape new stories or reshape classic fairy tales and fables has become one of the favorite activities of students attending my course on Anglo-American proverbs. If the number of students in a seminar group is larger than 15, we don't have time to read all the stories out loud; instead we post them on the walls or blackboard, thus allowing everyone to read them during the break. After students have created their stories, they sometimes replace the proverbs with blanks, provide a list of proverbs, and then ask their peers to refer to the list and insert the appropriate proverbs into the blanks in the text. Students sometimes convert this exercise into a contest: the one who inserts all the proverbs into all the stories in the shortest period of time wins. The students also become enthusiastic when discussing different versions of the same tale. What stories could be used most effectively and efficiently? My experience

343 The tale was first published in T. Litovkina 2004a: 43–44.

344 Stotter 1999: 24.

has shown that any story will do and that it is best to trust the students' choice, although the following classic tales are without any doubt among the ones most frequently reshaped with proverbs: "Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs", "Cinderella", "Little Red Riding Hood", "The Elves and the Shoemaker"³⁴⁵ (see also some more students' tales in Appendix 9):

By transforming their favorite tales, fables, or stories in their own way with the help of proverbs, students acquire experience in creative writing; they can use proverbs in innovative ways and change their favorite stories according to their current interests, beliefs, and imagination. Rewriting existing stories or writing their own stories with the help of proverbs will work with any age level, provided a teacher supplies the students with a stock of appropriately chosen proverbs.

The textbook "*Teaching Proverbs and Anti-Proverbs*" focused on proverbs and anti-proverbs (deliberate proverb innovations, alterations, parodies, transformations, variations, wisecracks, fractured proverbs, or proverb mutations). In the introduction at first I considered the topics of contradictory proverbs and people's doubts in the truth of proverbs, then I reviewed the background of anti-proverb research and terminology, as well as the occurrence of anti-proverbs. I also addressed the proverbs that are most popular for variation, and touched upon the question of proverbs with international distribution. Last but not least, I demonstrated the most frequent types of proverb alteration, as well as the most common themes which emerge in anti-proverbs. In the first chapter I treated various ways Anglo-American proverbs can be used in the language classroom. The second chapter discussed briefly upon my experience in teaching courses on *Anglo-American Proverbs* and *Proverbs in an American Cultural Context* in various Hungarian universities and colleges. The focus of the third chapter was on four of my books on the theme under consideration. The fourth chapter commented on proverb collections and proverbs to be used in the language classroom,

³⁴⁵ See also my students' tales, fables and stories illustrated by proverbs in T. Litovkina 2004a: 17–92.

and the fifth chapter demonstrated various activities in which anti-proverbs can be incorporated into the language classroom. While the sixth chapter discussed proverbs in tales, fables and stories, the seventh chapter addressed various types of activities with the help of which tales, fables and stories, along with proverbs could be incorporated into the language classroom.

It is hoped that “*Teaching Proverbs and Anti-Proverbs*” will encourage the use of proverbs and anti-proverbs in the language classroom, and that teachers will use some of suggestions offered here, as well as find new ways to include proverbs and anti-proverbs in their curricula. Although this book focuses on the introduction of Anglo-American proverbs and anti-proverbs into second-language education, the main ideas expressed above could be easily transferred to other languages and cultures as well.

PART II

Appendices



Appendix 1

250 Most Frequently Listed Proverbs in Folklore Archives at the Department of Anthropology at University of California at Berkeley

These proverbs are listed according to the frequency of their occurrence (numbers in brackets indicate the number of persons from whom proverbs were collected). The proverbs were collected by Alan Dundes' students over a period of more than forty years. Each proverb was submitted on a piece of paper that not only recorded the proverb itself, but also indicated who collected it and when, where, from whom, and in what situation the proverb was used. Sheets featuring the same proverbs were grouped together in individual folders, and the folders organized in boxes.³⁴⁶

1. A whistling girl and a crowing hen always come to no good end. (169)
2. A stitch in time saves nine. (128)
3. A watched pot never boils. (91)
4. Don't count your chickens before they hatch [are hatched]. (83)
5. Don't look a gift horse in the mouth. (76)
6. People who live in glass houses shouldn't throw stones. (74)
7. A bird in the hand is worth two in the bush. (70)
8. You can't make a silk purse out of a sow's ear. (70)
9. Too many cooks spoil the broth. (68)
10. A penny saved is a penny earned. (66)
11. An apple a day keeps the doctor away. (66)
12. If wishes were horses, beggars would ride. (65)
13. Early to bed, early to rise, makes a man healthy, wealthy and wise. (61)
14. The squeaky wheel gets the grease. (61)

³⁴⁶ The list of the top 151 proverbs (ranging in popularity from 169 to 11 citations) was first published in Tóthné Litovkina 1998: 151–155.

15. Still waters run deep. (55)
16. You can lead a horse to water, but you can't make him drink. (54)
17. Haste makes waste. (52)
18. Pretty is as pretty does. (52)
19. Birds of a feather flock together. (49)
20. A rolling stone gathers no moss. (48)
21. Don't cry over spilt milk. (47)
22. The early bird catches the worm. (45)
23. Curiosity killed the cat. (41)
24. Little pitchers have big ears. (40)
25. Cold hands, warm heart. (37)
26. Children should be seen and not heard. (36)
27. Don't put all your eggs in one basket. (36)
28. You can't get [squeeze] blood of a turnip. (36)
29. The grass is always greener on the other side (of the fence). (35)
30. Fools' names and fools' faces often [always] appear in public places. (34)
31. Penny wise and pound foolish [Penny wise, pound foolish]. (34)
32. If the shoe fits, wear it. (33)
33. The apple doesn't fall far from the tree. (33)
34. A fool and his money are soon parted. (32)
35. Absence makes the heart grow fonder. (32)
36. Do as I say, not as I do. (32)
37. Make hay while the sun shines. (31)
38. Two wrongs don't make a right. (31)
39. Beauty is only skin deep. (30)
40. The road to hell is paved with good intentions. (30)
41. All that glitters is not gold. (29)
42. Beggars can't be choosers. (29)
43. Better late than never. (29)
44. Spare the rod and spoil the child. (29)
45. You cannot have your cake and eat it too. (28)
46. You can't [Don't] judge a book by its cover. (28)
47. (As) you made your bed, so must you lie in it. (27)

48. Fool me once, shame on you; fool me twice, shame on me. (27)
49. You can catch more flies with honey than you can with vinegar.
(27)
50. Why buy a cow when the milk is free [you can get the milk for free]? (26)
51. Blood is thicker than water. (25)
52. Don't cut off your nose to spite your face. (25)
53. Don't put off till [until; for] tomorrow what you can do today. (25)
54. Every cloud has a silver lining. (25)
55. Idle hands are the Devil's workshop. (25)
56. Out of sight, out of mind. (25)
57. An ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure. (24)
58. It is always darkest before the dawn. (24)
59. Guests are like fish; after three days they start to stink. (23)
60. He who laughs last laughs best. (23)
61. If you don't have anything nice to say, don't say anything at all.
(23)
62. If you lie down with dogs, you get up with fleas. (23)
63. Let sleeping dogs lie. (23)
64. Necessity is the mother of invention. (23)
65. You can't teach an old dog new tricks. (23)
66. A new broom sweeps clean. (22)
67. Smoke follows beauty. (22)
68. Waste not, want not. (22)
69. Don't take any wooden nickels. (21)
70. What is good for the goose is good for the gander. (21)
71. Cleanliness is next to Godliness. (20)
72. It is better to be [remain] silent and thought a fool, than to speak
and remove all doubts. (20)
73. Don't bite off more than you can chew. (19)
74. Finders keepers, losers weepers. (19)
75. Pride goeth [goes] before the fall. (19)
76. The bigger they are, the harder they fall. (19)
77. Don't cross the bridge till you come to it [until you get there]. (18)

78. Don't lock the barn [the stable door] after the horse is stolen. (18)
79. God helps those who help themselves. (18)
80. Look before you leap. (18)
81. Love is blind. (18)
82. Two heads are better than one. (18)
83. When the cat is away, the mice will play. (18)
84. Even a blind pig can find an acorn [finds an acorn now and then; hog finds an acorn sometimes]. (17)
85. Great [big] oaks from little acorns grow. (17)
86. If at first you don't succeed, try, try again. (17)
87. Many hands make light work. (17)
88. Time and tide wait for no man. (17)
89. When it rains, it pours. (17)
90. Where there's a will, there's a way. (17)
91. A moment on the lips, forever on the [your] hips. (16)
92. A son is a son till he gets a wife, a daughter is a daughter for the rest of her life. (16)
93. Don't burn your candle from [at] both ends. (16)
94. Don't put the cart before the horse. (16)
95. Mind your p's and q's. (16)
96. Neither [never] a borrower nor a lender be. (16)
97. There's many a slip twixt the cup and the lip. (16)
98. Fish or cut bait. (15)
99. He who dances must pay the piper [If you want to dance, you've got to pay the piper]. (15)
100. Nothing ventured, nothing gained. (15)
101. Practice makes perfect. (15)
102. Two is company, three is a crowd. (15)
103. When the going gets tough, the tough get going. (15)
104. You don't [never] miss the water until the well runs dry. (15)
105. A friend in need is a friend indeed. (14)
106. Candy is dandy, but liquor is quicker. (14)
107. Don't burn your bridges behind you. (14)
108. Grass never grows on a busy street. (14)

- 109.Honesty is the best policy. (14)
- 110.Misery loves company. (14)
- 111.One man's meat is another man's poison. (14)
- 112.The proof of the pudding is in the eating. (14)
- 113.A fox smells his own hole first. (13)
- 114.All work and no play makes Jack a dull boy. (13)
- 115.Beauty is in the eye of the beholder. (13)
- 116.He who hesitates is lost. (13)
- 117.If you can't stand the heat, get out of the kitchen. (13)
- 118.It takes two to tango. (13)
- 119.Oh, what a tangled web we weave when first we practice to deceive. (13)
- 120.Patience is a virtue,
Possess it if you can,
Seldom in a woman,
Never in a man. (13)
- 121.Take care of the pennies and the dollars will take care of themselves. (13)
- 122.There is more than one way of killing a cat than choking it with butter. (13)
- 123.Use your head and save your feet. (13)
- 124.Willful waste makes woeful want. (13)
- 125.As the twig is bent, so grows the tree. (12)
- 126.Don't change horses in the middle of the [a] stream [in mid-stream]. (12)
- 127.Don't throw the baby out with the bathwater. (12)
- 128.I cried because I had no shoes until I saw someone with no feet
[a man without feet]. (12)
- 129.If the dog hadn't stopped to shit, he would have caught the rabbit.
(12)
- 130.If you can't be good, be careful. (12)
- 131.Money talks. (12)
- 132.Rob Peter to pay Paul. (12)
- 133.Strike while the iron is hot. (12)

134. Where there's smoke, there's fire. (12)
135. Wish in one hand and shit [spit] in the other, and see which gets full first. (12)
136. You reap what you sow. (12)
137. A place for everything and everything in its place. (11)
138. All is fair in love and war. (11)
139. Familiarity breeds contempt. (11)
140. It will all come out in the wash. (11)
141. It's an ill wind that blows no good. (11)
142. Life is a shit sandwich; the more bread you have the less shit you eat. (11)
143. Lightning never strikes twice in the same place. (11)
144. Live and let live. (11)
145. Man works [man's work is] from sun to sun but a woman's work is never done. (11)
146. Monkey see, monkey do. (11)
147. One boy is a whole boy; two boys are half of a boy; three boys are no boys at all. (11)
148. Procrastination is the thief of time. (11)
149. There are other fish in the sea. (11)
150. Water seeks its own level. (11)
151. When in Rome, do as the Romans do. (11)
152. A miss is as good as a mile. (10)
153. An empty wagon makes the most noise. (10)
154. April showers bring May flowers. (10)
155. Better safe than sorry. (10)
156. Don't bite the hand that feeds you. (10)
157. Don't buy a pig in a poke. (10)
158. Easy come, easy go. (10)
159. Empty barrels make the most noise. (10)
160. For want of a nail the shoe was lost,
For want of a shoe the horse was lost. (10)
161. It's better to have loved and lost than to never have been loved at all [than never to have loved at all]. (10)

- 162.It's not the size of the dog in the fight, it's the size of the fight in the dog. (10)
- 163.Like father, like son. (10)
- 164.No news is good news. (10)
- 165.Nothing goes over the Devil's back that doesn't buckle under his belly. (10)
- 166.There is no fool like an old fool. (10)
- 167.Time flies. (10)
- 168.Time heals all wounds. (10)
- 169.When in doubt, don't [do without]. (10)
- 170.A barking dog never [seldom] bites. [Barking dogs don't bite]. (9)
- 171.Do unto others as you would have them do unto you. (9)
- 172.Jack of all trades, master of none. (9)
- 173.March comes in like a lion and goes out like a lamb. (9)
- 174.The way to a man's heart is through his stomach. (9)
- 175.Walls have years. (9)
- 176.A little knowledge is a dangerous thing. (8)
- 177.A word to the wise is sufficient. (8)
- 178.All's well that ends well. (8)
- 179.Every dog has his day. (8)
- 180.Ignorance is bliss. (8)
- 181.Marry in haste, repent at leisure. (8)
- 182.Money is the root of all evil. (8)
- 183.Rome was not built in a day. (8)
- 184.Time is money. (8)
- 185.Use it up, wear it out, make it do or do without. (8)
- 186.Variety is the spice of life. (8)
- 187.You can never tell the depth of the well by the length of pump handle. (8)
- 188.You can't make chicken salad out of chicken shit. (8)
- 189.A job worth doing is worth doing well. (7)
- 190.All cats are gray at [in] night [in the dark]. (7)
- 191.Another day, another dollar. (7)

192. Beware of Greeks bearing gift. (7)
193. Charity begins at home. (7)
194. Chickens [curses like chickens] come home to roost. (7)
195. Don't let your right [left] hand know what your left [right] hand is doing. (7)
196. First come, first served. (7)
197. Good things come in small packages. (7)
198. Laugh [smile] and the world laughs [smiles] with you, cry and you cry alone. (7)
199. No pain, no gain. (7)
200. One rotten apple can spoil [spoils] the whole barrel. (7)
201. Silence is golden. (7)
202. To err is human (, to forgive is divine). (7)
203. A cat can look at the Queen [king]. (6)
204. A man who is his own lawyer has a fool for a client [a counsel]. (6)
205. A man's home is his castle. (6)
206. Chicken today, feather tomorrow. (6)
207. Clothes make the man. (6)
208. Give him [them] an inch and he'll [they'll] take a mile. (6)
209. He who fights and runs away lives to fight another day. (6)
210. His bark is worse than his bite. (6)
211. If you fuck with the bull you get the horn. (6)
212. In the land [kingdom] of the blind, a [the] one-eyed man is king. (6)
213. It's a long road that has no turning. (6)
214. Money doesn't grow on trees. (6)
215. No rest for the wicked. (6)
216. Practice what you preach. (6)
217. Too many irons in the fire. (6)
218. A journey of a thousand miles begins with one step. (5)
219. A picture is worth a thousand words. (5)
220. A winner never quits, and a quitter never wins. (5)
221. Don't make a mountain out of a molehill. (5)

- 222.Hitch your wagon to a star. (5)
223.Life is a bowl of cherries. (5)
224.Live and learn. (5)
225.Never trouble trouble until trouble troubles you. (5)
226.Politics make strange bedfellows. (5)
227.Poor people have poor ways. (5)
228.Talk is cheap. (5)
229.The more hurry, the less speed. (5)
230.To each his own. (5)
231.A bad penny always returns [turns up]. (4)
232.A hard head makes a soft behind. (4)
233.Call a spade a spade. (4)
234.Don't kill the goose who lays the golden eggs. (4)
235.Handsome is as handsome does. (4)
236.One mother can take care of eight [ten] children, but eight [ten]
children can't take care of a mother. (4)
237.Politeness is to do and say the kindest thing in the kindest way.
(4)
238.Three moves are worse than a fire. (4)
239.Whisky on beer, never fear,
Beer on whisky, always risky. (4)
240.Win a few, lose a few; some get rained out. (4)
241.Easier said than done. (3)
242.Every tube must stand on its own bottom. (3)
243.If you want something done, do it yourself. (3)
244.Lucky in cards, unlucky in love. (3)
245.One swallow doesn't make a summer. (3)
246.The truth is said in jest. (3)
247.There is no rest for the weary. (3)
248.True love never runs smooth. (3)
249.Unlucky in cards, lucky in love. (3)
250.You can't win them all. (3)

Appendix 2

384 Anglo-American Proverbs from My Corpus Which Have Generated Three or More Parodies³⁴⁷

The proverbs in this list are arranged in alphabetical order. The data for my corpus, which includes about 5000 texts of anti-proverbs based on 600 traditional Anglo-American proverbs, have been collected primarily from American and British sources, including books and articles on puns, one-liners, toasts, wisecracks, quotations, aphorisms, maxims, quips, epigrams, and graffiti (see the list of references at the end of the book) during a time span of more than 11 years (1995–2005).

1. **A barking dog never bites.** [Barking dogs do not [seldom; never] bite]. (9) {People making threats seldom carry them out.}
2. **A bird in the hand is worth two in the bush.** (49) {It is better to accept a small, certain thing than to hope to get a better, larger one.}
3. **A burnt [burned] child dreads [fears] the fire.** (4) {A person who has suffered from something will try to avoid it after that and not to repeat a painful lesson again.}
4. **A cat has nine lives.** (7) {The proverb is applied to people who have survived things that could have killed anyone else.}
5. **A chain is no stronger than its weakest link.** [A chain is as strong as its weakest link]. (6) {Things will break where they are the least secure.}
6. **A dog is man's best friend.** [Man's best friend is his dog]. (13) {A dog is more loyal and faithful to his owner than many people or other animals.}
7. **A dog's bark is worse than his bite.** (7) {Things are often not as bad or dangerous as they might seem.}

³⁴⁷ All the proverbs in this list, followed by their explanations, illustrative examples, etc. have been published in the book “Old Proverbs Never Die, They Just Diversify: A Collection of Anti-Proverbs” (see T. Litovkina & Mieder 2006).

8. **(A fair) exchange is no robbery.** (3) {The proverb is usually given as an excuse by someone who has had an advantage of an unfair exchange.}
9. **A fool and his money are soon parted.** (47) {Foolish people spend their money without consideration and soon find themselves without any money at all.}
10. **A friend in need is a friend indeed.** (26) {A real friend is the one who helps you when you are in trouble.}
11. **A good man is hard to find.** (6) {There are only a few good people in the world.}
12. **A little (bit) goes a long way.** (9) {Small efforts can make a big difference.}
13. **A little knowledge [learning] is a dangerous thing.** (21) {People who know only a little are unaware of their ignorance and are consequently prone to error or make judgements about something they are not qualified in.}
14. **A man is as old as he feels (, a woman as old as she looks).** (29) {Men are judged by their inner youthfulness, women by their looks.}
15. **A man is known by the company he keeps.** (38) {You can tell what someone is like by the people he associates with.}
16. **A man's [An Englishman's] home is his castle.** (14) {You can do whatever you want in your own house, no one has a right to enter it without your permission.}
17. **A miss is as good as a mile.** (22) {Almost having achieved something and missing your objective by a narrow margin is the same as not having achieved it at all or missing it by a great margin.}
18. **A new broom sweeps clean.** [New brooms sweep clean]. (7) {People appointed to a new position or responsibility will tend to inject energy and make big changes.}
19. **A penny saved is a penny earned.** (17) {The proverb is given as advice to save even small amount of money and not to spend it right away.}

20. **A rolling stone gathers no moss.** (20) {People who do not settle down and constantly move from place to place will never make money or amass affection.}
21. **A soft answer turneth away wrath.** (12) {A gentle reply to someone who is angry with you will calm him down.}
22. **A sound mind in a sound body.** (3) {Mental health and physical health go together.}
23. **A stitch in time saves nine.** (20) {Fixing a small problem right away can prevent serious trouble in the future.}
24. **A watched pot never boils.** (9) {Something we are waiting for with impatient attention seems to never happen.}
25. **A woman without a man is like a fish without a bicycle.** (5) {The proverb is a feminist slogan expressing the independence of women from men.}
26. **A woman's place is in the home.** (13) {A woman should stay at home, doing housework and raising children.}
27. **A woman's work is never done.** (6) {Women are constantly busy with cooking, cleaning, raising children and any other household jobs.}
28. **A word to the wise (is sufficient [enough]).** (18) {Intelligent and wise people can take hints and don't need long explanations.}
29. **Absence makes the heart grow fonder.** (34) {People feel more affection when they are parted.}
30. **Accidents will happen (in the best regulated families).** (9) {Nobody, be it a man or organization (often family) is immune from the unforeseen, mistakes, accidents.}
31. **Actions speak louder than words.** (7) {What you do is more important than what you say.}
32. **All men are created equal.** (11)
33. **All roads lead to Rome.** (6) {All efforts will lead to the same result.}
34. **All that glitters is not gold.** (8) {Superficial attractiveness may not denote great value.}

35. **All the world loves a lover.** (4) {People have a lot of understanding for someone in love.}
36. **All the world's a stage.** (17) {People and life on this earth are compared to a theater performance.}
37. **All things come to him who waits.** (25) {If you wait patiently you will get what you want.}
38. **All work and no play makes Jack a dull boy.** (27) {If you work and don't spend any time on recreational activities, you won't be a balanced and interesting person.}
39. **All's fair in love and war.** (8) {In some situations, e.g., in amatory or military matters, people are allowed to use every stratagem and take advantage of every opportunity in order to succeed.}
40. **All's well that ends well.** (12) {When the outcome is happy, previous failures and disappointments do not matter.}
41. **Always a bridesmaid but never a bride.** (4) {Some women go to a lot of weddings but never get married themselves.}
42. **Always look on the bright side.** (3) {Be optimistic and positive.}
43. **An apple a day keeps the doctor away.** (64) {Eating an apple every day keeps you healthy.}
44. **An elephant never forgets.** (4) {The proverb expresses the idea that an elephant with its big head must also have a good memory.}
45. **An eye for an eye, a tooth for a tooth.** (3) {Evil should be returned in equal measure to its perpetrator.}
46. **An honest man's word is as good as his bond.** (5) {An honest person can be trusted completely.}
47. **An ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure.** [Prevention is better than cure]. (17) {Taking precautions against something bad is better than repairing the damage after it has already occurred.}
48. **Any port in a storm.** (3) {Any safe place will do in time of danger.}
49. **Appearances are deceptive [deceiving].** (7) {We shouldn't use looks as an only criterion for assessment.}
50. **April showers bring May flowers.** (5) {1. Rain in April helps plants to grow later. 2. Something unpleasant may lead to something enjoyable.}

51. **Art's long, life is short.** (3) {While beautiful creations continue to live, the life of the artist is soon over.}
52. **As the twig is bent, so is the tree inclined [so grows the tree].** (5) {A child's character is molded during his early childhood; an adult will behave the way he was taught to act as a child.}
53. **As you make your bed, so you must lie on [in] it.** [As one makes his bed, so he must lie on [in] it; You made your bed; now lie in it]. (8) {You must suffer the consequences of your actions.}
54. **As you sow, so you reap.** [You shall reap what you sow; As you sow, so shall you reap; As a man sows, so shall he reap]. (9) {You must face up to the consequences of your actions and decisions.}
55. **Bad news travels fast.** (6) {Negative information spreads quickly.}
56. **Beauty is in the eye of the beholder.** (12) {Everybody has a different opinion regarding beauty.}
57. **Beauty is only skin deep.** (28) {Physical beauty is superficial and may hide an ugly nature, so don't judge by looks alone.}
58. **Beggars can't be choosers.** (8) {People in need should gratefully accept what is offered instead of dictating what others give them.}
59. **Behind every great [successful] man there is a woman.** (36) {Men's careers very much depend on the help of women.}
60. **Better late than never.** (17) {It is better to do something later than not to do it at all.}
61. **Better safe [sure] than sorry.** (3) {It is better to be cautious than to do something about which you may regret.}
62. **Beware of Greeks bearing gifts.** (5) {Be careful from whom you accept favors.}
63. **Birds of a feather flock together.** (8) {People are attracted to others whose tastes or interests are similar to their own.}
64. **Blood is thicker than water.** (13) {Relatives have stronger ties and are more loyal and helpful to each other than people outside the family.}
65. **Blood will tell.** (4) {1. There are no secrets among relatives; 2. One cannot hide one's background.}
66. **Boys will be boys.** (9) {Boys are expected to act in a childish way,

- i.e., be boisterous, immature, noisy, irresponsible, etc.}
67. **Brevity is the soul of wit.** (13) {Cleverness must be to the point.}
 68. **Business before pleasure.** (7) {You should take care of your responsibilities before starting to relax and enjoy yourself.}
 69. **Call a spade a spade.** (9) {Call things by their real name; tell things the way they really are.}
 70. **Candy is dandy, but liquor is quicker.** (3) {Although it is nice to give a girl candy, you will get farther with her if you ply with liquor, which would lead her to an ecstatic state before candy does.}
 71. **Charity begins at home.** (15) {You tend to take care of people close to you (i.e., your relatives) before taking care of those outside the family circle.}
 72. **Charity covers a multitude of sins.** (13) {Being generous brings forgiveness.}
 73. **Chickens [Curses, like chickens,] (will always) come home to roost.** (4) {Your mistakes or bad deeds will return upon you.}
 74. **Children should be seen and not heard.** (20) {Children should not be obtrusively noisy in the presence of adults.}
 75. **Christmas comes but once a year.** (5) {Good things only come very seldom.}
 76. **Circumstances alter cases.** (7) {If the circumstances change, someone's situation changes too.}
 77. **Cleanliness is next to godliness.** (10) {Cleanliness is a great value.}
 78. **Clothes don't make the man.** (8) {Don't judge a person by appearance and dress.}
 79. **Clothes make the man.** (18) {You are judged by the way you dress.}
 80. **Cold hands, warm heart.** [A cold hand, a warm heart]. (4) {Cold hands are a sign of a loving personality, ready affection, fidelity and temperament.}
 81. **Comparisons are odious.** (3) {It is useless to compare different people or things.}
 82. **Confession [(An) open [honest] confession] is good for the soul.** (6) {If you confess something you have done wrong, you will feel better and have mental peace.}

