

**REPRODUCIBILITY OF MULTIWORD EXPRESSIONS
IN PAREMIOLOGICAL AND LINGUO-CULTURAL
STUDIES**

VOLUME TEN

INTERCONTINENTAL DIALOGUE ON PHRASEOLOGY
University of Białystok, Poland

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UNIVERSITY OF BIAŁYSTOK PUBLISHING HOUSE
BIAŁYSTOK 2021

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Typesetting: Stanisław Żukowski



The volume has been financed by the Philological Department
of the University of Białystok

ISBN 978-83-7431-716-0

University of Białystok Publishing House
15-328, Białystok, 20B Świerkowa Street
Phone number: 857457120, e-mail: wydawnictwo@uwb.edu.pl,
<http://wydawnictwo.uwb.edu.pl>

Printed and bound by: Hot Art Przemysław Zaczek

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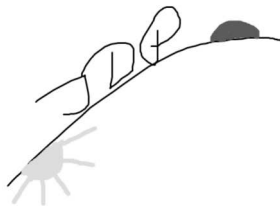
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Introduction

The tenth volume of the Intercontinental Dialogue on Phraseology series is composed of five parts containing a total of eleven papers delivered at the Europhrase 2018 conference titled *Reproducibility from a phraseological perspective: Structural, functional and cultural aspects* held at the University of Bialystok, Poland, 10–12 September 2018. This volume contains mostly papers discussing problems of cognitive, cultural and applied linguistics and paremiology viewed within the broad framework of reproducibility.

The first part of the book titled *Phraseology from the Perspective of Applied Linguistics and Ethnolinguistics* begins with the paper *Phraseology and Cognitive Entrenchment: Corpus-based Evidence and Applications for Language Teaching and Translation* by Jean-Pierre Colson based on his keynote lecture delivered at the Europhras 2018 conference. Attention is drawn to the fact that cognitive entrenchment is situated close to key phraseological notions: reproducibility, fixedness or idiomaticity. The paper discusses an experiment conducted on large linguistic corpora, showing that computational phraseology enables determining partial evidence for the theoretical notions. Moreover, it has developed practical tools to language users in general. In the article, light is shed on evidence for the probabilistic nature of the network of constructions. What is of paramount importance is the fact that one statistical score, the *cpr-score*, used primarily for the extraction of phraseology, gives significant results for other types of constructions, including lexical ones (in the case of Chinese word segmentation), cultural references and named entities, and even more schematic or abstract patterns underlying syntactic constructions.

Cultural aspects reflected in phraseology constitute the core theme of Munzhedzi James Mafela's paper *Exploring Culture-related Idioms in Tshivenda*, the other article included in Part One. The author assumes that idioms, units

which are important in terms of daily communication, convey a plethora of cultural information. Idiomatic expressions of various kinds reflect the linguo-cultural specificity of a given ethnic community, they develop over time and verbalize the knowledge of the world as seen in a given culture. These issues are exemplified by an in-depth study of Tshivenda idioms excerpted from lexicographic sources. Their analysis reveals many facts about the Vhavenda society, its life and the environment.

Part Two of the volume, *Phraseology across Languages: an Onomasiological Perspective*, contains two studies of idiomatic units with components belonging to a particular notional groups. The focal issue of the first text *Deutsche und georgische Phraseologismen mit Farbensymbolik* by Nana Stambolishvili and Anzor Abuseridze is a comparison of German and Georgian idioms with colour terms. The papers deals with expressions containing terms for green, blue, grey and yellow in the two languages from a contrastive perspective, offering a detailed account of their linguo-cultural perspective. The objective of the research is to offer an insight into the positive and negative connotations of selected colour terms in German and Georgian phraseology, the fields the colour idioms belong to and cross-linguistic equivalence.

In a similar vein, Jasminka Delova-Siljanova in her paper *Somatic Phrases: Macedonian-Czech Parallels* focuses on fixed expressions with names of body parts. In general, somatic idioms constitute the largest collection of items across languages due to the adoption of an anthropocentric perspective. The study analyses reproducible units with body parts lexemes in two languages, mainly Macedonian and Czech, from a contrastive perspective. The research is multiaspectual and comprehensive, since it includes pragmatic, linguistic and culture-related problems. Thus, it contributes greatly to the holistic interlingual analysis of phraseological units.

Part Three titled *A Contrastive Analyses of Notions Expressed by Reproducible Language Units* also contains two papers. Anna O'Byrne's contribution *Linguo-culturological Aspect of Russian, Bulgarian and Polish Proverbs on the Subject of Human and Human Nature* adopts a cross-linguistic perspective, presenting multilingual material. The study employs a conception of the Russian paremiological minimum to search for paremiological units from the field of "Human and Human Nature". The research corpus has been compiled by excerpting proverbs from the Russian-Slavonic dictionary of proverbs published in 2000. The objective is to analyse interlingual equivalence, then to determine lacunae and culture bound units in the languages compared, i.e. Russian, Bulgarian and Polish. Moreover, the actualisation and reproductivity of units are also taken into account.

In the study *Rumeur et calomnie – modalités du mensonge (étude contrastive d'unités idiomatiques françaises, roumaines et bulgares)*, Radostina Zaharieva devotes her scholarly attention to the phraseological reflection of slander and rumour as modalities of lying in three languages: French, Romainian and Bulgarian. The research corpus is composed mainly of phraseological units, proverbs and collocations. The aim of the study is to identify the key characteristics and verbalizations of the two phenomena and to discuss the evaluative load of the expressions in question. The objective is also to determine the relation between the picture of slander and rumour contained in phraseological units and its scientific counterpart.

Part Four, titled *Theoretical and Empirical Approaches to Proverbs*, focuses on paroemia viewed and researched from different perspectives. It contains three papers whose authors are recognised paremiologists from Finland and Poland. This part opens with the contribution delivered by Liisa Granbom-Herranen. Her article titled *A Regional Newspaper as a Repository for Proverbial Expressions – Proverbs Included in SMS Messages* voices the scholar's stand on how one can determine proverbs and proverbial sentences in a corpus of written speech containing approximately 70,000 unedited text-messages sent to be published as short letters to the editor of the daily Finnish regional newspaper. Above 7000 expressions relayed to proverbs have been detected in the corpus. The findings of the research study are that proverbs are part of contemporary Finnish colloquial language. Yet, the Author observes that the context of use has changed over the two-centuries period when Finnish proverbs have been collected. The majority of traditional proverbs refer to farming and contain agrarian terms, but they tend to be often used in a new context and with a new meaning in the modern Finnish language.

Proverbs are also in the center of Outi Lauhakangas' research whose her paper *Better Familiar Bad than Unfamiliar Good. Re-evaluation of Common Values by Proverb Use* assumes that in order to function, proverbs are reinterpreted or transformed to suit pluralistic and ambiguous commonplace situations. Generally speaking, the content of proverbs, which can be decoded both figuratively or non-figuratively, stresses what the Author describes as "concrete, reasonable and predictable things as esteemed aims". A proverb known to language users explains decisions within traditional procedures; however, in the case of ambiguous decision situations, what is accepted and commonly agreed on may be not be applicable. The objective of this paper is to discuss in which way a familiar proverb pattern may incline language users to accept views which otherwise would not be approved of. The Matti Kuusi international typology of proverbs is employed to analyse the emphasis of common

values in the stock of traditional proverbs and the exemplification comes from traditional and online media.

In turn, Bożena Kochman-Haladyj's paper *Weather Proverbs/Sayings as Modes of Exhorting People to Take or Refrain from Action* aims to investigate and categorise the weather proverbs/sayings. The Author adopts a semantic approach to analyse the research material which is composed of the units describing human action excerpted from a paremiographical collection titled *Weather wisdom: proverbs, superstitions, and signs* (1996) edited by Stewart A. Kingsbury, Mildred E. Kingsbury and Wolfgang Mieder. In the study, two groups of proverbs are analysed: in the first one, a prospective and/or suggested human action is not directly verbalised, while in the other, the need of a certain activity is implied by the weather conditions referred to. Attention is paid to the pragmatic aspect of weather proverbs/sayings.

Phraseological units and their textual potential in literary and political discourse is the title of Part Five which contains two papers. The first one is Elena V. Carter's contribution "*With an Open Soul and Heart*": *Nikita Khrushchev's Translated Messages to the American People*. The paper deals with linguistic and cultural aspects of metaphorical expressions translation. The author conducts a comparative cross-linguistic analysis of the store of metaphorical conceptions of *soul* and *heart* employed in the political speeches of Soviet Premier Nikita Khrushchev during his two visits to the USA (1959–1960) and its English translations. The research aim is to analyse how phraseological units containing the words *soul* and *heart* are translated from Russian into English, with a focus on determining conceptual and linguistic metaphors in these languages with a view to discussing differences and similarities in conceptual structure and in culture. The article offers rich exemplification of the issues discussed, which is its great asset.

Part Five also contains Ludmila Torlakova's article *Use of Figurative Language in "The Land of the Sun" by Hanan al-Shaykh*. The paper investigates relevant and interesting problems of idioms translation in literary texts from the perspective of cognitive semantics and stylistics. The Author analyses a short story *The Land of the Sun* (*Arḍ al-Shams*, 1994) written by the Lebanese writer Ḥanān al-Shaykh (b. 1945) who uses a plethora of various metaphorical expressions. The objective of the study is to determine the specificity of al-Shaykh's writing in term of the use of rhetorical figures and techniques for creation of her style as well as verbalizing the contents.

The main theme of the volume is reproducibility – one of the key notions in modern linguistics. As the broad perspective of phraseology is adopted, the Authors investigate different kinds of reproducible language units like idioms, proverbs, winged words and other phrases of different degree of

fossilization. The papers collected in the present monograph address a vast array of phraseological issues viewed from various perspectives, mainly cognitive, stylistic, translational, cross-linguistic and cross-cultural. What makes the book a particularly valuable contribution to phraseological studies is that the theoretical development is combined with practical applications of the results.

Thanks to the variety of approaches represented by contributors, a variety of methodological approaches is exemplified and illustrated. As a result, the multiaspectuality and complexity of research on phraseology is emphasized. That is why the book might interest both scholars and students interested in reproducible language units. The volume offers new insight into phraseological studies, with innovative and inspirational research proposals. The articles attest the state-of-the-art of the research on reproducibility, bring an element of novelty and set new directions for futures studies in the field of phraseology and paremiology, and from a broader perspective, reproducibility in language.

Białystok, May 2021

Joanna Szerszunowicz

PART I

**PHRASEOLOGY
FROM THE PERSPECTIVE OF
APPLIED LINGUISTICS AND
ETHNOLINGUISTICS**

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Phraseology and Cognitive Entrenchment: Corpus-based Evidence and Applications for Language Teaching and Translation

Abstract. Cognitive entrenchment, originating from cognitive grammar, actually comes very close to other theoretical notions such as reproducibility, fixedness or idiomaticity. By the means of experiments carried out on huge linguistic corpora, computational phraseology makes it possible to find partial evidence for the theoretical notions, and to offer at the same time practical tools to language users in general. This paper provides evidence for the probabilistic nature of the network of constructions. Indeed, the same statistical score, the *cpr-score*, developed in the first place for the extraction of phraseology, turns out to yield significant results for other types of constructions: lexical ones (in the case of Chinese word segmentation), cultural references and named entities, and even more schematic or abstract patterns underlying syntactic constructions.

Key words: *phraseology, entrenchment, construction grammar, corpora, translation*

1. Introduction

Perhaps one of the most striking features of phraseology is that researchers coming from a wide range of theoretical backgrounds have reached a similar conclusion: much of what we say or write consists of (at least) partly idiomatic constructions. Spontaneously, native speakers will put together elements of meaning which, according to their mastery of the linguistic system, are used together as a set of ready-made structures.

An overview of the multiple paths and tracks of phraseological research leading to similar conclusions falls beyond the scope of the present contribution. We would just like to take the example of a key issue underlying idiomatic constructions of any type, namely the nature of the attraction between the elements of a phraseme (or phraseological unit).

In the Russian phraseological tradition, the notions of *reproducibility* and *stability* have been used in that respect, at least since Vinogradov (1947: 160): “the very fact of stability and semantic limitation of PUs (PUs) shows that in reality they are used as ready PUs, which are reproducible, not constructed anew, in the speech process”.

Just like words, PUs are seen as functionally repeatable in different situations, and are retrieved from memory as a whole. In the Russian tradition, reproducibility has also been studied from a cognitive point of view:

A reproducible unit is a unit tending to possess some invariant character, i.e. “a stable image, a stereotype..., a continual verbal symbol, able to unfold into a whole segment of the ‘picture of the world’, which is expressed by a word, a morpheme, a root, a phrase (Karaulov 1987: 181).

