

The semantic features of English proverbs with the basic lexeme *man*

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Abstract. Proverbs are studied not only as a means of communication but, first and foremost, as a tool for understanding the national world of other peoples, as they carry cultural information and express the national character of people. Proverbs reflect the philosophy and psychology of people, providing an opportunity to penetrate into another world and discover its most significant national values. They have a didactic meaning, characterized by conciseness of form and completeness of thought. Proverbs, as a type of paremial cliché, are a cultural heritage of the people, used in the appropriate language-speech situation. They are marked by imagery, vividness, enrich the speech of the speaker and writer, and evoke feelings of awe, surprise, sadness and other feelings and emotions of the listener.

Key words: proverbs, semantics, English, *man*, culture.

Introduction. A proverb, as a type of paremial cliché, represents a rich and expressive layer within the language system. It takes the form of a complete sentence both in structure and meaning. Proverbs of all nations reflect the way of life, history, culture, traditions, and customs, both of the people as a whole and the individual. They also preserve the observations, reasoning, and views of the people about the world and life. In proverbs the experience of economic activity, the spiritual and moral values of the people, and the ethical norms of human relationships, both in the family and society, are reflected.

The proverb is the object of linguistic theoretical, linguistic-contrastive and linguistic-methodological research. Both aspects of her research have great theoretical and practical significance. In the understanding and definition of a proverb, scientists have a lot in common and specific. The problem of researching proverbs was studied by linguists and methodologists: V.I. Dal, G.L. Permyakov, E.V. Ivanova, W. Mieder, M. Dzhusupov, A.A. Nasirov, P.U. Bakirov etc. [6; 10; 8; 3; 7; 9; 5].

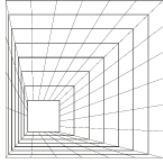
W. Mieder noted disagreements among paremiologists regarding a unified definition of a proverb and attempted to address this issue through an experiment, asking 55 people to write their definitions of proverbs, based on what they thought a proverb was. He received the following definition: «a proverb is a phrase, saying, sentence, statement or expression of folk which contains above all wisdom, truth, morals, experience, lessons and advice concerning life and which has been handed down from generation to generation» [3; p. 24]. On the basis of the gained definitions W. Mieder offers his own: «proverbs are short, generally known sentences of the folk that contain wisdom, truths, morals, traditional views in a metaphorical, fixed and memorable form and that are handed down orally from generation to generation» [3; p. 5].

Methods. While conducting scientific research the method of linguistic description, comparative method, semantic-stylistic method etc. were used.

Results and discussion.

To characterize the content of English proverbs with the basic lexeme *man*, the following proverb dictionaries were analyzed: *Dictionary of Common English Proverbs* (M. Attia, 2004); *English Proverbs and Sayings* (S. Kuskovskaya, 1987); *Russian-English dictionary of proverbs and sayings* (A. Margulis, A. Kholodnaya, 1974) [1; 2; 4].

The lexeme *man* in the English language can have other similar variants. They differ from each other in stylistic coloring (literary, neutral, colloquial) and can be used in different contexts and meanings.



Synonym of the word <i>man</i>	Stylistic coloring,	Description/definition of the word
1. <i>man</i>	<i>neutral</i>	<i>An individual human</i>
2. <i>person</i>	<i>neutral</i>	<i>Human , individual</i>
3. <i>human</i>	<i>literary</i>	<i>Of, relating to, or characteristic of humans</i>
4. <i>soul</i>	<i>literary</i>	<i>The immaterial essence, animating principle, or actuating cause of an individual life</i>
5. <i>being</i>	<i>literary</i>	<i>The quality or state of having existence/conscious existence (life)</i>
6. <i>body</i>	<i>colloquial</i>	<i>A human being (person)</i>
7. <i>creature</i>	<i>literary</i>	<i>Something created either animate or inanimate: such as a human being</i>

All proverbs have an anthropocentric orientation, as they characterize a person, their way of life, actions, attitude toward work, other people, animals, etc. To reveal the semantics of proverbs with the base lexeme *man*, where the person is explicitly expressed, we conducted a thematic classification of proverbs in the English language, presented in proverb dictionaries.

I. Man – The Image of a Person

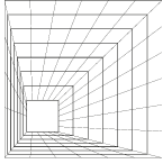
For the English, the image of a person is not determined by their appearance or clothing, but by their intellect, mind, and reason. Therefore, it is very important for them to be well-read and educated: *A man is known by the books he reads*. A person is also defined by their manners, behavior, and habits: *Man is a bundle of habits*, *Manners make the man*. It is especially important to be modest, despite one's virtues: *That man is best dressed whose dress no one observes*, *No man is always wise*. Wisdom, reason, and modesty should also be accompanied by a flexible temperament, meaning that a person should be able to enter society, establish contact quickly, and express their positive qualities with dignity: *A man of elastic temper wins all hearts*. However, despite such a noble image of a person in English proverbs, there are often proverbs that diminish their qualities and abilities: *Men are blind in their own cause*.

II. Man – Work

A person should engage in their favorite work and invest their soul into it: *Every man to his trade*. If a person takes on a task in which they are skilled, they can achieve good results and become a master of their craft: *A man is a lion in his own cause*. A person's mastery in English proverbs is also often expressed by the name Jack. As a proper noun, Jack has become a generic noun and is often used to represent the concept of a person. For example, the proverb *Jack of all trades, master of none* is common in English. The English believe it is better to focus on one thing and do it well than to take on several things and fail at all of them: *A man can do no more than he can*, and it is not advisable to do two things at once: *No man can do two things at once*. The English also believe that the most dangerous enemy in any task is empty chatter: *A man of words and not of deeds is like a garden full of weeds*.

III. Man – Society

The English are one of the peoples who excel in team sports, as they believe that collaboration leads to good results: *One man does not make a team*. However, people do not always express unanimity on issues, as *So many men, so many minds*. English proverbs teach tolerance toward others and express this idea with the proverb *When in Rome, do as Romans do*, which calls on a person to respect the people around them and value their traditions and customs. Before making friends, it is important to remember that *A man is known by the*



company he keeps. Also, human relationships are not always friendly, as *Man is a wolf to a man.* As one of the developed countries, business is the main profitable activity in England. In business, it is common for people to destroy others' plans, which is expressed by the proverb *One man makes the chair, and another man sits on it.*

IV. Man – The Image of Animals

Often, the notion *man* is conveyed through animal imagery. In such proverbs, the image of animals is used mostly metaphorically. Animal characteristics commonly found in folk literature such as fairy tales, fables, riddles, etc., are used to create these images. For example, the fox represents cunning, the lion represents leadership, the wolf represents hostility or hunger, the hare represents speed, the bear represents clumsiness, etc. Proverbs about animals often express human qualities directly or indirectly: *If you lie down with dogs you will get up with fleas.* In the analyzed proverb dictionaries, there are proverbs with animal names and the base lexeme *man*: *A man is a lion in his own cause.*

Conclusion.

Proverbs demonstrate what is most important to a people. They express the cultural and traditional values of the nation. They tell us about people, their character, actions, manners, as well as geography, traditions, etc. Therefore, they contain national-cultural specifics alongside universal (human) elements. The national-cultural aspect of a proverb shapes its idiomatic and specifically national dimensions. Proverbs in the English language with the basic lexeme *man* are diverse both in meaning and in the functioning of real-world objects and abstract concepts that are inherent to the English person as an individual and English society as a national formation.

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