83. **Courtesy [Civility; Politeness] costs nothing.** [Courtesy pays]. (5)
{It never hurts you to behave in a courteous way.}
84. **Crime doesn't pay.** (23) {Although crime may be profitable for a while, it will not pay in the long run.}
85. **Curiosity killed the cat.** (11) {Curiosity may get you into trouble.}
86. **Dead men tell no tales.** (7) {Dead people will not reveal any secrets.}
87. **Different strokes for different folks.** (14) {People have different interests and preferences.}
88. **Discretion is the better part of valor.** (5) {Caution is better than rash bravery.}
89. **Distance lends enchantment.** (3) {Things often look better when far away.}
90. **Do unto others as you would have them do unto you.** (18) {You should treat others in the same way you would like them to treat you.}
91. **Don't bite off more than you can chew.** (4) {Don't try to take on more responsibility or action than you can handle.}
92. **Don't bite the hand that feeds you.** (6) {Do not behave ungratefully with someone who has helped you.}
93. **Don't build your castles in the air.** (12) {Don't dream too much about unattainable goals and things.}
94. **Don't burn the candle at both ends.** (4) {Do not work too hard; do not dissipate your fortune.}
95. **Don't burn your bridges behind you.** (4) {Do not destroy all the ways of retreating.}
96. **Don't cast your pearls before swine.** (6) {Don't waste precious things before undeserving people.}
97. **Don't change [swap] horses in midstream [while crossing a stream; at the middle of the stream].** (4) {Don't change direction or tactics when you are in the middle of doing something.}
98. **Don't count your chickens before they are hatched [hatch].** (9)
{Don't be overconfident and too optimistic that something will happen, and never assume success before things have turned out favor-

ably for you.}

99. **Don't cross the bridge till you come to it.** [Don't cross your bridges before you come to them]. (8) {Don't worry about something until it has happened.}
100. **Don't cry [(It's) no use crying] over spilt milk.** (11) {Don't get upset about something that has already happened and can't be changed.}
101. **Don't kick [hit] a man [fellow] when he's down.** (5) {Don't hurt someone who is at a disadvantage.}
102. **Don't kill the goose that lays [laid] the golden egg(s).** (4) {Don't ever try to destroy something that is profitable to you.}
103. **Don't make a mountain out of a molehill.** (14) {Don't exaggerate.}
104. **Don't put all your eggs in one basket.** (9) {Do not risk everything on one single venture.}
105. **Don't put the cart before the horse.** (9) {Deal with things in their right order.}
106. **Don't throw the baby out with the bathwater.** (4) {In making changes and getting rid of something, make sure you don't discard the good things along with the bad.}
107. **Early to bed, early to rise, makes a man healthy, wealthy and wise.** (46) {The proverb is given as advice to go to bed early and to wake up early.}
108. **East is east, west is west, and never the twain shall meet.** (4) {Some things are very distinct and cannot be combined or compared.}
109. **Easy come, easy go.** (3) {Things that are come by without effort are lost or squandered without much grief.}
110. **Eat, drink, and be merry (, for tomorrow we may die).** (20) {Enjoy your life as much as possible, because you may die soon.}
111. **Even a worm will turn.** [The worm will turn]. (5) {Even weak people will rise up if hurt too much.}
112. **Every cloud has a silver lining.** (16) {Every misfortune or difficult circumstance has its bright side. One should be optimistic even

- in the most desperate situation.}
113. **Every dog has his day.** (11) {Fortune smiles at least once in a lifetime on everyone.}
114. **Every little (bit) helps.** (12) {Little by little you can gain much.}
115. **Every man for himself.** (3) {People have to fight for their own survival.}
116. **Every man has his price.** (6) {Everyone can be bribed, provided the bribe is big enough.}
117. **Every man [Everyone; Everybody] to his (own) taste.** (4)
118. **Everybody's business is nobody's business.** (5)
119. **Everything comes to him who waits.** (14) {If you wait patiently you will get what you want.}
120. **Experience is the best teacher.** (11) {You learn best through practice.}
121. **Extremes meet.** (3) {People with opposite interests, likes, tastes, etc. attract each other.}
122. **Faint heart never won fair lady.** (14) {Courage leads to great achievements, especially in courting women.}
123. **Faith will [can] move mountains.** (11) {Your faith and belief in what you are doing will help you to overcome any obstacle.}
124. **Familiarity breeds contempt.** (15) {The better we know someone or something, our respect is more likely to degenerate into disregard.}
125. **Feed a cold and starve a fever.** (3) {Eating will help cure a cold, withholding food will help cure a fever.}
126. **Figures don't lie.** (10) {Statistics can prove anything.}
127. **Fine feathers make fine birds.** (4) {Good appearance and dress might indicate a good character, behavior, etc.}
128. **Fools rush in where angels fear to tread.** (12) {Foolish people act hastily and attempt feats that wise people would avoid.}
129. **Forgive and forget.** (5) {Not only forgive someone but put out of mind all wrongs he or she has ever caused to you.}
130. **Gentlemen prefer blondes.** (13) {A stereotypical male view of women.}

131. **Give a man [someone; him] enough rope and he will hang himself** (19) {Given the opportunity and freedom to behave badly, someone will bring about his or her own downfall.}
132. **Give him an inch and he'll take an ell [a yard]**. (21) {If you are kind and generous to someone, the person will take advantage of you and will demand more.}
133. **Give the devil his due**. (7) {Even bad people can do good deeds which should be recognized and appreciated.}
134. **God helps those who help themselves**. (16) {You must make the effort yourself if you want to succeed.}
135. **Good fences make good neighbors**. (5) {Do not trespass upon the other people's property or privacy.}
136. **Great minds run in the same channel**. [Great minds think alike]. (5) {Clever people think in the same way.}
137. **Great [Mighty] oaks from little acorns grow**. (10) {The most impressive things or people have humble origins.}
138. **Half a loaf is better than no bread [none]**. (11) {A part of something, something small and not precious is better than nothing.}
139. **Half the world [One half of the world] does not know how the other half lives**. (25) {People don't know much about the fate of others.}
140. **Handsome is as handsome does**. (6) {Deeds and not good looks show that someone is a good person.}
141. **Hard work never hurt anybody**. (13) {Serious work does not harm anybody.}
142. **Haste makes waste**. (10) {Hurrying will actually slow things down.}
143. **He who dances must pay the fiddler [the piper]**. (3) {1. If you want to do something, you have to pay the cost of an enterprise. 2. You have to accept the consequences of your actions.}
144. **He who fights and runs away may live to fight another day**. (14) {Running away from a fight will give you a better chance of surviving and continuing your fight later on.}

145. **He who hesitates is lost.** (24) {In order to achieve your goal, you have to act decisively.}
146. **He who laughs last laughs best [longest].** (26) {Don't be delightful at success well in advance, it may turn to disappointment.}
147. **Hell hath [has] no fury like a woman scorned.** (12) {No one is angrier than a woman who has been rejected in love or offended.}
148. **Here today, (and) gone tomorrow.** (36) {What or who is available now may soon be gone.}
149. **History repeats itself.** (22) {The same kinds of events are liable to happen again.}
150. **Hitch your wagon to a star.** (8) {You should always set high goals in everything you are doing.}
151. **Home is where the heart is.** (12) {People's home is whatever place they long to be.}
152. **Home, sweet home.** (11) {One's home is the best place to feel truly comfortable.}
153. **Honesty is the best policy.** (30) {Honesty will pay in the long run.}
154. **Hope springs eternal in the human breast.** (5) {Hope is part of human life.}
155. **If a thing [a job] is worth doing, it is worth doing well.** [Anything worth doing is worth doing well]. (9) {If you are going to do something, do it to the best of your ability.}
156. **If at first you don't succeed, try, try again.** (65) {Keep trying until you finally succeed.}
157. **If the shoe [cap] fits, wear it.** (8) {If the words of blame or criticism apply to you, you should accept them.}
158. **If wishes were horses, beggars would ride.** (4) {Wishing something should have happened in different way is useless.}
159. **If you can't be good, be careful.** [Be good; and if you can't be good, be careful]. (5) {If you are going to do something immoral, make sure it's not dangerous.}
160. **If you can't stand the heat, get out of the kitchen.** (9) {If the pressures of some situation or job are too much for you, quit (a fa-

- vorite proverb of President Harry Truman).}
161. **If you want a thing done well [well done], do it yourself.** (3) {Don't rely on other people, you are the best person to do things properly for yourself.}
 162. **Ignorance is bliss.** (16)
 163. **Ignorance of the law is no excuse.** (15) {People who don't know that something is against the law can still be punished for doing it.}
 164. **In the spring a young man's fancy lightly turns to thoughts of love.** (5) {Spring is the time when people often fall in love.}
 165. **In union there is strength.** [Union is strength]. (3) {People working together have more power.}
 166. **It is better [more blessed] to give than to receive.** (23) {Being generous is better than being in need or on the receiving end.}
 167. **It never rains but it pours.** [When it rains, it pours]. (11) {Events, especially misfortunes, always occur in large numbers all at once.}
 168. **It takes all sorts [kinds] to make the world.** (5) {The world is full of various types of people.}
 169. **It takes three generations to make a gentleman.** (3) {It takes time to climb the social ladder.}
 170. **It takes two to make a bargain.** (5) {Both sides should agree if they want to negotiate successfully.}
 171. **It takes two to make a quarrel.** (8) {Quarrelling can't be performed alone, participation of two people is always needed for it.}
 172. **It takes two to tango.** (4) {Some things can be accomplished only together with somebody else.}
 173. **It will all come out in the wash.** (5) {Everything will work itself out.}
 174. **It's a great life if you don't weaken.** (3) {Success in life is a constant struggle.}
 175. **It's a long lane that has no turning.** (4) {An existence without change is boring.}
 176. **It's a wise child that knows its own father.** (11) {A person can never be sure that a certain man is his father.}

177. **It's a wise father who knows his own son.** (4) {Good parents know their children well.}
178. **It's always darkest just before the dawn.** [The darkest hour is just before the dawn]. (9) {Bad times don't continue forever; sooner or later things will improve.}
179. **It's an ill wind that blows nobody any good.** (7) {In every misfortune, difficulty or loss there is someone who benefits by it.}
180. **It's better to have loved and lost than never to have loved at all.** (29) {You gain so much from experiencing love that you shouldn't avoid it for fear of rejection.}
181. **It's easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle than it is for a rich man to enter the kingdom of heaven.** (6) {Wealthy people might not adhere to the rules of the Bible as others do.}
182. **It's never too late to learn.** (5) {No matter how intelligent and experienced, people can always learn more.}
183. **It's never too late to mend.** (3) {It is never too late to turn over a new leaf and to try to repair something you have done wrong.}
184. **It's the little things in life that count.** (7)
185. **Judge not, that ye be not judged.** (3) {Do not criticize other people, for they will have the right to criticize you in return.}
186. **Know thyself.** (11) {Try to understand your own strengths and weaknesses.}
187. **Knowledge is power.** (8) {The more one knows, the stronger the influence he can exercise on others.}
188. **Laugh and the world laughs with you; cry [weep] and you cry [weep] alone.** (30) {When you are happy and cheerful, people will be around, sharing your interests and feelings; but when you are gloomy or sad, they will tend to keep away from you.}
189. **Lend your money and lose your friend.** (3)
190. **Let bygones be bygones.** (4) {We should forget our past offenses and problems and start over again.}
191. **Let sleeping dogs lie.** (13) {Do not do anything that will instigate trouble.}

192. **Let [Leave] well (enough) alone.** (7) {Do not try to improve the situation in which things are going well.}
193. **Life begins at forty.** (5) {Life can still have its good side after reaching mid-age.}
194. **Life is just a bowl of cherries.** (9) {Life is good despite its problems.}
195. **Life is just one damned thing after another.** (9) {Life has its problems.}
196. **Life is not a bed of roses.** (10) {Life is not always easy.}
197. **Life is what you make it.** (9) {You are responsible for your own life.}
198. **Lightning never strikes twice (in the same place) [the same place twice].** (8) {The same misfortune or unpredictable thing never occurs twice in the same way to the same person.}
199. **Live and learn.** (6) {We always learn something new.}
200. **Look before you leap.** (18) {Think carefully what you are going to do before you do it.}
201. **Love is blind.** (33) {When we are in love, we don't see the faults of the beloved.}
202. **Love laughs at locksmiths.** (5) {Nothing can prevent lovers from getting together.}
203. **Love makes the world go round.** (15) {Love keeps things going.}
204. **Love me, love my dog.** (3) {If you love me, you should accept everyone and everything I love, all my weaknesses and foibles.}
205. **Love your [thy] neighbor as yourself.** (21) {Try to get along with people.}
206. **Make hay while the sun shines.** (7) {Take immediate advantage of favorable circumstances.}
207. **Make love not war.** (16) {It is better to attempt to get along with each other than to fight.}
208. **Man does not [cannot] live by bread alone.** (28) {People have not only physical but spiritual things.}
209. **Man proposes, God disposes.** (10) {Man can make plans but he can't control the outcome of them.}

210. **Many a true word is spoken in jest.** (8) {Teasing and joking often have a serious part to them.}
211. **Many are called but few are chosen.** (8) {Though people may want something, only a select few get it.}
212. **Many hands make light work.** (5) {Large tasks are carried out easier and more quickly when divided among many people.}
213. **March comes in like a lion, and goes out like a lamb. [In like a lion, out like a lamb].** (7) {At the beginning of March weather is cold and unpleasant, but at the end it's mild and pleasant.}
214. **Marriage is a lottery.** (5) {You can never say what kind of a spouse your partner is going to turn out to be.}
215. **Marriages are made in heaven.** (8) {Providence provides the partner.}
216. **Marry in haste and repent at leisure.** (16) {If you rush into marriage without thinking, you will probably regret the choice for a long time.}
217. **Men seldom make passes at girls who wear glasses.** (7) {Often men appear to be looking only for outside beauty.}
218. **Might makes [is] right.** (6) {Power gives much strength and control.}
219. **Mind your own business.** (13) {Worry about your own affairs and not those of others.}
220. **Mind your p's and q's.** (6) {Be careful and watch the details.}
221. **Misery loves company.** (10) {Unhappy people will get some consolation if they know that the others are also unhappy.}
222. **Moderation in all things.** (3)
223. **Money can't [doesn't] buy happiness.** (34) {Financial security does not necessarily mean happiness.}
224. **Money doesn't grow on trees.** (12) {It is difficult to get money.}
225. **Money [The love of money] is the root of all evil.** (36) {All wrongdoing can be traced to the relentless pursuit of riches.}
226. **Money isn't everything.** (34) {Wealth alone does not bring contentment.}

227. **Money makes a [the] man.** (3) {Money is the most influential and important thing in the world.}
228. **Money makes the mare go.** (9) {If you have money, you can obtain everything.}
229. **Money talks.** (65) {Money is the most influential and important thing in the world.}
230. **Nature abhors a vacuum.** (6) {There is always something to fill a void.}
231. **Necessity is the mother of invention.** (26) {A need encourages creative ways to be figured out.}
232. **Necessity knows no law.** (6) {In need someone might be forced to do unusual or even illegal things.}
233. **Neither a borrower nor a lender be.** (4) {Don't borrow money or lend it.}
234. **Never [Don't] judge by appearances.** (3) {We shouldn't use looks as an only criterion for assessment.}
235. **Never [Don't] look a gift horse in the mouth.** (11) {Don't be too critical of a gift you get.}
236. **Never [Don't] put off till [until] tomorrow what you can do today.** (48) {If something needs to be done, do it straight away without procrastination.}
237. **Never underestimate the power of women [a woman].** (5) {Women have more strength and influence than some people want to admit.}
238. **No man can [A man cannot] serve two masters.** (7) {You cannot work for two different employers, or purposes and be faithful to both.}
239. **No man is a hero to his valet.** (11) {No one is more aware of someone's failings and faults than his subordinate.}
240. **No news is good news.** (10) {Without information about something or somebody, we can safely assume that all is well.}
241. **No pain, no gain.** (7) {If you don't work hard, you will not accomplish anything.}
242. **Nobody is perfect.** (6) {No human being is without faults.}

243. **None but the brave deserve the fair.** (9) {Only courageous people deserve to get the best.}
244. **Nothing is certain but death and taxes.** (15) {We can't be sure in anything.}
245. **Nothing is impossible.** (3)
246. **Nothing succeeds like success.** (11) {Success breeds more success.}
247. **Nothing ventured [venture], nothing gained [had; won; have].** (5) {If you don't take risks, you will never get anything.}
248. **Of two evils choose the less(er) [least].** (20) {When faced with two unpleasant options, choose the less damaging one.}
249. **Old soldiers never die (, they just fade away).** (79) {The proverb is a line from a song popular among soldiers in Britain in World War I.}
250. **One good turn deserves another.** (17) {A kindness is repaid in return.}
251. **One man's loss is another man's gain.** (5) {What is a disadvantage to one person might be an advantage to another.}
252. **One man's meat is another man's poison.** (25) {What might be good for one person might be bad for another.}
253. **One [A] picture is worth a [ten] thousand words.** (16) {A visual image conveys information more effectively than words.}
254. **One swallow does not make a summer.** (10) {A single piece of evidence doesn't prove anything.}
255. **Opportunity knocks but once.** [Opportunity [fortune] never knocks twice at any man's door; Opportunity seldom knocks twice]. (43) {You should take full advantage of opportunity, for you may never get another chance.}
256. **Opposites attract.** (3) {Sometimes very different things or people can complement each other very well.}
257. **Out of sight, out of mind.** (5) {Absent people or things are soon forgotten.}
258. **Out of the frying pan into the fire.** (7) {Don't try to get from a bad situation into an even worse one.}

259. **Out of the mouths of babes (comes truth).** (4) {Babes can't lie, they tell the truth when adults would never tell it.}
260. **Paddle your own canoe.** (4) {You should take care of yourself and be independent.}
261. **Patience is a virtue.** (5) {It is good to be able to wait for positive events or things.}
262. **Penny-wise, pound-foolish.** (4) {Don't be thrifty with small amount of money and foolish with large sums.}
263. **People who live in glass houses shouldn't throw stones.** (32) {Do not criticize or slander another person for having the same faults that you yourself have.}
264. **Physician, heal thyself.** (4) {Before blaming or correcting someone, first make sure you don't have the same faults or problems yourself.}
265. **Politics makes strange bedfellows.** (15) {Political interests can bring together people who otherwise dislike and avoid each other.}
266. **Possession is nine points of the law.** (5) {If a full legal right to something has not been established, he who is in possession of it has a greater right to it than somebody who claims it belongs to him or her.}
267. **Poverty is no(t) a disgrace.** (6) {Poor people do not need to be ashamed.}
268. **Practice makes perfect.** (14) {The only way to master any skill is to do it over and over.}
269. **Practice what you preach.** (12) {Do yourself what you advise other people to do.}
270. **Pretty is as pretty does.** (3) {Deeds and not good appearance show that somebody is a good person.}
271. **Pride goes [goeth; comes] before a fall.** [Pride will have a fall]. (10) {Arrogant or overconfident people are likely to make mistakes leading to their fall.}
272. **Procrastination is the thief of time.** (4) {Procrastination usually ends up in nothing being done properly or accomplished at all.}
273. **Return good for evil.** (3)

274. **Revenge is sweet.** (6) {It is very pleasurable to get your own back.}
275. **Rome wasn't built in a day.** (6) {It takes a lot of time and hard work to obtain important results.}
276. **Save for a rainy day.** (22) {Save your money to meet possible emergencies in the future.}
277. **Second thoughts are best.** (4)
278. **See no evil, hear no evil, speak no evil.** (7) {Ignore any evil you may come in contact with. The proverb is often represented by three monkeys, one of which is covering his eyes, one his ears, and one his mouth.}
279. **Seeing is believing.** (6) {You can believe something is true just after you have seen its evidence with your own eyes.}
280. **Seek and you [ye] shall find.** [Seek and you shall find; knock, and it shall be opened unto you]. (4) {In order to get something, one has to put some efforts in looking for it.}
281. **Silence gives consent.** (3) {If you do not say anything, you can be assumed to have no objection.}
282. **Silence is golden.** (8) {Silence is often valuable or wise.}
283. **Slow but [and] sure [steady] (wins the race).** [Slow and [but] steady wins the race; Slowly but surely.] (3) {Consistent effort, patience and perseverance lead to success.}
284. **Spare the rod and spoil the child.** (13) {When misbehaving children need physical punishment, otherwise they will grow up spoilt and will expect everyone to indulge them.}
285. **Speak well of the dead.** [Never speak ill of the dead]. (6) {There is no use in speaking ill of people who cannot defend themselves.}
286. **Sticks and stones may break my bones, but words will never hurt me.** (3) {Don't care about someone's verbal abuse.}
287. **Still waters run deep.** [Still water runs deep]. (4) {A person's calm exterior may conceal profoundness, great depth of character, emotions or feelings.}
288. **Strike while the iron is hot.** (10) {Take advantage of an opportunity while it lasts.}
289. **Take care of your pennies and the pounds [the dollars] will**

- take care of themselves.** (18) {If you take care of small amounts of money you will inevitably have a larger sum.}
290. **Talk is cheap.** (19) {Words don't count much.}
291. **The best things in life are free.** (23) {The most important things do not cost any money and can't be bought for any money.}
292. **The best-laid plans [schemes] of mice and men often go astray.** (3) {Things often go wrong even though they have been carefully planned.}
293. **The bigger they are, the harder they fall.** (9) {The more prominent people are, the more dramatic is their failure.}
294. **The child is father of the man.** (4) {The child's character indicates what sort of person he will be when he grows up.}
295. **The course of true love never did run smooth.** (5) {People who love each other often have to overcome obstacles in order to be together.}
296. **The customer is always right.** (6) {People who serve customers must always obey their wishes.}
297. **The devil finds work for idle hands (to do).** (3) {Those who have nothing to do in order to get rid of their boredom will be tempted to get into mischief.}
298. **The early bird catches the worm.** [It is the early bird that catches the worm]. (35) {In order to achieve your goal, get up early in the morning, or take full advantage of opportunity without delay.}
299. **The end justifies the means.** (6) {If your purpose is good and noble, in order to reach it you may justify any means, whatever evil and dishonest they are.}
300. **The exception proves the rule.** (6) {If something does not follow a rule, it still may show that the rule exists, or it applies to those not excepted.}
301. **The family that prays together stays together.** (12) {Religious living is good for family life.}
302. **The good die young.** (21) {Only in youth do people seem to be good and innocent.}
303. **The grass is always greener on the other side of the fence.** (23)

- {People are permanently dissatisfied, thinking that others have better circumstances or benefit from something more than they do.}
304. **The hand that rocks the cradle rules the world.** (17) {Mothers who look after their children and shape their personalities have the most power and influence.}
305. **The laborer is worthy of his hire.** (3) {A worker deserves to be paid for his work.}
306. **The [A] leopard does not [cannot] change his [its] spots.** (5) {A person can't change his basic nature.}
307. **The Lord gives [giveth], and the Lord takes [taketh] away.** (9) {God's will is not to be questioned.}
308. **The meek shall inherit the earth.** (38) {The day of improvement will come for the weak and disadvantaged.}
309. **(The) more haste, (the) less [worse] speed.** (3) {The greater your haste, the more likely you are to waste time instead doing things quickly.}
310. **The only good Indian is a dead Indian.** (12) {An unfortunate stereotype against Native Americans.}
311. **The pen is mightier than the sword.** (18) {The written word is more effective than physical force.}
312. **The proof of the pudding is in the eating.** (6) {The wisdom of any action may be tested by putting it into practice.}
313. **The race is not always to the swift.** (4) {The stronger and the faster person does not always win.}
314. **The road to hell [Hell] is paved with good intentions.** (14) {Merely good intentions, not translated into actions, are of no value.}
315. **The unexpected always happens.** (3)
316. **The way to a man's heart is through his stomach.** (13) {The best way of making a man love you is to feed him well.}
317. **There are other fish in the sea.** [There are better fish in the sea than have ever been caught; There are as good fish in the sea as ever came out of it]. (11) {Just because you have lost one good opportunity (usually a girlfriend or boyfriend), does not mean you will never find another.}

318. **There are two sides to every question.** (19) {In any argument both sides may hold opposing opinions.}
319. **There's a skeleton in every family closet [cupboard].** (3) {Every unit (especially family) has an unpleasant secret.}
320. **There's a time and place for everything.** (3) {Everything has its appointed time or place to happen.}
321. **There's always room at the top.** (10) {The proverb is used to encourage the average man to work hard.}
322. **There's always room for one more.** (3) {There is always space for one more person if people are willing to make it possible.}
323. **There's many a slip 'twixt [between] (the) cup and (the) lip.** (12) {Nothing is certain; things may go wrong while we are carrying out our plans.}
324. **There's no accounting for tastes.** (6)
325. **There's no fool like an old fool.** (27) {If old people behave foolishly they are bigger fools than younger ones.}
326. **There's no place like home.** [Be it ever so humble, there's no place like home]. (26) {Home is the place where we feel happiest.}
327. **(There's) no rest [peace] for the weary [wicked].** (4) {Even a tired, a worn-out person has to do more work.}
328. **There's no such thing as a free lunch.** (3) {You can't get anything for free.}
329. **There's no time like the present.** (6) {The time to act is at once.}
330. **There's nothing new under the sun.** (7) {Even the very latest novelty has happened before.}
331. **There's safety in numbers.** (5) {Being surrounded by a group of people gives you a safer position. The proverb often refers to the man who doesn't intend to get married and divides his attentions among a number of women.}
332. **Think twice before you speak. [Think first and speak afterwards; Think twice; speak once.]** (14) {Think thoroughly before you start speaking.}
333. **Those who can, do; those who can't, teach.** (10) {A stereotypical view of the inabilities of teachers.}

