

COMPARATIVE CHARACTERISTICS OF ENGLISH AND UKRAINIAN PAREMIAS RELATED TO CONCEPTS OF BEING IN THE ANTHROPOCENTRIC PARADIGM

Oksana Prolyhina

Lecturer at the Department of Theoretical and Applied Linguistics,
Zhytomyr Polytechnic State University, Ukraine
e-mail: ktpl_pol@ztu.edu.ua, orcid.org/0000-0001-9754-6023

Summary

The article raises the issue of comparative analysis of the English and Ukrainian paremiological systems. Approaches to defining the terms linguistic anthropocentrism, paremiology, linguistic and cultural aspect of paremiology, paremia, proverb are analyzed. The mental features of the two ethnic groups' views on the fundamental values are considered.

The practical goal is to conduct a comparative analysis of English and Ukrainian paremies in the prism of the anthropocentric paradigm, taking into account the linguistic and cultural aspect.

In this work, a layer of paremies conveying the fundamental concepts of existence, namely the concepts of life and death, was analyzed in the amount of 70 EPs and 70 UPs, and attention was focused on the study of the national discourses specific features, taking into account the different cultural and linguistic specificities of the two languages.

The following methods were used in the research process: the method of continuous sampling of paremias; the method of linguistic description and observation to systematize the material; the comparative method with classification of materials; analysis of dictionary definitions; the method of contextual analysis of lexical units.

In the course of this work, the ratio of linguistic and extralinguistic meanings of paremies was analyzed, from which it follows that the worldview of two ethnic groups, their stereotypes and priorities can be clearly traced on the basis of the concepts of being.

During the comparative analysis of the mentioned paremias, a number of thorough conclusions were made regarding their semantic, grammatical and stylistic characteristics.

Key words: comparative analysis, thinking style, linguistic and cultural aspect, paremiology, proverb, linguistic culture, EPs (English proverbs), UPs (Ukrainian proverbs).

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1. Introduction

The relevance of the study is determined by the need to develop some unresolved problems of comparative analysis of the English and Ukrainian paremiological systems and to identify in them both general, common and nationally specific. The existence of common and distinctive properties of English and Ukrainian paremies has a linguistic and extra-linguistic explanation.

In order to reveal the structural and semantic features in each language, in addition to a direct comparison, a deep theoretical understanding of these phenomena is necessary. The problem of the languages comparative study has been developed by various researchers, but it remains poorly analyzed.

Thus, *the purpose* of this work is a comparative analysis of paremias related to the key concepts of being: life-death.

The object of the study is English and Ukrainian paremias.

The subject of the research is determined by the linguistic and cultural aspect of the perception of English and Ukrainian proverbs.

The task of the research is to consider the general structure of English and Ukrainian proverbs with the concept of being, to analyze the linguistic and cultural aspect of the specified paremias in the national paradigm of the two peoples' values; to determine their internal forms and images; to outline synonymous and antonymic relationships, to characterize the stylistic features of paremias.

Research methods. In the research process, the following were used: the method of continuous sampling of paremias containing the concepts of life-death; the method of linguistic description and observation to systematize the material; the comparative method with classification of materials; analysis of dictionary definitions; the method of contextual analysis of lexical units.

The research material is English and Ukrainian paremies from dictionaries of English and Ukrainian proverbs, data from the Internet.

2. Scientific problem statement

In the course of a comparative analysis of paremiological systems, common and distinctive properties of paremies with linguistic and extralinguistic explanations are distinguished. According to V. von Humboldt's concept, language reflects the spirit of the people, its worldview and mentality. Therefore, in modern linguistics, the priority direction has become the study of cultural features in the linguistic picture of the world, where each individual language reflects a certain way of perceiving the world (*Kocherhan, online-resource*).

According to N. Andreichuk, one of the anthropocentric approaches to the study of linguistic consciousness involves the study of psychological landscapes of the individual at the neurophysiological and psychological levels. Studies of the genetic determinism of cognitive programs, the biological aspect of the evolution of cognitive abilities are being conducted (*Andreichuk, online resource*). In turn, the linguistic and cultural aspect of paremiology is considered by scientists as a synthesized concept that includes mental, psychological, ethnic, social, cultural, historical information about a certain national discourse and reflects the national outlook and identity of the people.

Therefore, conducting a comparative analysis of the English and Ukrainian paremiological systems in the prism of the anthropocentric paradigm, taking into account the linguistic and cultural aspect, is promising in modern linguistics and needs further study.