These statements bear a striking resemblance to the notion of *entrenchment* as it has been used within the theoretical framework of cognitive linguistics and construction grammar. In cognitive linguistics, *entrenchment* is related to one of the four general cognitive processes that (also) play a role in language: automatization (the other processes are: association, schematization and categorization, see Langacker 1987; 2008). Much in the same way as an activity tends to become a habit, a linguistic structure may undergo progressive entrenchment and eventually become established as a unit. This is valid at the lexical level (for the traditional notion of words) but also at higher levels of complexity. Langacker (2008: 32) further distinguishes between *entrenchment* and *conventionality*: “For ease of discussion, I am conflating two parameters that eventually have to be distinguished: entrenchment or unit status (pertaining to a particular speaker) and conventionality (pertaining to a speech community)”. Crucially, all grammar consists of symbolic assemblies that can be situated along three main parameters: symbolic complexity, schematicity/specificity and entrenchment/conventionality (Langacker 2008: 32).

The first parameter, symbolic complexity, may be roughly explained by the length of the structure (containing more or fewer symbolic elements; for instance *merry* is less complex than *merry-go-round*). Schematicity, as opposed to specificity, refers to the possibility of using other elements paradigmatically at a given position or *slot*, or of modifying the existing element by inflection. Thus, *long time no see* is fully specific, while *take X into account* contains two specific slots (*into* and *account*), one schematic slot (*X*, the direct object) and one partly schematic slot (*take*, as the verb may be conjugated). *Entrenchment/conventionality* refer, as mentioned above, to the unit status of the assembly (or construction), as in the case of *book* but also of *long time no see*.

A further elaboration of cognitive grammar was provided by construction grammar (CxG), in which a number of different versions may be differentiated (e.g. Berkeley Construction Grammar, Cognitive Construction Grammar, Cognitive Grammar, Radical Construction Grammar, Sign-Based Construction Grammar, Fluid Construction Grammar; for an overview, see Hoffmann & Trousdale 2013). These approaches are varied, but they share the basic notion of constructions, defined as follows. They are Saussurean signs, i.e. “conventional, learned form-function pairings at varying levels of complexity and abstraction” (Goldberg 2013: 17). A construction may therefore be a word, a partially filled word (*pre-N*, *V-ing*) or morpheme, an idiom (in the general sense of a phraseological unit), but also a more abstract structure such as the transitive or passive construction.

A crucial point with respect to phraseology is that, as pointed out by Wulff (2013), all constructions are, in a sense, idioms:

What may license referring to some constructions as idioms and not others is merely a reflection of the fact that effects of idiomatic variation are best observable in partially schematic complex constructions – however, this does not make them fundamentally different in nature from other constructions (Wulff 2013: 285).

In other words, the idiosyncrasies associated with almost any construction make them in a sense (at least partly) idiomatic. Think, for instance, of the various ways of asking what the time is, even in European languages: *What time is it?* may sound like a purely grammatical construction, but the point is that this specific pairing of form and meaning (the very definition of a construction) is purely conventional in English, and a look at German and Dutch (resp. *Wie spät ist es?* / *Hoe laat is het?*, literally ‘How late is it?’) suffices to see that other languages use other conventional pairings of form and meaning for this everyday phrase.

It should also be pointed out that *entrenchment* has received slightly different definitions in CxG. For Goldberg (2013: 247), token frequency determines the degree of entrenchment of “individual substantive word forms”. In other words, entrenchment can simply be measured by the number of occurrences of the tokens in a corpus. But for others (e.g. Booij 2013), it is type frequency that correlates with the degree of entrenchment. For Wulff (2013: 279), schematic idioms (i.e. idioms or phrasemes with at least one schematic slot: *break DET ground*, *take DET course*, *cross DET mind...*) are of particular interest, because they show a ‘multi-dimensional continuum’ of formally and semantically irregular and cognitively entrenched expressions.

To sum up, reproducibility and entrenchment show many similarities, as the notions are applied to:

- STABLE units in the individual’s cognitive system and in the language community (conventionality);
- HOLISTIC units, retrieved as a whole from memory;
- VARIED units, such as a morpheme, a word, a lexical or syntactic construction.

It is also clear that both notions come very close to *fixedness*, which has been widely used in the phraseological tradition (Burger et al. 2007), because fixed words in a phraseological unit are stable and are supposed to constitute one unit. However, most versions of CxG go one step further, because they also view words and even morphemes as stable and holistic constructions.

Entrenchment remains largely a theoretical hypothesis, which is very hard to prove from a purely scientific point of view. However, *collostructional analysis* has already provided some clues in that direction.

This probabilistic and statistical methodology (for an overview, see Gries 2013; Stefanowitsch 2013), makes it possible to quantify association strength in constructions, and is derived from collocational approaches used in corpus linguistics. The results tend to show that there is some statistical association between verbs and Argument Structure constructions (and words and constructions in general) and that verbs display very different pictures of association. Even the combination of lexical constructions and more abstract grammatical constructions may be of a probabilistic nature (Stefanowitsch 2013).

2. Statistical experiments around entrenchment

2.1. Extraction of phraseology

I have proposed the *cpr-score* for measuring the association strength between words in a phraseological unit (Colson 2017; 2018). As indicated in figure 1, for any ngram of length 2 to n , it basically measures the average distance between the component grams in a huge corpus. The exact number of occurrences of the grams (without a window) is divided by the number of occurrences within a given window W , that is experimentally set according to the average word length in a language (for English, it is typically set at 20 words). Thus, the score ranges from 0 to 1, with a significance threshold that can experimentally be set at 0.065.

Figure 1. The *cpr-score*

$$cpr = \frac{n(w_1, w_2, \dots, w_n)}{n(x_{t_1} = w_1, x_{t_2} = w_2, \dots, x_{t_n} = w_n \mid \max(t_{i+1} - t_i) \leq W; i = 1, \dots, n - 1)}$$

This metric seems to be complex when expressed in mathematical terms as in figure 1, but it actually tries to simulate, by using very large corpora, the general human principle that elements displaying strong semantic links will tend to occur very close to each other. This simple idea was already expressed by the famous British linguist John R. Firth, who stated that “You shall know a word by the company it keeps” (Firth 1957: 11).

The *cpr-score* has been implemented in a freely accessible web application, *IdiomSearch* (<http://idiomsearch.lsti.ucl.ac.be>), allowing the user to enter a source text and to receive an approximation of the most common PUs in the text (including formulaic language). In much the same way as colostruational analysis, the *cpr-score* can be seen as a measure of the degree of association prevailing between words within PUs, i.e. the degree of entrenchment/conventionality of those constructions.

The crucial point is that, if the predictions of construction grammar are correct, the scores yielding significant results for one type of constructions (in this case PUs) should also work for other constructions, including partly schematic, schematic and even abstract constructions.

2.2. Chinese word segmentation

In Colson (2018), the *cpr-score* has been tested against Chinese word segmentation. It should be reminded that (Mandarin) Chinese is an unsegmented language, which means that there is no blank space between *words* as we understand them in Western languages. For instance, a *personal computer* (two words in English) is written as one sequence of characters in Mandarin Chinese (simplified): 个人计算机 [gèrénjìsuànjī]. As a matter of fact, we should be very cautious not to be Eurocentric when having recourse to traditional linguistic notions. Words, for instance, are in themselves very controversial when applied to very different languages such as Chinese (Dixon & Aikhenvald 2002). In the traditional vision of their own language, Chinese native speakers often consider that any Chinese character or *han* is a word, which used to be the case in classical Chinese. In modern Mandarin Chinese, however, it is generally agreed that most words (or at least what corresponds to the Western notion of words) consist of two characters, and some of three

or more. As there is in the language itself a fuzzy border between lexical constructions (words) and grammatical or phraseological ones, Chinese is a particularly interesting object of study for construction grammar and for phraseology, all the more so if we take into account the fact that it is the most spoken language in the world, and that it relies upon a very rich and ancient culture. Most Chinese words and phrases display complex cultural features. For instance, a *university teacher* is in Mandarin Chinese (simplified): 大学老师 [*dàxuélǎoshī*]. The literal meaning of those characters is: big – learn(ing) – old – master: an old master (i.e. a teacher) of the big learning (i.e. of higher education).

When applying corpus or computational linguistics to Chinese, the first basic task is *segmentation*: a sequence of Chinese characters must be separated into words, in order to be processed and understood by users or algorithms. How should this segmentation be carried out? There is no general agreement on this point.

The state-of-the-art tools for segmenting Chinese are circular: they are based on existing lists such as those found in dictionaries, or on models derived from hand-annotated data. In many cases, however, the lists contradict each other, and so do native speakers. Large-scale experiments have shown that the average degree of agreement between native speakers is just 75 per cent (Sproat et al. 1996; Ying Xu et al. 2010). In addition, a native speaker who is asked to segment the same text again after a few weeks, will often segment it in a different way. In the case of the *personal computer*, some Chinese segmentation systems or native speakers will consider 个人计算机 [*gèrénjìsuànjī*] as one word, while others will separate 个人 [*gèrén*] (personal) from 计算机 [*jìsuànjī*], computer.

In Colson (2018), the *cpr-score*, previously used only for the extraction of PUs, was applied to the segmentation of Chinese texts. The efficiency of the methodology was checked by the state-of-the-art methodology: the results are measured against a gold standard provided by native speakers, and they are automatically evaluated by a computer program. In this case, the gold standard and the evaluation program were the freely available datasets from the second International Chinese Word Segmentation Bakeoff (Emerson 2005). When a gold test is available, as in this case, the results of the automatic extraction are checked, as is the case for the extraction of phraseology, against precision and recall. Recall checks whether all the structures that had to be recognized were indeed identified, whereas precision checks if every identification is indeed a correct one. For instance, if there are 2 dogs and 2 cats in a room, and your algorithm checking the number of cats claims that there are 4 cats, the recall is 100 per-

cent, because every cat has been recognized as such, but the precision is just 50 percent, because the 2 dogs were wrongly identified as cats. Finally, the F-measure (or F1-measure) computes an average between precision and recall.

Measured against the MSR-dataset of the Bakeoff (Emerson 2005), the segmentation of the Chinese texts on the basis of the *cpr-score* (Colson 2018) reached a recall of 0.749, a precision of 0.658 and an F-measure of 0.70. Of course, those figures are less good than those obtained by state-of-the-art Chinese segmenters, but it should be emphasized that these rely on existing lists or dictionaries, and are not corpus-based. On the contrary, our experiment with *cpr* was purely corpus-driven: a web corpus of about 200 million words was assembled for the purpose of the experiment, and the algorithm just relied on that corpus for recognizing words. To our best knowledge, those precision and recall results for the automatic segmentation of Chinese are the best ones that were ever obtained by means of a purely unsupervised and corpus-driven method. Besides, a recall of 0.749 and an F-measure of 0.70 come pretty close to the average degree of mutual agreement for segmentation reached by Chinese native speakers (0.75).

What can we learn from this about entrenchment, constructions and phraseology? It will be recalled that exactly the same methodology (extraction from a corpus by means of the *cpr-score*) was applied to the detection of PUs (Colson 2017) and to the segmentation of Chinese (Colson 2018). Applying the same metric yields quite comparable results: most PUs can be extracted from a text, and most Chinese words as well. This confirms the very fuzzy border between phraseological and lexical constructions. In European languages, we often take it for granted that words are combined with each other by means of grammatical rules, but very different languages such as Chinese illustrate how our Eurocentric view should relativized. Thus, even common Chinese words such as *boy*, 男孩 [*nánhái*] or *woman*, 女人 [*nǚrén*] might equally be considered as collocations, as they resp. mean ‘male child’ and ‘female people’.

Indeed, the statistical method shows that, in many respects, Chinese words behave just like PUs, which they are at the end of the day, if we take the constructionist view that the very associations of morphemes into words are entrenched and idiomatic. In construction morphology (Booij 2013), a constructional idiom is defined as “a (syntactic or morphological) schema in which at least one position is lexically fixed, and at least one position is variable” (Booij 2013: 258).

2.3. Extraction of cultural PUs

As the whole set of constructions of a language or *constructicon* is seen by most researchers in CxG as a complex and probabilistic network interacting with all aspects of the language community, many constructions are also entrenched and idiomatic because of specific references to culture (in particular history). Extracting very entrenched constructions on the basis of idiomaticity (as in the IdiomSearch experiment) or of lexical associations (as for the segmentation of Chinese) should therefore also work for compound terms displaying a reference to tradition, history, culture or society in general.