334. **Time and tide wait for no man.** (13) {Things will not wait for you, do not delay taking action.}
335. **Time flies.** (7) {Time passes very quickly.}
336. **Time heals all wounds. [Time is a [the] great healer].** (9) {All insults, injuries and hurts heal over in time.}
337. **Time is money.** (17) {Time is as valuable as money.}
338. **Time will tell.** (3) {Only time will show the outcome of something.}
339. **To each his own.** (3)
340. **To err is human (, to forgive divine).** (45) {All human beings are liable to commit sins and make mistakes.}
341. **Too many cooks spoil the broth.** (21) {When too many people try to do the same thing at the same time, it is never done properly, and chaos reigns.}
342. **Too much of a good thing (is worth than none at all).** (5) {Nothing should be had in excess.}
343. **Travel broadens the mind.** (7) {Traveling teaches a lot.}
344. **Truth is stranger than fiction.** (23) {Real life happenings are sometimes more bizarre than the wildest sensational stories people invent.}
345. **Truth lies at the bottom of a well.** (3) {Truth is often hidden and hard to uncover.}
346. **Two can live as cheap(ly) as one.** (42) {There are financial advantages for two people living together.}
347. **Two heads are better than one.** (31) {Two people can solve a problem more easily than one.}
348. **Two is company, (but) three is a crowd [none].** (18) {The presence of the third person is inconvenient, especially in the case of lovers or close friends who want to be by themselves.}
349. **Two wrongs don't make a right.** (19) {An evil act can't be corrected with another evil act.}
350. **United we stand, divided we fall.** (4) {People who stick together are much harder to defeat than if they would be one by one.}
351. **Use your head and save your feet [heels].** (4) {If you think before

- you act, you will not have to work harder later.}
352. **Variety is the spice of life.** (13) {Constant variation and change will make your life interesting and delightful.}
353. **Virtue is its own reward.** (18) {The reward for behaving virtuously is the satisfaction one feels he has acted properly. So no one should expect material rewards for virtuous actions.}
354. **Walls have ears.** (3) {Your conversation may be overheard without your knowing it; be careful what you say and where you say.}
355. **What a tangled web we weave, when first we practice to deceive.** (6) {It is difficult to get out of a lie once one has told it.}
356. **What goes up must come down.** (7) {Nothing remains on top forever.}
357. **What you don't know can't [doesn't; won't] hurt you.** (21) {Things unknown do not bother people.}
358. **When angry [If you're angry] count to ten.** (7) {Try to control your anger.}
359. **When in doubt, do nowt [don't; do without; do nothing].** (18) {Refrain from actions you are not sure about.}
360. **When in Rome, do as (the) Romans do.** (8) {A visitor must follow the host's customs and ways of doing things, and must not expect the other people to change something just to please him.}
361. **When poverty comes in at the door, love flies out of the window.** (8) {Love disappears when there is lack of money}
362. **When [If] the blind lead the blind, both shall fall into the ditch. [The blind leading the blind].** (4) {If a man lacking in understanding, knowledge or expertise attempts to guide an ignorant person like himself, both of them will suffer serious consequences.}
363. **When [While] the cat's away, the mice will play.** (5) {When the person in authority is away, the subordinates will take advantage of his absence.}
364. **When the going gets tough, the tough get going.** (7) {At the time of adversity strong people take action and try harder.}
365. **Where [When] ignorance is bliss, 'tis folly to be wise.** (9) {If knowledge makes you unhappy, it is better to be ignorant.}

366. **Where there's a will there's a way.** (34) {If you truly want something, you can accomplish it, in spite of obstacles.}
367. **Where [While] there's life there's hope.** (8) {People hope for improvements as long as they live.}
368. **Where there's smoke, there is fire.** (18) {There must be some truth behind every rumor.}
369. **Whom the gods would destroy they first make mad.** (6) {The best way to bring about someone's downfall is to make that person drunk (mad) with pride or power.}
370. **Wine, women, and song will get a man wrong.** (4)
371. **You are never too old to learn.** (16) {People of all age groups can learn new things.}
372. **You are only young once.** (5) {It is best to take advantages of things as they come along and not wait.}
373. **You are what you eat.** (10)
374. **You can catch more flies with honey than vinegar. [Honey catches more flies than vinegar.]** (7) {Kind and polite words can bring more success than demands or force.}
375. **You can fool some of the people all the time, all the people some of the time, but you can't fool all the people all the time.** (32) {Misleading people has its limits.}
376. **You can lead a horse to (the) water, but you can't make him drink.** (19) {You can present people with an opportunity but you can't force them to act.}
377. **You can't get blood out of a turnip [from a stone].** (4) {It is hopeless to try to extort something from an uncharitable person or someone who has not got it.}
378. **You can't have [eat] your cake and eat [have] it (too).** (19) {One can't pursue two alternatives or benefit from two incompatible things, plans, actions at the same time.}
379. **You can't judge [tell] a book by its cover.** (10) {Don't judge the value of something just from the way it looks.}
380. **You can't keep a good man down.** (8) {A decent person will prevail.}

381. **You can't make a silk purse out of a sow's ear.** (5) {You can't make something excellent out of poor materials, neither you can change a person's real character.}
382. **You can't teach an old dog new tricks.** (5) {People who are used to doing things in a particular way do not welcome any innovation and changes.}
383. **You don't get something for nothing.** (8) {You have to pay for everything in life.}
384. **You never miss the water till the well runs dry.** (4) {People don't value what they have until they lose it.}

Appendix 3

486 Proverbs and Sayings Most Frequently Used in Written Sources in the 20th Century in the Anglo-American World

The list, which I compiled during preparation for a seminar on American proverbs in the mid-1990s and which I used for writing a book for the seminar “A Proverb a Day Keeps the Boredom Away”³⁴⁸, demonstrates 486 proverbs and sayings that are most frequently listed in Barlett Jere Whiting’s large collection of “Modern Proverbs and Proverbial Sayings”³⁴⁹. Whiting’s dictionary contains 5567 main entries with quotations from over 6000 books and innumerable newspapers and magazines published in the 20th century in the Anglo-American world.

Proverbs and sayings are listed according to the frequency of their occurrence (the first number in parentheses indicates their frequency, and the second one refers to the page number in Whiting’s collection where they’re discussed).

1. Two (three) heads (etc.) are better than one. (40: 297)
2. All things (good, bad, or neutral) come in threes. (35: 617)
3. There are more ways than one of killing (to skin) a cat. (34: 670)
4. A nine (etc.) days’ wonder. (30: 695)
5. Politics (etc.) makes strange bedfellows. (30: 504)
6. In the dark all cats are gray. (29: 149)
7. Every cloud has a silver lining. (28: 121)
8. Hell has no fury like a woman scorned. (27: 302)
9. Speak well of the dead. (27: 156)
10. To lock the door after the horse is stolen. (27: 182)
11. A bird in the hand is worth two in the bush. (26: 47)
12. The love of money is the root of all evil. (26: 387)

³⁴⁸ See T. Litovkina 2000.

³⁴⁹ Whiting 1989.

- 13.It is an ill wind that blows nobody good. (25: 685)
- 14.One's house is his castle. (25: 328)
- 15.The pot calls the kettle black. (25: 506)
- 16.Truth (fact, life) is stranger (stronger) than fiction. (25: 648)
- 17.A rolling stone gathers no moss. (24: 597)
- 18.Blood is thicker than water. (24: 56)
- 19.The only good Indian (etc.) is a dead Indian (etc.). (24: 337)
- 20.There is (no) honor among thieves. (24: 315)
- 21.To look a gift horse in the mouth. (24: 324)
- 22.Where there is smoke there is fire. (24: 576)
- 23.Discretion is the better part of valor. (23: 169)
- 24.Every man to his taste. (23: 395)
- 25.Providence (God, the Lord, the Almighty) looks after fools (babies, drunks etc.). (23: 513)
- 26.The early bird catches the worm. (23: 49)
- 27.To make a silk purse out of a sow's ear. (23: 515)
- 28.To put all one's eggs in one basket. (23: 198)
- 29.Two is company and three is a crowd (none). (23: 654)
- 30.As well be hanged for a sheep as a lamb (goat). (22: 554)
- 31.Chickens (curses) come home to roost. (22: 108)
- 32.Dead men tell no tales. (22: 393)
- 33.Given an inch one takes an ell. (22: 336)
- 34.One man's meat is another man's poison. (22: 400)
- 35.Silence gives consent. (22: 567)
- 36.Charity begins at home. (21: 105)
- 37.In wine is truth. (21: 688)
- 38.It takes all sorts (kinds) to make a world. (21: 583)
- 39.Misfortunes (troubles etc.) never come singly. (21: 414)
- 40.One cannot have his cake and eat it. (21: 88)
- 41.One has made his bed and must lie on it. (21: 37)
- 42.Too many cooks spoil the broth. (21: 130)
- 43.Cleanliness is next to godliness. (20: 118)
- 44.Find (look for) the woman (cherchez la femme). (20: 693)
- 45.Finders are keepers (finding is keeping) [Finders are keepers,

- losers are weepers]. (20: 223)
- 46.To pay the piper. (20: 495)
- 47.To practice what one preaches. (20: 510)
- 48.Appearances (looks) are deceitful. (19: 13)
- 49.Birds of a feather flock together. (19: 49)
- 50.Even a worm will turn. (19: 705)
- 51.Half a loaf is better than none. (19: 280)
- 52.History repeats itself. (19: 308)
- 53.One cannot make an omelet without breaking eggs. (19: 461)
- 54.Set a thief (rogue) to catch a thief. (19: 616)
- 55.Unlucky at cards, lucky in love. (19: 92)
- 56.When in Rome do as the Romans do. (19: 536)
- 57.Easy come, easy go. (18: 127)
- 58.First catch your hare (cat, rabbit, fish, bird, devil). (18: 287)
- 59.Give one enough rope and he will hang himself. (18: 537)
- 60.Handsome (etc.) is as handsome does. (18: 286)
- 61.Little pitchers (pigs, jugs) have long ears. (18: 497)
- 62.Love is blind. (18: 386)
- 63.Out of sight, out of mind. (18: 566)
- 64.People who live in glass houses should not throw stones. (18: 484)
- 65.Sauce for the goose is sauce for the gander. (18: 548)
- 66.The brooms sweep clean. (18: 75)
- 67.The darkest hour is just before the dawn. (18: 327)
- 68.The devil looks after his own. (18: 163)
- 69.To let (leave) well (bad) enough alone. (18: 676)
- 70.Walls have ears. (18: 663)
- 71.A hair of the dog. (17: 278)
- 72.All work and no play etc. (17: 701)
- 73.Crime does not pay. (17: 139)
- 74.Early to bed and early to rise etc. (17: 37)
- 75.Familiarity breeds contempt. (17: 213)
- 76.Fools rush in where angels fear to tread. (17: 236)
- 77.He that touches pitch will be defiled. (17: 497)
- 78.It takes two to make a bargain. (17: 653)

79. Let sleeping dogs lie. (17: 176)
80. Like father, like son (daughter, child). (17: 216)
81. One swallow does not make a summer. (17: 607)
82. One thing (etc.) leads to another. (17: 619)
83. Out of the frying pan into the fire. (17: 244)
84. The leopard (tiger) cannot change his spots. (17: 368)
85. The onlooker (looker-on) sees most of the game. (17: 463)
86. To cry over spilled milk. (17: 411)
87. What is done cannot be undone. (17: 172)
88. Wonders (miracles) will never cease. (17: 696)
89. A bad penny always turns up. (16: 481)
90. A drowning man will clutch at a straw. (16: 394)
91. Constant dropping wears away a stone. (16: 186)
92. Every little (bit) helps. (16: 379)
93. Live and let live. (16: 380)
94. Man proposes, but God disposes. (16: 398)
95. There are other fish in the sea. (16: 228)
96. Time heals all wounds. (16: 628)
97. What one doesn't know won't hurt him. (16: 356)
98. When the cat's away the mice will play. (16: 102)
99. A (the) black sheep (of the flock, family). (15: 555)
100. A live dog (ass, donkey, horse) is better than a dead lion. (15: 177)
101. A man is known by the company he keeps. (15: 397)
102. A nod is as good as a wink to a blind horse. (15: 449)
103. Blood will tell (out). (15: 57)
104. Business (duty) before pleasure. (15: 82)
105. Children (boys, girls, women) should be seen and not heard. (15: 111)
106. Confession is good for the soul. (15: 129)
107. Curiosity killed a (the) cat. (15: 144)
108. Desperate diseases require desperate remedies. (15: 169)
109. Every man has his price. (15: 395)
110. Forgive (forget) and forget (forgive). (15: 239)

111. God (Heaven, the Lord) helps those who help themselves. (15: 259)
112. Let the cobbler stick to his last. (15: 124)
113. Live and learn. (15: 380)
114. Marriages are made in heaven. (15: 405)
115. Of two evils choose the lesser. (15: 206)
116. One may lead a horse to water etc. (15: 322)
117. Pride goes before a fall. (15: 511)
118. Rats desert a sinking ship. (15: 526)
119. Rome (the world) was not built in a day. (15: 535)
120. Still waters run deep. (15: 666)
121. The bird that fouls its own nest. (15: 49)
122. The course of true love never did run smoothly. (15: 134)
123. The lull (calm) before the storm. (15: 390)
124. The pitcher will go to the well once too often. (15: 498)
125. The three Chinese monkeys. (15: 421)
126. There are tricks in every trade. (15: 643)
127. Time will tell. (15: 630)
128. To count one's chicken before they are hatched. (15: 109)
129. When thieves (rogues) fall out etc. (15: 616)
130. While there is life there is hope. (15: 372)
131. A cat has nine lives. (14: 96)
132. A fool and his money are soon parted. (14: 236)
133. A word to the wise (is sufficient). (14: 701)
134. An elephant never forgets. (14: 199)
135. Give a dog a bad name etc. (14: 175)
136. God tempers the wind to the shorn lamb. (14: 260)
137. Honesty (truth) is the best policy. (14: 314)
138. If the mountain will not come to Mahomet etc. (14: 427)
139. It takes two to make a quarrel. (14: 653)
140. Money makes (attracts) money. (14: 417)
141. Mud (etc.) sticks. (14: 432)
142. Murder will out. (14: 434)
143. Never put off till tomorrow what can be done today. (14: 636)

- 144.No man can serve two masters. (14: 399)
- 145.One good turn deserves another. (14: 651)
- 146.Seeing is believing. (14: 551)
- 147.Talk (speak) of the devil and he will appear. (14: 165)
- 148.The murderer (criminal) returns etc. (14: 434)
- 149.The proof of the pudding is in the eating. (14: 513)
- 150.There are two sides to everything. (14: 564)
- 151.There is safety (strength, comfort) in numbers. (14: 544)
- 152.Third time lucky. (14: 627)
- 153.Time flies. (14: 628)
- 154.Time is money. (14: 629)
- 155.To make hay while the sun shines. (14: 293)
- 156.To play with fire. (14: 226)
- 157.Tomorrow is another (a new) day. (14: 636)
- 158.What the eye cannot see the heart cannot grieve for. (14: 210)
- 159.Where there's a will there's a way. (14: 683)
- 160.A place for everything etc. (13: 499)
- 160.A stitch in time saves nine. (13: 595)
- 162.Absence makes the heart grow fonder. (13: 2)
- 163.All that glitters is not gold. (13: 9)
- 164.Beggars cannot be choosers. (13: 41)
- 165.Caesar's wife must be above suspicion. (13: 87)
- 166.Circumstances alter cases. (13: 116)
- 167.Eat, drink, and be merry etc. (13: 195)
- 168.Every dog is entitled to (allowed) one bite. (13: 175)
- 169.First things first. (13: 618)
- 170.He who sups with the devil needs a long spoon. (13: 165)
- 171.Homer (Jove) sometimes nods. (13: 314)
- 172.If you can't lick 'em, jine 'em. (13: 369)
- 173.Let bygones be bygones. (13: 86)
- 174.Like it or lump it. (13: 375)
- 175.Look before you leap. (13: 383)
- 176.March comes in like a lion etc. (13: 403)
- 177.Misery loves company. (13: 413)

178. More flies are caught with honey than vinegar. (13: 234)
179. No rest (peace) for the wicked (weary). (13: 530)
180. One rotten apple can spoil the whole barrel. (13: 15)
181. Opposites attract. (13: 464)
182. Poison is a woman's weapon. (13: 502)
183. Slow but (and) sure. (13: 575)
184. The bigger they are the harder they fall. (13: 45)
185. The child (boy) is father to the man. (13: 111)
186. The devil (Satan) finds work for idle hands. (13: 162)
187. The end justifies the means. (13: 200)
188. The more the merrier. (13: 424)
189. The mountain was in labor and produced a mouse. (13: 428)
190. The voice of the people is the voice of God. (13: 659)
191. There are exceptions to all the rules. (13: 206)
192. There is no harm in trying. (13: 288)
193. To be wise after the event. (13: 204)
194. To cry wolf. (13: 692)
195. To kick a man when he is down. (13: 401)
196. To swap horses while crossing a stream. (13: 325)
197. To teach an old dog new tricks. (13: 179)
198. A cat may look at a king. (12: 97)
199. A miss is as good as a mile. (12: 414)
200. A penny saved is a penny earned. (12: 482)
201. A prophet is not without honor etc. (12: 513)
202. Ask no questions and be told no lies. (12: 519)
203. Comparisons are odious. (12: 129)
204. Dog eat dog. (12: 174)
205. Faint heart never won fair lady. (12: 298)
206. Fine (etc.) words butter no parsnips. (12: 698)
207. Forewarned is forearmed. (12: 239)
208. He that laughs last laughs best. (12: 362)
209. He who is his own lawyer (doctor, physician) has a fool for a client. (12: 364)
210. Hindsight is better than foresight. (12: 308)

- 211.If one wants a thing well done he must do it himself. (12: 619)
- 212.It never rains but it pours. (12: 523)
- 213.It's a wise child that knows its own father. (12: 111)
- 214.Least said soonest mended. (12: 366)
- 215.Love laughs at locksmiths (obstacles). (12: 386)
- 216.Make haste slowly. (12: 289)
- 217.Money is not everything. (12: 417)
- 218.No news is good news. (12: 445)
- 219.Nothing venture, nothing have. (12: 454)
- 220.Once bitten, twice shy. (12: 53)
- 221.One dies but once. (12: 168)
- 222.One must creep before he walks etc. (12: 138)
- 223.One should not cross a bridge until he gets to it. (12: 74)
- 224.Opportunity knocks but once. (12: 464)
- 225.Other times, other customs. (12: 626)
- 226.Possession is nine points of the law. (12: 505)
- 227.Practice makes perfect. (12: 509)
- 228.Red sky at night, sailors' delight etc. (12: 573)
- 229.Revenge is sweet. (12: 530)
- 230.Self-preservation is the first law of nature. (12: 552)
- 231.Speech is silver, silence is golden. (12: 586)
- 232.Sticks and stones may break my bones etc. (12: 594)
- 233.Straws show which way the wind blows. (12: 601)
- 234.The law is an ass (fool). (12: 363)
- 235.The tail wags the dog. (12: 611)
- 236.There is always a first time. (12: 627)
- 237.Time and tide wait for no man. (12: 628)
- 238.Women are kittle (queer) cattle. (12: 695)
- 239.You cannot get blood out of a stone. (12: 57)
- 240.You cannot get blood out of a turnip. (12: 57)
- 241.A watched pot never boils. (11: 507)
- 242.All is well that ends well. (11: 9)
- 243.All roads lead to Rome. (11: 532)
- 244.Attack is the best defense. (11: 21)

- 245.Bad news travels fast. (11: 445)
- 246.Big oaks from little acorns grow. (11: 458)
- 247.Different countries, different customs. (11: 133)
- 248.Divide and rule (conquer). (11: 171)
- 249.Dog does not eat dog. (11: 174)
- 250.Enough is enough. (11: 204)
- 251.Every man for himself and the devil take the hindmost. (11: 394)
- 252.First come, first served. (11: 128)
- 253.Fortune favors the bold (brave). (11: 240)
- 254.Great minds think alike. (11: 412)
- 255.Greeks bearing gifts. (11: 271)
- 256.If at first you don't succeed etc. (11: 604)
- 257.If one dishes it out he should also take it. (11: 170)
- 258.If the shoe fits, wear it. (11: 560)
- 259.In for a penny, in for a pound. (11: 481)
- 260.Lightning never strikes twice in the same place. (11: 374)
- 261.Listeners (etc.) never hear good of themselves. (11: 379)
- 262.Many a true word is spoken in jest. (11: 699)
- 263.Marry in haste and repent at leisure. (11: 289)
- 264.Nature abhors a vacuum. (11: 440)
- 265.Necessity is the mother of invention. (11: 441)
- 266.Necessity knows no law. (11: 441)
- 267.No man is a hero to his valet. (11: 399)
- 268.Nobody is perfect. (11: 449)
- 269.Nothing succeeds (fails) like success. (11: 453)
- 270.Oil and water will not mix. (11: 460)
- 271.Put up or shut up. (11: 516)
- 272.Sink or swim. (11: 569)
- 273.Strike while the iron is hot. (11: 338)
- 274.The cure (remedy) is worse than the disease. (11: 144)
- 275.The devil can quote Scripture. (11: 161)
- 276.The exception proves the rule. (11: 206)
- 277.The grass is (looks) greener on the other side etc. (11: 268)
- 278.The laborer is worthy of his hire. (11: 357)

- 279.The truth will out. (11: 649)
- 280.The way (road) to hell is paved with good intentions. (11: 673)
- 281.Turn about is fair play. (11: 651)
- 282.Virtue is its own reward. (11: 659)
- 283.What can't be cured must be endured. (11: 144)
- 284.What is bred in the bone will not out of the flesh. (11: 64)
- 285.A change is as good as a rest. (10: 105)
- 286.A woman may change her mind. (10: 694)
- 287.All is fair in love and war. (10: 8)
- 288.Ask a silly question, get a silly answer. (10: 519)
- 289.Better late than never. (10: 361)
- 290.Boys will be boys. (10: 69)
- 291.Clothes do not make the man. (10: 120)
- 292.Coming events cast their shadows before. (10: 204)
- 293.Death pays all debts. (10: 158)
- 294.Devil take the hindmost. (10: 164)
- 295.Do not mix business with pleasure. (10: 82)
- 296.Every dog has his day. (10: 175)
- 297.Every man Jack. (10: 340)
- 298.Fish or cut bait. (10: 229)
- 299.He who fights and runs away may live to fight another day. (10: 222)
- 300.Home is where one hangs his hat. (10: 313)
- 301.If one has the name he might as well have the game. (10: 438)
- 302.Ifs, and ends (or) buts. (10: 334)
- 303.Knowledge is power. (10: 356)
- 304.Like mother, like daughter. (10: 427)
- 305.Look out for the pennies and the pounds will look out for themselves. (10: 481)
- 306.Love me, love my dog. (10: 407)
- 307.(Man may work from sun to sun, but) woman's work is never done. (10: 398)
- 308.Money burns a hole in one's pocket. (10: 416)
- 309.Money talks. (10: 418)

- 310.Needs must when the devil drives. (10: 444)
- 311.No names, no pack drill. (10: 439)
- 312.One never can tell. (10: 614)
- 313.One should try anything (everything) once. (10: 13)
- 314.One thing at a time (and that done well). (10: 619)
- 315.Talk is cheap. (10: 612)
- 316.The blind leading the blind. (10: 55)
- 317.The devil is not as black as he is painted. (10: 162)
- 318.The grapes are sour. (10: 268)
- 319.The more haste the less (worse) speed. (10: 289)
- 320.There is no accounting for tastes. (10: 3)
- 321.There's many a slip between the cup and the lip. (10: 575)
- 322.Time is precious. (10: 629)
- 323.To fight fire with fire. (10: 225)
- 324.To know (understand) all is to forgive (excuse) all. (10: 10)
- 325.Truth lies at the bottom of a well. (10: 648)
- 326.What will be, will be. (10: 684)
- 327.When poverty comes in at the door etc. (10: 508)
- 328.Where the carcass is there will the vultures (etc.) be gathered.
(10: 91)
- 329.A burnt child dreads the fire. (9: 110)
- 330.A cornered rat will fight. (9: 525)
- 331.A dog is man's best friend. (9: 174)
- 332.A Jack of all trades and master of none. (9: 341)
- 333.A liar needs a good memory. (9: 369)
- 334.A long lane that has no turning. (9: 360)
- 335.A sailor has a wife in every port. (9: 544)
- 336.A man is as old (young) as he feels. (9: 397)
- 337.Accidents happen in the best regulated families. (9: 3)
- 338.Accidents (mistakes) will happen. (9: 3)
- 339.Actions speak louder than words. (9: 4)
- 340.All in the day's work. (9: 8)
- 341.All good things come to an end. (9: 617)
- 342.All things come to an end. (9: 618)

- 343. An apple a day keeps the doctor away. (9: 14)
- 344. An ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure. (9: 465)
- 345. Art is long and life is short. (9: 20)
- 346. Be off with the old love before one is on with the new. (9: 385)
- 347. Beauty is only skin deep. (9: 36)
- 348. Better the devil you know than the devil you don't. (9: 161)
- 349. Delays are dangerous. (9: 160)
- 350. Distant pastures are greener. (9: 475)
- 351. Do as you would be done by. (9: 171)
- 352. Do not take any wooden nickels. (9: 446)
- 353. Every man to his trade. (9: 396)
- 354. Everything comes to him who waits. (9: 205)
- 355. (Fair) exchange is no robbery. (9: 207)
- 356. Fine feathers make fine birds. (9: 217)
- 357. God deliver me from my friends etc. (9: 259)
- 358. Good things come in small packages. (9: 618)
- 359. Happy is the bride that the sun shines on etc. (9: 74)
- 360. He that is born to be hanged will never be drowned. (9: 68)
- 361. He who lives by the sword shall perish by the sword. (9: 608)
- 362. If a thing is worth doing it is worth doing well. (9: 618)
- 363. If the cap fits wear it. (9: 91)
- 364. Let the dead bury their (the, its) dead. (9: 156)
- 365. Love conquers all. (9: 385)
- 366. Love (nature) will find a way. (9: 387)
- 367. Manners make the man. (9: 402)
- 368. Never say die. (9: 167)
- 369. No time like the present. (9: 626)
- 370. One is only young once. (9: 708)
- 371. One never knows (you never know). (9: 355)
- 372. Second thoughts are best. (9: 622)
- 373. So many men, so many opinions. (9: 400)
- 374. Spare the rod and spoil the child. (9: 534)
- 375. The better the day, the better the deed. (9: 153)
- 376. The husband (wife) is always the last to know. (9: 332)