3. Recent research and publications analysis

At the end of the 20th century, a transition to an anthropocentric paradigm took place in linguistics, when language began to be studied in close connection with human consciousness and mentality. Individual fields of humanities research, based on the trinity: man-language-culture, have been singled out. Based on the theory of the German philosopher M. Heidegger, a person is considered not only as a speaker of a certain language, but also as a representative of national culture, an exponent of a certain mentality, as a subject who learns about the world and evaluates it. In this context, we can talk about linguistic anthropocentrism, when speech is studied in the prism of human activity in a complex of relevant circumstances.

According to O. Selivanova, the anthropocentric orientation of modern linguistics determines the need to study language from the point of view of realizing in it the results of an individual's cognitive activity. Language acts as an integral component of consciousness, its tool, an intermediary between a person and a conceptual picture of the world, which reflects it in linguistic forms (*Selivanova, 2006:259*).

In turn, V. Zhaivoronok notes that the followers of this approach focus on the study of the linguistic picture of the world as a product of a person or ethnic group, taking as a basis the statement that the phenomenon of the world known through language appears to a person primarily as language appears to him, and a human here acts as a generalized subject, because individual products of knowledge of reality through consciousness and thinking are supported by collective efforts, verified by collective experience (*Zhaivoronok, 2007:9*).

I. Karpova is convinced that in the linguistic picture of the world, a person appears as a biological being with certain physical advantages and disadvantages, with intellectual-volitional, moral-ethical and emotional-psychological characteristics, which reflect the morality of society, religious education and general principles, and also as a social being from the standpoint of its place in society, its belonging to a certain social group, its social role (*Karpova, 2013:25*).

V. Telia is engaged in the linguistic and cultural analysis of phraseological units, the position of L. Wierzbicka, who is engaged in the development of mental linguistics, is close to her. In this connection, modern linguistics acquires in-depth knowledge about the culture and mentality of a single people. In this context, paremias of a certain people are of particular value. Accordingly, the psychology of the individual, the peculiarities of the manifestation of intelligence, feelings and a person's attitude to the sacred concepts of being are also reflected in paremiology and are of particular interest for study.

4. Paremiology, paremia and proverb terms analysis

Many of scientists' works are devoted to issues of paremiology and paremias: V. Mieder, A. Taylor, R. Trench, S. Vinik, R. Honeck, etc. In our context, it is necessary to review these concepts briefly. For example, researcher B. Chilukuri in his work cites forty-four definitions of proverbs, which were formulated throughout history by famous figures from Aristotle to D. Ray, and conducts a thorough analysis of them (*Chilukuri, online resource:11*). Despite the large number of studies in this area, there is still no common idea regarding the definition of proverbs or their classification. However, scholars agree that paremias reflect the identity and wisdom of a nation, as they are part of language and at the same time part of culture and serve as material for linguistic research at various levels (*Gevorgyan, online resource:217*).

Paremiology (from the Greek *paremia* = proverb) collects, classifies and studies proverbs. According to V. Mieder, paremiologists consider proverbs from a more inclusive point of view, since they rely on such fields as anthropology, art, communications, folklore, history, literature, philology, psychology, religion and sociology (*Mieder, 2004:27*). At the modern stage, proverbs are considered both in the language system and in the context of culture. In connection with the above-mentioned problem, A. Wierzbicka quotes von Humboldt, putting forward the idea that each language contains a characteristic worldview. As a single sound is an intermediary between an object and a person, so all language is an intermediary between people, the inner and outer world that affects them (*Wierzbicka, 1992:34*).

Scientist R. Honeck, in turn, concentrates on the use of proverbs in a socio-cultural context, arguing that proverbs are cultural language products created and used in social situations

for social purposes, they entail the codification of important cultural lessons (*Honeck & oth., 1997:615*).

In one of his works, Mieder examines the origin of proverbs in detail, emphasizing that throughout history there have always been borrowings from the ancient period, the Middle Ages, as well as migration from one language to another. The process of creating paremias takes place at the present stage and will continue. A paremiologist is convinced that a statement can become a proverb only if it enters general oral and written usage with a certain frequency and distribution (*Mieder, online resource:44*). In another study, the author concludes that a proverb is a short, well-known folk sentence that contains wisdom, truth, morals and traditional views in a metaphorical, fixed, memorable form that is passed down from generation to generation (*Mieder, 2004:4*).

So, drawing a conclusion from the above, we can state that the terms proverb and paremia are identical and will be used as synonyms further in this study.