In Colson (2016), the same methodology was used for the extraction of PUs around globalization in 6 languages. The study revealed the emergence of candidate PUs around globalization, a major notion in our society, as in *unfettered globalization* or *in the era of globalization*.

In addition to such recent PUs or compound terms referring to society, a whole host of cultural, and in particular historical or geographical references can be extracted with the *cpr-score* by having recourse to large linguistic corpora (of at least 200 million tokens). This includes most compound named entities (proper nouns) denoting famous people or cities, but also historical notions such as *the partition of Poland*.

To illustrate this point, table 1 below displays the *cpr-score* and the frequency (number of occurrences) of a number of PUs, including communicative formulas, collocations, idioms, but also named entities, and cultural PUs. All those results were extracted from the same corpus: a web corpus of 1.4 billion tokens (the freely available ukWaC corpus, Baroni et al. 2009).

The figures displayed under Table 1 illustrate how various types of phraseological units in the broad sense display significant statistical scores in the same corpus, despite their number of occurrences. While *long time no see*, *run of the mill*, *it takes two to tango*, *the chickens have come home to roost* clearly belong to phraseology, the first elements in the table are cultural PUs. *The partition of Poland* refers to history, *New Mexico* is an American state, and it is also called *Land of Enchantment* (on American number plates). *The Black Country* is the region around Birmingham (UK) and part of the *West Midlands*. *The Industrial Revolution* and *Sturm und Drang* are two periods in European history.

Considering all those examples from a cognitive point of view, it is clear that they can all be seen as very entrenched, specific, complex constructions, because their association score is very high. Such evidence gained from corpora confirm that a very complex network of constructions, including cultural and social ones, is at stake in language.

Table 1. Association and frequency of varied PUs in a 1.4 billion word corpus (ukWaC)

	<i>Cpr-score</i>	Frequency
partition of Poland	0.73	22
New Mexico	0.70	1796
Land of Enchantment	0.67	18
the Black Country	0.49	1099
the West Midlands	0.60	1071
the Industrial Revolution	0.83	2769
Sturm und Drang	1.00	53
long time no see	0.64	98
run of the mill	0.92	1005
it takes two to tango	0.92	107
the chickens have come home to roost	0.73	8

Source: own research.

2.4. Extraction of schematic constructions

According to CxG, the probabilistic network of constructions is valid, as we have seen, at various levels of abstraction and schematicity. If we wish to find evidence for this claim in large linguistic corpora, we should therefore check whether association scores such as those found for Chinese word segmentation and for other categories of specific constructions (Table 1) also hold for more schematic or abstract constructions.

Let us start from the example of the very common idiomatic construction *as white as snow*. Obviously, this stereotyped comparison is very entrenched in the linguistic competence of any native speaker of English. He/she will certainly also be aware of other similar cases like *as clear as crystal*, *as good as gold*, *as stupid as a donkey*, etc.

If linguistic corpora are a reflection of the native speaker's mastery of the complex network of constructions, we should be able to find a trace of these associations by means of our statistical score. The missing link, in this case, is just the use of *POS-tagged* corpora. Following the claim of CxG about the existence of abstract constructions, we will assume that a tag (such as *Noun*, *Adjective*, *Verb* etc.) will also be open, in a measurable way, to statistical associations that will reflect the complex construction network.

In the following examples, a randomly selected portion of 120 million words (tokens) from the ukWaC corpus (Baroni et al. 2009) was tagged by

means of the Stanford POS Tagger¹. Table 2 shows the association and frequency results for the idiomatic construction *as white as snow* and for the more abstract construction *as ADJ as NOUN*. The window (w) corresponds to the maximum number of words that is allowed between each token.

Table 2. Association and frequency of a PU and its abstract construction

	<i>Cpr-score</i>	Frequency	Window (w)
as white as snow	1.00	11	0
as ADJ as NOUN	0.53	429	2

Source: own research.

Thus, the association score for the abstract construction *as ADJ as NOUN* turns out to be already significant (0.53, with a significance threshold at 0.065). This means that anyone using a sufficiently large linguistic corpus could predict, by means of the algorithm, that this structure is very entrenched in English. Besides, *as white as snow* clearly inherits, in CxG parlance, from a more abstract construction, because it is a particular case of a pattern that belongs to the natural constructions of English.

3. Possible applications to language teaching and translation

As already advocated by Michael Lewis (1993, 1997), awareness raising of phraseology, by means of confrontation with corpora and varied linguistic data, offers new perspectives for learning foreign languages or for translating them.

As we have seen in section 1, construction grammar confirms many of the findings of phraseology, while giving it a solid theoretical grounding. The implications for language teaching and translation are numerous, because the very structure of language turns out to be very different from the vision given by more traditional approaches. In particular, the notion of grammar as a separate entity largely disappears, as there is a cline from lexicon to syntax. Although the experiments presented in section 2 are not, strictly speaking, evidence for construction grammar, they are quite compatible with it. There is presently no better theory of language that can explain

¹ We used version 3.9.1 of the Stanford POS tagger (<https://nlp.stanford.edu/software/tagger.shtml>).

the similarities in the behavior of very different constructions such as words, idioms, named entities, idiomatic constructions, etc.

If these findings are confirmed by other studies, it also means that we should start from a very different perspective for learning foreign languages and for translating them. The IdiomSearch experiment, briefly discussed in section 2.1., already offers several new possibilities to (advanced) language learners and translators, thanks to the mere detection of a great many PUs in any source text. It is generally admitted that advanced learners will learn a lot by reading in the foreign language, but they are often misled by sentences in which they fail to detect the figurative and idiomatic meaning.

Consider, for instance, the following excerpt from a British newspaper (The Guardian, 23 December 2018)²:

It is notable that this latest iteration of fantasy Brexit is most often promulgated by ministers, such as Andrea Leadsom, who have no responsibility for delivering essential services. Even these Brexiters don't deny that a no-deal outcome would present a big challenge to government on multiple fronts. In the light of their recent performance, how confident are you that our masters of disaster could cope?

The IdiomSearch tool makes it possible to extract from this passage the following PUs and communicative formulas: *It is notable that / iteration of / is most often / promulgated by / a big challenge / In the light of / how confident are you that / masters of*. The communicative formula *How confident are you that* is an interesting example, because it is unlikely that even advanced learners reading this text will recognize it as a recurrent formula, unless their attention is focused on it by a teacher or by a tool.

Verbal constructions will also serve to illustrate the benefit that can be drawn from a manipulation of corpora by means of the *cpr-score*. If we take the traditional view that grammar is a major part of language structure, with for instance transitive constructions like *He takes the money*, we should expect a very similar behavior for most high frequency verbs, as in the basic pattern: a verb, followed by a determiner, followed by a noun (VERB, DET, NOUN). However, using the same methodology and the same corpus as in Table 2 yields the following results.

As can be seen in Table 3, *do* and *make* are very often followed by a direct object in the form of a determiner and a noun, as in *do the work*. However, a close look at the *cpr-score* reveals that the situation is quite different between

² <https://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2018/dec/23/bluff-blackmail-brinkwomanship-why-a-no-deal-brex-it-is-still-on-the-cards>

Table 3. Association and frequency for a number of transitive verbal constructions

	<i>Cpr-score</i>	Frequency
do DET NOUN	0.08	3503
make DET NOUN	0.28	9890
play DET NOUN	0.12	1543
seize DET NOUN	0.67	335
take DET NOUN	0.26	8118

Source: own research.

these two verbs: in terms of CxG, this construction is much more entrenched with *make* (as the *cpr-score* is 0.28) than with *do* (*cpr-score*: 0.08). This also means that, taking the variety of examples of this construction into consideration, there is a much higher proportion of phraseology with *make* than with *do*. A brief look at the most frequent examples with *make* thus yields the following examples.

Table 4. Frequency of verbal constructions with *make* (120 MW web corpus)

Frequency	Verbal construction
779	make a difference
486	make any changes
296	make a decision
283	make a donation
268	make an appointment
192	make every effort
168	make a claim
162	make a note
133	make a complaint
111	make a contribution
101	make a profit
91	make a booking
90	make a difference
89	make a living
88	make any difference
86	make a start
86	make an impact
85	make a sudoku

Source: own research.

As shown by Table 4, many of the most frequent transitive constructions with *make* are at least partly idiomatic (e.g. *make a decision*, *make a claim*, *make a living*, *make any difference*), which explains why the overall association score for the abstract construction is so high (Table 3). The picture is different with *do* in the same construction:

Table 5. Frequency of verbal constructions with *do* (120 MW web corpus)

Frequency	Verbal construction
268	do the job
173	do a lot
163	do the work
98	do the rest
94	do the things
92	do the trick
70	do a bit
60	do the things
53	do the work
49	do some work
47	do this thing
46	do a job
46	do these things
44	do the following
40	do all things
39	do any harm
39	do the initials
39	do the rest
37	do some research
32	do this work
32	do the job

Source: own research.

Among the most frequent transitive constructions with *do*, we note an opposite tendency: there are many weakly or non-idiomatic examples, such as *do a lot*, *do the rest*, *do the things*, *do a bit*, *do this thing*, *do the rest*, *do this work*.

The kind of information provided by Table 3 (association scores for abstract verbal constructions), exemplified by a look at the relative frequencies of specific examples, provides a picture of grammar that is compatible with CxG and with phraseology. Not only are specific verbal constructions

very entrenched (e.g. *make a claim, make a start*), but the underlying pattern, i.e. the abstract construction itself is more or less entrenched, depending on the verb. The point made here is just valid for one type of transitive construction, but it might be extended to other aspects of the cline ranging from grammar to lexicon.

4. Conclusions

Recent developments in computational phraseology and in construction grammar converge on the existence of a complex network of probabilistic constructions, which is at the same time the reflection of the relative cognitive entrenchment of those constructions. Although the notion of entrenchment, inherited from cognitive grammar, might be further specified, it displays many theoretical and practical similarities with the notions of reproducibility, fixedness and even idiomaticity. Indeed, the only observable feature of all those theoretical notions in huge linguistic corpora is the high degree of statistical association of the constructions.

In this contribution, we have shown that very similar types of association can be found at the level of phraseological units, of lexical constructions (as illustrated by Chinese word segmentation), at the level of cultural constructions, and even at the more schematic or abstract level of underlying syntactic patterns. The only general theory of language that offers an explanation for these similarities is construction grammar, but the contribution of phraseology to the theoretical debate is also of paramount importance. Even if we just take traditional phraseology into account, there is no denying that recurrent associations can also be traced back, which confirms the overall importance of a statistical approach.

From a theoretical point of view, this is not to say that statistics are intrinsically present in constructions, in phraseology or in semantics, because they might just be an indirect way of describing the arbitrary pairings of form and meaning. Recent developments in artificial intelligence might however point in the other direction: meaning in itself may turn out to be far more statistical in nature than was previously thought.

On the practical side, learning and teaching a foreign language, or translating languages, may profit from tools allowing for complex statistical manipulation on the basis of huge corpora. More than ever, the big data approach turns out to be of the essence in applied linguistics. It is often fascinating to see that corpus-based data contradict traditional views on many aspects of syntax or lexicon. However, there is a need for more practical

tools adapted to language professionals and not just to computer scientists and engineers. The *IdiomSearch* project mentioned in this paper was meant as a tentative step towards that goal, but new user-friendly interfaces are necessary between the big data and actual language use.

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Frazeologia i kognitywne ucieleśnienie: korpuse dowody i ich zastosowanie w dydaktyce języków obcych i tłumaczeniu

Streszczenie

Kognitywne ucieleśnienie, wywodzące się z gramatyki kognitywnej, jest właściwie bardzo bliskie innym teoretycznym pojęciom takim, jak odtwarzalność, stałość czy idiomatyczność. Za pomocą eksperymentu przeprowadzonego na dużym korpusie językowym, komputerowa frazeologia umożliwi zarówno znalezienie częściowych dowodów dla pojęć teoretycznych, jak i zaproponowanie praktycznych narzędzi dla użytkowników języka. Niniejszy artykuł przedstawia dowody na probabilistyczną naturę sieci konstrukcji. Okazuje się, że statystyczny wynik *cpr-score*, opracowany przede wszystkim do ekstrakcji frazeologizmów, daje istotne wyniki dla innych typów konstrukcji: leksykalnych (w przypadku segmentacji chińskich słów), odniesień kulturowych i nazwanych jednostek, a nawet bardziej schematycznych czy abstrakcyjnych wzorów będących podstawą konstrukcji składniowych.