- 377.The pen is mightier than the sword. (9: 480)
378.The sooner the better. (9: 583)
379.There is a pot of gold at the end of the rainbow. (9: 507)
380.There is a time and place for everything. (9: 627)
381.To come out in the wash. (9: 664)
382.Variety is the spice of life (love). (9: 658)
383.Waste not, want not. (9: 664)
384.Whom the Gods would destroy etc. (9: 261)
385.Why keep a cow when milk is so cheap? (9: 135)
386.A criminal (murderer) always makes one mistake. (8: 139)
387.A friend in need is a friend indeed. (8: 242)
388.A stiff prick has no conscience. (8: 511)
389.A woman, a spaniel and a walnut tree etc. (8: 694)
390.A woman has the last word. (8: 694)
391.Any stick will do to beat a dog. (8: 594)
392.As one sows so shall he reap. (8: 585)
393.Better be safe (sensible) than sorry. (8: 543)
394.Business is business. (8: 82)
395.Crowing hens, whistling girls etc. (8: 305)
396.Do or die. (8: 171)
397.Enough is as good as a feast. (8: 203)
398.Every man for himself. (8: 394)
399.Experience is the best teacher. (8: 207)
400.Fair is fair. (8: 213)
401.Four eyes are better than two. (8: 208)
402.Good wine needs no bush. (8: 688)
403.He (she) who hesitates is lost. (8: 306)
404.Home is where the heart (hearth) is. (8: 313)
405.If you can't be good be careful. (8: 263)
406.In the kingdom of the blind etc. (8: 350)
407.Life is not a bed of roses. (8: 371)
408.Like calls to like. (8: 375)
409.Love makes the world go round. (8: 386)
410.Money is power. (8: 417)

- 411.Never complain (apologize), never explain. (8: 129)
- 412.Never (forever) is a long time. (8: 445)
- 413.Never judge from appearances. (8: 14)
- 414.No rose without a thorn. (8: 538)
- 415.Nothing is impossible. (8: 453)
- 416.Old sins have long shadows. (8: 568)
- 417.One only lives once. (8: 380)
- 418.Patience is a virtue. (8: 476)
- 419.Pretty is as pretty does. (8: 510)
- 420.Tastes differ (vary). (8: 613)
- 421.Tell (speak) the truth and shame the devil. (8: 647)
- 422.The devil was sick, the devil a monk would be. (8: 164)
- 423.The dog returns to his vomit. (8: 175)
- 424.The longest way round is the shortest way home. (8: 669)
- 425.The sky is the limit. (8: 573)
- 426.The way to a man's heart is through his stomach. (8: 673)
- 427.The wish is father (parent) to the thought. (8: 690)
- 428.Them as has, gets (to him that hath shall be given). (8: 292)
- 429.There is nothing new under the sun. (8: 454)
- 430.To fall into the pit one digs for others. (8: 496)
- 431.Two wrongs do not make a right. (8: 706)
- 432.When Adam delved and Eve span etc. (8: 5)
- 433.When Greek meets Greek etc. (8: 271)
- 434.You never know your luck. (8: 389)
- 435.You scratch my back and I'll scratch yours. (8: 25)
- 436.A bird can't fly on one wing. (7: 47)
- 437.A chain is as strong as its weakest link. (7: 104)
- 438.A green Christmas (winter) makes a fat (full) churchyard. (7: 114)
- 439.A prize apple can have a worm inside. (7: 15)
- 440.A soft answer turns away wrath. (7: 12)
- 441.A sound mind in a sound body. (7: 412)
- 442.A still tongue makes a wise head. (7: 637)
- 443.All flesh is grass. (7: 232)
- 444.Charity covers multitude of sins. (7: 106)

- 445.Cockneys are born within sound of Bow bells. (7: 125)
- 446.Deeds speak louder than words. (7: 160)
- 447.Fingers were made before forks. (7: 223)
- 448.Flattery will get you nowhere. (7: 231)
- 449.Gentlemen prefer blonds. (7: 350)
- 450.Hard words break no bones. (7: 699)
- 451.Hard work never killed (hurt) anyone. (7: 702)
- 452.Haste makes waste. (7: 289)
- 453.Hunger is the best sauce. (7: 331)
- 454.If it had been a bear (snake, dog) it would have bitten you. (7: 35)
- 455.In union (unity) is strength. (7: 656)
- 456.Into every life some rain must fall. (7: 370)
- 457.It is better to marry than to burn. (7: 405)
- 458.It takes one to know one. (7: 462)
- 459.Let nature take its course. (7: 440)
- 460.Life is one damned thing after another. (7: 371)
- 461.Money cannot buy happiness. (7: 416)
- 462.Money has no smell. (7: 417)
- 463.Money makes the mare go. (7: 418)
- 464.More people know Tom Fool than Tom Fool knows. (7: 484)
- 465.Never too late (old) to learn. (7: 361)
- 466.Never trouble trouble till trouble troubles you. (7: 645)
- 467.Offence is the best defense. (7: 460)
- 468.Old friends are best. (7: 243)
- 469.Old soldiers never die etc. (7: 581)
- 470.One cannot keep a good man down. (7: 399)
- 471.One never knows what he can do until he tries. (7: 355)
- 472.Prevention is better than cure. (7: 510)
- 473.Procrastination is the thief of time. (7: 512)
- 474.The camel and the needle's eye. (7: 89)
- 475.The customer is always right. (7: 145)
- 476.The devil hates holy water. (7: 162)
- 477.The good die young. (7: 263)
- 478.The weakest (weak, weaker) goes to the wall. (7: 673)

479. There is many a good tune played on an old fiddle. (7: 649)
480. There is no place like home. (7: 499)
481. Things are not (always) what they seem. (7: 620)
482. Those that hide can find. (7: 307)
483. To have something for nothing. (7: 582)
484. Tomorrow never comes. (7: 636)
485. What the soldier said is not evidence. (7: 581)
486. With a Hungarian for a friend one does not need an enemy. (7:
331)

Appendix 4

169 Proverbs Occurring Most Frequently in the American Media at the End of the 20th Century

The proverbs in this list are ranked according to number of citations, and are taken from a list of proverbs most frequently used in American newspapers, news and popular magazines, television and radio news transcripts compiled by Kimberly J. Lau and presented in her study “It’s about Time”: The Ten Proverbs Most Frequently Used in Newspapers and Their Relation to American Values³⁵⁰. In Lau’s article, however, the proverbs are given in alphabetical order and are not ranked according to their frequency.

1. Enough is enough. (15,808)
2. Time will tell. (14,226)
3. First come, first served. (13,050)
4. Forgive and forget. (5,097)
5. Time is money. (3,770)
6. History repeats itself. (3,713)
7. Time flies. (3,673)
8. Better late than never. (3,493)
9. Out of sight, out of mind. (2,902)
10. Boys will be boys. (2,103)
11. Here today, gone tomorrow. (1,995)
12. Actions speak louder than words. (1,970)
13. Live and let live. (1,949)
14. The end justifies the means. (1,882)
15. Seeing is believing. (1,766)
16. The more the merrier. (1,758)
17. Every man for himself (and God for all). (1,738)
18. Like Father (parent), like child (3), like daughter (7), like son (7). (1,593)

³⁵⁰ See Lau 1996.

- 19.Marriages are made in Heaven. (1,524)
- 20.Practice makes perfect. (1,406)
- 21.Every little bit helps. (1,356)
- 22.Easy come, easy go. (1,220)
- 23.Charity begins at home. (1,163)
- 24.When there's a will there's a way. (1,015)
- 25.The coast is clear. (988)
- 26.Speech is silver, silence is golden. (930)
- 27.The exception proves the rule. (912)
- 28.All is well that ends well. (879)
- 29.Misery loves company. (858)
- 30.Necessity is the mother of invention. (775)
- 31.Honesty is the best policy. (714)
- 32.An ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure. (668)
- 33.What's sauce for the goose is sauce for the gander. (613)
- 34.Chickens (curses) come home to roost. (585)
- 35.Nature abhors a vacuum. (564)
- 36.No time like the present. (551)
- 37.Every dog has his day. (550)
- 38.Forewarned, forearmed. (520)
- 39.Revenge is sweet. (497)
- 40.All is fair in love and war. (463)
- 41.Nothing succeeds (fails) like success. (450)
- 42.Politics make strange bedfellows. (443)
- 43.Discretion is the better part of valor. (436)
- 44.Where there's smoke there's fire. (429)
- 45.Every cloud has a silver lining. (425)
- 46.There is no accounting for tastes. (421)
- 47.Blood is thicker than water. (410)
- 48.Variety is the spice of life. (390)
- 49.Children (boys, girls, women) should be seen and not heard. (386)
- 50.The truth will out. (384)
- 51.When in Rome do as the Romans do. (383)
- 52.A man's home is his castle. (370)

- 53.Spare the rod and spoil the child. (362)
- 54.The proof of the pudding is in the eating. (352)
- 55.Half a loaf is better than none. (306)
- 56.Birds of a feather flock together. (267)
- 57.A penny saved is a penny earned. (264)
- 58.Absence makes the heart grow fonder. (263)
- 59.All that glitters is not gold. (251)
- 60.Cleanliness is next to godliness. (240)
- 61.God helps those who help themselves. (226)
- 62.There is a time and place for everything. (212)
- 63.A bird in the hand is worth two in the bush. (201)
- 64.The child/boy is father to the man. (196)
- 65.Comparisons are odious. (182)
- 66.Walls have ears. (176)
- 67.Too many cooks spoil the broth. (173)
- 68.Virtue is its own reward. (162)
- 69.Any port in a storm. (161)
- 70.It never rains but it pours. (147)
- 71.One swallow does not make a summer. (146)
- 72.Confession is good for soule. (139)
- 73.Still waters run deep. (135)
- 74.New brooms sweep clean. (125)
- 75.One good turn deserves another. (125)
- 76.A stitch in time saves nine. (122)
- 77.Rome was not built in a day. (122)
- 78.The game is not worth the candle. (121)
- 79.The love of money is the root of all evil. (103)
- 80.Dead men tell no tales. (95)
- 81.Two is company and three is a crowd. (93)
- 82.Every man has his price. (92)
- 83.In for a penny, in for a pound. (92)
- 84.Business (duty) before pleasure. (91)
- 85.The early bird catches the worm. (91)
- 86.There are two sides to everything. (89)

87. Delays are dangerous. (85)
88. Handsome is as handsome does. (85)
89. What is done cannot be undone. (82)
90. A fool and his money are soon parted. (79)
91. The more haste the less speed. (67)
92. Finders are keepers, losers are weepers. (63)
93. Many hands make light work. (62)
94. The voice of the people is the voice of God. (59)
95. Time and tide wait for no man. (58)
96. Murder will out. (57)
97. No man can serve two masters. (54)
98. There are exceptions to all rules. (53)
99. Truth is stranger than fiction. (53)
100. A rolling stone gathers no moss. (51)
101. The wish is father to the thought. (51)
102. Least said, soonest mended. (47)
103. Circumstances alter cases. (46)
104. There's many a slip between the cup and the lip. (45)
105. While there is life there is hope. (45)
106. A miss is as good as a mile. (44)
107. Turn about is fair play. (40)
108. Attack is the best defense. (39)
109. The pot calls the kettle black. (39)
110. People who live in glass houses should not throw stones. (37)
111. Fortune favors the bold (brave). (36)
112. The darkest hour is just before the dawn. (36)
113. Early to bed and early to rise makes a man healthy, wealthy and wise. (35)
114. Pride goes before a fall. (34)
115. Beggars cannot be choosers. (33)
116. Clothes do not /might make the man. (32)
117. The Devil finds work for idle hands. (32)
118. Wonders [miracles] will never cease. (29)
119. A man is known by the company he keeps. (24)

- 120.Opportunity knocks but once. (24)
- 121.Caesar's wife must be above suspicion. (23)
- 122.Fine words butter no parsnips. (22)
- 123.It is an ill wind that blows nobody good. (22)
- 124.Marry in haste and repent at leisure. (21)
- 125.Devil take the hindmost. [Every man for himself and the Devil take the hindmost]. (20)
- 126.The Devil can quote Scripture. (19)
- 127.A cat may look at a king. (18)
- 128.Faint heart never won fair lady. (18)
- 129.Many a true word is spoken in jest. (18)
- 130.There are more ways than one to skin a cat. (18)
- 131.Need must when the devil drive. (17)
- 132.Possession is nine points of the law. (17)
- 133.(Fair) exchange is no robbery. (15)
- 134.If a thing is worth doing it is worth doing well. (15)
- 135.Dog does not eat dog. (14)
- 136.In wine is truth. (14)
- 137.What can't be cured must be endured. (14)
- 138.He who is his own lawyer/doctor has a fool for a client. (13)
- 139.Necessity knows no law. (13)
- 140.Self-preservation is the first law of nature. (12)
- 141.A nod is as good as a wink to a blind horse. (11)
- 142.Coming events cast their shadows before. (11)
- 143.Different countries, different customs. (11)
- 144.It's a wise child that knows its own father. (9)
- 145.Love laughs at locksmiths [obstacles]. (9)
- 146.Big oaks from little acorns grow. (7)
- 147.Fine feathers make fine birds. (7)
- 148.The course of true love never did run smoothly. (7)
- 149.A burnt child dreads the fire. (6)
- 150.God tempers the wind to the shorn lamb. (6)
- 151.Misfortunes [troubles] never come singly. (5)
- 152.Desperate diseases require desperate remedies. (4)

- 153.He who fights and runs away may live to fight another day. (4)
154.Man proposes but God disposes. (4)
155.One's word is his bond. (4)
156.A drowning man will clutch at a straw. (3)
157.Familiarity breeds contempt. (3)
158.It takes two to make a quarrel. (3)
159.The better the day, the better the deed. (3)
160.The Devil is not as black as he is painted. (3)
161.The Devil looks after his own. (3)
162.What is bred in the bone will not out of flesh. (3)
163.A bad penny always turns up. (2)
164.A live dog [ass, donkey, horse] is better than a dead lion. (2)
165.Every man to his taste. (2)
166.Every man to his trade. (2)
167.There are tricks in every trade. (2)
168.There is honor among thieves. (2)
169.Truth lies at the bottom of a well. (2)

Appendix 5

Final Test³⁵¹

1. Write the appropriate preposition in the blank provided.

1. A prophet is..... honor his own country.
2. It is easier..... a camel to go..... the eye..... a needle than it is..... a rich man to enter the kingdom..... heaven.
3. A place..... everything and everything..... its place.
4. You can't make a silk purse..... a sow's ear.
5. The wish is father..... the thought.
- 6..... the frying pan..... the fire.
- 7..... every great man there is a woman.
8. Man works..... sun..... sun, but a woman's work is never done.
9. The way..... a man's heart is..... his stomach.
- 10..... the old love,..... the new.
11. Marry..... haste and repent..... leisure.
- 12..... the mouths of babes comes truth.
13. Do..... others as you would have them do..... you.
14. Beauty is..... the eye..... the beholder.
15. Garbage....., garbage.....

2. Supply the suitable letters of the proverbs.

1. C*nst*nt dr*pp*ng w**rs *w*y * st*n*.
2. L*t th* d**d b*ry th* d**d.
3. * wh*stl*ng g*rl *nd * cr*w*ng h*n *lw*ys c*m* t* n* g**d *nd.
4. * g**d b*g*nn*ng m*k*s * g**d *nd*ng.
5. G*v* h*m *n inch *nd h*'ll t*k* *n *ll.
6. Th* n**r*r th* ch*rch, th* f*rth*r fr*m G*d.
7. H*tch y**r w*g*n t* * st*r.

351 The test was first published in T. Litovkina 2000: 347–355.

8. D*n't k*ck * m*n wh*n h*'s d*wn.
9. Y** c*n't p*t n*w w*n* *n *ld b*ttl*s.
10. D**d m*n t*ll n* t*ls.
11. F*ng*rs w*r* m*d* b*f*r* f*rks.
12. T*m* w*ll t*ll.
13. Th*r* *s n* r*y*l r**d t* l**m*ng.
14. *s th* tw*g *s b*nt, s* gr*ws th* tr**.
15. Th* ch*ld *s f*th*r *f th* m*n.
16. T*t f*r t*t.
17. *t's * l*ng l*n* th*t h*s n* t*rn*ng.
18. N**ds m*st wh*n th* d*v*l dr*v*s.
19. Th* sq***ky wh**l g*ts th* gr**s*.

3. Give the synonyms of the proverbs below.

1. First come, first served.
2. Faint heart never won fair lady.
3. The oak is not felled with one stroke.
4. Like will to like.
5. There is honor among thieves.
6. Catch your bear before you sell its skin.
7. You can see a mote in another's eye but cannot see a beam in your own eye.
8. Man proposes, God disposes.
9. He labors in vain who tries to please everybody.
10. What is bred in the bone will come out in the flesh.
11. Once bitten, twice shy. A burnt child dreads the fire.
12. Who keeps company with the wolf will learn to howl.
13. The cow knows not the value of her tail till she has lost it.
14. You don't get something for nothing.

4. What proverbs are being parodied in the reference below?

Vernon Howard, *Our Famous Proverbs*

Character: A scholarly lecturer (male or female).

I thought perhaps you would be interested in hearing a few facts about the proverbs that we so glibly quote every day. You know, *Experience is the best teacher*; *Beauty is only skin deep*; *Don't hold a lighted firecracker between your toes...*

One of our most famous proverbs was born when two boys of ancient Greece came upon a bottle of glue in the road. "It's *mine!*" shouted one. "It's *mine!*" shouted the other. And so was born the proverb, *It takes glue to make a quarrel*. 1.

Another famous proverb first appeared in Spain. An orange grower was crating up his oranges. He piled crate, crate upon crate until the crates were twenty feet high. A gust of wind suddenly blew the whole works down on his head, and so we have the proverb, *Everything comes to him who crates*. 2.

Another noted proverb was originated in a dog kennel. Their trainer was teaching them to jump over a high fence when a lady came in. "Those dogs can't jump that fence," she insisted. The man quietly replied, "*Let leaping dogs try*." 3.

Speaking of animals, by the way, I just heard what I think is a fairly new proverb. It all started when a road hog was squeezing into the last parking place at the curb. Another motorist drove up and said, "I'll fight you for it." "Don't be silly," said the other. "*A parking hog never fights*." 4.

A famous proverb was first uttered when an Indian mother complained to her husband that she had no washing machine, kitchen stove, or television set. So the poor man went out and invented them. Thus was born the proverb: *Mother is the necessity for inventions*. 5.

One afternoon in ancient Rome another housewife complained to her husband that there was no water in the house. He angrily turned on her and shouted, "*Remember, woman, Rome wasn't built on a bay*." 6.

A chicken coop is responsible for another famous proverb. It seems

that a hen saw some choice corn beneath a board. The hen tugged and tugged until it got the board out of the way. A watching farmer casually remarked, "*The hen is mightier than the board.*" 7.

A famous poet was responsible for one of our greatest proverbs. He wrote poetry all day long but was unable to sell it. He sadly remarked, "*Rhyme does not pay.*" 8.

One old proverb originated differently than we hear it today. It seems that Bill was so much in love with May that he followed her wherever she went. People said, *Where there's a Bill, there's a May*. Someone twisted it around in later years to: *Where there's a will, there's a way*.

One day a small boy tried to rake leaves, but they piled up faster than he could work. And so was born the saying, *You can't have your rake and beat it, too*. 9.

Finally, you have all heard the proverb, *A word to the wise is sufficient*. Well, I just heard someone down there telling me to leave. (start to leave) And if I know what's good for me, I'll get out of here! (quickly exit)

5. Give the antonyms of the proverbs below.

1. Look before you leap.
2. An honest man cannot be bought.
3. A setting hen lays no eggs.
4. Love never dies.
5. Misfortunes seldom come alone.
6. Clothes don't make the man.
7. Like attracts like.
8. Dog eat dog.
9. Many hands make light work.
10. Fling dirt enough and some will stick.
11. Caution is the parent of safety.
12. Oil and water don't mix.
13. Do as I say, not as I do.
14. Absence makes the heart grow fonder.
15. Extremes meet. Two of a trade seldom agree.

6. What proverbs are connected in the anti-proverbs below?

1. A penny saved gathers no moss. (Henry Youngman, in Berman 1997: 320)
2. A sleeping dog never bites. (Berman 1997: 103)
3. Early to bed and early to rise makes Jack a dull boy. (E. Healy, Mr. Sandeman Loses His Life)
4. Behind every successful man is a fish with a bicycle. (Haan and Hammerstrom 1980)
5. Better late than sorry. (Mieder et al. 1992: 361)
6. The older the fool, the harder he falls. (Barbour 1963: 99)
7. Two in a bush is the root of all evil. (Hubbard 1973: 79)
8. Don't burn your bridges until you come to them. (Kilroy 1985: 165)
9. A stitch in time is worth two in the side. (Loomis 1949: 353)
10. A stitch in time gathers no moss. (Anonymous 1961: 200)
11. A proverb in the hand - is often worth a thousand words. (Mieder 1993: 149)
12. Beauty is but skin-deep; common sense is thicker than water. (Mieder et al. 1992: 41)
13. Necessity is the mother of strange bedfellows. (Berman 1997: 298)
14. It's never too late to say die. (Berman 1997: 91)
15. Think twice before you speak to a friend in need. (Bierce 1958: 120)
16. Be it ever so mortgaged, there's no place like home. (Old postcard) (Berman 1997: 192)
17. The early bird befouls its nest. (Mieder et al. 1992: 52)
18. Constipation is the thief of time.
Diarrhoea waits for no man. (Rees 1980: 40)

7. Fill in the blanks with proverbs.

1.....This is so - just as soon as we get familiarized with castor oil, for instance, we contempt it. (Josh Billings, in Berman 1997: 132)

2. 'I'm not in the running for any big deal,' he said. 'Besides,.....' 'You've been bitten more than once,' Sally reminded him. (K. S. Prichard, *Winged Seeds*)

3....., says the proverb, but that is precisely what it never really does. It is the historians who repeat themselves. (Clement F. Rogers, *Verify Your References*)

4. 'When a person makes up a story, the first thing he tries to bear in mind is to make up a story that's plausible. When he relates events just as they happened, the story doesn't sound so plausible.' 'I can't exactly see that,' Della Street objected. 'You've heard the old adage,' he asked, 'that.....?' (E. S. Gardner, *The Case of the Curious Bride*)

5. 'Stop worrying.....' 'Oh, Adrian, I don't think she's a bad penny, not really.' (G. Mitchell, *Mudflats of Dead*)

6. It is not true that..... Mr. Churchill has gathered a great deal of moss. Not that a stone, whether stationary or rolling, is a suitable symbol for this extraordinary man. He is like a rocket that intermittently dazzles the night sky, disappears, and dazzles it again; flashes now from this quarter, now from that; is always meteoric but never extinguished. (A. G. Gardiner, *Genius Without Judgment: Churchill at Fifty*)

7..... Yet most would be slow to acknowledge...that Caesar himself ought to be so too. (J. C. Hare, *Guesses at the Truth*)

8..... but when it's coming down in buckets, it's hard to think of the goddamn May flowers. (Berman 1997: 15)

9. Piper said, 'You should go to bed earlier and you wouldn't need to sleep during the day.'

'I was in bed last night earlier than I've been for months,' Quinn said. 'What's more, I was up early this morning. And it only succeeded in disproving the old adage.'

'Which one?'

'..... With me it works in reverse. I feel lousy, I'm flat broke - and I'm no wiser about the Whittle affair than I was

when I started.' (H. Carmichael, *Too Late for Tears*)

10. Aunt Prue in Yorkshire...will be able to instruct you, that.....
.....; and that you ought not to be in haste to take a first
offer, for fear you should not have a second. (S. Richardson, *The History of
Sir Charles Grandison*)

11. In peacetime, patience is a requirement as well as a virtue in
a civil servant who knows that and waste
makes you liable to Congressional investigation; whereas, in wartime, im-
patience is essential (R. E. Sherwood, *Roosevelt and Hopkins*)

12....when you practice perfection. (Berman 1997: 340)

13....and make rye while the moon shines. (Berman 1997: 183)

14....but you can't breed without familiarity. (Nicolas Slominsky,
Perfect Pitch)

15....but friends are for enjoying, not needing. (Berman 1997: 149)

16....How can birds flock any other way? (Henny Youngman, in
Berman 1997: 31)

8. Match the two parts of anti-proverbs below (Berman 1997).

A	B
1. Lightning never strikes the same place twice	a....especially when you forget to light the gas.
2. Faint heart never won fair lady	b....But not the kind of silver you can take to the bank.
3. Do unto others as you would have them do unto you	c.... but their water bill is bigger.
4. Two is company, three is a crowd	d.... but it can be more expensive.
5. The best things in life are free	e....but it's nevertheless good practice to steer clear of the locality where it's been in the habit of hitting.
6. A watched pot never boils	f.... murmured the thief as he broke a window and helped himself to a TV set.
7. A little knowledge is a dangerous thing	g....Keep that in mind next time you want a swarm of flies.
8. Every cloud has a silver lining	h....but there is always free cheese in a mouse-trap.
9. Money talks	i....Even when it whispers, people listen and hear it.
10. A word to the wise is sufficient	j.... but the second best can run into real money.
11. Accidents will happen (in the best regulated families	k....but they're broken down here on earth.
12. Patience is a virtue	l....but better not expect others to do unto you what you do unto them.
13. God helps those who help themselves	m....that's how lots of families get started.
14. There's no fool like an old fool	n....only when the word is wise.
15. You can catch more flies with honey than vinegar	o....but you've got to have a lot of patience to acquire it.
16. You can fool some of the people all of the time, and all of the people some of the time, but you cannot fool all of the people all of the time	p....but clothes can break the man.
17. The grass is always greener on the other side of the fence	q....but a faint whisper often catches her.
18. There's no such thing as a free lunch	r.... and a lawyer to write the contract.
19. It takes two to make a bargain	s....and four is a bridge game.
20. Marriages are made in heaven	t....and a lot can be lethal.
21. It is more blessed to give than to receive	u.... You just can't beat experience.
22. Clothes don't make the man.	v.... Don't be greedy; fooling some of the people all of the time is good enough.