Paremias in the Ukrainian and English languages can be conditionally divided into three groups:

- 1) proverbs that can be translated literally, that is, those that have an identical translation;
- 2) proverbs that have the same structure, but the chosen images are different;
- 3) proverbs that differ both in structure and images, that is, those that do not have their counterparts in another language.

All three types are considered in this work, but proverbs of the third type are of particular interest. It is they that make it possible to trace the linguistic and cultural features of two separate peoples. The source of the ancient paremias origin of any people is lost. In this work, attention is paid to proverbs of folk origin. Their original source lies in the collective mind of the people. While studying the two nations' paremias, we also study the culture of the two countries, namely their mentality.

5. EPs and UPs comparative analysis

Ideas about life – death mostly coincide in different peoples, but there are certain differences in the perception of these concepts in different peoples, which is determined by the way of life, geographical location, history, religion, etc. All fundamental values of life are reflected in the language of the people, which conveys them in proverbs, sayings, phraseological units, etc. Proverbs of any nation are the result of its cognitive activity from generation to generation. They summarize the experience of the people in the form of completed judgments, conclusions, teachings. The models for proverbs building in most nations are similar, as is their semantic content, since the values of being among different nationalities mostly coincide. However, a certain cultural difference attracts special interest, according to which it is possible to investigate the mentality of the nation in general and its cultural uniqueness in particular. Paremias of any language constitute a deep layer of folk wisdom, which native speakers were guided by in their everyday life. The concepts of life-death are among the key concepts of the linguistic culture of any people. Studying the conceptual sphere of these contrasts, one can trace the worldview of the ethnic group, its stereotypes and priorities.

Let's consider the most important concepts of existence for any nation: life-death. The selected EPs (30) describing the concept of life can be conditionally divided into two categories: philosophical and practical direction, in percentage terms almost in half.

For example, of a philosophical nature: *shrouds have no pockets* – we came into this world with nothing, and we will leave with nothing; *every path has its own puddle*;

April rains bring May flowers – maybe the downpour is unpleasant, but something pleasant comes after it.

This category is formulated in an allegorical form and grammatically takes the form of affirmative and complex sentences: *what goes around comes around; oaks may fall when reeds weather the storm* -those who are flexible and relatively insignificant can survive a crisis that destroys powerful people who can't or won't adapt. *If there is white, then there is also black*- if there are easy times, there are also hard times.

Many paremies in this category have the grammatical form of the conditional: *if you survive the storm, you won't be bothered by the rain disturb*- if you survive hard times, small problems in the future are unlikely to bother you. *If there were no clouds, we would not enjoy the sun.*

The second category contains practical recommendations or teachings: *life is what you make it* – life is not predetermined. Your choices and the actions you take on those choices shape it; life becomes less difficult if you take it step by step; life is not all about beer and skittles. According to the structure of this paremia type, they can refer to persuasive sentences: *don't put all your eggs in one basket* – don't put all your efforts into some course of action, enterprise, investment, goal or something similar, because if it doesn't work, you lose everything. *Be like a tree. Stay grounded, keep growing and know when to let go*- just as a tree releases its fruits and leaves from time to time, you must release pent-up anger and hatred. There are also many proverbs in the form of narrative sentences: *everything revolves around bread and death; difficult times teach us much more than peaceful times; failure teaches you more than success.*

Comparing EPs and UPs that reveal the concept of life, we find a small percentage of those that completely coincide in form and meaning (have an identical translation): *hope for the best, but prepare for the worst-сподівайся на краще, але зотуйся до гіршого*- be optimistic, but be prepared for a scenario where things can go wrong. *What doesn't kill us makes us stronger- те, що нас не вбиває, робить нас сильнішими*- if we go through hard times, we come out of them stronger. *What you sow, so shall you reap- що посієш, то і пожнеш. The drowning man will grasp at straws-потопельник за соломинку вхопиться*- when someone is in a difficult situation, he/she will use any available opportunity to get out of it. *Keep your head in the cold, and your feet in warmth – you will live forever on earth- держи голову в холоді, а ноги в теплі – будеш жити вік на землі.*

Among the paremias of this group, there are many proverbs of a dualistic nature, where the concept of life and death is revealed within the limits of one proverb: *life is not separated from death. It just looks that way; he who dies- dies, and he who lives- lives; live so that you will be well spoken of at the grave. A righteous man needs no memory, for his deeds are his monument* -live so that they speak well of you at the grave. The righteous does not need memory, because his deeds are his monument. We find similar paremias in the Ukrainian language: *коли б життя, а смерть прийде* (when life and death will come); *живий про живе гадає* (the living thinks about the living); *яке життя, така й смерть* (as life is, so is death); *який порядок у себе заведеш, таке й життя поведеш* (whatever order you establish in yourself, such is the life you will lead); *які люди, таке і життя буде* (like people, like life will be).