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Exploring Culture-related Idioms in Tshivenda

Abstract. Idioms make up a large part of people's knowledge of language. They are an important mode of expression that forms part of a daily communication among the speakers of the language. In addition to the idiom colouring the language with its figurative meaning and serving as a conveyance of distinctive meaning, it also reflects on the general life of the nation and its attitude toward the world. Idioms are formed from national sayings and are related to the culture of the nation. People are considered competent speakers of a language when they master the various idiomatic expressions. Idioms are distinct from ordinary literal language because their meaning cannot be deduced by the general rules of the language in question. As in other languages, Tshivenda is rich in idiomatic expressions. Tshivenda idioms mirror the Vhavana society and they reflect on aspects of life of this society and its immediate environment. Nations do not exist without some form of culture; therefore, it is important for people to understand the cultures of other language groups if they intend on improving communication across the groups. Culture can be imparted to people in different ways, including the use of figurative expressions such as idioms. The youth and learners of the language learn more about the culture of the speakers of the language in idioms. This paper seeks to explore idioms as phraseological units which reveal the culture of the nation. Idioms, as presented in Tshivenda dictionaries will be analysed to achieve this objective.

Key words: *culture, dictionary, figurative expressions, idiomatic expressions, language, phraseological units, Vhavana*

1. Introduction

All nations of the world are characterised by forms of idiomatic expressions which make up a large part of people's knowledge of a language. Idioms form part of a daily communication among the speakers of a language, be it in spoken or written forms. These expressions are not used senselessly;

a number of functions are attached to them. Many people associate idiomatic expressions with the function of colouring a language because they are figurative in nature. In this regard, Ntsanwisi (1968) says that idioms render linguistic expressions more effective. Among other functions, idioms serve as a conveyance of distinctive meaning. They reflect on the general life of the nation and its attitude toward the world by reflecting on the people's experience on aspects of life in all spheres. This means that idioms are formed from national sayings that reflect on the immediate environment in which people are found. As a result, some of these idiomatic expressions contain the elements of culture of a specific nation. Among the aspects that help to identify one nation from the other is culture. If one does not have the knowledge of the culture of a nation, he or she might find it difficult to follow the meaning of an idiomatic expression. Gibbs, Jr (1995: 97) states: "People are not considered competent speakers of a language until they master the various clichéd idiomatic expressions that are ubiquitous in everyday discourse."

African languages, including Tshivenda, are rich in idiomatic expressions. In their daily conversations, speakers of these languages will now and then colour their linguistic expressions with idioms. In addition, idioms are used in literary works to enhance their value. Hence, it is important to know the culture of a language group if one intends to understand some of culture-related idiomatic expressions and the message of literary texts. In emphasizing the importance of the knowledge of culture of a language group regarding understanding the meaning of a literary text, Mafela (1995: 16) asserts:

There is one important element which must not be ignored whenever a literary text is interpreted, and this is culture. It is not easy to interpret the meaning of a literary text without considering the culture of a society for which it has been written because it affects the other elements of a literary text.

The above assertions reveal that readers of literary texts must observe the connections of the literary work and the world outside it. A reader must therefore have the knowledge about the belief, art, morals, law, and custom of the society for which the text has been written to have a fair understanding of the meaning (Mafela, 1995).

The young rising generation among the Africans associate the use of idioms to old members of the community and do not bother to know their origin. They therefore miss a lot of cultural aspects revealed in the idioms. In many instances it becomes difficult for them to interpret literary works because of the lack of understanding of culture-related idioms. It is important to explore culture-related idioms to find out what they contain. This article

investigates idioms as phraseological units which reveal the culture of a community. The results of the investigation will assist the youth and learners of a language to understand meanings during a day to day conversation and when reading literary texts. The content analysis method is used to highlight the use of idioms as a vehicle for revealing the culture of a community. Selected Tshivenda dictionaries, *Ifa lashu la maambe* by N̄eluvhalani and *Venda Dictionary: Tshivenda – English* by Van Warmelo, and a text *Tshivenda literature: a historical sketch with special reference to its bibliography* by Mafela will serve as sources of selected idiomatic expressions that will be used in the discussion.

2. Idioms and culture

People all over the world have the power to communicate in at least one language. The word language in this context, is meant as the human speech which is characterised by words, phrases and sentences. About knowing a language, Fromkin and Rodman (1998: 389) state:

Knowing a language includes knowing morphemes, simple words, compound words, and their meanings. In addition, it means knowing fixed phrases, consisting of more than one word, with meanings that cannot be inferred from the meanings of the individual words. The usual semantic rules for combining meanings do not apply. Such expressions are called **idioms**.

This discussion is concerned with the knowledge of fixed phrases which Fromkin and Rodman call idioms, and are characterised by meanings which are hard to guess without a special context or previous exposure (Abeille, 1995). Ntsanwisi (1967: 2) defines an idiom as

a fixed structured form or a fixed phrasal pattern of words which go together, peculiar to the genius of a language as regards grammatical structure, accepted usage, and the meaning of which cannot be logically or literally ascertained from its component parts.

Like Fromkin and Rodman, Ntsanwisi also emphasizes that an idiom is a fixed phrase. In his definition of the idiom, Guma (1967) comments on the meaning which cannot be ordinarily deduced or inferred from the knowledge of the individual words that make it up. This means that idioms are figurative in nature.

A language is a carrier of culture of the community. Berthemet (2011: 244) comments about the function of language:

We believe that when we say something, it is because we are members of a definite speech community. We are part of history and language is like a lens through which we see the world, but this lens can be removed.

The choice of words, the use of idiomatic expressions such as proverbs and idioms, transmits a great deal about the culture (Mafela, 2012). An idiom is one of the aspects of a language; it is also a lens through which we see the world. It is therefore a carrier of culture because some individual words which make up and give meaning to the idiom have a link with the culture of the community. An idiom further reflects the general way of life among the people. Ran (n.d) states that language and culture are inextricably linked because they influence each other.

Culture involves general customs and beliefs of a particular group of people (Cloete & Madadzhe, 2004). It is the integrated pattern of human knowledge, belief and behaviour (Mafela, 2012). Guy (1999: 7) defines culture as reference

to the shared values, attitudes, beliefs, behaviors, and language use within a social group. These cultural values and beliefs and practices are at the core of group life and identity and are powerful factors that shape or influence individual attitudes, beliefs and behaviors.

These scholars perceive culture as a hub from which human behaviour finds its source. Culture is a human product because it is about the interpretation of reality and meanings by a specific community. Roberts (2009) points out that traditionalists understood culture in terms of belonging and otherness as if people felt part of one group and so separate from another. Culture gives a community some identity. In addition, culture determines whether certain things generally happen or not; it tells that certain acts have certain causes or motives in various contexts (Mafela, 1995). Communities interpret reality and meaning differently, which leads culture to be different from one community to another. Beyaraza (1994) mentions that culture is relative to individual person's needs, desires, attitudes of life and the specific circumstances, among other differences. People perceive culture differently, as they acquire it differently.

3. Culture-related idioms

African languages share some idiomatic expressions because the speakers of these languages share a lot of aspects in life. There might be some differences in the interpretation of the idiom, but the basic meaning is usu-

ally found to be the same in these language groups. This is so because the speakers live together and that they share some cultural aspects. Sometimes an African language can borrow idioms from other African languages or even from languages such as English. Tshivenda, like any other African language, shares idioms with neighbouring languages, such as Xitsonga, Sesotho sa Leboa and Setswana (three of the nine indigenous official languages of South Africa). However, Tshivenda is also characterised by idiomatic expressions which cannot be found in other languages. The presence of these idiomatic expressions originate from the Vhavenda cultural background. Tshivenda culture-related idiomatic expressions reveal a particular way of life of the Vhavenda. Interpreting the meaning of such idiomatic expressions need the knowledge of the culture of Vhavenda. One should have the knowledge about the way the Vhavenda conduct their life to interpret their idiomatic expressions. Knowing the cultures of other language groups is important because it helps people to communicate competently. South Africa, as a multicultural and multilingual congeal country, should have people who are able to communicate in the languages of the people with whom they freely interact at school, in working situations and business (Neluvhalani, 1987). Hereunder, a few culture-related idioms in Tshivenda are identified and discussed.

3.1. U buba u songo țohola

Like many other Africans in Africa, Vhavenda believe in witchcraft and sorcery. They believe that sorcerers move about during the night practicing their sorcery. Anyone who is seen walking about in the very early hours of the morning is suspected to be a sorcerer by the Vhavenda. Hence Vhavenda came up with an idiomatic expression *U buba u songo țohola* (To wake up very early in the morning with no reason of going to grind maize), which means **to practice sorcery**. In his dictionary of idioms, Neluvhalani (1987: 15) defines the idiomatic expression *U buba u songo țohola* as follows:

U buba u songo țohola – U lowa.

(To wake up early, with no reason of going to grind maize – To practice sorcery.)

When one tells another person that *u buba a songo țohola* (he/she wakes up early with no reason of going to grind maize), he/she means that one is a sorcerer. Among the Vhavenda, it is only those who grind maize who are not accused of sorcery when they are seen moving about very early in the morning because grinding of maize is done at this time. The grinding referred to

in this idiomatic expression is that of using mortar and peddle, which are instruments used by Africans, particularly Vhavenḁa. Women wake up during the middle of the night and grind maize. This is a common practice among the Vhavenḁa and it is known by all people in the community. Therefore, women are not accused of witchcraft or sorcery. Any other person seen moving about very early in the morning will be accused of sorcery. The idiomatic expression *u buba u songo ʒohola* (to practice sorcery) originates from the cultural practice of Vhavenḁa; and the interpretation of the meaning thereof is based on the activities of Vhavenḁa.

3.2. U humbela fola

Taking snuff is an important activity among the Vhavenḁa. In many instances it is taken for pleasure. Once they start taking snuff, Vhavenḁa women take it forever. Snuff is taken by both males and females; even though more females take it than males. In many instances, females start to take snuff when they become girls of marriageable age. Snuff is also used as a vehicle for communication. Vhavenḁa came up with an idiomatic expression, *u humbela fola* (to ask for snuff) meaning to propose love to a girl, after noticing that it is not used only for pleasure, but also for communication between girls and boys. Mafela (2005) writes that idioms are meant to embellish verbal communication in the community. There are many ways of proposing love to a lady among societies of the world. In the past, Vhavenḁa boys used to propose love to girls by asking for snuff. When a Muvēḁa boy was attracted to a girl, he did not tell her directly that he loved her, but asked for snuff. Girls knew what they meant when boys ask for snuff; they would respond by giving boys the snuff or indicate that they do not have it. If a girl happened to give a boy snuff, then the boy would know that she loves him. If she does not love him, she would indicate to him that she did not have snuff. In addition to using snuff as something to entertain oneself, snuff is also used to propose love among the Vhavenḁa in this regard. Current boys and girls, especially those who stay in the rural areas know that asking for snuff, is figurative language which means that one (a boy) loves another (a girl). Mafela (2005: 30) provides the meaning of this idiomatic expression as follows:

U humbela fola – U ambisa

(To ask for snuff – To propose love)

Presently, very few girls and women take snuff as it is considered an old way of entertaining oneself. However, boys carry on using the idiomatic expression *u humbela fola* (to ask for snuff) when proposing love to girls.

Unlike in the past, present girls do not show acceptance or rejection by giving boys snuff or denying them, they tell boys directly that they love them or do not love them. In the past it was considered a taboo for a girl to tell a boy directly that she loves him. Responses used to be in the form of figurative language and actions.

3.3. U *ḵisa tshivhindi*

Vhavaḵḵa are a community that believes in the leadership of a chief or king. They respect the role of the chief and king in their society. In the past, when Vhavaḵḵa realized that the chief or king was overstaying his position, they would come up with a plan to cut his reign short. This was done especially when they realized that the heir was ageing. Senior members of the royal house would organize to strangle the chief or king while enjoying beer. This was performed indoors and secretly by people close to the chief or king. People outside would never know that the chief or king had been strangled. They would only be informed that the chief or king has vanished to a place no one knows (*dzama*), which means that the chief or king has died. This act gave rise to the formation of an idiomatic expression *u ḵisa tshivhindi* (to make one eat the liver), meaning **to kill a person**. Mafela (2005: 31) explains the meaning of *u ḵisa tshivhindi* as follows:

U ḵisa tshivhindi – U vḵulaha nga u tou tshipa

(To make one eat liver – To strangle a person to death)

The performance of *u ḵisa tshivhindi* (to strangle a person to death) is no longer practiced to chiefs and kings only, it is also practiced for ordinary citizens. Ordinary people are killed by strangling these days, and it would be said *o ḵiswa tshivhindi* (he or she has been strangled). These days it is not practiced to manage a situation like it used to be done in the past, but as a habit. People are strangled for various reasons. Unlike in the past, killing a person by strangling is considered a crime presently. The idiomatic expression *u ḵisa tshivhindi* originated from the cultural beliefs of Vhavaḵḵa, and it has a popular usage in the society.