9. Can you recognize proverbs Guiterman twists and changes in the poem “A Proverbial Tragedy”? List as many as you can.

Arthur Guiterman, *A Proverbial Tragedy*

The Rolling Stone and the Turning Worm
And the Cat that looked at a King
Set forth on the Road that Leads to Rome-
For Youth will have its Fling,
The Goose will lay the Golden Eggs,
The Dog must have his Day,
And Nobody locks the Stable Door
Till the Horse is stol’n away.

But the Rolling Stone, that was never known
To Look before the Leap
Plunged down the hill to the Waters Still
That run so dark, so deep;
And the leaves were stirred by the Early Bird
Who sought his breakfast where
He marked the squirm of the Turning Worm-
And the Cat was Killed by Care!

10. Paraphrase the italicized proverbs in the following quotations, using one of the proverbs learned.

1. But that’s all ex post facto wisdom. *Any fool would be wise after the event.* (G. Marion, Stop the Press!)

2. *Look for the silver lining*

When ‘ere a cloud appears in the blue
Remember somewhere the sun is shining
And so the right thing to do
Is make it shine for you.
A heart full of joy and gladness

- Can always banish sadness and strife
 So *always look for the silver lining*
 And try to find the sunny side of life. (J. Kern, *Look for the Silver Lining*)
3. Dress works wonders, and the tailor... doubtless helps to make the man.
 (G. Whyte-Melville, *Market Harborough*)
4. One can't be too careful in choosing a well-bred cat's company... *Evil communications corrupt good manners*. (M. Innes, *Appleby's Answer*)
5. There was a political ring in Philadelphia in which the major, certain members of the council, the treasurer, the chief of police... and others shared. It was a case generally of "*You scratch my back and I'll scratch yours*". (Th. Dreiser, *The Financier*)
6. 'I suppose... you would marry any man with a good character and a fine estate.'... '*Beggars can't be choosers, you mean!*' (J. Shearing, *Blance Fury* 72)
7. 'The danger of public business is that it never ends.'... 'What I say is that *everybody's business is nobody's business*.' (G. B. Shaw, *Misallians*)
8. I could have gi'en you advisement...but now it's like after meat mustard.
 (W. Scott, *The Fortunes of Nigel*)
9. *Don't halloo till you're out of the wood*. I'll bet my head to a china orange we shall have trouble before to-morrow night. (E. C. R. Lorac, *Crime Countert Crime*)
10. A letter may have gone wrong. Depend upon it, that is what has happened. The Post Office is a wonderful institution, but *even Homer nods*. (D. L. Sayers, *Busman's Honeymoon*)

11. Substitute one of the proverbs you know for these quotations.

1. When I do good, I feel good; when I do bad, I feel bad, and that is my religion. (Abraham Lincoln, in Berman 1997: 430)
2. What is pornography to one man is the laughter of genius to another. (D.H. Lawrence, *Pornography and Obscenity*)
3. He that is thy friend indeed,
 He will help thee in thy need. (Shakespeare, *Passionate Pilgrim*)

4. Withhold not correction from the child: for if thou beatest him with the rod, he shall not die. Though shalt beat him with the rod, and shalt deliver his soul from hell. (*Proverbs* 23,13-14)

5. Little drops of water poured into the milk,
Give the milkman's daughter lovely gowns of silk.

Little grains of sugar mingled with the sand,

Make the grocer's assets swell to beat the band. (Walt Mason, *Little Things*)

6. Drink today and drown all sorrow;

You shall, perhaps, not do it tomorrow. (Woods 1967: 333)

7. Murder may pass unpunish'd for a time,

But tardy justice will o'ertake the crime. (Dryden, *The Cock and the Fox*)

12. What proverbs are reduced or alluded to in the following excerpts?

1. We cross our bridges when we come to them and burn our bridges behind us, with nothing to show for our progress except a memory of the smell of smoke, and a presumption that once our eyes watered. (T. Stoppard, *Rosencratz & Guildenstern are Dead*)

2. You can buy the average fool for a couple of bucks, but a wise and honest man will cost you plenty. Being honest, he knows what he is worth, and being wise, he knows how to get somewhat more than he is worth. (Richard Needham, in Berman 1997: 257)

3. There were two brothers who looked very much alike. One was a minister and the other a doctor. The medical brother was greeted on the street one day by a man who said, "I wish to compliment you on your fine sermon last Sunday, Doctor." The other shook his head and replied, "I'm sorry, but I'm not the doctor who preaches - I'm the one who practices." (Esar 1945: 132)

4. Mrs. Van Twiller (who mistakes Dr. Jovial for a physician) - "And what do you practice, Doctor?"

The Reverend Dr. Jovial - "Ah, madam, I do not practice; I only preach." (Braude 1955: 121)

5. The formula for success is a secret, the formula for failure is to try to please everybody. (Esar 1968: 778)

13. What proverbs are connected in the following excerpts?

1. "Wise lad!" he said. "That's another reason why I'm what I am. Don't let any mistake be made about it! - the old saw, much despised and laughed at though it is, has more in it than anybody thinks for. Get to your pillow early, and leave it early! - that's the sure thing."

"I don't think I should like to get up as early as you do, though," remarked Mr. Raven. "You certainly don't give the worms much chance!"

"Aye, and I've caught a few in my time," assented the old gentleman, complacently. "And I hope to catch a few more yet. You folk who don't get up till the morning's half over don't know what you miss." (J. S. Fletcher, *Ravensdane Court*)

2. Slurp... One sound is often 2,000 pictures. Do you feel you shouldn't advertise on radio because people have to see the product? Try this test. Buy your child a chocolate shake. Then cover your ears and watch him/her drink the shake. Next, treat your child to another chocolate shake. This time, close your eyes and listen to him/her drink the shake...Hearing is believing. (*Fortune*, Nov. 6, 1978)

3. Changing horses, love? I should look before you leap. (D. May, *Revenge's Comedy*)

4. The early worm gets the rubbish

Worms are turning, or at any rate recycling, in a London council's attempts to cut down domestic rubbish.

Tomorrow Sutton begins a major experiment in which householders will be encouraged to put their waste food, tea bags and other organic refuse into 'wormeries' - plastic containers holding a colony of Tiger worms. (*Sunday Telegraph*, May 17, 1992)

5. Yes, and you want to know what got me into this mess? Going to bed at ten o'clock, that's what. That spells ruin. T-e-en-space-o-apostrophe-c-l-o-c-k: ruin. Early to bed, and you'll wish you were dead. Bed before eleven, nuts before seven. Bed before morning, sailors give warning. (Dorothy Parker, *The Little Hours*)

6. A handsome young fellow in New York, in great distress for want of money, married last week a rich old woman of seventy. He was no doubt

miserable for want of money, and she for want of a husband; and “misery makes strange bedfellows.” (G. D. Prentice, *Louisville Journal*, ca. 1860, in Berman 1997: 276)

7. He did not actually suggest that she should come home. Evidently it was still necessary that she should remain out of sight and out of mind - a skeleton in a distant and well-locked cupboard. (G. Orwell, *A Clergyman's Daughter*)

14. Fill in the blanks of the jokes below with proverbs.

1. A delivery boy was trying to enter a yard with some bundles but stopped at the gate because of a vicious, barking dog on the other side. “Oh, come on in,” encouraged the owner from a window. “You know the old proverb: ‘.....’” “Yeah, I know the proverb,” admitted the boy, “and you know the proverb. But what worries me is, does the dog know the proverb?” (Esar 1945: 351)

2. Two men were traveling together. The first morning out one of them was up bright and early. “Come, come,” he said, prodding the other. “Don’t you know that.....?” “Well, it serves the worm right for being up so early,” mumbled the other as he turned over, “and my wife says that I’m a worm.” (Esar 1945: 143)

3. Teacher was investigating a little altercation. “And what did you do, John, when Thomas called you a liar?” she asked. “I remembered what you said, teacher, that ‘.....,’” replied John. “Why, excellent,” approved the teacher, “and what soft answer did you make?” “I hit him with a rotten tomato,” said John grimly. (Esar 1945: 18-19)

4. Teacher was giving a lesson on the wonders and powers of nature, and in the course of it she questioned, “Now, Tommy, can you tell us why it is that?” “I’ll say,” replied Tommy. “It’s ’cause after it strikes once the same place ain’t there any more.” (Esar 1945: 267)

5. Hubby was very fond of quoting proverbs. So one evening as he sat idly watching his wife trying to put the fretful baby to sleep, he remarked cheerily, “Don’t get annoyed, dear. Just remember that, ‘.....’”

.....” “That’s wonderful,” said the wife wearily. “Suppose you step over here and rule the world awhile and let me the rest.” (Esar 1945: 351)

6. A farmer had been moaning to a friend about adverse farming conditions until finally the friend objected, “It’s not that bad, Hi. Remember ‘.....’” “Humph!” grunted Hiram. “It’d be better if they had an arsenic linin’ then when it rained it’d spray the crops with bug-killer as well as water ‘em.” (Esar 1945: 85)

7. “Father, what is it?”

“It says here, ‘.....’ Is that so, Father?”

“Yes, yes, yes.”

“Well, Father, if a good man keeps company with a bad man, is the good man bad because he keeps company with the bad man, or is the bad man good because he keeps company with the good man?” -Punch. (Edmund and Workman Williams 1921: 202)

8. “Ah, me!” moaned Brown after he had had another disappointment. “....” “That’s true enough,” agreed Black, “but at least death doesn’t get worse every time Congress meets.” (Esar 1945: 442)

15. Sum up the fables below by using a proper proverb.

1. Aesop, *Why the Ant Is a Thief*

The first ant began life as a human being. He was a farmer who, not content with the fruit of his own labours, kept casting envious eyes on his neighbours’ produce and stealing it. His greed made Zeus so angry that he transformed him into the insect which we call the ant. But even when his form was altered his character remained unchanged. To this day he goes to and fro in the fields collecting other people’s wheat and barley and storing it up for himself. (Aesop 1964: 140)

2. Aesop, *Mercury and the Man Bitten by an Ant*

A man once saw a ship go down with all its crew, and commented severely on the injustice of the gods. "They care nothing for a man's character," said he, "but let the good and the bad go to their deaths together." There was an ant-heap close by where he was standing, and, just as he spoke, he was bitten in the foot by an Ant. Turning in a temper to the ant-heap he stamped upon it and crushed of unoffending ants. Suddenly Mercury appeared, and belaboured him with his staff, saying as he did so, "You villain, where's your nice sense of justice now?" (Aesop 1994: 192)

3. Aesop, *Ready for Action*

A wild boar was standing against a tree and whetting his tusks. A fox asked why he sharpened them when no huntsman was pursuing him and no danger threatened. 'I have a reason for doing so,' he replied. 'If danger overtakes me, I shall not have time then to sharpen them, but they will be all ready for use.' (Aesop 1964: 40)

4. Aesop, *The Father and His Daughters*

A Man had two Daughters, one of whom he gave in marriage to a gardener, and the other to a potter. After a time he thought he would go and see how they were getting on; and first he went to the gardener's wife. He asked her how she was, and how things were going with herself and her husband. She replied that on the whole they were doing very well: "But," she continued, "I do wish we could have some good heavy rain: the garden wants it badly." Then he went on to the potter's wife and made the same inquiries of her. She replied that she and her husband had nothing to complain of: "But," she went on, "I do wish we could have some nice dry weather, to dry the pottery." Her Father looked at her with a humorous expression on his face. "You want dry weather," he said, "and your sister wants rain. I was going to ask in my prayers that your wishes should be granted; but now it strikes me I had better not refer to the subject." (Aesop 1994: 155-156)

16. What proverb would you use as the title of the following verse by Frederic E. Weatherly?

.....

There were three young maids of Lee;
They were fair as fair can be,
And they had lovers three times three,
For they were fair as fair can be,
These three young maids of Lee.
But these young maids they cannot find
A lover each to suit her mind;
The plain-spoke lad is far too rough,
The rich young lord is not rich enough,
The one is too poor, and one is too tall,
And one just an inch too short for them all.
“Others pick and choose, and why not we?
We can very well wait,” said the maids of Lee.
There were three young maids of Lee;
They were fair as fair can be,
And they had lovers three times three
For they were fair as fair can be,
These three young maids of Lee.

There are three young maids of Lee;
And they are old as old can be,
And one is deaf, and one cannot see,
And they are all as cross as a gallows-tree,
These three old maids of Lee.
Now, if any one chanced - ‘tis a chance remote -
One single charm in these maids to note,
He need not a poet nor handsome be,
For one is dead and one cannot see;
He need not woo on his bended knee,

For they all are willing as willing can be.
He may take the one, or the two, or the three,
If he'll only take them away from Lee.
There are three young maids at Lee;
They are cross as cross can be,
And there they are, and there they'll be
To the end of the chapter, one, two, three,
These three old maids of Lee.

17. Render into English the following Hungarian proverbs.

1. Aki korán kel, aranyat lel.
2. Pénz beszél, kutya ugat.
3. Amilyen a mosdó, olyan a törülköző.
4. Ebül szerzett jószag ebül vész el.
5. Jóból is megárt a sok.
6. Aki kíváncsi, az hamar megöregszik.
7. A sötétben minden tehén fekete.
8. A szomszéd rétje mindig zöldebb.
9. Csödörből vödörbe.
10. Nagy ember nagyot botlik.
11. Vér nem válik vízzé.
12. A jó pap is holtig tanul.
13. Biztos csak a halál.
14. Tisztaság fél egészség.
15. Az igazságot nem lehet véka alá rejteni.
16. Szükség törvényt bont.
17. Előbb a munka, aztán a szorakozás.
18. Farkast emlegetnek, a kert alatt jár.
19. Ha a ha nem volna, koldus is úr volna.
20. Ne tegy fel mindent egy lapra.
21. Több szem többet lát.
22. Akármilyen kedves vendég, három napig untig elég.

23. Késő az agg ebet táncra tanítani.
24. Jobb félni, mint megijedni.
25. A vízbefúló a szalmaszálhoz is kapkod.
26. Több nap, mint kolbász.
27. Szemérmes koldusnak üres a tarisznája.

18. Below you will find the beginnings of proverbs completed by small children. Correct their answers.

1. Don't cross your bridges before you...pay the toll.
2. Strike while the...bug is close.
3. Still waters...will get you nowhere.
4. Don't bite the hand that... looks dirty.
5. A miss is as good as a...Mr!
6. You can't teach an old dog new...math.
7. Don't cut off your nose to...get away from the smell.
8. If you lie down with the dogs...you'll stink in the morning.
9. An idle mind is...the best way to relax.
10. Where there's smoke... there's pollution.
11. Happy the bride...who gets all the presents.
12. A penny saved is...not much.
13. Laugh and the world laughs with you. Cry and...you have to blow your nose.
14. The pen is mightier than the...pigs.
15. What's good for the goose is...a gooster.
16. When the cat's away...no pooh!
17. Children should be seen and not...spanked or grounded.
18. If at first you don't succeed...get new batteries.
19. When the blind leadeth the blind...get out of their way. (proverbs 1-19, Stark 1982)
20. Two heads are... enough.
21. Spare the rod and...throw in the reel.
22. Half a loaf is better than...vegetables.

23. You can't get blood out of a...sick duck.

24. Fools rush in where...people are crowded. (proverbs 21-24, Monteiro 1968: 128)

19. Sum up the joke below by using a proper proverb.

"Why, I'm ashamed of you, my son," The father screamed at his lazy offspring. "When George Washington was your age, he had become a surveyor and was hard at work." "And when he was your age," shot back the lad, "he was President of the United States." (Adams 1959: 145)

20. What proverbs may be used as the title of the fable below?

Aesop '.....'

A mother crab was telling her son not to walk sideways or rub its sides against the wet rock. 'All right, mother,' it replied; 'since you want to teach me, walk straight yourself. I'll watch you and copy you.' (Aesop 1964: 135)

Appendix 6

Two sample lessons

A Miss Is as Good as a Mile: Metaphor³⁵²

“Where did you get the new book, Danny?” inquired mother as the boy came in with the volume under his arm. “It’s a prize from school, replied Danny. “A prize for what, dear?” asked mother. “For natural history,” was the answer. “Teacher asked how many legs an ostrich had, and I told her three.” “But an ostrich has two legs,” objected mother. “I know that now,” agreed the boy. “But I was closest - all the rest of them said four.” (Esar 1945: 346)

PROVERBS

1. **A miss is as good as a mile.** (DAP 413; ODEP 535; CODP 171; MPPS 414; NTC 10-11)
2. **Hell [The road [way] to hell] is paved with good intentions.** (DAP 297, 644, 514; ODEP 367; CODP 216; MPPS 673; NTC 207)
3. **Hitch your wagon to a star.** (DAP 637; ODEP 375; MPPS 661; NTC 109-110)
4. **If the shoe [cap] fits, wear it.** (DAP 82, 536; ODEP 101; CODP 36, 227-228; MPPS 91, 560; NTC 116)
5. **If you can’t stand the heat, get out of the kitchen.** (CODP 126; NTC 117)
6. **In the country [land, kingdom] of the blind, the one-eyed man is king.** (DAP 56; ODEP 428; CODP 51; MPPS 350; NTC 120-121)
7. **It’s an ill wind that blows nobody any good.** (DAP 656; ODEP 401;

³⁵² This Unit was first published (with some changes) in T. Litovkina 2000: 41–46.

CODP 136; MPPS 685-686; NTC 126-127)

8. **The pot calls [is calling] the kettle black.** (DAP 345-346, 476; ODEP 421; MPPS 506-507; NTC 206)

9. **When in Rome, do as (the) Romans do.** (DAP 515; ODEP 683; CODP 217; MPPS 536; NTC 229-230)

10. **Where there is smoke, there is fire.** [(There's) no smoke without fire]. (DAP 549; ODEP 573; CODP 232-233; MPPS 576; NTC 215)

ACTIVITIES

1. Read the following extracts and try to guess the meaning of the italicized proverbs.

1. Man. A narrow shave; but *a miss is as good as a mile*. (B. Shaw, *Arms and the Man*)

He was very near being a poet - but *a miss is as good as a mile*, and he always fell short of the mark. (Scott, *Journal*, Dec. 3., 1825)

2. Augustus. This is perfectly monstrous. Not in the least what I intended.

The Clerk. Hell -

Augustus. Sir!

The Clerk. *Hell*, they say, *is paved with good intentions*.

Augustus (springing to his feet). Do you mean to insinuate that *hell is paved with my good intentions* - with the good intentions of his Majesty's Government? (B. Shaw, *Augustus Does His Bit*)

3. *Hitch your wagon to a star*. Let us not fag in paltry works which serve our pot and bag alone. (R. W. Emerson, *Society and Solitude*, 'Civilization')

4. *If the cap fits*, Rector, you must *wear it*, and if you want to take your custom away from me for saying it, you'll be provin' to me that it fits right well. (A. G. Street, *The Endless Furrow*)

Why should Mr. Vanderbeek apply a general comparison to himself? *Let those whom the shoe fits wear it*. (*New-York Gazette and Weekly Mercury*, 1773, May 17)

'That does not mean I admit for a moment *the cap fitted*,' he declared dis-

tinctly. (J. Conrad, *Lord Jim*)

5. A few months later Truman said in a speech, “The President gets a lot of hot potatoes from every direction and a man who can’t handle them has no business on the job. That makes me think of a saying that I used to hear from my old friend and colleague on the Jackson County Court. He said, “Harry, *if you can’t stand the heat you better get out of the kitchen!*” (Keyes 1992: 5)

6. At last *among the blind the one-eyed man was king*...There are men much more limited than David. (*Guardian*, Oct. 3, 1979)

7. ‘Catherine!.. Mr. Peveral has offered you an engagement! *It’s an ill wind that blows nobody any good*...’ ‘Oh, Uncle, please!.. he’s engaged me to please you. He can’t think very much of me. I was so bad to-day.’ (P. H. Johnson, *Catherine Carter*)

My good fortune (truly *it is an ill wind that blows nobody any good*) was almost too much for me. (S. Warren, *Diary of Late Physician*)

8. But a very few weeks after Voltaire’s arrival, little clouds of discord become visible on the horizon; and one can overhear *the pot and the kettle*, in strictest privacy *calling each other black*. (L. Strachey, *Biographical Essays*, ‘*Voltaire and Frederick the Great*’)

9. ‘I thought the English never bothered about protocol?’ ‘*When in Rome*, however, *we do, as the Romans do*.’ (N. Mitford, *Don’t Tell Alfred*)

10. *There was no Smoak but some Fire*: either he was dishonest, or indiscreet. (T. Fuller, *Church Hist. Britain*)

Mrs Carter protested that it was merely nervous reaction, but to Berenice it seemed that *where there was so much smoke there must be some fire*. (Th. Dreiser, *The Titan*)

2. Build up situations of your own around the following proverbs: *A miss is as good as a mile. If the shoe fits, wear it. Hitch your wagon to a star. If you can’t stand the heat, get out of the kitchen. It’s an ill wind that blows nobody any good. The pot calls the kettle black. Where there is smoke, there is fire*. For example:

- Gregory has advertised his car and his holiday cottage for selling at the same time. Isn't it strange?
- It is. I'm sure he has gone bankrupt. *Where there is smoke, there is fire.* (Anikó Tóth, student, JPTE)

3. Match the proverb from column A that corresponds to its definition in column B.

A	B
1. A miss is as good as a mile.	a. A visitor must follow the host's customs and ways of doing things, and must not expect the other people to change something just to please him.
2. The road to hell is paved with good intentions.	b. If the words of blame or criticism apply to you, you should accept them.
3. Hitch your wagon to a star.	c. You should always set high goals in everything you are doing.
4. If the shoe fits, wear it.	d. Merely good intentions, not translated into actions, are of no value.
5. If you can't stand the heat, get out of the kitchen.	e. Almost having achieved something and missing your objective by a narrow margin is the same as not having achieved it at all or missing it by a great margin.
6. In the country of the blind, the one-eyed man is king.	f. A person who has a greater ability than those around him will attain a powerful position and have advantage even if he is not particularly good at something.
7. It's an ill wind that blows nobody any good.	g. If the pressures of some situation or job are too much for you, quit (a favorite proverb of President Harry Truman).
8. The pot calls the kettle black.	h. In every misfortune, difficulty or loss there is someone who benefits by it.
9. When in Rome, do as the Romans do.	i. There must be some truth behind every rumor.
10. Where there is smoke, there is fire.	j. People tend to criticize others for the faults they have themselves.

4. Fill in the blanks with proverbs. Proverbs to fill in: a) *Good intentions do pave the way to hell*; b) *A miss is as good as a mile*; c) *It's the pot and the kettle*; d) *If you can't stand the heat, get out of the kitchen*; e) *Do at Rome as the Romans do*; f) *No smoke without fire*.

1., your reverence. Many a cannon ball has passed me nearer than your horse's hoof. (Blackmore, *Maid Sker*)

2. '.....,' said the detective-constable largely. 'Smoke signals can be misread,' countered Sloan. (C. Aird, *Dead Liberty*)

3. His first marriage...was the result of my interference
..... (E. X. Giroux, *Death for Adonis*)

4. Hornby (with a little smile). Well, are you enjoying the land of promise as much as you said I should?

'Nephew,' said the old man. 'You have been a dutiful son, I hear.'

'Ecod!' said Jonas... 'I've been as good a son as ever you were a brother....., if you come to that.' (Ch. Dickens, *Martin Chuzzlewit*)

5. Not only does medical school not teach them to cope with the stresses and learning difficulties inherent in the work, it actually makes them worse...They come in with a healthy approach. Within weeks they realise that the pressure is such that they must either get down to it or get out. The attitude they get from most of their teachers is '.....
.....' (*Guardian*, Oct. 4, 1991)

6. Don't put on the sabots again. I told you... they were not quite the thing for this country..... (Ch. Brontë, *Shirley*)

5. Match the proverbs from each column that are equivalent in meaning.

- | A | B |
|---|---|
| 1. A leopard cannot change his spots. | a. One man's loss is another man's gain. |
| 2. The pot calls the kettle black. | b. You can see a mote in another's eye but cannot see a beam in your own. |
| 3. It's an ill wind that blows nobody any good. | c. You can't make a silk purse out of a sow's ear. |
| 4. Strike while the iron is hot. | d. Two of a trade seldom agree. |
| 5. Diamond cuts diamond. | e. Make hay while the sun shines. |

6. After reading the anti-proverbs below, transform some proverbs in this unit into parodies.

A miss is as good as a male. (Kilroy 1985: 260)

A Miss is as good as a Mrs. (Loomis 1949: 356)

If you can't stand the heat, go back to the kitchen. (U.N. Ambassador Jeane Kirkpatrick, on her wish to retire from the pressures of political life, in Berman 1997: 186)

In the kingdom of the one-eyed, he would steal you blind. (Rosten 1972: 28)

It's an ill wind that shows no pretty knees. (Copeland 1965: 787)

The road to hell is paved. It has to be; it gets a lot of traffic. (Berman 1997: 187)

Where there's smoke, there's burnt toast. (Berman 1997: 378)

Where there's smoke there's pollution. (Weller 1982)

7. Match the American proverbs from column A with their Hungarian equivalents from column B.

A

1. Don't count your chickens before they are hatched.
2. The road to hell is paved with good intentions.
3. In the country of the blind, the one-eyed man is king.
4. The pot calls the kettle black.
5. Where there is smoke, there is fire.
6. A leopard cannot change his spots.
7. A little pot is soon hot.
8. A bad penny always comes back.
9. All cats are black at night.
10. Every cloud has a silver lining.
11. The grass is always greener on the other side of the fence.

B

- a. Vakok közt a félszemű a király.
- b. Nincsen füst tűz nélkül. A kutya nem ugat hiába.
- c. Bagoly mondja a verébnek, hogy nagyfejű. Más szemében a szálkát meglátja, a magáéban a gerendát se.
- d. A pokolba vezető út is jó szándékkal van kikövezve.
- e. Kutyából nem lesz szalonna.
- f. Kicsi csupor hamar felforr.
- g. A sötétben minden tehén fekete.
- h. A szomszéd rétje mindig zöldebb.
- i. Ne igyál előre a medve bőrére.
- j. Rossz pénz nem vész el.
- k. Borúra derű. Minden rosszban van valami jó.

8. What incidents in your life confirm or contradict the moral of the proverbs of this unit? After reading the humorous folktale below, construct a narrative which demonstrates the wisdom or fallacy of one of the proverbs in this unit.

