



MODERN PAREMIOLOGY (LINGUISTIC ASPECTS)

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Annotation: *The article provides a detailed overview of the state of the study of proverbs. Over the last three decades, proverbs have become the object of not only ethnography and folkloristics, but also linguistics. I have outlined historical milestones in the study of proverbs and sayings of Slavic languages, posed a number of pressing questions regarding the linguistic status of proverbs, paremiological terminology, as well as the nature of functioning, primarily in texts of fiction and the media.*

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The paremiological boom in linguistics, which phraseologists predicted 30 years ago, has exceeded all expectations. The dynamization of modern society has caused the activation of national consciousness, and with it interest in such a small genre of folklore as proverbs and sayings. Liberation from censorship, freedom of speech, demand for advertising and open access of any “wit” to the Internet space and the media provided proverbs with such a powerful functioning that such passionaries of European paremiology as Erasmus of Rotterdam could not even dream of during the Renaissance or the formation of nations, Jan Amos Komensky, Vuk Karadzic, F. L. Chelakovsky, V. I. Dal, M. Nomis, I. I. Nosovich and others. They could not dream, but it was they who laid the material foundation of paremiology as a folkloristic and ethnographic discipline, giving We, linguists, have the opportunity, after several centuries, to finally begin to analyze not only their conceptual basis, but also the purely linguistic nature.

Phraseologists readily responded to this imperative of the time and, with their characteristic passionarity, study a variety of aspects of proverbs. Many of them devoted part of their phraseological life to paremiology, and some have long given preference to proverbs, without giving a complete “divorce” of phraseology in the narrow sense of the word.

What are the most pressing problems solved by modern paremiology in a linguistic manner?

A tribute to the tradition of paremiologists is one of the organic properties of this discipline. After all, the proverb genre itself presupposes the careful preservation of cultural and linguistic traditions, and this fully applies to those who before us hardworkingly and selflessly stored up pearls of folk wisdom in their paremiological treasures. That is why turning to the experience of predecessors and constantly using in our research the material collected by the patriarchs of paremiology is one of the most important tasks of modern paremiology.

It must be said that in Slavic studies this task is constantly being accomplished. In the Czech Republic, after the war, a modernized re-edition of Frantisek Ladislav Celakovsky’s



classic collection “Myogo8loul paragoyoi sbyashkobo ye rshloyls” [83] appeared, which collected Slavic paremiology for the period up to the mid-19th century. It has also been published in abbreviated, popular versions and is widely used by Slavists - for example, it is taken into account with due taste and tact in the modern “Russian-Slavic Dictionary of Proverbs with English Correspondences” by M. Yu. Kotova [28]. Interest in paremiography is now characteristic of almost all Slavic countries, and one could go on and on about reprints of the classics of national paremiology, which have again seen the light of day in recent decades. Thus, recently in Lvov, the fundamental dictionary of proverbs of Galicia-Volyn Ukraine, created by Ivan Franko at the beginning of the last century on the basis of the nesting principle developed by the classic of German paremiology K. F. Wander, finally saw the light of day for the second time [78; 118]. This reissue is an example of a careful attitude towards one’s national paremiological heritage, because with the new numbering, updated spelling and punctuation, etc. the publishers have reproduced the original page numbering, which allows any researcher to use this collection, returning ad fontes.

Nevertheless, so far the reprints of Slavic classical paremiography lack thoughtful and easy-to-search indexes on various aspects and deep linguistic, historical-etymological, ethnographic and folkloristic comments. Indeed: take a look at the most luxurious reissues of the collections of V. I. Dahl, M. Nomis, Vuk Karadzic and other pioneers of our genre in Slavia. They are constantly being republished. But try, for example, in the gold-lined edition of Vuk Karadzic’s “Srpske Proverb” to find the proverb you need or to find out the meaning of some Serbian dialectism, and you will see that this is truly a task for Sherlock Holmes.

It seems that it is time for paremiologists to take on this difficult task. Creating good linguistic and cultural commentaries and indexes to classical collections of paremiological classics is an urgent task, and the sooner we complete it, the sooner we will satisfy the interest of many lovers of Slavic paremiology. The fulfillment of this task also intensifies the so far “neglected” aspect of the study of Russian and Slavic paremiology, such as the historical and etymological one, which will be discussed below.