3.4. *Ṭhanga i hwalwa na hatsi*

Many Africans stay in thatched roof huts. The roofing of traditional huts of many African communities, particularly those of Vhavaḵḵa, are made of wood and thatching grass. Unlike the modern roofs which are constructed

on the houses, the roofs of traditional huts among the Vhavenḁa used to be put together on the ground, and carried on to the hut for thatching. The task of carrying it on to the hut would need a number of strong men because it is heavy. It was not the custom of Vhavenḁa to thatch the roof on the ground because its weight will make the task of carrying it difficult. Thatching the roof on the ground was considered abnormal, and would imply that people are in a hurry. The act of hurrying means that there is no peace. Usually, this happened during the periods of quarrels. It is common for people to have differences that lead to quarrels, but where there are quarrels there is no peace. Vhavenḁa came up with an idiomatic expression *ḁhanga i hwalwa na hatsi* (the roof is carried with the thatch) to refer to a situation which is characterised by quarrels, especially to indicate that the quarrel is at its height; meaning that there is no peace. Van Warmelo (1989: 58) defines this idiomatic expression as follows:

ḁhanga i hwalwa na hatsi "The quarrel is at its height, the roof is being carried together with the thatch on it" (which cannot be done) i.e. the people are so worked up, nobody can restore peace just now

Vhavenḁa do not carry the roof with the thatch on it, the roof is thatched on the hut. That is why they see carrying the roof with thatch as an abnormal action, and associate the action with the absence of peace. By mentioning that *ḁhanga i hwalwa na hatsi* (The roof is carried with the thatch) one says that the quarrel is at its height. This means that there is no one who can bring peace to the warring factions. This idiomatic expression was derived from the way Vhavenḁa do things, and it is commonly used in their daily interaction.

3.5. Nzie yo bva khalini

Delicacies differ from one cultural group to another. Among the Vhavenḁa's delicacies are *nzie* (locust), *nḁhwa* (winged termite) and *ḁhungulifha* (large green stink-beetle). These are delicacies which some people would not like to share with others. For Vhavenḁa to enjoy these delicacies they are first roasted or cooked in a pot. When the cooking process is taking place, a lid will be used to cover the pot so that people cannot see what is inside. The one who cooks would not like others to know because he or she might end up sharing the delicacy with them. This is where the idiomatic expression *Nzie yo bva khalini* (The locust is out of the cooking pot) originated, meaning **the secret is known**. Its origin can be linked to the cultural practices

of Vhavenda. The delicacy of *nzie* (locust) is likened with a secret. Mafela (2005: 30) explains the meaning of this idiomatic expression as follows:

Nzie yo bva khalini – Mafhungo a tshiphiri a vho divhea.

(The locust is out of the pot – The secret is known.)

A secret is not supposed to be known by people for whom it is not meant. This means that valuable information should be kept a secret and not to be shared with others. Immediately when it is divulged it will be known by the public, and it is no longer a secret. When people hear one saying that *nzie yo bva khalini* (the locust is out of the pot), they immediately know that valuable information has been leaked.

3.6. U vha pfukhaluhura

Taboos play an important role in reprimanding the youth against misbehaving among the Vhavenda. Children are expected to listen to the elders. If they do not listen to the elders there will always be some consequences. In many instances messages of reprimand are communicated through the use of taboos. It is a taboo for a Muvenda child to jump over an outer fence of a homestead or village. If a child does not listen to the elders and jumps the fence, it is believed that something bad will happen to him/her or his/her relatives. Such a child is called *pfukhaluhura* (one who jumps over a fence). From this taboo, Vhavenda derived an idiomatic expression *u vha pfukhaluhura* (to be someone who jumps over the fence), meaning to **have an uncontrollable behaviour**. This idiomatic expression is associated with children who do not listen to the elders and become uncontrollable. Whenever elders notice a child who is uncontrollable, they will call him/her a *pfukhaluhura* because he/she acts in an unacceptable way. Neluvhalani (1987: 130) defines the idiomatic expression *u vha pfukhaluhura* as follows:

U vha pfukhaluhura – U vha na vhutshilo vhu sa iti lune na vhabebi vha vho kundwa u kaidza nga u shavha u vhuya nazwo. Zwothe zwo bva u lemani

(To jump over the fence – To have an uncontrollable behaviour to the extent that parents end up failing to reprimand one; all this because of being spoiled)

The definition of the idiom above reveals that Vhavenda associate uncontrollable children with people who do not listen to the elders. According to Neluvhalani (1987) children who become uncontrollable are those spoiled

by their parents. This means that some parents contribute toward their children becoming uncontrollable; but at the same time they want the children to listen to them; hence they will call such children *pfukhaluhura*. No one likes to be called a *pfukhaluhura* (one who jumps over the fence). The idiomatic expression *u vha pfukhaluhura* is derived from the cultural beliefs of Vhavenda.

3.7. U vhuya nga *litswu*

Many communities associate the colour black with bad omen, bad results, failure, etcetera. The colour black is perceived negatively in this regard. For example, if there is death in a family, especially that of a senior member of the family such as the husband; the wife would be clothed in black as a symbol of mourning. Although in this status she would be respected by all people in the village, she would also be denied participation in many activities because she is in black clothes. Death is perceived as a loss and bad omen which has befallen the village. Vhavenda associate failure for achievement with the colour black. As a result, they came up with an idiomatic expression *u vhuya nga litswu* (to be rewarded with a black one), meaning **to fail to get one's due**. Van Warmelo (1989: 443) defines the idiom *u vhuya nga litswu* as follows:

-bva or -vhuya nga litswu fail to get one's due, lose one's case

The equivalents of *litswu* (black one) in the idiom – *vhuya nga litswu* are *fail* and *lose* in the explanatory English phrases. These equivalents denote bad results. The association of a black colour with a failure came from Vhavenda's perception of the concept 'black' as bad omen.

4. Discussion

The discussion of the few examples of Tshivenda idiomatic expressions above reveals that idioms do not only colour the language and convey a message to the community; they also reflect on the general life and the culture of the community. In reality, culture-related idioms, particularly those of Vhavenda, are derived from the cultural practices of the community, for example, Vhavenda's belief in witchcraft. Furthermore, the interpretation of culture-related idioms is based on the activities of the community concerned, for example, grinding maize in *u buba a songo tohola* (To wake up very early in the morning with no reason of going to grind maize).

The study of the culture-related idioms has shown convincingly that important messages are conveyed to the community by using idiomatic expressions, as they are not conveyed directly. The idiomatic expression *u hambela fola* (to ask for snuff) is a good example in this regard, because it serves as a vehicle of passing a message of love. By using the idiomatic expressions, speakers try to impress their seriousness on the receiver of the message. Accordingly, the receiver of the message will also respond in a respectful manner.

Like other ordinary idiomatic expressions, culture-related idioms address problems of the youth. Some youth, especially present generation youth, do not respect traditional practices because of their encounter with western civilization. Idiomatic expressions teach the youth to respect the traditional practices and to listen to the elders. For example, *u vha pfukhaluhura* (to be one who jumps over the fence), teaches the youth to listen to the elders. Jumping over the fence does not only refer to physical jumping, but also not abiding by practices as expected in a language group. Members of a community are expected to abide by its rules and norms. In this regard, the community uses culture through idiomatic expressions to reprimand their children. They believe that the youth respect the idioms more than a direct reprimand.

5. Conclusion

Like other indigenous African language groups of South Africa, Vhavaṇḁa is a nation that is characterised by a belief in their culture. The exposition above showed that they reveal this belief through their actions and in the way they communicate with each other. Vhavaṇḁa respect their culture and customs in many ways. This article focused on the exploration of idiomatic expressions as a form of communication. The analysis of the selected idiomatic expressions confirms that idioms carry the culture of a language. It has been illustrated without doubt that people, specifically Vhavaṇḁa, impart culture from one generation to the other through the use of fixed expressions such as idioms because their messages remain the same. As idiomatic expressions are used in verbal and written communication, the discussion above has shown that it would be difficult for listeners and readers to interpret idiomatic expressions, especially culture-related idioms, without the knowledge of the culture of a language group. However, acquiring the messages of idiomatic expressions will assist the youth and learners of the language to learn more about the culture of the language group. The present youth must

avoid associating idiomatic expressions with elders of a language group if they really want to enhance the knowledge of their culture. Learning more about culture-related idioms in their language will help the youth to communicate competently. Despite colouring their speech with idiomatic expressions, the youth will also be empowering themselves with the knowledge of customs and morals of their language group. Culture is related to the ideas, beliefs and customs of a society.

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Badanie idiomów o motywacji kulturowej w języku tshivenda

Streszczenie

Idiomy stanowią ważny element znajomości danego języka. Są one ważnym środkiem wyrażania, odgrywają więc dużą rolę w codziennej komunikacji pomiędzy użytkownikami języka. Oprócz wzbogacania języka o aspekt figuratywny i słuzeniu do przekazywania określonego znaczenia idiomy przekazują również informacje o życiu danego etnosu i jego stosunku do świata. Jednostki te powstają na bazie powiedzeń o charakterze narodowym i są powiązane z daną kulturą. Znajomość rozmaitych idiomów jest konieczna, aby uznać osobę posługującą się językiem za kompetentą w tym zakresie. Idiomy różnią się od zwykłego języka literackiego, ponieważ ich znaczenie nie może być zrozumiane za pomocą ogólnych zasad obowiązujących w danym języku. Podobnie jak inne języki, tshivenda ma bogactwo idiomatycznych wyrażen: idiomy odzwierciedlają społeczeństwo vhavenda i aspekty jego życia oraz bezpośrednie otoczenie. Narody nie istnieją bez jakiejś formy kultury, dlatego jest ważne, aby ludzie rozumieli klutury innych grup językowych, jeżeli mają zamiar poprawić komunikację między grupami. Kultura może być przekazywana ludziom w różny sposób, włączając użycie figuratywnych wyrażen, takich jak idiomy. Ludzie młodzi i osoby uczące się języka dowiadują się dzięki temu więcej o kulturze użytkowników języka. Niniejszy artykuł stanowi próbę zbadania idiomów jako jednostek frazeologicznych, które są nośnikami kultury danego narodu. Aby zrealizować ten cel, zostaną przeanalizowane idiomy poświadczane w słownikach języka tshivenda.

PART II

**PHRASEOLOGY ACROSS LANGUAGES:
AN ONOMASIOLOGICAL PERSPECTIVE**

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Somatic Phrases: Macedonian-Czech Parallels

Abstract. The human body and its parts have an important place in the cultural and mythical cognition of the space and as mythical codes participate in the creation and recreation of the structure of the world. In our presentation, we will stress the semantics of somatic phrases both in Macedonian and Czech language, as well as the classification of possibilities for their translation from one language into another. We will analyze the problems arising during translation of phrases, which can have pragmatic, language nature, culture-specific problems or problems arising from the specifics of the phrases themselves.

Key words: *somatic phraseology, cognitivism, theory of translation, Macedonian language, Czech language*

1. Introduction

The phrases in the Czech language, but also in the Macedonian language take a very important part of the lexicological fund of the language. They are a testimony of the creativity and resourcefulness of the speakers of the given language, and they tell a lot about the spiritual life of a certain nation, the typology of its emotions and moral principles, its overall way of living and attitudes, its life philosophy. The phrases not only reflect the life wisdom and experience, but they also show the human capability to create images and games with words, which can indicate not only the development of the language, but also the development of the mentality of the nation. They significantly enrich the language and interpersonal communication, which is the basis of the mutual familiarization of the people from all around the world.

For the purpose of our paper, we have used the theoretical postulates of the cognitive science, that is, cognitive linguistics which refer to the human thought and ability to think through metaphors. The ideas coming out of the cognitive postulates indicate that the language covers the interpretation of the world.

For the needs of our paper, first, we have limited our material to the Czech works translated into Macedonian and vice versa, Macedonian works translated into Czech. Out of that material, we have excerpted the phrases, which as a component contain a human body part. Then, based on the language material, we have made an analysis into several directions:

- in regard to their semantics for which we have divided the phrases into 8 schemes (according to the concept of cognitive theory);
- in regard to their structure (noun, verb, comparative clauses and whole sentence);
- in regard to the way they have been translated into Macedonian, that is into Czech (full equivalent, partial equivalent, relative equivalent, analogue, without an equivalent and literal or incorrect translation).