The Foo Bird

Did you hear about the Foo bird? Well, the Foo bird lives in the deepest Amazon, in this one region. There was this old Indian temple, and these archaeologists, about three of them, went down to explore this Indian temple.

They recruited native help, and as they were going through the jungle they came upon this one section, and the native guides wouldn't go any further. And the three archaeologists asked them why not, and they said, "Well, that is the domain of the Foo bird." And they said, "What is the Foo bird?" And the Indians said it was a powerful bird that flies by very dangerous, and the archaeologists didn't believe it. They started to go in, and this great big bird flies over, and they can hear the natives say, "The Foo bird, the Foo bird!" And the Foo bird shits, and it lands on one of the archaeologists. The archaeologist wipes it off, as any person would wipe off shit from a bird, you know. As soon as the last bit is off, he falls down dead. So this kind of upsets the two archaeologists, but they are determined to go on and explore these temples.

After a couple of thorough exploring of the temple, they start on their way back, and at about a quarter of the way back, they hear the flapping of wings and see this same kind of bird, a Foo bird, fly overhead. It shits, and it lands on one of the archaeologists. He jumps right into a river which is right next to where they are walking. He washes all the Foo shit off, and as soon as the last bit of it is all off, he keels over dead.

Well, this really upsets the third archaeologist, and he is determined to get out of that jungle as fast as he can. So he starts running and running. He is almost out of the area where the bird lives when one flies over and shits on him. And he thinks back what happened to his two friends when they washed and wiped off all the shit and cleaned it off. So he decides just to leave it. So he has what he wanted: films and documents and all this other stuff from the temple. And he goes back still worrying of the Foo shit that landed on his head, and he takes back, everything back, to New York where he was situated. And he lives a normal life, as normal a life as anyone can live with a pile of Foo shit on your head. And gradually, you know, the Foo shit wears away. About ten years later, he has got just a very little speck of Foo shit left on his head, and he is kinda old, so he decides just the hell with it; he is going to brush it off. So he brushes that last bit of the Foo shit off, and as soon as he does that, he falls dead. You know what the moral of that is? *If the Foo shits, wear it.* (Baker 1986: 52-53)

9. Link the beginnings of proverbs in A with their endings in B.

A

1. As the twig is bent,
2. Grass doesn't grow
3. Sweep in front of
4. The cat in gloves
5. The cat that would eat fish
6. The sleeping fox
7. You can't tell a frog
8. You can't put a round peg
9. Don't pour new wine
10. Don't build your castles
11. Shoemaker,

B

- a. on a busy street.
- b. must wet her feet.
- c. stick to your last.
- d. catches no poultry.
- e. by the size of his jump.
- f. so grows the tree.
- g. catches no mice.
- h. in old bottles.
- i. in the air.
- j. in a square hole.
- k. your own door first.

10. Sum up the fable below by using a proper proverb. Proverbs to choose from: *A leopard cannot change his spots. The road to hell is paved with good intentions. Care killed the cat. Give a dog a bad name and hang him. Great oaks from little acorns grow. It's an ill bird that fouls its own nest. The grass is always greener on the other side of the fence.*

Aesop, *The Sick Stag*

A Stag fell sick and lay in a clearing in the forest, too weak to move from the spot. When the news of his illness spread, a number of the other beasts came to inquire after his health, and they one and all nibbled a little of the grass that grew round the invalid till at last there was not a blade within his reach. In a few days he began to mend, but was still too feeble to get up and go in search of fodder; and thus he perished miserably of hunger owing to the thoughtlessness of his friends. (Aesop 1997: 140)

11. Here are some metaphorical proverbs of various peoples of the world. Choose a proverb and write a story illustrating it.

A boat doesn't go forward if each one is rowing his own way. (African / Swahili/)

A calf will not follow horses. (African /Hausa/)

A crooked branch has a crooked shadow. (Japanese)

A fly can drive away horses. (Greek)

A needle is small but its metal is strong. (African /Kpelle/)

A serpent, though it is put in a bamboo tube, won't crawl straight. (Korean)

Asses carry the oats and horses eat them. (Dutch)

Better have one bee than a host of flies. (Italian)

Beware of a door that has many keys. (Portuguese)

Do not set the mill on fire in order to burn the mice. (Rumanian)

Golden coins make our crooked windows look straight. (Greek)

He who chases after a deer will take no notice of hares. (Korean)

He who has brewed the porridge must eat it himself. (Russian)

It is the mother hippopotamus which shows the little one how to dive. (African /Bemba/)

Little brooks make great rivers. (French)

No grass grows under the stone that is often moved. (Swedish)

One armpit cannot hold two watermelons. (Turkish)

One pebble doesn't make a floor. (African /Hausa/)

One's own shirt is closer to one's body. (Russian)

Play with an ass, and he will slap your face with his tail. (Portuguese)

The bird seeks the tree, not the tree the bird. (Mexican)

The butterfly that flies among the thorns will tear its wings. (African /Jabo/)

The hunchback does not see his own hump, but he sees his brother's. (French)

The hungry belly and the full belly do not walk the same road. (Jamaican)

You can't hide a drum under a blanket. (Iranian)

You can't make cheesecakes out of snow. (Yiddish)

12. Using any proverbs of this lesson, write an ad. For example:

As we all know There's no smoke without fire and that's how we care for your and your family's lives.

Our 100% reliable SMOKE-DETECTOR equipment starts alarming even at smoke unsmelled or unseen by humans. Come and see for yourself! (Noémi Horváth, student, ELTE)

If you can't stand the heat, buy RAYNOR AIR CONDITIONERS. (Zsuzsanna Haraszti, student, ELTE)

When in Rome, eat SPAGHETTI. (Zsuzsanna Haraszti, student, ELTE)

13. Fill in the gaps with the appropriate words from this list: *acorns, bird, bone, broom, cloud, cup, dog (3 times), hand, horse, lining, lip, name, oaks, penny, pot, slip, stone, tricks, water (3 times), worm, well.*

1. A bad..... always comes back.
2. A barking..... never bites.
3. A little..... is soon hot.
4. A new..... sweeps clean.
5. Constant dropping wears away a.....
6. Every..... has a silver.....
7. Give a..... a bad..... and hang him.
8. Great..... from little..... grow.
9. Still..... runs deep.
10. The early..... catches the.....
11. One..... washes the other
12. There is many a..... 'twixt the..... and the.....
13. What is bred in the..... will come out in the.....
14. You can lead a..... to....., but you can't make him drink.
15. You can't teach an old..... new.....
16. You never miss the..... till the..... runs dry.

14. Try to identify the proverbs from the initial letters given below.

1. A m... is a. g... a. a m...; 2. Where t.... i. s...., t.... i. f...; 3. H.... y... w.... to a s...; 4. The p.. c.... t.. k.... black; 5. When i. R..., d. a. R..... d..

Time Is Money: Time³⁵³

Time is Money

Magistrate - Ten dollars or ten days, Uncle Rastus?

Uncle Rastus (after long thought) - Well, I guess I'll take the ten dollars. (Welch 1889)

Both management and unions agree that time is money. They just can't agree on how much! (Metcalf 1993: 215)

PROVERBS

1. **Procrastination is the thief of time.** (DAP 485; ODEP 648; CODP 208; MPPS 512; NTC 172-173)
2. **There is a time and place for everything.** (DAP 597; CODP 255; MPPS 627; NTC 212)
3. **There is a time for everything.** (DAP 597; ODEP 823; CODP 255-256; MPPS 627)
4. **There is [has to be; must] (always) a first time (for everything).** (DAP 597; CODP 96; MPPS 627)
5. **(There is) no time like the present.** (DAP 482, 598; ODEP 824; CODP 256; MPPS 626; NTC 216)
6. **Time and tide wait for no man.** (DAP 598; ODEP 822; CODP 255; MPPS 628; NTC 218)
7. **Time flies.** (DAP 598; ODEP 823; CODP 255; MPPS 628; NTC 218)
8. **Time is a [the] great healer. [Time heals all wounds].** (DAP 598; ODEP 823; CODP 256; MPPS 628; NTC 218-219)
9. **Time is money.** (DAP 599; ODEP 823-824; CODP 256; MPPS 629; NTC 219)

³⁵³ This Unit was first published (with some changes) (with some changes) in T. Litovkina 2000: 177–182.

10. **Time will tell.** (DAP 599; CODP 256; MPPS 630; NTC 166)

11. **Time works wonders.** (DAP 599; ODEP 825; CODP 256-257; NTC 219)

ACTIVITIES

1. Read the following extracts and try to guess the meaning of the italicized proverbs.

1. In large letters was the name of a firm... and below, in type smaller, but still of some magnitude, was the dogmatic statement: ***Procrastination is the Thief of Time***. Then a question, startling because of its reasonableness: Why not order today? (W. S. Maugham, *Of Human Bondage*)

2. ***There is a time and place for everything***, and sometimes the warmest admirer of ale would prefer the lymph of the hill-side fountain to the choicest ale. (G. Borrow, *Wild Wales*)

3. Your head runs too much upon Bath; but ***there is a time for every thing*** - a time for balls...and a time for work. (J. Austen, *Northanger Abbey*)

To every thing there is a season, and a time to every purpose under the heaven:

A time to be born, and a time to die; a time to plant, and a time to pluck up that which is planted;

A time to kill, and a time to heal; a time to break down, and a time to build up;

A time to weep, and a time to laugh; a time to mourn, and a time to dance;

A time to cast away stones, and a time to gather stones together; a time to embrace, and a time to refrain from embracing;

A time to get, and a time to lose; a time to keep, and a time to cast away;

A time to rend, and a time to sew; a time to keep silence, and a time to speak;

A time to love, and a time to hate; a time of war, and a time of peace. (*Ecclesiastes* 3,1-9)

4. ***No time like the present***. Come on, get it over with. (J. Smith, *Death*)

Turns Trick)

5. **First time for everything.** In Ronnie's case, first and last. (F. Dickenson, *Kill 'em with Kindness*)

6. Come, come, master, let us get afloat... **Time and tide wait for no man.** (W. Scott, *Nigel*)

7. 'Why, I am fifty-five.' '**Doesn't time fly?**' cried Betty... (J. B. Priestley, *Let the People Sing*)

8. Six years of marital bliss, huh? **Time flies** when you are having fun. (A. Robinson, *Dick and Jane*)

9. He had a terrible shock and loss... But **Time**, as my dear mother used to say, **is a great healer.** (A. Christie, *The Body in the Library*)

10. I can't wait here day after day... **Time's money**, you know. (H. R. F. Keating, *Murder of Maharajah*)

11. The doctor had looked very grave... and had said that **time** alone **could tell.** (E. H. Porter, *Pollyanna*)

12. 'I want you to like me.'...'They say **time works wonders...** and I feel I shall.' (G. J. Whyte-Melville, *Satanella*)

2. Match the proverb from column A that corresponds to its definition in column B.

A	B
1. Procrastination is the thief of time.	a. Things will not wait for you, do not delay taking action.
2. There is a time and place for everything.	b. Procrastination usually ends up in nothing being done properly or accomplished at all.
3. There is a time for everything.	c. Only time will show the outcome of something.
4. There is no time like the present. Time and tide wait for no man.	d. Everything has its appointed time or place to happen.
5. Time works wonders.	e. Time is as valuable as money.
6. Time flies.	f. Various things are appropriate on various occasions.
7. Time is a great healer.	g. Time passes very quickly.
8. Time is money.	h. All insults, injuries and hurts heal over in time.
9. Time will tell.	i. Many problems can be solved with the passing of time.

3. Fill in the blanks with proverbs. Proverbs to fill in: a) *Time is money*; b) *There is no time like the present*; c) *Time will tell*; d) *There's time for everything*; e) *Procrastination is the thief of time*; f) *There's a time and place for everything*.

1. Beware, Lorenzo! a slow, sudden death.
 Be wise to-day, 'tis madness to defer;
 Next day the fatal precedent will plead;
 Thus on, till wisdom is pushed out of life.
;
 Year after year it steals, till all are fled,
 And to the mercies of a moment leaves

The vast concerns of an eternal scene. (E. Young, *Night Thoughts*)

2..... except the things worth doing. Think of something you really care about. Then add hour to hour and calculate the fraction of your life that you've actually spent in doing it. (G. Orwell, *Coming Up for Air*)

3.....

...or so at least they say...some things occur at nighttime...while still others must have day...and there are so many places...needed for so many things...to describe them would be hopeless...thoughts would fly on silver wings...words must know when to be spoken...

deeds must know when to be done... (Ben Burroughs, *Time and Place*)

4. 'If you were a-passing this way, sir, some time in the morning-.'

'.....,' answered Roger. (M. Oliphant, *Second Son*)

5. To reverse-engineer a chip, a company must produce something that achieves exactly the same effects by wholly different means. With a chip as complex as the 486, this could take a great deal of time, and that.....
..... to Intel. (*Independent*, Nov. 27, 1992)

6. 'I'm not...bringing any charge.'...'Oh...a bright idea, perhaps. Or perhaps not so bright.' '.....,' the Superintendent retorted. (J. J. Connington, *Eye in Museum*)

4. Which of the proverbs listed below would you use as the title of the poem by Adelaide Crapsey? Proverbs to choose from: *Third time is lucky. Time flies. Time is the best teacher. Time presses. Time is a great healer. You cannot pluck roses without fear of thorns nor enjoy a fair wife without danger of horns. No rose without thorns. Love never dies.*

Adelaide Crapsey,.....

Yesterday in the garden-close
Budded and blossomed and blew a rose,
Faded and fallen its petals gay;
The rose lies dead in the garden to-day.
But, sweet, I pray you do not sorrow,
As fair a rose will bloom to-morrow.

Yesterday, dearest, you and I,
Swore that our love would never die.
Our vows were frail as all vows be.
To-day love's fled from you and me.
But, sweet, I pray you do not sorrow,
New love will come to us to-morrow.

Thus the hours swiftly by us go;
Well, I e'en wist it must be so.
Do not weep now for what is past,
Love and roses will never last.
Then gaily speed past what is over,
And gladly greet new rose and lover.

5. Do you agree with the moral of all the proverbs of this unit? Can they be wrong in some cases? What incidents in your life contradict them? After reading the poem below, give a situation suggesting a view contrary to the one implicit in a proverb of this lesson.

Edgar Bogardus, *March*

Town clocks in public measures hit
The hour hard and once would beat
In time with my rich heart when set

For eight o'clock by this wild wait

Now how I wait for timeless hands
To heal the cut of certain bonds
And how a town clock senseless sounds
To strike so much: time hurts all wounds

6. After reading the anti-proverbs below, transform some proverbs in this unit into parodies.

Dime is money. (Margo 1982)

I gave my wife a watch for her birthday. I figure there's no present like the time. (Henny Youngman, in Berman 1997)

No wonder time flies - there are so many people trying to kill it. (Esar 1968: 812)

Procreation is the thief of time. (Rees 1980: 103)

There is no time like the pleasant. (Anonymous 1908: 35)

Time wounds all heels. (Anonymous 1961: 200)

To the mother of young children, there's a time and place for everything, except rest. (Esar 1968: 533)

7. Illustrate the proverbs of this unit with situations of your own. For example:

1. A woman is expecting a baby. The members of her family, relatives and friends are preoccupied with the question of whether the baby is a boy, or a girl. The pregnant woman doesn't really care about the baby's sex, as long as it's healthy. The relatives keep asking her if she knows or wants to know the baby's sex, they keep guessing and betting about it, when finally the woman feels fed up with the questions and noise, and says:

"As long as my baby is healthy, I don't care if it's a boy, or a girl. I am patient and you should be patient, too. *Time will tell*, don't worry, and stop

asking these silly questions.” (Emese Nagy, student, JPTE)

2. Two teenagers are walking in the park in the warm summer night. The boy is anxious to kiss the girl, but she doesn't let him. After a while the boy is discouraged, but he decides to ask her why she doesn't want to kiss him. The girl's answer shocks him. Is it possible that she has never been kissed before?

“Well, *there's a first time for everything!*” - he says and kisses her successfully. (Emese Nagy, student, JPTE)

8. Match the American proverbs from column A with their Hungarian equivalents from column B.

A

1. Other times, other customs.
2. The third time is a charm. The third time pays for all. Third time is lucky.
3. Time brings everything to light.
4. Procrastination is the thief of time.
5. There is a time for everything.
6. Time and tide wait for no man.
7. Time is money.
8. Time is a great healer.

B

- a. Késedelem veszedelem.
- b. Az idő legjobb orvos(ság).
- c. Az idő pénz.
- d. Az idő eljár, senkire nem vár.
- e. Három a magyar igazság.
- f. Mindennek megvan a maga ideje.
- g. Az idő mindent kiderít.
- h. Más idők, más erkölcsök.

9. Match the two halves of the proverbs.

A

1. Lost time
2. Moving three times
3. One thing
4. Other times,
5. Take time
6. Times change,
7. You can please some of the people all the time, or all the people some of the time,
8. Nothing is more precious than time,

B

- a. is as bad as a fire.
- b. yet nothing is less valued.
- c. but never all of the people all of the time.
- d. and we change with them.
- e. by the forelock.
- f. other customs.
- g. at a time.
- h. is never found.

10. Here are some proverbs of various peoples of the world. Choose a proverb and write a story illustrating it.

From tomorrow till tomorrow time goes a long journey. (French)

In a lucky time it's good to talk; in an unlucky time, it's better to be silent. (Yiddish)

In the time of rejoicing, rejoicing; in the time of mourning, mourning. (Hebrew)

No one can blow and swallow at the same time. (German)

One cannot drink and whistle at the same time. (Italian)

Those who are happy do not observe how time goes by. (Chinese)

Time and money make everything possible. (Maltese)

Time and patience bring roses. (Slovakian)

Time and patience would bring the snail to Jerusalem. (Irish)

Time and place make the thief. (Dutch)

Time builds a castle and demolishes it. (Slovenian)

Time can alter everything. (Yiddish)

Time heals a wound, but leaves a scar. (Estonian)

Time heals and yet it kills. (Mexican)

Time is not tied to a post, like a horse to the manger. (Danish)
Time passes away, but sayings remain. (Indian /Hindi/)
Time, wind, women, and fortune are changing every moment. (German)
When times are easy we do not burn incense, but when trouble comes we embrace the feet of the Buddha. (Chinese)
You won't die before your time. (Russian)

11. Construct some witty statements with the word ,time'.

12. Read the wellerisms below.

"I'm trifling away your time," as the pickpocket said to the gentleman while stealing his watch.

"I've got time on my hands," said the old man as he picked up the clock.

"It is time to wind up," as the watchmaker said when he found that he couldn't pay his debts.

"Never saw such stirring times," as the spoon said to the saucepan.

"Now I am in the big time," said the pigeon when it flew into the street clock.

"Now is the time to subscribe," said the cross-road's editor, as he led his wealthy bride to the marriage register and shoved a pen into her trembling hand.

"These are the times that try men's soles," as the man said when he was kicked through the streets for lying.

"Time works wonders," as the lady said when she got married after an eight years' courtship.

"You're just in time," as the watch-spring said to the flea which crept in at the key-hole.

13. Match the two halves of the wellerisms

A	B
1. "Time is money,"	a. quoth the vicar, "I'll make it rain."
2. "Time will tell,"	b. remarked the policeman to a man
3. "When you are all agreed	he arrested.
upon the time,"	c. as the monkey said when he hid the
4. "How time flies,"	limburger in Grandpa's clock.
5. "Time presses,"	d. as the monkey said when the clock
6. "Come along with me and	fell on his head.
have a fine time,"	e. as the monkey said when it threw
	the clock at the missionary.
	f. as the man said ven he stole the pat-
	ent lever watch.

14. Write a story, fable, tale or dialogue to illustrate the proverbs of this unit.

15. Write an essay about American attitudes towards time.

16. Do a cross-cultural comparison and contrast of basic attitudes towards time in America and Hungary.

17. Using any proverbs of this lesson, write an ad. For example:
Time is money, but with CASIO watches time flies and you didn't even waste your money. (Cecilia Klemen, student, ELTE)

18. Try to identify the proverbs from the initial letters given below.

1. Time f....; 2. Time w... t...; 3. Time i. m....; 4. Time i. a g.... h....; 5. Time w.... w.....; 6. Time a.. t... w... f.. n. m.; 7. P..... i. t.. t.... o. time.

19. From the following proverbs select the one best suited to the joke below. Proverbs to be used: *There is a first time for everything. You can please some of the people all the time, or all the people some of the time, but never all of the people all of the time. Enjoy yourself; there is less time than you think. Take time by the forelock. The third time is a charm. Time presses. One thing at a time.*

A country woman arrived in the city and got into a taxi. It immediately took off at a breakneck speed, almost overturning at corners, and narrowly missing colliding with many cars. "Please be careful, driver," gasped the lady, holding her hat. "This is the first time I've ever ridden in a taxi." "That's nothin', lady," shouted the driver. "This is the first time I ever drove one!" (Esar 1945: 442)

Appendix 7

Anti-Proverbs Created by Students Who Attended My Courses on Anglo-American Proverbs³⁵⁴

The following proverbs are arranged in alphabetical order and printed in bold type; following each proverb is a complementary and alphabetically arranged list of anti-proverbs. In cases of contamination (i.e., anti-proverbs that parody two proverbs), the second proverb is given in { } brackets.

A bird in the hand is worth two in the bush

A bird in the pan is worth two in the bush. (Gergely Horváth, JPTE)

A crown is no cure for a headache

A crown is no cure for a headache, when an aspirin costs five crowns. (Gergely Horváth, JPTE)

A fair exchange is no robbery

An eye for an eye, a tooth for a tooth – a fair exchange is no robbery. (Gergely Horváth, JPTE) {An eye for an eye, a tooth for a tooth}

A good man is hard to find

A good man is hard to find in the zoo. (Pál Kocsis, ELTE)

A good van is hard to find in a bicycle store. (Pál Kocsis, ELTE)

A little learning is a dangerous thing

A little learning is a dangerous thing. Can you imagine what'll happen if you study a lot? (Orsolya Gólya, ELTE)

A man is known by the company he keeps

A man is known by the car he drives. (Lívía Vágó, JPTE)

A man is known by the woman he keeps. (András Richter, ELTE)

³⁵⁴ First published in T. Litovkina 2004b.

A new broom sweeps clean

A new groom sweeps clean. (Zoltán Jeszenszky, JPTE)

A new groom sweeps well. (Judit Gyenes, ELTE)

A new maid sweeps clean. (Orsolya Burián, ELTE)

A penny saved is a penny earned

A penny saved is good for nothing. (Ildikó Vágújhelyi, ELTE)

A son is a son till he gets a wife, a daughter is a daughter for the rest of her life

A son is a son till he gets a wife, a daughter remains a spinster for the rest of her life. (Mária Helyes, JPTE)

A stitch in time saves nine

A stitch in time requires a Singer sewing machine. (Bernadett Ószéné Samu, ELTE)

A stitch in time saves the patient's life. (Zsuzsa Bálizs, JPTE)

A watched pot never boils

A watched pot never boils, unless you turn the cooker on. (Livia Horváth, ELTE)

Absence makes the heart grow fonder

Absence makes the marriage longer. (Hajnalka Kertai, JPTE)

Absence makes the relationship more expensive. (Katalin Török, ELTE)

Absence makes you look for a new lover. (Emese Nagy, JPTE)

Actions speak louder than words

Mothers-in-law speak louder than us. (Livia Vágó, JPTE)

All for one and one for all

All for me, and me above all. (Orsolya Jánosik, JPTE)

All for one and one for himself. (Ágnes Kiss, JPTE)

All work and no play makes Jack a dull boy

All work and no computer games makes Jack a dull boy. (Andrea Petrás, ELTE)

All work and no play makes Jack a rich boy. (Gergely Horváth, JPTE)

An apple a day keeps the doctor away

A coffee a day keeps the doctor awake. (Éva Kriszt, ELTE)

A driver a day keeps the ticket inspector away. (Bernadett Molnár, ELTE)

A heartache a day keeps the toothache away. (Lívía Vágó, JPTE)

A smile a day keeps rudeness away. (Katalin Wittinger, JPTE)

A whiskey a day keeps sadness away. (Hajnalka Kertai, JPTE)

An apple a day makes the greengrocer rich. (Anikó Juszel, ELTE)

An apple a day means seven a week. (Brigitta Stalter, ELTE)

Being drunk every day, keeps hangovers away. (Orsolya Burián, ELTE)

Lots of homework a day keeps the student away (from school). (Orsolya Jánosik, JPTE)

An eye for an eye, a tooth for a tooth

An eye for an eye, a tooth for a tooth – a fair exchange is no robbery. (Gergely Horváth, JPTE) {A fair exchange is no robbery}

An hour's sleep before midnight is worth two after

An hour's sleep before midnight is not enough. (Eszter Molnár, JPTE)

As a man lives, so shall he die; as a tree falls, so shall it lie

As a man needs, so shall he lie; as a tree falls, so shall it lie. (Judit Zongor, JPTE)

Bad news travels fast

Bad news alters fast. (Katalin Blatviczky, ELTE)

'Bed news' travels fast. (Éva Frauhammer, JPTE)

Beauty is only skin deep

Suntan is only skin deep. (Éva Kriszt, ELTE)

Beggars can't be choosers

Beggars can't be choosers but choosers can turn into beggars. (Ani Horvath, ELTE)

Beggars can't be losers. (Szilvia Csábi, ELTE)

Better an egg today than a hen tomorrow

Better a boy-friend today than a husband tomorrow. (Mónika Barta, ELTE)

Better an egg today than tomorrow. (Márta Palojtay, ELTE)

Better go around than fall into the ditch

Better go around than step on the mine. (Gergely Horváth, JPTE)

Better late than never

Better late than early to rise. (Mirtill May, ELTE) {Early to bed and early to rise, makes a man healthy, wealthy and wise}

Better late than right now. (Orsolya Jánosik, JPTE)

Better never than ever. (Kinga Köberl, JPTE)

Better now than ever. (Éva Kriszt, ELTE)

Boys will be boys

Boys will be boys but from little boys mighty men do grow. (Katalin Blatvicky, ELTE) {Mighty oaks from little acorns grow}

Cold hands, warm heart

Cold hands need gloves. (Livia Horváth, ELTE; Brigitta Stalter, ELTE)

Cold lands, no hart. (Éva Kriszt, ELTE)