The most common group of proverbs are of the same structure, but the chosen images are different. For example, the EP *don't throw the baby out with the bath water* – don't throw away something valuable while getting rid of something worthless. In the Ukrainian language, another image is used, but with a similar meaning: *відбирайте зерня від полову* (select the grain from the chaff). For a Ukrainian bread grower, the topic of grain-bread has long been associated with the most important concepts, just as a child has a sacred meaning for both

cultures. So, two different paremias acquire the same meaning: not to lose something fundamentally important in life.

But there are also those that belong to the third group: proverbs that differ both in structure and in images, that is, those that do not have their analogues in another language. In the course of the study, 44 of the most used UPs were selected, among which there is a very large percentage of those that are authentic: *вік звікувати – не в гостях побувати* (to grow old – not to visit); *як жили наші діди та прадіди, так нам веліли* (as our grandfathers and great-grandfathers lived, so we were told); *виходиш з дому – кланяйся життю молодому* (you leave the house – bow down to a young life); *в добрім житті кучері в'ються, в поганім – січуться* (in a good life the curls curl, in a bad one – they are cut); *живемо, як горох на дорозі: хто не йде, той скубне* (we live like peas on the road: those who go, pluck us); *де мир і совіт, там життя, як маків цвіт* (where there is peace and harmony, there is life, like a poppy flower).

In contrast to EPs, the majority of Ukrainian proverbs describing the concept of life are philosophical and instructive at the same time and are distinguished by the simplicity of images and laconicism: *день довгий, а вік короткий* (the day is long and the age is short); *з віком розум приходить* (wisdom comes with age); *де є життя, там є й надія* (where there is life, there is hope); *життя закоротке для щастя, а задовге для терпіння* (life is short for happiness and long for patience); *життя закоротке для розкоші, а задовге на горі* (life is too short for luxury, but too long for grief); *ліпше соломяне життя, як золота смерть* (a straw life is better than a golden death); *живи для людей, проживуть люди і для тебе* (live for people, people will live for you); *чоловік змінюється у житті, а по правді життя змінює чоловіка* (a man changes in life, and in truth life changes a man).

According to the structure of UPs, they often acquire comparative forms: *літа пливають, як вода* (years flow like water); *життя біжить – як музика дзвенить* (life runs as music rings); *вік пройшов – як батогом лягнув* (the age passed like a whiplash); *жив, як пес, загинув, як собака* (lived like a dog, died like a dog); *живе, як у батька за пазухою* (lives as in his father's bosom); *живуть між собою, як голубів пара* (they live together like a pair of pigeons); *живуть між собою, як риба з водою* (live together like fish with water).

Opposites are inherent in UPs: *життя любить того, хто за нього бореться, а нищить того, хто йому піддається* (life loves the one who fights for it, and destroys the one who succumbs to it); *живи не як хочеться, а як можесться* (live not as you want, but as you can); *живи просто, проживеш років за сто, а будеш лукавить – чорт тебе задавить* (live simply, you will live for a hundred years, but if you are cunning – the devil will crush you).

It should be noted that the largest percentage of the selected English proverbs with the concepts of existence falls on paremias dedicated to the concept of death (40 units). Therefore, the theme of death for centuries has been of great concern to the English, which indicates their deep experiences and understanding of the meaning of departure to the other world, which was reflected in the large number of paremias. In his research, A. Vojtěch states that the word death in English paremias is used metaphorically (as great fear, great unknown) in five different ways (Vojtěch, 2018). In the course of this study, three main meanings of the concept of death were singled out:

- 1) the approach of death humiliates and reminds a person that everything is temporary;
- 2) death as a relief from pain and suffering as stated in the Bible, where death is the path that man must walk;
- 3) death as the most important fear is one of the few driving forces that prompts the rethinking of existence.

The first group includes: *nothing is certain except death and taxes* – no one will escape death; *every day we live brings us closer to death* -it is an immutable law of nature; *the sea does not refuse any river* – as the journey of all rivers ends in the sea, our journey ends in death; *there is no one who can jump so high to escape death; there is a cure for everything except death*.

The second group includes: *death doesn't just look through the book of the old; the whole world is a dream, and death is the interpreter; death rather frees us of ills than robs us of our goods; pale death knocks at the cottage and the palace with an impartial hand*.