2.

We support the view that the somatic phraseology contains the word connections which contain a component with a direct meaning 'a human body part' or terms of body liquids and materials. We think that this area is interesting in regard to the interlanguage comparatistics, since it is possible to find numerous universalities within the phraseological fund of the Slavic languages. The reason might be the anthropocentrism of the human thought, but also the fact that the body functions as a connection/link of the human being with the world and as a result, it is the basis for the establishment of contact with the environment. Thus, the somatic phraseology is an expression of anthropocentrism and anthropomorphism of the language and the human subconscious.

2.1. In our analysis, we have divided the human body in six parts within which we have distributed the individual parts of the body. In the divisions of the body parts, we have placed only those somatic key components, which we have singled out in our material for excerption.

2.2. In our analysis, we present the individual body parts in an order according to the number of excerpted phrases.

Considering the fact that the number of works in Macedonian language translated into Czech language is smaller, we have smaller number of Macedonian phrases in the comparative analyses. However, we want to stress that

it does not mean that there are less phrases in the Macedonian language, but our material, to which we have limited the excerpt, was smaller in size than the one we had for excerpt of works in Czech language translated into Macedonian.

For the needs of this paper, from the works in Czech language translated into Macedonian language we have excerpted 498 phrases. Considering the fact that some phrases are more frequent than the others, and for the needs of the analysis of the translation of phrases we needed all the examples present in the material. Thus, by repetition of some phrases, we have excerpted a total number of about 1200 phrases with a somatic key component and plus the same number of translation solutions in Macedonian language.

We have already mentioned that the very corpus for excerpt of phrases from the works in Macedonian language translated into Czech language was smaller in size, and that is why in our material we have excerpted a total of 197 Macedonian phrases, while with a repetition of same phrases, we have excerpted a total of 272 phrases and the same number of their translation solutions in Czech language.

3.

We start our analysis with the EXTERNAL BODY PARTS. This group includes SKIN, BODY, and HAIR.

3.1. The following table (1) gives us a best presentation of the number of excerpted phrases:

Table 1. Number of excerpted phrases – external body parts

EXTERNAL BODY PARTS					
No.		Number		Occurance	
		Czech SP	Macedonian SP	Czech SP	Macedonian SP
1.	SKIN	8	2	12	2
2.	BODY	7	1	9	2
3.	HAIR	3	2	2	2
Total		18	5	27	6

Source: own research.

3.1.1. As far as the conceptualization of the body parts is concerned, the most present are the phrases with the component **skin**, followed by **body** and **hairs**.

3.2. The following division is the one of HEAD – NECK. We can say that these are the most numerous and most present phrases in both languages (Table 2).

Table 2. Number of excerpted phrases – head/neck

HEAD – NECK					
No.		Number		Occurance	
		Czech SP	Macedonian SP	Czech SP	Macedonian SP
1.	HEAD	78	16	241	24
2.	EYE	72	34	218	55
3.	MOUTH	27	9	53	12
4.	NOSE	20	3	33	3
5.	NECK	18	3	30	4
6.	EAR	12	8	15	12
7.	FACE	10	5	32	5
8.	TOOTH	9	4	15	4
9.	TONGUE	9	4	10	5
10.	FOREHEAD	6	/	31	/
11.	HAIR	3	2	3	4
12.	BEARD/MOUSTACHE	2	2	2	2
13.	EYE LID	1	/	1	/
14.	EYEBROWS	1	2	1	2
15.	EYELASHES	1	1	3	1
16.	JAW	/	1	/	1
Total		267	94	682	134

Source: own research.

3.2.1. As it could be also seen from the table, it has been confirmed, as it is the case in the greatest number of languages in the general framework, that the greatest number of phrases belong to those which contain the components **head** and **eye**. It could be also confirmed in regard to the frequency of occurrence in our material. In the material excerpted from works in Czech language translated into Macedonian language the component **head** not only occurs in the greatest number of phrases, but also their frequency is present in even 241 examples, as opposed to let's say another body part in the area of HEAD-NECK, such as **beard** or **eyebrows** which occur only twice, that is once. A similar situation is also notable in the Macedonian language. Our analysis has not proved that it is the phrases with the component **head** to be

the most frequent, but we think that the fact that we were limited to only a certain material for excerption has brought us to this number, thus we think that this result cannot be taken as valid in a sense that the Macedonian language has less phrases with the component **head**. If we analyze the Macedonian phraseological sentences, which are available, we can note a great number of phrases with this component.

However, as a general comment we can say that the focus of our material in regard to the number of phrases goes to those, which contain a component, which is a body part belonging to the division HEAD-NECK. Thus, we can say that the head as a seat of the thought / mind is a basis of the whole body, the eye occurs as a representative of the most important of all senses. The next to come is the mouth, which for the human being represents the very important contact with the surrounding world.

3.3. TRUNK or torso of the human being in our material occurred through the following parts (Table 3):

Table 3. Number of excerpted phrases – trunk

TRUNK					
No.		Number		Occurance	
		Czech SP	Macedonian SP	Czech SP	Macedonian SP
1.	BACK	7	2	15	2
2.	CHEST	2	1	2	1
3.	HIP	2	/	9	/
4.	BOTTOM	1	2	1	2
5.	BACKBONE	1	/	1	/
6.	ABDOMEN	1	/	2	/
7.	BOSOM	/	1	/	1
Total		14	6	30	6

Source: own research.

3.3.1. The trunk in the phraseology is conceptualized as a front side (abdomen, chest, hip) and back side (back, backbone, bottom). Here we are talking about the orientation of the body in space. In this division, we can note the greatest number of discrepancies in regard to the presence of the phrases in the Czech and in the Macedonian material. In the Macedonian material, we have not excerpted a single phrase with a somatic key component **hip**, **backbone** or **abdomen**, but we have excerpted a phrase with a somatic key component **bosom**, which has not been excerpted from the Czech material.

3.4. The next division within our analysis is HAND AS AN UPPER EXTREMITY, including the following components – body part (Table 4):

Table 4. Number of excerpted phrases – hand as an upper extremity

HAND AS AN UPPER EXTREMITY					
No.		Number		Occurance	
		Czech SP	Macedonian SP	Czech SP	Macedonian SP
1.	HAND	56	31	118	47
2.	FINGER	11	8	14	8
3.	FIST	4	1	16	1
4.	SHOULDER	3	4	35	9
5.	NAIL	3	1	4	1
6.	HANDFUL	2	/	6	/
7.	THUMB	1	/	2	/
8.	PALM	1	/	1	/
Total		81	45	196	66

Source: own research.

3.4.1. The area of upper extremity is mostly notable through the presence of the component **hand** in the greatest number of examples. In the examples of the Macedonian material, the component **hand** takes the second place based on the number of excerpted phrases, following the eye. In the area of HAND AS AN UPPER EXTREMITY, we have only one example where the term **handful** is included, and it is not a priori linked to a specific physical body part.

3.5. In the area of LEG AS A LOWER EXTREMITY, a smaller number of components occur (Table 5):

Table 5. Number of excerpted phrases – leg as a lower extremity

LEG AS A LOWER EXTREMITY					
No.		Number		Occurance	
		Czech SP	Macedonian SP	Czech SP	Macedonian SP
1.	LEG	16	9	24	13
2.	KNEE	7	4	13	4
3.	HEEL	6	/	13	/
Total		29	13	50	17

Source: own research.

3.5.1. The lower extremity in most of the examples is represented by the **leg** in both excerpted materials – Czech and Macedonian. In regard to the number, next come the examples with the somatic component **knee**, while the phrases with the component **heel** have not been present in the material excerpted from works in Macedonian language translated into Czech language.

3.6. As a last area of our division of the human body is the INTERNAL BODY PARTS by the following number of phrases and components (Table 6):

Table 6. Number of excerpted phrases – internal body parts

INTERNAL BODY PARTS					
No.		Number		Occurance	
		Czech SP	Macedonian SP	Czech SP	Macedonian SP
1.	HEART	44	18	76	24
2.	BLOOD	15	7	18	8
3.	NERVES	6	/	12	/
4.	STOMACH	5	/	6	/
5.	THROAT	4	4	9	6
6.	RIB	3	/	3	/
7.	BONE	3	3	4	3
8.	BRAIN	2	/	4	/
9.	SKELETON	2	/	2	/
10.	JOINT	2	/	4	/
11.	BILE	1	/	2	/
12.	VEINS	1	/	1	/
13.	LIVER	/	1	/	1
14.	TEAR	/	1	/	1
Total		88	34	141	43

Source: own research.

3.6.1. In this division, most of the phrases in both materials contain the component **heart** and **blood**. The heart occurs as a center of emotions, the blood as an element, natural, energy, while the stomach in the Czech phraseology is considered as a physical center of negative feelings. In the Macedonian material, we have not excerpted phrases with the components **stomach**, but as a conclusion, we can say that in the Macedonian phraseology in general there are very few such phrases at the **account of the phrases** with the component **abdomen**.

In addition to the blood and heart, the phraseology does not also forget the other essential parts of the bloodstream, such as the veins, even though in smaller number, and in the Macedonian material they were not even present in a single example.

As far as the body liquids are concerned, besides the blood, the phraseology includes also the bile as symbol of anger, rage (without examples in the Macedonian material), and the tear as a symbol of sadness (without examples in the Czech material)

The nervous system is also present through the brain and nerves, yet we did not excerpt such examples in the Macedonian material.

4.

In regard to the structure of the phrases that we have excerpted in both materials, we can conclude that the greatest number of phrases are verb phrases then noun phrases followed by comparative phrases and those with a whole sentence, that is proverbs.

5.

To review the phrases from a semantic point of view means to work with a language material which is not a subject to codification, which provides testimony for the language and the experience of the past generations, and which is specific for each nation.

Whereas, to make a semantic analysis of the somatic phraseology means to ask questions which are related to the bodily experience of the human being. It means to look for the pure, bare/raw experience of our body transferred into the language; it means to discover the interpretation of how we experience the world and how we live it through our own body; it means to look for a link/relation between the extent the world touches us and how we formulate that world in a language expression.

Starting from that aspect, for the needs of our semantic analysis we divided the excerpted phrases from our material in 8 schemes, and each of them is analyzed in regard to the specific features and characteristics, which we can find in the phrases, as well as in regard to the reality, which they interpret and value.

The purpose was to apply the principle of the physical body to a specific lexicological material and then to make a semantic classification of the phraseological units.

According to the frequency – besides the body parts which can be seen by naked eye, such as head, hand, leg, ears, nose, etc., there is a very big

group of body parts not visible for our eyes, that is, the internal organs, bones, and nerves. Thus, it cannot be noted that the human being would perceive his/her body only superficially and that he/she does not reflect only what happens internally.

Out of the overall scope of key components of the human body parts, we have analyzed only those, which we have identified in the excerpted material from Czech works translated into the Macedonian language, or from Macedonian works translated into Czech language.

The semantic analysis confirms that the human body and its physical experience represents a significantly important factor for our thinking and our language. On one side there are phrases which reflect pure sensory-motor experience of our body such as *mít hlavu jako koleno* (lit. to have a head as a knee). On the other side we come to abstract thinking of information of intangible character (for example emotions) which are linked to the physical feelings or the appearance of certain body parts that are followed by these aspects of thinking (for example: *s odchozími starostmi mu spadl kámen ze srdce* (lit. with his outgoing worries a stone fell from his heart).

Each scheme has been analyzed in regard to the specific features and characteristics, which we could find in the phrases and also in regard to the reality they interpret and value:

1. The body as a means of counting – The body as a measure

The body also serves as a means of counting and identification of some measure. We can measure with fingers, elbows, and feet. Certainly, we can also measure with bones. They are located deep in the body, thus if the cold penetrates the bones, then we are talking about a real feeling of cold.

The body as a means of counting and measure can also count specific things such as height or length, but also abstract things such as degree or success. This can indicate that we need to transfer also the abstract meanings to a specific area, and that is our human body.

2. Orientation of the body in space

Each day our body functions within the space in which we move, in which we perceive our position and spatial orientation. The head manages our body, and that is why its orientation in space is also essential. Primarily, it is linked with the upward orientation, while the leg or heel are related to the downward orientation. As a result, it seems that the most important orientation is the opposition upward – downward, as well as forward – backward.

3. Appearance of the body – comparison on the basis of visual similarity

An area, which occurs in the somatic phrases to a great extent, is the appearance of the human body, meaning our visual experience with our bodies.

The most present measure of the appearance of our body is the comparison with the body of animals. Thus, we have, hands like those of a bear, long hands as those of a monkey, we have eyes like a gazelle, or red eyes like a rabbit.