Comparisons are odious

Comparisons are obvious. (Mariann Moncsek, JPTE)

Crime doesn't pay

Crime doesn't pay, especially if you break into the Scotland Yard instead of the British Museum. (Gergely Horváth, JPTE)

Curiosity killed the cat

Curiosity killed the spy. (Barbara Varga, JPTE)

Diet killed the fat. (Orsolya Jánosik, JPTE)

Greed killed the fat! (Judit Zongor, JPTE)

If curiosity wouldn't have killed the cat, she would have got knocked over by a truck. (Judit Szabó, ELTE)

Whiskas killed the cat. (without name, ELTE)

Different strokes for different folks

Different strikes for different folks. (Kinga Kőberl, JPTE)

Don't bite off more than you can chew

Don't bite off more than I do. (Mária Helyes, JPTE)

Don't bite off more than the horse. (Zsuzsa Bálizs, JPTE)

Don't count your chickens before they are hatched

Don't count your chickens before they are hatched, use the eggs and make a good scrambled egg instead. (Orsolya Gólya, ELTE)

Don't cross that bridge till you come to it

Let's not cross that bridge when we come to it. Let's go another way. (Ildikó Vágújhelyi, ELTE)

Don't cry over spilt milk

Don't cry over spilt beer. (without name, ELTE)

Don't cry over spilt milk – just call the cat into the kitchen. (Pál Kocsis, ELTE)

Don't cry over spilt milk. Take a dish cloth and wipe it up. (Ildikó Vágújhelyi, ELTE)

Don't cry over spilt milk, there is coke in the fridge. (Brigitta Stalter, ELTE)

Don't cry over whipped cream, go and get some ice cream as well. (Éva Kriszt, ELTE)

Don't look [Never look] a gift horse in the mouth

Don't look a crocodile in the mouth. (Kinga Köberl, JPTE)

Don't look a gift horse in the mouth, unless you're a vet. (Orsolya Burián, ELTE)

Don't punch a gift horse in the mouth. (Ani Horvath, ELTE)

Don't smell an old horse in the mouth, you may faint. (Mirtill May, ELTE)

If wishes were horses, you couldn't look a gift wish in the mouth. (Orsolya Gólya, ELTE) {If wishes were horses, beggars would ride}

Never look a Christmas present in the mouth. (Katalin Wittinger, JPTE)

Never look a dentist in the mouth. (Zsuzsa Bálizs, JPTE)

Don't put the cart before the horse

Don't put the cart before the horse. Forget about them and walk. (Ildikó Vágújhelyi, ELTE)

Don't throw out the baby with the bathwater

Don't throw out the baby with the old pram. (Anita Németh, JPTE)

Early to bed, early to rise, makes a man healthy, wealthy and wise

Better late than early to rise. (Mirtill May, ELTE) {Better late than never}

Early to bed, early to rise, makes a man sleepy, dreamy and tired all day long. (Pál Kocsis, ELTE)

Early to bed, early to rise – you miss your life but at least you are wise. (Barbara Csapody, ELTE)

East is east, west is west, and never the twain shall meet

East is east, west is west, so let's just rest. (Barbara Csapody, ELTE)

East or West, home is best

East or West, money is never at rest. (Márta Palojtay, ELTE)

Eat, drink, and be merry, for tomorrow we may die

Eat, drink, and be merry for tomorrow we go to your place. (Barbara Varga, JPTE)

Every dog has his day

Every dog has his day when the postman comes. (Orsolya Gólya, ELTE)

Every dog has his tail. (Mariann Moncsek, JPTE)

Everybody's business is nobody's business

Everybody's business is my business, too. (Alexa Dékán, JPTE)

Everyone has his own cross to bear

Everyone has his own boss to bear. (Pál Kocsis, ELTE)

Experience is the best teacher

Experience is the best teacher, it won't fail you. (Pál Kocsis, ELTE)

Fish or cut bait

Fish or buy fresh frozen sea-food. (Orsolya Gáspár, ELTE)

Fool me once, shame on you, fool me twice, shame on me

Fool me once, shame on you, fool me twice, you're dead. (Katalin Wittinger, JPTE)

Fools' names and fools' faces often appear in public places

MSZP names and MSZP faces often appear in public places. (without name, ELTE)

Forbidden fruit is the sweetest

Forbidden drug is the sweetest. (Gergely Horváth, JPTE)

God helps those who help themselves

God helps those who pray to him. (Bernadett Őszéné Samu, ELTE)

God helps those whom he likes. (Szilvia Csábi, ELTE)

Good fences make good neighbors

Good fences keep out the thieves. (Katalin Török, ELTE)

Good things come to those who wait

Good things come to those who go for them. (Éva Kriszt, ELTE)

Good things come to those who pay. (Katalin Török, ELTE)

Grass never grows on a busy street

Grass never grows on a Budapest street. (Katalin Wittinger, JPTE)

Half a loaf is better than none

Half a loaf is better than a roll. (Mariann Moncsek, JPTE)

Haste makes waste

Haste makes you sweat. (Zsuzsanna Haraszti, ELTE)

He who hesitates is lost

He who meditates is a buddhist. (Pál Kocsis, ELTE)

He who meditates isn't lost. (Andrea Petrás, ELTE)

He who penetrates is ghost. (Zsófia Kovács, ELTE)

He who laughs last laughs best

He who laughs last has the last laugh. (Anikó Juszel, ELTE)

He who laughs last thinks slowest. (Zsuzsanna Haraszti, ELTE)

She who loves first loves best. (Éva Kriszt, ELTE)

Here today, gone tomorrow

Here today, gone tomorrow – said the burglar at 23.59 p.m. (Pál Kocsis, ELTE)

Honesty is the best policy

Dishonesty is the best policy. (without name, ELTE)

Honesty ain't the best policy. (Zoltán Simon, ELTE)

Honesty is the best hypocrisy. (Barbara Varga, JPTE)

Honesty is the best policy; Politics is the death of honesty. (Barbara Csapody, ELTE)

If at first you don't succeed, try, try again

If at first you don't succeed, call the mechanic. (Orsolya Gáspár, ELTE)
If at first you don't succeed, curse and curse again. (Mirtill May, ELTE)
If at first you don't succeed, you are unskillful. (Horváth Eszter, JPTE)
If at first you don't succeed, you should give it up. (Szilvia Csábi, ELTE)
Once bitten, try again. (Zoltán Simon, ELTE) {Once bitten, twice shy}

If the dog hadn't stopped to shit, he would have caught the rabbit

If the dog hadn't stopped to shit, we wouldn't have stepped into it. (Mirtill May, ELTE)

If the shoe fits, wear it

If the shoe fits, buy it. (Emese Nagy, JPTE)
If the shoe fits, you're Cinderella. (Mirtill May, ELTE)

If wishes were horses, beggars would ride

If wishes were horses, the world would be a huge race-track. (Orsolya Gáspár, ELTE)
If wishes were horses, you couldn't look a gift wish in the mouth. (Orsolya Gólya, ELTE) {Don't look a gift horse in the mouth}

If you can't be good, be careful

If you can't be careful, be fast. (Éva Kriszt, ELTE)
If you can't be good, be bad. (Mária Helyes, JPTE)
If you can't be good, be evil. (Zoltán Jeszenszky, JPTE)
If you can't be good, be happy. (Livia Horváth, ELTE)

If you can't stand the heat, get out of the kitchen

If you can't cook, get out of the kitchen. (Anikó Tóth, JPTE)
If you can't make a cake, get out of the kitchen. (Anita Németh, JPTE)
If you can't stand the heat get out of Africa. (Judit Zongor, JPTE)
If you can't stand the heat, get out of Hawaii. (without name, ELTE)
If you can't stand the heat, get out of the oven. (Katalin Nagy, ELTE; Gergely Horváth, JPTE)

If you can't stand the heat, go to Siberia. (Katalin Wittinger, JPTE)
If you can't stand the heat, why are you sitting in the sauna? (Emese Nagy, JPTE)
If you can't stand the heat, you are likely to be able to pay your gas bill.
(Pál Kocsis, ELTE)

If you don't have anything nice to say, don't say anything at all
If you don't have anything nice to say, say something unpleasant. (Horváth Eszter, JPTE)

If you lie down with dogs, you'll get up with fleas
If you lie down with dogs you must be Ciccolina (Attila Lengyel, ELTE)
If you lie down with too many cooks you'll wake up with an aching ass.
(Attila Lengyel, ELTE) {Too many cooks spoil the broth}

In the land of the blind, the one-eyed man is king
In the land of the blind, the blind's guide dog is the king. (Bernadett Ószéné Samu, ELTE)

In this world nothing is certain but death and taxes
In this world nothing is certain but death and taxes. The taxes are certain to rise. (Pál Kocsis, ELTE)
In this world nothing is certain but death in taxis. (Anikó Tóth, JPTE)

It is easier for a camel to go through a needle's eye than for a rich man to enter the kingdom of heaven
It is easier for a camel to go through a needle's eye than for an elephant.
(Márta Palójtay, ELTE)

It never rains but it pours [When it rains, it pours]
It never rains when you have your umbrella with you. (Katalin Török, ELTE)
When it rains, it is wet. (Bernadett Ószéné Samu, ELTE)
When it rains, you don't have an umbrella. (Brigitta Süle, JPTE)

It takes two to tango

It doesn't take two to buy a mango. (Katalin Wittinger, JPTE)

It takes two to Bingo. (Andrea Petrás, ELTE)

It takes two to kiss. (Barbara Csapody, ELTE)

It's better to give than to receive

It's better to give, but it's much better to receive. (András Richter, ELTE)

Laugh and the world laughs with you; cry and you cry alone

Cough and the world will cough with you! (Judit Zongor, JPTE)

Let sleeping dogs lie

Let sleeping husbands lie. (Alexa Dékán, JPTE)

Sleeping dogs won't wake you up. (Kinga Kőberl, JPTE)

Life is just a bowl of cherries

Life is just a bowl of cherries: half of them are green and sour, and the other half rotten black. (Gergely Horváth, JPTE)

Lightning never strikes twice in the same place

Lightning never strikes twice in the same place, but fate does. (Ágnes Kiss, JPTE)

Live and learn

Live and earn. (Barbara Csapody, ELTE)

Look before you leap

Cook before you eat. (Anikó Juszel, ELTE)

Look before you cheat. (Katalin Nagy, ELTE)

Look before you kiss. (Barbara Csapody, ELTE)

Look before you leave. (Judit Gyenes, ELTE; Mariann Moncsek, JPTE)

Love conquers all

Money conquers all. (Gergely Horváth, JPTE)

Love is blind

Love is blind; either wear glasses or else don't fall in love. (Brigitta Stalter, ELTE)

Love is blind to gender. (Livia Horváth, ELTE)

Love makes the world go round

Laugh makes the world go round. (Judit Gyenes, ELTE)

Love makes the world go blind. (Orsolya Gólya, ELTE)

Make hay while the sun shines

Lie on the beach while the sun shines. (Kinga Köberl, JPTE)

Man does not live by bread alone

Man does not live by beer alone. (Katalin Nagy, ELTE)

Man does not live by bread alone. He also needs some breasts, too. (Orsolya Gólya, ELTE)

Man proposes, God disposes

Man proposes – woman refuses. (Márta Palojtay, ELTE)

Many hands make light work

Many electricians make lights work. (Barbara Varga, JPTE)

Mighty oaks from little acorns grow

Boys will be boys but from little boys mighty men do grow. (Katalin Blatviczky, ELTE) {Boys will be boys}

Mind your p's and q's

Mind your p's or wash the toilet. (Barbara Csapody, ELTE)

Money is the root of all evils

Love is the root of many evils. (Katalin Blatviczky, ELTE)

Money isn't everything

Money isn't everything if the amount is below one million forints. (Pál Kocsis, ELTE)

Money isn't everything while robbing a bank; you mustn't be caught by the police, either. (Pál Kocsis, ELTE)

Money makes the man

Money makes the mean. (Attila Lengyel, ELTE)

Money talks

Honey talks. /says Pooh/ (Alexa Dékán, JPTE)

Money talks...but unfortunately not to me and not in my flat. (Orsolya Gáspár, ELTE)

Necessity is the mother of invention

Necessity is the mother of prevention. (Zsófia Kovács, ELTE)

Necessity knows no law

Carlos is no necessity, although he knows no law. (Gergely Horváth, JPTE)

Neither a borrower nor a lender be

Either a teacher or a student be. (Éva Kriszt, ELTE)

Never put off until tomorrow what you can do today

Never put off until tomorrow what you can drink today. (Zsuzsa Bálizs, JPTE; Kinga Kőberl, JPTE)

Never say die

Never say ,hi'! (Judit Gyenes, ELTE)

No pain, no gain

No gain, just pain. (Zoltán Simon, ELTE)

No man can serve two masters

No gun can serve two gangsters. (Éva Frauhammer, JPTE)

Nothing succeeds like success

Nothing succeeds like unsuccess. (Ágnes Kiss, JPTE)

Nothing ventured, nothing had

Nothing ventured, nothing lost. (Szilvia Csábi, ELTE; Hajnalka Kertai, JPTE)

Once bitten, twice shy

Once bitten, try again. (Zoltán Simon, ELTE) {If at first you don't succeed, try, try again}

One good turn deserves another

One good sperm deserves a mother (Attila Lengyel, ELTE)
One good turn never deserves another. (Andrea Tóth, ELTE)

One man's meat is another man's poison

One man's wife is another man's lover. (Mária Helyes, JPTE)

Out of sight, out of mind

Out of sight, out of fight. (Mária Helyes, JPTE)
Out of sight – you are blind... (Zsófia Kovács, ELTE)

People who live in glass houses shouldn't throw stones

People who live in glass houses complain a lot about curtain prices. (Orsolya Burián, ELTE)
People who live in glass houses shouldn't walk around naked. (Anikó Juszél, ELTE)
People who live in glass houses will have to buy lots of curtains. (Dávid Szabó, ELTE)

Politics makes strange bedfellows

Alcohol makes strange bedfellows. (Anikó Tóth, JPTE)

Practice makes perfect

Practice makes tired. (Alexa Dékán, JPTE)

Practice makes you tired. (Bernadett Ószéné Samu, ELTE)

Pretty is as pretty does

Pretty is as pretty looks. (Szilvia Csábi, ELTE)

Red sky at night, sailor's delight; red sky in the morning, sailors take warning

Full moon at night is for dogs' delight. (Zsuzsa Bálizs, JPTE)

Silence is golden

Silence is golden but then you can't see my golden teeth. (Gergely Horváth, JPTE)

Silence is golden, speech is silver

Beer is golden, wine is silver. (Judit Zongor, JPTE)

Slow but steady wins the race

Slow but steady wins the race – unless you're a nice guy. (Anikó Juszel, ELTE)

Smoke follows beauty

Smoke follows smokers. (Zsuzsa Bálizs, JPTE)

Spare the rod and spoil the child

Spare the rod and spoil the wife. (Livia Horváth, ELTE)

Spare the rod but use iron and the child will be as desired. (Brigitta Stalter, ELTE)

Strike while the iron is hot

Strike while the boss is away. (Kinga Köberl, JPTE)

Take care of your pennies and the pounds will take care of themselves

Take care of your children and nurses will take care of you in the old people's home. (Brigitta Süle, JPTE)

The bad workman always blames his tools

The bad lover always blames his tool. (Anikó Tóth, JPTE)

The best defense is a good offense

The best defense is a fence. (Eszter Molnár, JPTE)

The best things in life are free

The best things in life aren't free. (Andrea Tóth, ELTE)

The worst things in life are free. (Pál Kocsis, ELTE)

The bigger they are the harder they fall

The bigger they are the more they weigh. (Brigitta Stalter, ELTE)

The bigger they come the harder they lose weight. (Anikó Tóth, JPTE)

The customer is always right

The customer is always right – as long as he gives his money. (Márta Palótyaj, ELTE)

The early bird catches the worm

An early bird is a tired one. (Judit Szabó, ELTE)

The early bird catches the cold. (Livia Horváth, ELTE; Mariann Moncsek, JPTE; Zoltán Jeszenszky, JPTE)

The early bird catches the headache. (András Richter, ELTE)

The early bird catches the worm, But the early worm feeds the bird!... (Zsófia Kovács, ELTE)

The early bird doesn't catch a single worm. They stay in bed late. (Ildikó

Vágújhelyi, ELTE)

The early bird gets tired early. (Zsuzsanna Haraszti, ELTE)

The early bird is a real nuisance when you want to sleep. (Dávid Szabó, ELTE)

The early bird remains sleepy. (Alexa Dékán, JPTE)

The early bird suffers from insomnia. (Orsolya Burián, ELTE)

The early bird wakes up the whole neighborhood. (Orsolya Gólya, ELTE)

The early worm will be caught by a bird. (Dávid Szabó, ELTE)

The grass is always greener on the other side of the fence

The barbecue is always more tasty on the other side of the fence. (Judit Zongor, JPTE)

The grass is always greener in England. (Brigitta Stalter, ELTE)

The grass is always greener on the other side of the fence until the cows have grazed it. (Pál Kocsis, ELTE)

The grass is always greener on the Western side of the border. (Gergely Horváth, JPTE)

The grass is always greener where there's more rain. (Anikó Tóth, JPTE)

Your friend's girlfriend is always greener. (Katalin Wittinger, JPTE)

The nearer the church, the farther from God

The nearer the church, the more often you see the priest. (Márta Palojtay, ELTE)

The only good Indian is a dead Indian

The only good examiner is the dead examiner. (Bernadett Molnár, ELTE)

The only good slurs are dead slurs. (Barbara Varga, student, JPTE)

The road to hell is paved with good intentions

The road to hell must be dark. (Brigitta Stalter, ELTE)

The squeaky wheel gets the grease

The squeaky wheel sounds terrible. (Zsuzsanna Haraszti, ELTE)

There are plenty of fish in the sea

There are plenty of dishes in the sink, you must buy a dishwasher. (Pál Kocsis, ELTE)

There are plenty of fish in the sea. True that most of them are half-eyed, stinky and fat, but still... (Ildikó Vágújhelyi, ELTE)

There is plenty of oil in the sea. (Katalin Török, ELTE)

There's no fool like an old fool

There's no fool like a bald fool. (Pál Kocsis, ELTE)

Those who will not work shall not eat

Those who will not work shall live longer. (Hajnalka Kertai, JPTE)

Time heals all wounds

A new girlfriend heals all the wounds. (Ildikó Vágújhelyi, ELTE)

To err is human, to forgive is divine

To err is human, to forgive is difficult. (Livia Horváth, ELTE)

Too many cooks spoil the broth

If you lie down with too many cooks you'll wake up with an aching ass.

(Attila Lengyel, ELTE) {If you lie down with dogs, you'll get up with fleas}

Too many bad teachers spoil the child. (Judit Zongor, JPTE)

Too many cocks spoil the brothel. (Attila Lengyel, ELTE)

Too many cooks will eat the broth. (Dávid Szabó, ELTE)

Too many parents spoil the child. (without name, ELTE)

Too much of good thing is enough

Too much of good thing is never enough. (András Richter, ELTE)

Two heads are better than one

Two chocolates are better than one. (Alexa Dékán, JPTE)

Two heads are better than none. (Mirtill May, ELTE)

Two heads are better than one if they are not on the same body. (E. Nagy, JPTE)

Two is company, three is a crowd

Two is company, three is a love triangle. (Szilvia Csábi, ELTE)

Two wrongs don't make a right

Two lefts don't make a right. (Anikó Juszél, ELTE)

Two men do not make a woman. (Bernadett Molnár, ELTE)

Use your head and save your feet

Use your car and save your feet. (Orsolya Gáspár, ELTE; Horváth Eszter, JPTE; Emese Nagy, JPTE)

Use your head and save your money. (Mária Helyes, JPTE)

Wear Nike and save your feet. (Hajnalka Kertai, JPTE)

When in Rome, do as the Romans do

When at home, do as you usually do. (Anikó Juszél, ELTE)

When in Rome eat pizza. (Hajnalka Kertai, JPTE)

When in school do as teachers do. (Mónika Barta, ELTE)

When the cat's away, the mice will play

When the cat's away, the meat will probably not be stolen from the kitchen table. (Pál Kocsis, ELTE)

When the cat's away, you can start mending the furniture covers. (Pál Kocsis, ELTE)

When the husband's away the wife will play. (Andrea Tóth, ELTE)

Where there's a will, there's a way

Where there's a will, there's a stubborn wife. (Orsolya Gáspár, ELTE)

Where there's smoke, there's fire [There is no smoke without fire]

There is no smoke without a match to light your cigarette. (Brigitta Süle, JPTE)

Where there's smoke, don't go there. (Horváth Eszter, JPTE)

Where there's smoke, there's a barbecue. (Hajnalka Kertai, JPTE)

Where there's smoke, there's a cigarette. (Alexa Dékán, JPTE)

Where there's smoke, there's a smoker, too. (Éva Frauhammer, JPTE)
Where there's smoke, there's air pollution. (Orsolya Gáspár, ELTE)
Where there's smoke, there's Budapest's downtown. (Orsolya Gáspár, ELTE)
Where there's smoke, there's somebody smoking. (Anikó Juszal, ELTE)
Where there's smoke, try and get a free cigarette. (Mirtill May, ELTE)

While there's life, there's hope

While there's life, there's war. (Mariann Moncsek, JPTE)

With a Hungarian for a friend you don't need an enemy

With a Hungarian for a friend you had better join the NATO. (Barbara Varga, JPTE)

With age comes wisdom

With age come wrinkles. (Anita Németh, JPTE)

You're never too old to learn

You're never too old to die. (Barbara Varga, JPTE)

You can catch more flies with honey than with vinegar

You can catch more cavities with honey than with vinegar. (Anita Németh, JPTE)

You can catch more flies with a spider than with vinegar. (Anita Németh, JPTE)

You can catch more flies with money than with vinegar. (Gergely Horváth, JPTE)

You can get more bad teeth with honey than with vinegar. (Ágnes Kiss, JPTE)

You can't have your cake and eat it too

You can have your cake and eat it too – just cut it in half. (Pál Kocsis, ELTE)

You can't judge a book by its cover

You can't judge a book by its cover price. (Zsófia Kovács, ELTE)

You can't judge a washing-powder by its ad. (Katalin Wittinger, JPTE)

You don't miss the water until the well runs dry

You don't miss water until you run out of vodka. (Hajnalka Kertai, JPTE)

Appendix 8

Advertisements Created by Students Who Attended My Courses on Anglo-American Proverbs³⁵⁵

Proverbs appear in alphabetical order and printed in bold type; advertisements are arranged alphabetically, according to the first word in each ad.

A cat has nine lives

“A cat has nine lives” – and you’ll immediately have nine knives at hand if you buy the brand-new “KITCHEN-KNIFE SET” by Birex, TM. It consists of 9, sharp, shining stainless knives, designed for your needs in doing any “kitchen-work.” Come and buy them now in the “Birex Shop,” at Birch Street 29! (Éva Frauhammer, JPTE)

A fool and his money are soon parted

A fool and his money are soon parted...

Be clever! Use VISA CARD! (Barbara Varga, JPTE)

Don’t be a fool and let your money part you – be a client of our bank. (Andrea Petrás, ELTE)

A leopard cannot change his spots

A leopard cannot change his spots, but you can be spotless by using SMILE! (Zoltán Kész)

A man is known by the company he keeps

A man is known by the company he keeps.

Buy HOIL Company shares

HOIL

Hungarian Oil and Gas (Lívía Vágó, JPTE)

³⁵⁵ Some of the advertisements in Appendix 8 have been published in Tóthné Litovkina 1996a and T. Litovkina 2000.

A new broom sweeps clean

BROOMS on sale!

Here's the time for the tiring spring-cleaning. Make your job easier by a fantastic chipmunk-fur broom which you can buy now at a reduced price. Only a new broom sweeps clean, so don't hesitate. (Anita Németh, JPTE)

A penny saved is a penny earned

Life-time guarantee!

The Hungarian Savings Bank wishes you a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year. Don't forget a penny saved is a penny earned! (Zoltán Jeszenszky, JPTE)

A picture is worth a thousand words

If you don't have any idea what to surprise with your loved ones, come to the "LEONARDO GALLERY" where you can choose from beautiful pictures.

A picture is worth a thousand words. (Anita Németh, JPTE)

A sound mind in a sound body

A sound mind in a sound body...with BODY FORMER (Szilvia Németh, JPTE)

All work and no play makes Jack a dull boy

All work and no play makes Jack a dull boy – have a look at our newest toys. These are the games even Jack couldn't resist! (Éva Kriszt, ELTE)

An apple a day keeps the doctor away

Do you want to give up smoking?

A pill a day keeps the temptation away!

ANTISMOKE TABLETS are available in every drugstore. (Attila Strausz, JPTE)

Beauty is only skin deep

Beauty is only skin deep – but with Simple cosmetics you can make it last

longer! (Éva Kriszt, ELTE)

Better late than sorry

Better late than dearly! (slogan for a last-minute journey)

Last-minute journeys in October. Call us: 1-628-752. (Katalin Török, ELTE)

Boys will be boys

Boys will be boys.

Boys will need toys.

TOYES is your choice!

TOYES – Toys all over the world. (Lívía Vágó, JPTE)

Toys will be toys!

These are the most durable toys ever produced. (Zoltán Jeszenszky, JPTE)

Cleanliness is next to godliness

Cleanliness is next to godliness

Use BLUE IRIS set – soup, talcum and body lotion with the sweet fragrance of Iris – to keep your skin clean, healthy; to make it fresher and... more beautiful! (Judit Végvári, JPTE)

Clothes don't make the man

Clothes don't make the man...

Are you sure?

ARMANI suits (Lívía Vágó, JPTE)

Dog doesn't eat dog

“Dog does not eat dog” – not so with “CHAPPI!” If you give your pet the new beef-nuggets, enriched with multivitamin-complex and vegetables, you'll sure to have a healthy and good-conditioned “friend” by your side for many years. (Éva Frauhammer, JPTE)

Here is the fines dog-food: SHAPY. It contains the necessary vitamins your dog needs, and it's incredibly cheap!

Dog doesn't eat dog, give it SHAPY. It will like it. (Anita Németh, JPTE)

Don't burn the candle at both ends

If you use our energy saving bulb, you won't have to burn the candle at both ends.