The patriarchs of Slavic paremiology left us a good legacy. And - both fortunately and unfortunately - we all still mainly feed on it. It is no secret, for example, that almost all collections of Russian proverbs and sayings published in Soviet times “came out of Dalevskaya’s overcoat.” Most of them do not even contain exact references to sources, because this way it is easier to cover up the lack of one’s own attire under the wide and good-quality Dalevsky overcoat. But that wouldn’t be so bad. Alas, our post-revolutionary paremiography (with the exception, perhaps, of the collection by M. A. Rybnikova [55] and the academic collection “Proverbs, sayings, riddles in handwritten collections of the 18th-20th centuries,” prepared by M. Ya. Melts, V. V. Mitrofanova and G. G. Shapovalova [50]) handled Dalev’s legacy quite freely, “translating” quite freely the dialect components of proverbs into the modern Soviet language, sharpening the atheistic sting of folk proverbs, or even creating very biting supposedly Soviet proverbs. Here are a few of these “enrichments” of Dalev’s paremiological corpus: I joined a collective farm and bought boots [37: 55]; I came to the collective farm and found a caftan [37: 55]; On a collective farm, language is not taken into account; whoever works is honored [37: 55; 55: 53; 53: 54]; Lenin



released our lot into freedom [49: 31]; Lenin's decree is a father's order [49: 31]; Following the party means living and blooming in happiness [49: 30]; Gain strength from your mother's breast, and wisdom from the Communist Party [49: 31]; The party and the people are united and inseparable from each other [49: 30]. I specifically cite in the text of the article the exact sources of these proverbs so that the reader does not think that they are taken from oral anecdotal use. But these collections were published and republished in thousands of copies, reinforcing the idea of the unity of the people and the party in folklore reincarnation.

In the 80s of the last century, however, 3 extensive collections of Russian proverbs and sayings, largely cleared of mental primitivization, saw the light of day. In 1986, the "Collection of Proverbs of the Russian Language," compiled by Vladimir Tanchuk, was published in New York [73]. The proverbs here are arranged according to the strict alphabet of the first component; the dictionary includes both materials from ancient collections and some part of the modern oral paremiological fund. Two years later, the dictionary "Russian Proverbs and Sayings" was published in Moscow, the editor and one of the compilers of which was the famous folklorist V.P. Anikin [54]. Proverbs here are also given in alphabetical order according to the first component, the dictionary (in which proverbs from other collections were added to the corpus of V.I. Dahl) has been cleared of many random and distorted proverbs, spelling and punctuation have been unified. Unfortunately, these useful collections of Russian paremiology do not indicate the sources of the material, which deprives them of coordinates in time and space and at least implicit information about their use.

Dalev's tradition of thematic collections of Russian proverbs and sayings in the 80s of the last century was continued by A.S. Spirin [70], who enthusiastically collected them all his life. Later, A.I. Zimin joined the work to improve and somewhat expand the book.

Of course, in different Slavic countries, the "modernization" of traditional proverbs, clarification of their sources, chronology, regional markings and expansion of the paremiological database proceeds in its own way. But nevertheless, this process has already begun long ago and paremiologists should listen to it. Accurate identification of the authenticity of a particular proverb in paremiography is impossible without its accurate certification in time and space.

That is why the task of modern Slavic paremiography is to create paremiological collections of proverbs in different languages. An example of such a collection is the monumental work created under the leadership and editorship of Academician. Yu. Kzhizhanovsky. For the Russian language, such work was done by our phraseological seminar at the Interdepartmental Dictionary Cabinet named after. B. A. Larina (St. Petersburg State University). It took almost 40 years, and the first two volumes - "Big Dictionary of Russian Folk Comparisons" [36] and "Big Dictionary of Russian Proverbs" [35] have already seen the light, and the third - "Big Dictionary of Russian Proverbs" ", which describes about 80 thousand proverbs are already in the printing house. In the latest dictionary, we tried to reflect and accurately certify the Russian paremiological fund, starting from the "Izbornik" of Grand Duke Svyatoslav in 1073 to our Internet days.



If for each Slavic language we receive similar sets of national paremiology, then many aspects of the study of paremiology will be on a reliable basis and we will finally be able to objectively separate the national from the international, the European from the “purely” Slavic, the individual from the general. The main thing is that we will receive a reliable basis for testing very high and often abstract cognitivist ideas and conclusions made by conceptologists in recent years.

The speech nature of proverbs, in fact, not only ensures their functioning in the language system, but also creates a whole palette of artistic and aesthetic properties, thanks to which they become in demand by word artists and creators of texts of various types. At the same time, their verbal, supposedly exclusively “oral” character until recently was one of the most important arguments for establishing the “non-modernity” and folkloristic nature of proverbs. Some paremiologists even predicted the inevitable decline in their functioning in modern speech, simply because they are linguistic casts of outdated folklore stereotypes and do not correspond to the realities of modern life. Thus, the famous American folklorist J. Spears [113] 36 years ago expressed the opinion that modern urban civilization does not give rise to folklore, including proverbs, sayings or folk comparisons. It is curious that already 5 years later, S. I. Vyaltseva’s dissertation was defended in Russia [10], where the active speech use of proverbs is shown in English material. Research by paremiologists of recent times has finally dispelled doubts about the folklore creativity of modern urban societies, including Slavic ones. On the contrary, as already emphasized at the beginning of the article, there is now a powerful increase in the productivity of the use of proverbs in all varieties of national language systems.