4. Body parts and their specifics

This scheme names the body parts and their characteristics. It is about reflection of what certain words embody most intensively and most naturally for us. Thus, the head is, above all, a space where the human thought is happening and is located. The head represents a vessel, which is filled with thoughts.

5. The body as a sacrifice/guaranty

The importance, which is prescribed to certain body parts, can be conceptualized also in regard of the body as a sacrifice. In general terms, the human body parts can be given for the benefit of another person or something, which the other person considers as important.

We could interpret such phrases as an effort of the other person asking to see honest intentions, whose fulfilment we do not hesitate to guaranty by our own body. Here we can refer back to the past experience of our ancestors who often exercised, i.e. executed the punishments on the body of the individual. By such examples, we can look at the phraseology as collected human experiences, which mature as the time passes by.

All key words in this category indicate a close connection of the importance of certain human body parts with the need to confirm, guaranty the other side about the mutual agreement and to offer an opportunity for a possible sanction.

The presence of the key word “blood” within this conceptualization indicates that the blood is something that seals fateful agreements and at the same time indicates that the blood in its basic meaning is a body liquid, which circulates the whole body.

6. Human body = human being / Human body = life

This conceptualization indicates the human body parts, which occur as representative that symbolizes either the whole body or the human being as a personality. The most present is the occurrence of the head in this meaning.

A body part can also represent the meaning of life. Psychics predict our future from the lines on the palm and fingers, which means they predict from the hand.

7. The body represents a character – given characteristic

By the means of body parts, we express and value the human characteristics. The lack of preciseness of the human body can be expressed, since it is not a machine. Some state, character or specific feature or weakness can be also expressed.

8. The human body and expression of emotions and human relations and connections

Our emotional state is reflected on our body. We send the negative energy with eyes, with a look. The human body helps us express the mutual close human relations. The fear, love, peacefulness, laughter, surprise and wonder are also deeply rooted in the phrases. With the help of the body, we can also conceptualize the opposition of inferiority and superiority. The expression of punishment, attack, fight between two sides is also strongly linked with the body and it is natural because it is linked with the perception of a real physical fight.

9. The body as a means of communications / The body as a signal of a deal/agreement/disagreement

In the last scheme, the body is represented as a means of communications, as a means of expression of some gesture, nonverbal communication and pictorial expression linked with the human body.

A very numerous group of phrases contains the expression of agreement and disagreement within the communications.

5.1. After classifying all the phrases according to the semantics based on the schemes, we have reached very interesting results. Each scheme, has included a certain number of phrases, thus we could note that the body serves us as a means of counting or measure such as for example *се бројам на прсти* (lit. can be counted on the fingers) or *dalo by se to spočítat na prstech jedné ruky* (lit. it could be counted on the fingers of one hand) having the meaning of 'little', *за мало нокте* (lit. for a small nail) having the meaning of 'almost' or *co by se za nehet vešlo* (lit. that can fit as a nail) having the meaning of 'little, at all'.

Our analysis has indicated that with the help of the body we orient in space, for which we have the most phrase containing the somatic key component **head**: *mít/nemít kde hlavu složit* (lit. has/doesn't have where to

put his head) or *не знае кај му е главата* (lit. he does not know where his head is) – both having the meaning of ‘he/she has many problems, concerns, a lot of work and obligations’. Within this scheme, we have the occurrence of the opposition **upward: downward** by several examples such as *hlavu vzhůru* (lit. head up) or *горе главата!* (lit. head up!) having the meaning of ‘exclamations of giving hope, encouragement’ versus *svěsit hlavu* (lit. to hang a head) or *ведне глава* (lit. to bend a head) having the meaning of ‘to become submissive, to give in’.

The appearance of the human body is also present in our semantic analysis with a smaller number of phrases, such as *mít oči jako jestřáb/kočka/luňák/orel/rys* (lit. to have eyes like a hawk/cat/kite/eagle/rys) or *око соколово* (lit. a falcon eye) which mean ‘sharp vision’ or *црвено лице како лубеница/тетовско јаболко* (lit. red face as a watermelon/an apple from Tetovo) versus the Czech example (*být červený / (mít) tváře jako jablíčko* (lit. be) red / (have) the face as an apple) which have the meaning of ‘he/she has red cheeks; looks healthy’.

However, the most striking is the great number of phrases belonging to the scheme **Body parts and their specifics**. Half of the total number of excerpted phrases in both corpuses – from works in Czech language translate into Macedonian and the works in Macedonian language translated into Czech belong to this scheme. With the help of the eye we see, with the help of the ears we hear, and as a result we have the phrase *člověk má proto oči a uši, aby se díval a poslouchal* (lit. so man has eyes and ears to look and listen) or the Macedonian version *очите се за гледање, ушите за слушање* (lit. eyes are to see, ears are to hear), the hand serves for giving or taking: *dát něco z ruky* (lit. to give something from his hand (drop)) or the Macedonian phrase *испушти/испушта од рака (раце) некого или нешто* (lit. to drop something from his hand) which have the meaning of ‘to lose control, power/influence over somebody or something’.

The body serves us as a **guaranty/sacrifice** when *главата ја даваме* (lit. to give a head) when we are certain about something, or *раката в оган ја ставаме за некого или нешто* (lit. to put a hand in the fire for somebody or something). Certain human body part can represent a human being or life, for example: *prodat/neprodat svou kůži lacino* (lit. to sell or not to sell his own skin cheap) or *скапо/евтино ја продаде својата кожа* (lit. to sell his own skin expensive or cheap).

By the means of body parts, we express and value the human characteristics, thus we can say about somebody *му сече/фака главата* (lit. his head is cutting/catching) or that *má (dobrou) hlavu* (lit. he has a good head) having the meaning of ‘he/she is smart, understands fast’.

The scheme **Human body and expression of emotions and human relations** comes next based on the number of phrases. With the help of the body, we can express the most different emotions, feelings, fear, love, but also mutual close human relations such as inferiority vs superiority, punishment or attack. Thus if somebody's *срцето му затрепериува* (lit. his heart is trembling (shuddering)) or *srdce někomu poskočilo radostí* (lit. the heart of someone jumped of happiness/joy) has a meaning of 'he/she feels unexpected joy, but also fear'. By the knee, we can express submission/inferiority through the phrases *kleknout na kolena* (lit. to kneel on his knees) or *клекне на колена* (lit. to kneel on his knees).

The body can also represent a means of communications or a signal for a deal, and the gestures belong here as well. Thus, someone can *да се заканува со тупаница* (lit. to threaten with a fist) or the Czech equivalent *hrozit někomu pěstmi* (lit. to threaten with a fist (to someone)).

5.2. We can make a conclusion that in both corpuses the ratio of the presence of phrases in each of the schemes is very close, which makes us conclude that in both Czech and Macedonian language the concept of formation of phrases and their pictorial expression is pretty close which is due to the closeness of both languages both according to their origin, and according to the affiliation to the European culture and the similar geographical conditions. All this contributes for the human body parts to be perceived in a similar way and the formation and use of phrases with a somatic key component in both languages to have a same language image as a basis.

6.

In our paper, besides the semantic analysis, we have also made an analysis of the ways of translation of the Czech phrases in Macedonian, and of the Macedonian phrases translated in Czech. Based on what we have reviewed, we could conclude that in the greatest number of cases that is over 60% the translation is done in both directions with a full equivalent, for example the Czech phrase *být zamilovaný až po uši* (lit. be in love above/over ears) has a full equivalent in Macedonian language, and it is the phrase *вљубен до уши* (lit. be in love up to his ears) – in our material it was appropriately translated with a full equivalent.

About 7% of the translation is done with a partial equivalent, where the component is same, but we have a different grammar structure, for example: *го засука едниот мустаќ* (lit. to turn up the moustache) versus the Czech phrase *prohrábnout si vousy* (lit. to rake his own beard).

In the smallest number of cases, the translation is done with a relative equivalent, i.e. with a substitution of the component, while the grammar structure is the same. As an example, we can use the Czech phrase *zuby nehty se bránit* (lit. to defend himself with teeth and nails), which in Macedonian is translated with a substitution of the components *се брани со раце и со нозе* (lit. to defend himself with hands and legs).

The translation with an analogue, i.e. with a completely different phrase both in structure and component, is done in 5.58% in the material excerpted from the Czech works, or 7.14% from the Macedonian material. An example of translation with an analogue is the Czech phrase *nehnout ani brouu (při něčem)* (lit. to not move even with the eyelashes (at something)) which in our material is translated with the Macedonian phrase *без да му трепне око* (lit. without blinking with the eye) while preserving the meaning.

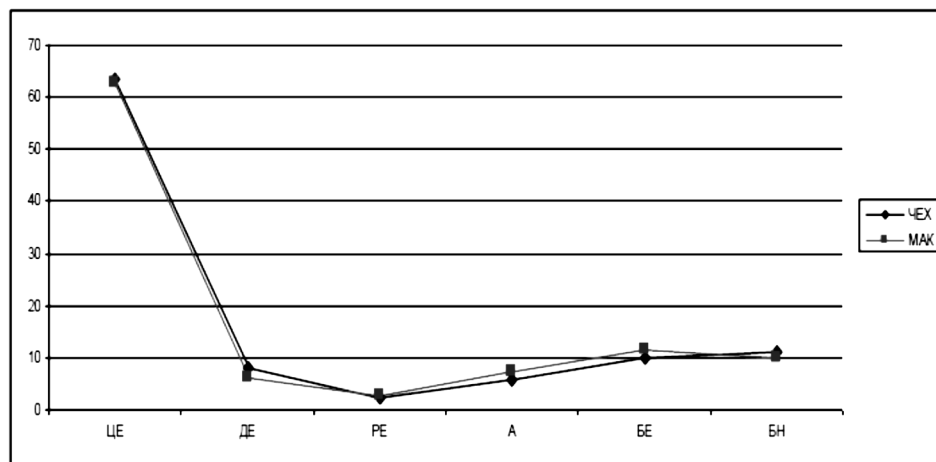
Without an equivalent, i.e. descriptive translation (as it is indicated by our analysis – the translation is given by an explanation of the meaning of the phrase) in the Czech material is almost 10%, while the Macedonian material is a bit more, 11.65%. For example, the Czech phrase *porazit na hlavu* (lit. to defeat up to a head) does not have an appropriate full equivalent in Macedonian language, and in our material it is translated descriptively with an explanation of the meaning of the phrase ‘fully, completely’.

As a last division, we have had the classification of the phrases with a literal translation on one side, and here we have also included the phrases which we have considered that even though they were translated literally, yet the reader could understand their meaning, such as for example: the Czech phrase *hrozí někomu pěstmi* (lit. to threaten with a fist (to the someone)) has a literal translation in Macedonian, but it is fully understandable for the Macedonian reader with: *се заканува со тупаница* (lit. to threaten with a fist). We have a literal translation of the Macedonian phrase *бистра солза* (lit. clear/transparent tear), which is translated in Czech as *čistá slza* (lit. clean tear), which is fully understandable for the Czech reader.

On the other side, there is the incorrect translation where the translator did not understand that there was a phrase in question or did not understand the text at all, for example, the Macedonian phrase *рамо до рамо* (lit. shoulder to shoulder) having the meaning of ‘sticking together’ has been translated in Czech with another phrase *hlava na hlavě* (lit. head on head) having the meaning of ‘many people gathered together in a small space’.

However, as a general impression by looking at the achieved results, we can conclude that in both materials the translations, according to all bases, are done identically, and it can be visually noted in the graph:

Graph 1. Results of analysis of the ways of translation of the Czech phrases in Macedonian, and of the Macedonian phrases translated in Czech



Source: own research.

7.

In our material, on one side the Czech works and their translations into Macedonian language and on the other side the Macedonian works and their translations into Czech language, we could come across the very same phrases, which we have singled out in both directions. They were very interesting in regard to how they were translated. As an example, we can use the phrases *hrozit prstem (na koho, komu)* (lit. to threaten with the finger (to somebody)) and the Macedonian phrase *му се закани со прст* (lit. he treats him with a finger), which we have singled out in both directions. We could note that in both materials the translation was done appropriately with full equivalents.

8. Conclusions

In our paper, we have tried to make an analysis of the phrases with a somatic key component in the translations from Czech into Macedonian language and vice versa, from Macedonian into Czech language. Then, we have reviewed the phrases from the excerpted material in regard to their structure, in regard to their semantics, and in regard to how there have been translated into Czech, i.e. into Macedonian language. The conclusions of these analyses

are presented in the text above. For the needs of this analysis, we have singled out a comprehensive material of somatic phrases in both languages for which we think it could be further used as a basis for future, more comprehensive research and projects of lexicographic nature. We also think that this material can be useful for the lectures of Czech language, i.e. Macedonian language and it will be useful for the students and lecturers in mastering the skills of translation and practical use of the language (Macedonian and/or Czech).