The third group includes the following paremias: *death is a great leveler* – we all die regardless of whether we are rich or poor, strong or weak; *cowards die many times before they die* – cowards suffer the terrible consequences of death many times; *who thinks often of death does nothing worthy of life*- if you start thinking about death, you are no longer sure of life; *there is no rich in the grave; while a person is alive, the whole world is small for him; after death, the grave is quite large; lightning never strikes the same place twice* – misfortune does not happen to the same person twice; *more die from food than from hunger; death takes no bribes; death pays all debts; a sudden death is the best*.

The most common grammatical structures are narrative simple or complex sentences: *death foreseen never comes; the sense of death is most in apprehension; death has a thousand doors to let out life; it is better to die once than to live always in the fear of death*.

So, in EPs, with the concept of death, a deep primordial philosophical thought about the doom and fatality of human existence is encrypted. Unlike EPs, Ukrainian proverbs with this concept are the least common, which indicates a positive perception of human existence, and if they are found, they are humorous in nature: *гроші, молода жінка і бистрі коні – то смерть* (money, a young woman and fast horses are death); *в гурті і смерть не страшна* (death is not scary in a band); *боятися смерті – на світі не жити* (to be afraid of death – not to live in the world), *добре лінивого по смерть посилали* (it is good to send the lazy to death).

In this context, there are more paremias, which contain the concept of life and death in a dualistic perception of the world, which was already discussed above.

It should be noted that all the above proverbs are rich in stylistic techniques, which are used as means of indirect and figurative expression of human thought. Stylistic techniques that contribute to the rhetoric of proverbs are metaphor, personification, allegory, hyperbole, comparison, paradox, metonymy, irony. Certain poetic features, such as rhyme, alliteration, assonance, and ellipsis, also add a special rhetorical power to proverbs, making them more vivid, emotional, and more memorable.

6. Conclusions

According to the anthropocentric approach to semantic-lexical, paremiological, conceptual analysis, a person is considered as the center and the highest goal of the universe, in our case, the attitude of a person to the fundamental concepts of being is studied.

The task of anthropocentric paremiology is to study the ratio of linguistic and extralinguistic meanings of paremias, since the paremiological meaning reflects only part of the mental information, while the other part of it is encoded in the human psyche by mental images of an extralinguistic nature.

The direct embodiment of the fundamental values of the existence was reflected in the language. With the help of language, the nation transmits and consolidates symbols, norms, customs, scientific knowledge and models of behavior, values, feelings, ideas, beliefs, attitudes.

Paremiias as communicative units have an instructive character, accumulating the authority of previous generations, conditioned by a sharp mind, aesthetic sense, wisdom and talent of collective discursive embodiment.

Based on the analysis conducted by the comparative method with the classification of materials, the following results were obtained:

- the specificity of the Ukrainian and English peoples' culture is directly reflected in the paremiological fund of the considered languages;
- all concepts denoted by paremiias are equally familiar to Ukrainian and English speakers, but the images underlying the meanings are specific;
- studying the concepts of existence life-death, it is possible to trace the worldview of the ethnic group, its stereotypes and priorities;
- among the considered paremiias, there are those that have lost their relevance over time and are archaic in their images. It is through such proverbs that the original realities associated with a certain historical period are traced;
- other proverbs and their interpretations are universally true at all times, despite the social, cultural and other changes taking place;
- the selected EPs describing the concept of life can be conditionally divided into two categories: philosophical and practical direction, in percentage terms almost in half;
- EPs of the philosophical orientation is formulated in an allegorical form and grammatically more often have the form of affirmative, complex or conditional sentences;
- the second category of EPs contains practical recommendations or teachings; they are practical and pragmatic; in terms of structure, they are more likely to be persuasive or narrative sentences;
- the overwhelming number of UPs describing the concept of life are philosophical and instructive at the same time and are distinguished by the simplicity of images and laconicism; according to the structure they often acquire comparative forms or contrasts;
- three main meanings of the concept of death were singled out in EPs and their examples were given;
- in EPs, the concept of death encodes a deep, primordial philosophical thought about the doom and fatality of human existence; the most common grammatical structures are narrative simple or complex sentences;
- UPs with the concept of death are the least common and of an ironic character;
- in UPs, the concepts of life and death are described within the limits of one proverb, conveying the dualism of the worldview;
- stylistic techniques in proverbs vary from metaphors, hyperboles, metonymies, comparisons, paradoxes, allegories to litotes and irony.

Prospects for research of the specified problem can be seen in the further study of structural and semantic features of EPs and UPs for the connection of their lexical, grammatical and stylistic characteristics.

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