Sociolinguistic research shows that in real speech usage, proverbs continue to be very relevant components of living discourse. On Czech material, for example, such work was done by the German paremiologist Franz Schindler, whose book “Sprichwort im heutigen Tschechischen: empirische Untersuchungen und semantische Beschreibung” [111] provides a detailed statistical processing of materials from a wide survey and surveys of Czech language speakers of different social status and age. It turned out that in speech usage many traditional proverbs are not only well recognized, but are also actively used in a transformed form. Based on such a survey, Fr. Schindler, together with the Czech linguist Dana Bittnerova [110], created an innovative dictionary of Czech proverbs, which to some extent reflected the real frequency of use of proverbs in the modern linguistic environment. Based on materials from the Czech national corpus, member of our phraseological commission Fr. Cermak also states the fairly active functioning of Czech proverbs in different types of texts. The monograph of the famous Slovak Germanist P. Durcho [85] convincingly shows the real life of proverbs in modern German and Slovak living speech.

Of course, the use of proverbs is largely due to personal choice, the linguistic selectivity of the individual. Paremiologists have already had their say in studying this problem. Moscow orientalist G. F. Blagova published the original book “Proverb and Life: Personal Fund of Russian Proverbs in a Historical-Folk-Clore Retrospective” [2], where she meticulously and lovingly described the paremiological fund of her mother, who lived her entire (mostly Soviet) life in Moscow region. It turned out that this fund is very large and



multifunctional. A dictionary similar in genre, reflecting the paremiological background of its mother, “Phraseology of a dialectal personality,” was recently published by the Ural researcher V.P. Timofeev [75].

There are already a lot of studies that convincingly show the multidimensional functioning of proverbs. Of course, paremiologists are especially attracted to the analysis of the functioning of proverbs in literary texts and in the media. Based on the material of the Russian language, this was done, for example, by T. A. Naimushina [38], E. I. Seliverstova [61; 60], L. B. Savenkova [57], M. V. Sablina [56], in Bulgarian - M. Yu. Kotova and E. E. Sakovtseva [30], in Czech - Maria Novakova [106], etc. The range of different possible aspects of the functioning of proverbs is very large. I would call one of the “highlights” here the original analysis of the use of Soviet proverbs, presented by V. Khlebda [79]. The functioning of proverbs in advertising is specific and worthy of special study (cf., for example: [117]).

The reasons for the expansion of proverbs in the text are different. They are determined both by the actual aesthetic and cultural qualities of proverbs, and by those social conditions that “stimulate” linguistic creativity. As G. Mironova and E. Kuptsevich correctly noted [32], the activation of the national paremia fund is largely due to the fact that it reflects crisis phenomena in society.

Despite all the activity and multifaceted nature of the study of this issue, it still seems to be lacking, on the one hand, a “bird’s eye view”, with a high degree of theoretical generalization, and on the other, a more strict specialization of the object analysis. As for the first, theoretical approach, then, perhaps, we, paremiologists, still have not achieved a synthetic approach to the functioning of proverbs, which was proposed by one of the representatives of the Prague linguistic school, Jan Mukarzhovsky, in a voluminous study on paremiology “The Proverb as a Component of the Context” [105]. This kind of research does not interfere with reading and re-reading, so as not to lose the strategic goals of studying the functional properties of proverbs.

As for specialization, then, alas, many works on the analysis of the use of proverbs in the text do not sufficiently reveal their specifics in comparison with phraseology and even vocabulary. It seems that a lot remains to be done for a specialized analysis of the functioning of proverbs in different genres of literature, poetry, different types of journalism, radio and television programs. It would be nice to create specialized dictionaries where such functioning was demonstrated using solid, concrete material.

Paremiologists have long paid attention to the variability of proverbs and sayings as their most important dynamizing property. Detailed and original classifications of paremiological variants proposed by J. Mlatsek [103], V.N. Vakurov [7], E.I. Dibrova [15], E.K. Nikolaeva [41], E.I. Seliverstova [61; 60; 62; 63] and others, are applicable to many languages, which indicates the universal nature of the phenomenon itself.



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