TUNGSRAM (Barbara Varga, JPTE)

East or West, home is best

East or West, BEER is best. (Orsolya Burián, ELTE)

East or West, Home is the best

PIZZA TO YOUR HOME

tel: 1-555-000 (Attila Strausz, JPTE)

East or West, SIGNAL is the best (Beatrix Papp, JPTE)

Easy come, easy go

In NIKE shoes you always easy come easy go. (Barbara Varga, JPTE)

Every Jack has his Jill

If you are lonely and can't find a lifetime partner, come to our office called HEART. There is a huge amount of data at our disposal, from which you can choose the man or woman of your dreams.

Every Jack has his Jill, maybe you have been looking for your partner at the wrong place.

Come and fulfill your dreams! (Anita Németh, JPTE)

Fools build houses and wise people live in them

WESTBUILD builds houses...

and wise people live in them. For free catalogue call 03-303-2777. (Barbara Varga, JPTE)

God heals and the doctor takes the fee

"God heals and the doc takes the fee"

Why pay your doctor for years, when you can save money and avoid the inconvenience of going to a doctor? Enjoy the divine healing power of our MIRACULOUS HERBAL REMEDY and feel how God heals. Order two

bottles now, so that you can get your free copy of the famous video tape “Unbelievable Recoveries” by Rev. John Priestly. Call now on 0800 559 559 and don’t forget:

God heals through our MIRACULOUS HERBAL REMEDY. (Emese Nagy, JPTE)

God sends meat, and the devil sends cooks

“God sends meat, and the devil sends cooks” – to continue the line, we’ll send you the perfect COOKERY BOOKS if you pay &8.50 on the cheque attached to this special offer. Just mark the book of your choice and send it to us right away. You’ll wonder what a great cook has been lost in you... (Éva Frauhammer, JPTE)

Birthday party? Garden party? “PEARL” helps you with making beautiful dish creations.

Dial 444-433 and our qualified workers will go and help you.

God sends meat, and “PEARL” sends cooks. (Anita Németh, JPTE)

If you can’t stand the heat, get out of the kitchen

If you cannot stand the heat, buy an electric fan. (Őszéné Samu Bernadett, ELTE)

If you can’t stand the heat have an air-condition installed. (Gaspar Orsolya, ELTE)

If you want peace, prepare for war

Dear Husbands!

Here is our new tinned-product called Peace. It’s made of delicious vegetables and chicken meat, and ideal for guests. Easy to cook and fast! If you want PEACE, prepare for war – with your wife! She will also want our Peace! (Katalin Wittinger, JPTE)

It takes two to tango

It takes two...

Dance courses for couples.

Tel: 1-415-763. (Katalin Török, ELTE)

It takes two to tango.
First you sign up for our dance courses.
The rest is up to us.
BLUE DANUBE DANCE SCHOOL. (Barbara Varga, JPTE)

It will all come out in the wash
All will come out in the wash.
To be sure use Ariel. (Brigitta Stalter, ELTE)
It will all come out in Omo Colours. (Őszéné Samu Bernadett, ELTE)

Knowledge is power
Knowledge is power!
Educate your child at The International School of Budapest (Judit Gyenes, ELTE)

Lightning never strikes twice in the same place
Lightning can strikes twice in the same place – it cannot if you buy our super lightning conductors. (Andrea Petrás, ELTE)

Look before you leap
It is night. The man is George. His mother told him in the morning: Look before you leap.
What was the problem then? Of course! He had no “EAGLE EYE” contact lenses!
Don’t forget. With “EAGLE EYE” this can never happen to you. (Mirtill May, ELTE)

Love is the only fire against which there’s no insurance
Love is the only fire against which L.O.V.E.’s no insurance
L.O.V.E
Local and Overseas Venturesome Enterprise
The Insurance Company
L.O.V.E., our insurance company is proud to be one of the world’s largest and most successful insurance groups. Our growth and success are set to

soar, both locally and internationally.

No wonder the majority of the world's top 100 companies have our insurance company as their preferred insurer. They already know that we can offer the most suitable insurance from the wide range of our insurance policies.

So if your company demands the best protection from all possible dangers (except from the danger of love), make a point of insisting on L.O.V.E. – the best insurance company in the world.

Choose your L.O.V.E., then LOVE your choice. (Szilvia Csábi, ELTE)

Misery loves company

“Misery loves company” – therefore you should take your friend with you when you go to see the gorgeous and thrilling film “MISERY,” based upon the novel by Stephen King, at the cinema. Starting times at the “Odeon” are 5, 7, 9 p.m., tickets cost &2.50/person. Don't miss it, but watch it! (Éva Frauhammer, JPTE)

Money talks

Have you long been angry that only money talks? Now, here is your chance to change this, by joining one of our advanced LANGUAGE COURSES in Swedish, French and German. All the sessions are dialogue-oriented, including a lot of interesting speech-activities and discussions as well. We can assure you: if you participate, you'll talk too (and very fluently)! (Éva Frauhammer, JPTE)

Money talks – come in and listen to what it says! (Proverbbank) (Éva Kriszt, ELTE)

No news is good news

No noise is good noise. Opel Swing (slogan for a car advertisement) (Katalin Török, ELTE)

Nothing is certain but death and taxes

Nothing is certain but death and CITY TAXIS. Call 03-333-333 and we will take you anywhere. (Barbara Varga, JPTE)

Nothing ventured, nothing gained

Nothing ventured, nothing gained if you don't buy lottery coupons. (Andrea Petrás, ELTE)

One hand washes the other

One hand washes the other, but our soap does it better. (Zoltán Kész)

One man's meet is another man's poison

One man's meet is another man's poison.

Are you a vegetarian too?

You don't have to avoid hamburgers any longer!

The VEGEBURGER has arrived at BURGER QUEEN! (Livia Vágó, JPTE)

Opportunity knocks but once

MOZART HERZ'L makes the heart grow fonder!

A perfect present for your love. In fact, these delicious and cheap ,sweet hearts' will make your relationship happier.

And if you have more lovers, buy three and you get one for free. Do not hesitate, opportunity knocks but once! (Éva Koppány, ELTE)

People who live in glass houses should not throw stones

People who live in glass houses should use CLEAR WINDOW CLEANER to keep them clean. (Barbara Varga, student, JPTE)

Physician, heal thyself

If you are not a physician, you can heal thyself still. CENTRUM VITAMIN provides you with the vitamins and minerals necessary for your daily fitness. (Barbara Varga, JPTE)

Revenge is sweet

Revenge is sweet

but NESTLÉ is sweeter. (Livia Vágó, JPTE)

Rome wasn't built in a day

Rome wasn't built in a day, but your house will be! (Zoltán Kész)

Seek and you shall find

Seek and you SHELL find.

Beside roads everywhere. (Livia Vágó, JPTE)

Slow but sure wins the race

Letters? Parcels? Cheques?

Mail delivery?

Trust STATE POST

Slow but sure wins the race. (Livia Vágó, JPTE)

Talk is cheap

Talk is cheap.

13Ft/min.

Only with PHONEYCOM! (Livia Vágó, JPTE)

The grass is always greener on the other side of the fence

The grass is always greener on the other side of the fence

Do you know why? The secret is PESTILENT FERETILIZER. Don't think too much. Order it now. (Mirtill May, ELTE)

The only good Indian is a dead Indian

The only good dancing club is the RHYTM dancing club. (Bernadett Molnár, ELTE)

The pitcher that goes to the well too often is liable to be broken

You surely know the pitcher that goes to the well too often... Then you also know that it is liable to be broken, don't you? Well, if your life is a constant mess full of stress, if you feel like your work has sapped all your energy and you have neglected your health recently, next time the 'pitcher' might be just you... But, as prevention is better than cure, here we have a unique opportunity for you to offer! Come and spend a week at our relax-center

in the beautiful region of Plymouth-South. (...) (Éva Frauhammer, JPTE)

The truth will out

If the truth will out, your lawyer will help! Call us for prompt and competent judicial service!

ADVOCATE LAWYER'S COMPANY (Barbara Varga, JPTE)

There are other fish in the sea

Perhaps there are other fish in the sea as well, but "FISH STICKS" by iglo are the crispiest and most delicious ones for sure! Just look for the iglo-label in the fridge of your supermarket next time and taste the best sea-food ever! (Éva Frauhammer, JPTE)

There's no smoke without fire

As we all know There's no smoke without fire and that's how we care for your and your family's lives.

Our 100% reliable SMOKE-DETECTOR equipment starts alarming even at smoke unsmelled or unseen by humans. Come and see for yourself! (Noémi Horváth, ELTE)

There's safety in numbers

Safety is not in numbers. AIDS. (Katalin Nagy, ELTE)

Think twice before you speak

Think twice before you speak.

BIG-BAC

is the thing you need.

Than you can freely speak.

BIG-BAC

The original fresh mints. (Lívía Vágó, JPTE)

Time is money

Time is money, but with CASIO watches time flies and you didn't even waste your money. (Cecilia Klemen) {Time flies}

Too many cooks spoil the broth

Too many cooks can spoil the broth.

But with KNORR it's impossible. (Brigitta Stalter, ELTE)

Two blacks do not make a white

"Two blacks do not make a white" – this statement is especially true in the case of your teeth; that's why you should try the new WHITERING TOOTHPASTE by Colgate, in order to prevent any "blacks," i.e., cavities and bad teeth, and having healthy and shining "whites" instead. Available in all supermarkets and drugstores from now on! (Éva Frauhammer, JPTE)

Two heads are better than one

"Two heads are better than one" – but it doesn't mean you have to be a Siamese twin! Instead, we offer you the possibility to join our German beginner-courses, organized in small groups. Just call us at 049/2177053 and experience an enjoyable and much more effective way of learning a new language and culture! (Éva Frauhammer, JPTE)

Variety is the spice of life

Our "FOUR SEASONS" products have been on the market for more than twenty years. We offer you more and more unique and delicious spices year by year. The more from our new products you use the spicier your life will be.

"FOUR SEASONS" is the spice of life!

Try now! The name is the guarantee. (Anita Németh, JPTE)

"Variety is the spice of life" – and of your meals, too! The newest mixtures of various spices and herbs have been selected exclusively to your taste, to make any kind of meal even more delicious and different each time. The spice-mixtures called "VARIETY" are available at all bigger grocery-stores and supermarkets. Look for the label. (Éva Frauhammer, JPTE)

When in Rome, do as Romans do

When in Rome, eat spaghetti. (Haraszti Zsuzsanna, ELTE)

When the cat is away, the mice will play

When the cat is away, the mice will play. Don't let them have fun!
CHEASY. The Mousetrap. (Anita Németh, JPTE)

Wonders will never cease

Wonders will never cease.
PANASONIC TV SETS are the evidence. (Barbara Varga, JPTE)

You are what you eat

You are what you drink. (Livia Vágó, JPTE)

You can't get blood out of stone

You can't get blood out of stone.
That's why we need YOU.
Give blood. Save lives. (Barbara Varga, JPTE)

You can't have your cake and eat it too

You can have your cake and eat it too.
Now STOLLWERK gives two chocolate cakes for the price of one to wish
you a Merry Christmas. (Andrea Kós)

You're never too old to learn

You're never too old to learn! Come and learn English in our school! Pensioners get a discount! (Andrea Petrás, ELTE)

Appendix 9

Tales, Fables and Stories Illustrated by Proverbs Created by Students Who Attended My Courses on Anglo-American Proverbs

The Elves and the Shoemaker I

by Szilvia Csábi

Once there was an honest shoemaker who always stuck to *Honesty is the best policy*. Thus he slowly became so poor that one day he found himself with only leather enough for one pair of shoes. He realized that *You can't make chicken salad out of chicken shit*. Sadly, he cut the leather for use the next morning, since he knew the truth in *Don't put off till tomorrow what you can do today*; then he went to bed.

When he woke up the next morning, he could hardly believe his eyes. There on his worktable was a pair of shoes finished to the last seam. He carefully examined the shoes and could not find a bad stitch in them. "*Every dog has his day*," he thought, and he called out to his wife: "Look dear, what happened at night. I have just found this pair of shoes finished on my worktable. It is incredible."

His wife was happy, too, to see the surprise and at once thought, "*Don't look a gift horse in the mouth*." Just then a customer came into the shop and saw the neatly made shoes. He liked them so much that he paid much more than the usual price. The shoemaker thought that *A fool and his money are soon parted*, but he and his wife were happy because *Money talks*.

So he bought leather for two pairs of shoes and cut the leather before going to bed. The next morning, once again, the shoemaker found the two pairs of shoes all expertly finished. Customers bought them at high prices since, *If the shoe fits, wear it*. The shoemaker now bought leather for four pairs of shoes, and the next morning there stood the expertly fashioned shoes. And this went on for a long time. As *Time flies*, the shoemaker soon became a wealthy man.

One day, not long before Christmas, the shoemaker said to his wife: “We have become rich people because somebody has been helping us in the past few months. I think we should find out who that person is. Let us stay up for the night and hide behind the curtains. I know that *A watched pot never boils*, but *Nothing ventured, nothing gained*.”

His wife agreed although she always favored the principle of *Early to bed, early to rise makes a man healthy, wealthy, and wise*. Anyway, the two of them hid. However, they could not help thinking of the fact that *Curiosity killed the cat*. They waited for a long time before anything happened.

At midnight, two tiny men (who knew that *Two is company, three's a crowd*) in ragged clothes climbed in through the window and immediately sat down to work. Their tiny hands expertly sewed together the leather pieces. They were singing *I cried because I had no shoes until I saw someone with no feet*. They were sawing and hammering and stitching since they knew that *A stitch in time saves nine*, and before dawn all their work was finished. Then they ran away.

After the strange little creatures left, the astounded wife said to the shoemaker: “The little elves have been so good to us. And they were poor things; they wore those ragged clothes. They must surely be cold in them. Still, *Cold hands, warm hearts*. I think I am going to sew little shirts and trousers for them and knit sweaters, caps, and stockings for them. You could make some shoes for them too.” She tried to seem nice and generous but as we all know, *The road to hell is paved with good intentions*.

“This is a wonderful idea,” said the shoemaker and immediately sat down to work. “*Where there's a will, there's a way*,” and by the evening all the little clothes and shoes were finished. So the shoemaker and his wife put them on the table instead of the cut out leather. When the little men came, they did not find any work to do. Since they loved sewing and stitching, they were very sad at first. Still, *Every cloud has a silver lining*. Instead of work, they found the cute little clothes and shoes for themselves. They were happy since *Finders keepers, losers weepers*. They could hardly believe their eyes. They tried on everything since *The proof of the pudding is in the eating* and were soon dancing and singing with joy, with their lovely new things on. They were dancing and jumping all over the furniture, the table,

the chairs, the floor, and finally they leaped out of the room carefully, keeping in mind that *Look before you leap*.

The shoemaker and his wife never heard from the two little men again. Still, *No news is good news*. Besides, the shoemaker and his wife knew that *It's no use crying over spilt milk*, so they should not be unhappy about the fact that the two little elves never returned to the house. Thus, all went well with the shoemaker and his wife as long as they lived since they prospered, and realized that *Life is a shit sandwich; the more bread you have, the less shit you eat*.³⁵⁶

The Tale of the Fox and the Crow (A new version)
by Orsolya Burián

Once upon a time there lived a crow in the middle of the forest. He was a grumpy old crow with certain peculiarities and no one could make him get out of the habit of things such as singing in the morning; he just frowned and muttered “*You can't teach an old dog new tricks*.” And crows are no exceptions either. He got up at 5 every morning because he believed that *early to bed, early to rise makes a man (and a crow) healthy, wealthy, and wise*. He could have had another reason to get up so early, namely that it's *the early bird that catches the worm*, but he just happened to hate having worms for breakfast. He preferred cheese. He ate all kinds of cheese, however disgusting it looked, as he thought *you can't judge a book by its cover*. The crow always stole the cheese from other animals. And although they say “*birds of a feather flock together*,” he did it alone because in his opinion *many hands make light work* was true. He invented all kinds of stealing-tricks and always managed to get his cheese because *where there's a will there's a way*, and *nothing ventured, nothing gained*. One day the crow stole his morning cheese from the fox, who noticed the act and decided to get his property back. *Use your head and save your feet*, thought the fox as he watched the smiling crow sitting on a bough with the cheese in his beak. “*He who laughs last, laughs best*,” mused the fox, and he tried to persuade

356 T. Litovkina 2004a: 30–34.

the bird to sing or speak so that the cheese would drop from his beak. “Sing to me, my dear, your voice is so beautiful!”

But the crow just shook his head because he remembered his mother’s teaching: “*Look before you leap.*” “*If at first you don’t succeed, try, try again,*” the fox kept telling himself, and so he said “*A moment on the lips, forever on your hips*” but it didn’t seem to affect the bird and the fox even regretted his saying that, because he wasn’t sure whether crows have hips at all. He had never been fond of biology. But the fox was patient, for he knew *good things come to those who wait*. And a piece of cheese was a good thing indeed. But however tricky he was, he couldn’t make the crow open his beak. It came to his mind that *two heads are better than one* and he hurried to get some help from the wolf. Meanwhile the crow was waiting rather impatiently to have the chance to eat the cheese all by himself, and when the fox disappeared he sighed with a relief, “*Better late than never,*” and gulped down the cheese in a jiffy. But it was just too much for him as it turned out, because he felt sick all day and all night. His upset stomach made him draw the conclusion: *Don’t bite off more than you can chew.*³⁵⁷

The Princess and the Frog

by Dóra Papp

Once upon a time there was a young princess, who lived with her family in a big castle on a hill. She was happy enough to say that “*There’s no place like home,*” but sometimes she felt lonely. One evening as she was walking in the garden, she heard a very strange noise coming from the ground.

“*Look before you leap!*” came a cry of pain in the darkness. “You’ve almost killed me, you’ve stepped on my foot!”

The princess was frightened because she couldn’t see anyone in front of her, but finally she realized that the voice came from a little frog. Seeing that, she regained her confidence and said: “*It takes two to tango!* If you had stayed away from the path, I wouldn’t have stepped on your foot, you little bastard. Anyway I’m a princess, so get out of my way!”

357 T. Litovkina 2004a: 72–75.

"The first step is always the hardest," thought the poor frog, so he tried to move. As he was crawling away he said to himself: "This stupid girl should have known the story about the prince-frog and the princess! I need that goddamn kiss!"

When the princess heard this, she immediately changed her mind and tried to entice the frog back with candy.

"Candy is dandy, but liquor is quicker!" said the frog as he turned back.

The princess, ashamed of herself, realized that honesty is the best policy and said: "I hate frogs, they're so disgusting.

"You can't judge a book by its cover," answered the frog angrily.

"Take it easy, froggy. You need my kiss and I need a handsome prince!"

"Actions speak louder than words," the frog said because he knew to *strike while the iron is hot.*

After he was kissed by the girl he began to laugh and said to the surprised princess: *"Before you meet the handsome prince you have to kiss a lot of toads! Ha-ha!"*³⁵⁸

The Fox and the Raven

by Katalin Wittinger

Once upon a time lived a raven on a tall apple tree. Under the tree there was a big hole and in it lived a red fox. The fox and the raven were constantly fighting with each other but *good things come to those who wait*. The raven was the vainest creature in the whole world, while the fox was the trickiest animal in the forest. As the favorite food of this raven was cheese, he was always munching it.

One time the raven was sitting on a bough with a big piece of cheese in his beak. To the tree came the fox, asking for the cheese and thinking: *use your head and save your feet*, and the cheese will be mine.

"My dear friend, please give me your cheese. I am very hungry. I have not eaten anything today. *Even a blind pig can find an acorn*," thought the fox. For once in his life he could be lucky. The raven did not say a word,

358 T. Litovkina 2004a: 76–77.

and merely turned his head into the direction of the sound. The fox tried it again because he knew that *if at first you don't succeed, try, try again*.

"Dear raven, my little foxes are starving. Give me at least half of your cheese."

But no answer came. Then the fox began to think up a plan. He decided to get the cheese with the help of a trick. *You can catch more flies with honey than you can with vinegar*. He said: "Dear raven! I always was a great admirer of your beautiful voice. Please, sing me a song to heal my broken heart!"

Necessity is the mother of invention, thought the fox. As I have mentioned, the raven was the vainest of all birds; he just could not stop himself from proving his ability. He felt he had to show off his beautiful voice: although he knew that *one cannot teach an old dog new tricks*, he began to sing: "Caw, caw."

But that was what the fox wanted. The cheese fell from the beak of the raven (as we know *a raven and his cheese are soon parted*), and the fox felt very satisfied. He'd heard somewhere that practice makes perfect. He ate the cheese with pleasure, even though it was stale: *never look a gift horse in the mouth*. *He who laughs last laughs best*, thought the fox, and he left the cheated raven on the bough.³⁵⁹

Anita Németh: *Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs I*

Once upon a time there lived a beautiful princess, the daughter of the king. After her mother's death she got an ill-willed stepmother who nevertheless was physically attractive in her own way. This queen had a magic mirror which was famous for telling the truth. She often had conversations with her mirror. The queen asked:

"Mirror, mirror on the wall,
Who's the fairest one of all?"

Then the mirror answered:

"You are nice my queen,

359 T. Litovkina 2004a: 47–48.

But Snow White is nicer still.
Your *beauty is only skin deep*,
But *don't cry over spilt milk*."

After this conversation the queen's real self was revealed. She boiled over with rage and screamed at the mirror,

"If you don't have anything nice to say, don't say anything.
Cursed be the master who made you, damned mirror!"
The mirror quietly answered,
"*Poets are born, not made.*"

One day the vicious stepmother ordered the royal huntsman to kill poor Snow White. The huntsman was very talented. He could kill two birds with one stone, and his motto was, "*A bird in the hand is worth two in the bush.*"

In spite of this, he was a kind person, so he took pity on Snow White and warned her to run away into the forest. And she did so.

As she was wandering in the forest, she found a little cottage. When she entered the house, she saw seven little beds and became puzzled; she could not imagine whose they could be. But when she glanced at a dead cat in the corner, she forced herself to calm down because she remembered that *curiosity killed the cat*. Then she rearranged the beds so that she could lie down and soon she fell asleep. When she woke up, she saw seven dwarfs who looked at her inquiringly. First the dwarfs behaved in a hostile way. Snow White heard such remarks as "*Seven is company, but eight is a crowd*" or "*Too many cooks spoil the broth.*" But when the dwarfs saw how beautiful and kind she was, they changed their minds and thought, "*The more the merrier.*"

The dwarfs told Snow White all about themselves. She got to know that they worked in a mine nearby and that in the course of their work they had soon come to learn that *all that glitters is not gold*. They had been living together over ten years, became fond of each other, and lived up to the spirit of the saying, "*All for one and one for all.*" Concerning their height they told Snow White that they were satisfied with it because they believed that *the bigger they come, the harder they fall*.

Snow White took to the dwarfs at once; she had no prejudice and knew that comparisons are odious. In the days that followed Snow White kept

the cottage in order. She believed that "*Cleanliness is next to godliness.*" She went to the supermarket and bought a new broom because she was taught that only *a new broom sweeps clean*. She patched up the dwarfs' old garments while singing her favorite song: "*A stitch in time saves nine...*"

As time went by in the castle, the queen's mirror kept on answering her in the same way as before, and the queen started to suspect that the huntsman had deceived her. When her apprehension proved to be true, she decided to take revenge on Snow White. The queen worked out a thorough plan because she insisted on the Court's Privy Councilor's advice that "*If you can't be good, be careful.*"

One day when Snow White was making the dwarfs' dinner, she heard someone knocking on the door. She opened it and saw an old woman there, dressed as a Greek beggar. The old woman offered her an apple, saying: "*An apple a day keeps the doctor away.*" Snow White did not know the saying, "*Beware of Greeks bearing gifts,*" and as she felt pity for the poor woman, she accepted the apple and gave the woman some money in return. Then Snow White broke the apple into two and told the woman to choose one half of it. But the queen – because it was she in disguise – thought: "*You can't teach an old dog new tricks,*" and answered Snow White, "*Beggars can't be choosers, so eat one half you first, my dear child!*"

As soon as Snow White had a bite from the apple she felt terrible, as if an army was marching on her stomach. Her last thought was: "*The road to hell is paved with good intentions.*" Then she fainted.

When the dwarfs arrived home they saw poor Snow White lying on the floor. They were distraught because they thought she was dead, so they placed her in a glass coffin.

But then came Prince Charming, slowly approaching on his panting horse. He got the hairless and toothless horse from one of his friends but Prince Charming was not angry about getting such a poor present, because he grew up in the spirit of the idea: "*Never look a gift horse in the mouth.*"

When the prince looked at the weak and haggard Snow White in the coffin, he could not help making a chauvinist remark: "*Frailty, thy name is woman!*"

Prince Charming arrived almost too late; Snow White's heart was hardly

beating. Well, the truth is: “*Nice guys finish last...*” He kissed Snow White’s lips, and she woke up with cold hands but a warm heart.

“Be my wife, you beautiful girl!” exclaimed the Prince. But Snow White was very thoughtful and she could not be seduced so easily. She answered, “*Marry in haste, repent at leisure.* Give me some time, dear Prince, to think it over.”

Snow White and Prince Charming said good-bye to the dwarfs and rode away. Unfortunately the horse soon succumbed because the Prince *could lead the horse to water but he could not make him drink*. They had to go on foot but they did not resent it. Soon they got home, got married and lived happily ever after.

Luckily, the moral of the story is not: “*One rotten apple spoils the barrel.*”³⁶⁰

360 The tale was published in T. Litovkina 2004a: 18–20.

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Univerzita J. Selyeho
Pedagógická fakulta
Bratislavská cesta 3322
SK-945 01 Komárno
www.ujs.sk

Anna T. Litovkina
Teaching Proverbs and Anti-Proverbs

Recenzensek:

Prof. PaedDr. Zdenka Gadušová, CSc., Doc. PaedDr. Barta Péter, CSc.,
PaedDr. Puskás Andrea, PhD.

Nyelvi lektorok:

Doc. PaedDr. Barta Péter, CSc., PaedDr. Puskás Andrea, PhD.

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Anna T. Litovkina
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Prof. PaedDr. Zdenka Gadušová, CSc., Doc. PaedDr. Péter Barta, CSc.,
PaedDr. Andrea Puskás, PhD.

Jazyková korektúra / Language review by:

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