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Episode #116

English Proverbs

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Hi, everybody! I am Georgiana, your English teacher and founder of SpeakEnglishPodcast.com. My mission is to help you speak English fluently. Speaking English is way easier than it seems! You just have to use the right material and techniques.

Today, I'll teach you some English **proverbs**. If you don't know what proverbs are, continue listening. And with a story, you will improve your **grammar intuitively but without memorizing any rules!**

Remember! You can get the transcript of this episode at speakenglishpodcast.com.

Ok. Let's get started!

First of all, what's a proverb?

A **proverb** is a popular saying that highlights the basic facts of life. Some of them are quite serious, although others are very funny.

Just like **idioms**, **proverbs** often have a greater meaning. It's not just individual words put together.

Great. So, **what's the difference between an expression and a proverb?**

Many English learners find it hard to learn **idioms**, and that's because they don't usually make literal sense.

Proverbs, on the other hand, are easier to guess, although their significance is greater, usually more philosophical.

Let's learn some **proverbs**:

1) Growing old is mandatory. Growing up? Definitely optional.

Oh, yeah! This first one is quite philosophical, and especially those who are growing old understand the meaning of this proverb.

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While our body inevitably ages, our behavior doesn't need to change. We can be young forever :)

2) Wise men don't need advice. Fools won't take it.

Usually foolish people don't take any advice, otherwise they wouldn't be foolish. Right?

3) Learn from the mistakes of others. You can't live long enough to make them all yourself.

Another wise proverb. Our lives are short, so it's best to observe how other's make mistakes and learn from them.

That's why we don't need to try everything ourselves. For example, we have been told that fire burns, so we don't stick our hands in the oven when it is at a high temperature. Right?

4) There is no difference between a wise man and a fool when they fall in love.

Yes, it's true. We're all fools when we fall in love, so I guess this proverb is true. No matter how smart or wise you think you are, in the face of love you're just a poor fool. :)

5) A closed mouth catches no flies.

It means it's better not to talk too much.

There are times in life when it is better to keep your mouth shut or give the least amount of information. This way we avoid mentioning something unpleasant or even hurtful.

I'm sure we've all been in a situation where we've regretted saying something.

6) Don't bite off more than you can chew.

It's true that biting off more than we can chew can cause digestive problems or even choking, however, in this case the proverb indicates a deeper meaning.

It tells us indirectly that sometimes we try to take on more than we can handle, or we try to do something that is beyond our ability.

You see, these **proverbs** won't just make you laugh, they also make you think about life's most serious problems.

Can you share with us some typical proverbs from your country?

Please write a comment on my website SpeakEnglishPodcast.com, or on my Youtube channel, Facebook.

Point of View Story

(Improve your Grammar)

Let's continue with a point of view story.

This way you can **practice grammar** intuitively and without memorizing anything.

I will tell you the same story twice, but in the second part, I'll change the grammar point of view. That way, you'll be able to observe how a specific grammatical aspect changes. It's a technique that I use intensively in my **English courses**. Let's start!

Let's listen to the story in the past tense from David's point of view:

When I was younger, I needed some advice because I was completely in love with a girl and didn't know how to approach her. So I went to visit an eccentric man who lived on the top of a mountain and called himself the "proverbial guru."

I found the guru sitting on a rock, with his eyes closed. Since I didn't want to disturb him

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too much, I just whispered, "Master, could you tell me a proverb about love? I need to win a girl's heart."

The guru didn't move nor open his eyes. He just said, "Contemplate...".

Not satisfied with the answer, I whispered the same question again.
The guru said, "Differentiate...".

After hearing that, I was furious, and yet, I patiently asked the man for some clarification.

And the guru's answer was: "Fluctuate...".

At that moment, I started yelling: "That doesn't make any sense! Please explain yourself!"

The guru opened his eyes and looked surprised. He said: "Good day to you! You know, I am a pro-verb guru, which means that I'm in favor of verbs! I love verbs, and I was reviewing my favorite ones!

Regarding your question, buy her some flowers and be nice".

Astonished, I left the place and followed his advice. Nowadays, I'm happily married to the girl of my dreams.

Let's hear the story in the past tense from the perspective of David and Toni:

David and Tony needed some advice because they were both completely in love with the same a girl and didn't know how to approach her.

They went to visit an eccentric man who lived on the top of a mountain and called himself the "proverbial guru."

They found the guru sitting on a rock, with his eyes closed. Since they didn't want to disturb him too much, they just whispered, "Master, could you tell us a proverb about love? We need to win a girl's heart."

The guru didn't move nor open his eyes. He just said, "Contemplate...".

Not satisfied with the answer, David and Tony whispered the same question again. The guru said, "Differentiate...".

After hearing that, David and Tony were furious, and yet, they patiently asked the man for some clarification.

And yet, the guru said another word: "Fluctuate...".

At that moment, David and Tony started yelling: "That doesn't make any sense! Please explain yourself!"

The guru opened his eyes and looked surprised. He said: "Good day to you! You know, I am a pro-verb guru, which means that I'm in favor of verbs! I love verbs, and I was reviewing my favorite ones!

Regarding your question, buy her some flowers and be nice".

David and Tony, astonished, left the place and followed his advice. Nowadays Tony is happily married to the girl of his dreams, and David, well he didn't get the girl. :)

Okay, great! That's the end of this short story. You may have noticed that the grammar changes are subtle, and that's because you need to understand them.

That's why it's useful to have the same story told from different grammar points so that you can easily compare. By the way, poor David, he didn't get the girl. I guess he needs to find someone else. :)

I have a question for you: is my podcast helping you with your English?

Though the podcast is a useful resource, because of time limitations, I can hardly develop these lessons, although they allow you to try out my method.

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That's all for today.



I will be back next week!
Bye! Bye!

Georgiana

founder of SpeakEnglishPodcast.com

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