When it comes to the translation as such, we would like to conclude one more time that we represent the view that the translation is a creative process. A quality translation plays its role and it might be better not to have a translation instead of having a bad translation. However, there is one thing which cannot be ignored, and it is the fact that only through translation the work starts, i.e. it continues to live – it becomes more available to the reading public which is not a native speaker or does not know the language in which the work is written. The translators are the bridge that connects different nations, cultures among each other and in that way they leave traces, not only for themselves, but also for all future generations and their descendants. Translating from one language into another does not mean only to transfer the code, but it means to get to know and bring closer two cultures, two literatures, two nations.

As Hečko would say (Hečko: 2000): “Translators enable exchange of beauty among nations, they extend their hands to their colleagues over mountains and oceans. They do not only bring themselves to the market, but they also bring their own heart on a palm. They are the citizens of the world that pass the relay of friendship and peace...”

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Somatische Phrasen: Mazedonisch-Tschechische Parallelen

Zusammenfassung

In unserer Arbeit haben wir versucht, die Phrasen mit einer somatischen Schlüsselkomponente in den Übersetzungen vom Tschechischen ins Mazedonische und umgekehrt, vom Mazedonischen ins Tschechische zu analysieren.

Wir analysierten die Phrasen aus dem extrahierten Material nach Aspekten ihrer Struktur, nach Aspekten ihrer Semantik und nach Aspekten, wie sie in die tschechische oder mazedonische Sprache übersetzt wurden.

Die Schlussfolgerungen aus diesen Analysen wurden in den obigen Zeilen dargestellt. Für die Zwecke dieser Analyse haben wir ein umfangreiches Material somatischer Phrasen extrahiert und aus beiden Sprachen, von denen wir glauben, dass sie die Grundlage für spätere, umfangreiche Forschungen und Projekte lexikographischer Natur bilden könnten. Wir glauben auch, dass dieses Material für den Unterricht der tschechischen Sprache, bzw. der mazedonischen Sprache von Nutzen sein wird, und dass es auch Studenten und Lehrer verwenden werden, bei der Beherrschung der Übersetzungsfähigkeiten und des praktischen Sprachgebrauchs (Mazedonisch und/oder Tschechisch).

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Deutsche und georgische Phraseologismen mit Farbensymbolik

Abstrakt. Die Farben spielen in jeder Zeit und Kultur für das Leben des Menschen eine bedeutsame Rolle. Kein Wunder, dass die Farben auch in unserer Sprachen ihre Spuren hinterlassen haben. Die meisten indogermanischen Sprachen unterscheiden klar zwischen *grün* und *blau*. Die anderen Sprachen dagegen haben nur ein Wort für beide Farben. In der georgischen Sprache ist das Wort für eine bestimmte Farbe verfügbar. Die Farben sind Träger verschiedenartiger Symbole. Zum Beispiel die *blaue* Farbe symbolisiert in der deutschen Sprache die Täuschung; in der georgischen Sprache ist diese Farbe jedoch nicht mit der Täuschung verbunden. *Grau* ist eine wirklich ausgewogene Farbe, aber *grau* ist oft mit Pessimismus und mit düsterem Wetter verbunden. *Grün* ist mit der Natur und der Erde verbunden. *Gelb* ist ein Symbol für Energie und Wärme. Die Symbolik findet mehr oder weniger ihren Niederschlag in den festen Wendungen, deren Kontrastive Forschung immer aktueller und wichtiger im Bereich der Phraseologie ist. Das Ziel der vorliegenden Arbeit besteht darin, am Beispiel der oft gebrauchten Phraseologismen mit Farbsymbolik *blau*, *gelb*, *grau* und *grün*, die kulturelle Spezifik der Farben in Deutschen und Georgischen Phraseologismen zu thematisieren und ihre Äquivalenzbeziehungen zu skizzieren. Es werden von uns festgestellt, mit welcher Farbe die symbolische Bedeutungen in beiden Sprachen zusammenfallen und inwieweit diese Phraseologismen nach dem positiven und negativen Sinn in beiden Sprachen in Übereinstimmung kommen.

Schlüsselwörter: *Farben, Farbsymbolik, die deutsche Sprache, die georgische Sprache, Phraseologismen, die symbolische Bedeutungen, Übereinstimmung, die kulturelle Spezifik, Äquivalenzbeziehungen, Spracheigentümlichkeiten*

1. Einführung

Die Farbsymbolik ist heute ein sehr relevantes Thema. Das Problem der Farbsymbolik ist ein Problem des allgemeinen humanitären Planes, das Psychologen, Theologen, Philosophen und Literaturkritiker interessiert. In letzter Zeit wurden interdisziplinäre Ansätze angeregt, um das Wissen verschiedener Geisteswissenschaften zu integrieren. Das Problem der Farbsymbolik ist interdisziplinär.

In der Wissenschaft besteht seit langem die Notwendigkeit, die psychologischen und ästhetischen Eigenschaften von Farbe zu verstehen. Zum Beispiel Goethe betrachtet Farbe nicht nur vom Standpunkt der Physik aus, sondern auch vom Einfluss einer jeden Farbe auf die menschliche Psyche. „Die Erfahrung lehrt uns, dass die einzelnen Farben besondere Gemütsstimmungen geben“ (Goethe, Internet). Goethe hat auf die Bedeutung der Farben für den Menschen und vor allem auf ihren Symbolwert in seiner Farbenlehre hingewiesen „Der Mensch lebt in einer farbigen Welt und wird sein ganzes Leben mit Farben konfrontiert“ (Goethe 1810).

Leben von Menschen ist eng mit den Farben verbunden. Farben haben in verschiedenen Nationen und Gesellschaften oft verschiedene Bedeutungen. Aufgrund dieser Tatsache fungieren Farben innerhalb einer Gesellschaft bzw. Sprachgesellschaft als konventionelle Symbole, denen Spiritualität bzw. religiöse und kulturelle Inhalte zugeschrieben werden. Überall und vor allem in der Natur sind wir umgeben von den Farben. Kein Wunder, dass die Farben auch in unseren Sprachen ihre Spuren hinterlassen haben.

Eine von den Phrasen, in denen im Deutschen die blaue Farbe auftritt, ist „Der Abend rot, der Morgen grau bringt das schönste Tagesblau“ (Internet). Diese Wetterregel reflektiert die Zusammenhänge zwischen der Natur und dem Leben von Menschen. Der Ausdruck „blau“ symbolisiert die blaue Farbe des Himmels, wenn das Wetter schön ist. Das Idiom „**blaue Jungs**“ bezeichnet die Matrosen. Die blaue Farbe symbolisiert das Meer, wo die Seeleute Tag um Tag arbeiten.

Blau ist eine Farbe, die auf den Menschen kalt wirken kann. Zugleich wird jedoch dieser Farbe eine „beruhigend-angenehme Wirkung“ anerkannt. Es ist bekannt, dass blaue Farben helfen sich zu beruhigen. „Die Farbe Blau wirkt häufig als beruhigend und entspannend“ (Scheinecker, Internet).

In der georgischen Sprache differenziert man zwei Stilfärbung von der Grundfarbe „blau“. Es wird mit zwei Wörtern ausgedrückt: geo. *Blau* ცოხვედრო *tsisperi* (wörtl.: Farbe des Himmels) und *Blau* ლურჯო *lurji* (vgl. auch im Russischen blau *голубой* und blau *синий*)).

Was mit der Farbe ლურჯი *lurji* stabil ausdrücken kann, darf man mit *blau* ცისფერი *tsisperi* nicht sagen, sonst führt das zu semantischer Inkompatibilität, z.B. სიცივისაგან გალურჯებულია *sicivisagan galurjebulia* (wörtl. durch Kälte wird blau; blau ist hier ლურჯი *lurji* und nicht ცისფერი *tsisperi*).

Diese Varianten von der Farbe „blau“ haben im Georgischen unterschiedliche Farbensymbolik. Blau ლურჯი *lurji* wird normalerweise mit Stabilität, Intellekt, Vertrauen und Frieden assoziiert und ist in der Regel mit dem Meer verbunden, mit dem männlichen Ursprung, Produktivität.

In den germanischen Sprachen (Deutsch, Englisch) wird diese Farbe mit einem Wort ausgedrückt: *blau* (engl. *blue*) und beinhaltet sowohl ცისფერი *tsisperi* als auch ლურჯი *lurji*. Blau ist weiterhin die Farbe der Aristokratie, ausgedrückt in der Wendung *blaues Blut* (geo. ცისფერი სისხლი *tsisperi siskhli* vgl. russ. *голубая кровь*).

Die Farbpsychologie erforscht den Einfluss von Farbe auf menschliche Verhaltensweisen und Gefühle. Die Farbe aller Kulturen hat ihre Last. Die Farbsymbolik verändert sich in Zeit und Kultur und befasst sich mit so vielen Themen, die nicht vollständig untersucht werden können.

Die Farben können Auskunft über die psychische Empfindung, die hierarchische Stellung in der Gesellschaft oder die Traditionen der Menschen in verschiedenen Kulturen geben. Die Farben sind Träger verschiedenartiger Symbole. *Die Symbolik findet mehr oder weniger ihren Niederschlag in den Phraseologismen.*

In unserer Arbeit versuchen wir verschiedene Phraseologismen für ausgewählte Farben verdeutlichen. Um zu überprüfen, ob die ausgewählten Phraseologismen in das allgemeine Vokabular aufgenommen wurden, verwenden wir: das Wörterbuch von Agricola *Wörter und Wendungen*, das *Lexikon der sprichwörtlichen Redensarten* von Röhrich, das *Deutsch-Georgisches Phraseologisches Wörterbuch und Redewendungen. Wörterbuch der deutschen Idiomatik*. Um das Stabilitätskriterium zu überprüfen, haben wir die Phraseologismen mit Farbwörter unter www.google.com (im Folgenden Google.com) durchgesehen. In der Arbeit mit idiomatischen Phraseologismen verwenden wir sowohl induktive als auch deduktive Methoden.

2. Farbsymbolik in der Literatur

In der Literatur beziehen sich einige Symbole auf jedes Ereignis oder Thema oder auf etwas Anderes. Die klassischen Zeichenbestimmungen setzen hier an: ein Zeichen „steht für“ oder „verweist auf“ etwas Anderes, das es „ersetzt“ oder „repräsentiert“ (Mersch, Internet).

Unter den georgischen und europäischen romantischen Dichtern ist üblich der emotionale und häufige Gebrauch von „blau“ als die Farbe des Geistes und einer irrealen Welt. Zum Beispiel, in Terenti Granells Poesie *Blauer Vogel* (geo. ლურჯი ფრინველი *lurji prinveli*) markiert Traurigkeit. In einem seiner Gedichte „Blaue Entfernung“ schreibt er: „Trauer wird kommen – mein blauer Vogel“ (Graneli, Internet). Die blaue Blume als Symbol einer romantischen Sehnsucht nach einer irrealen Welt kommt in den Roman „Heinrich von Ofterdingen“ von Novalis vor (Novalis, Internet)

Anfang des 20. Jahrhunderts existierte in Georgien ein literarischer Verein der jungen Symbolisten (mst die georgischen Dichter und Schriftsteller), der im Jahre 1916 die Zeitschrift „blauer Becher“ (geo. ცისფერი ყანწი *tsicisperi kanci*) veröffentlichte; (ყანწი *kanci* – der Becher (Trinkgefäß nicht aus Glas ohne Henkel u. ohne Fuß, mst. aus Horn mst. eines Wildtieres). Daher ist die Benennung: ცისფერყანწელები *tsisperkantslebi* (die, diesen Namen haben). Der Name hatte eine symbolische Bedeutung – Blau wurde als *die Poesiefarbe* und der Becher – als *das Symbol des böhmischen Lebens, das Symbol des georgischen Charakters wahrgenommen* (tsisperkantslebi, Internet).

3. Farben in den Phraseologismen

Blau symbolisiert in der deutschen Sprache *die Täuschung*. „Als Symbol der Treue kommt Blau in den Phraseologismen nicht vor“ (Röhrich, 1994). *Den blauen Mantel umhängen* bedeutet, dass man betrogen wird, was vor allem früher als Motiv von Malern und Graphikern dargestellt wurde (1994: 209). Die Täuschung, Verstellung und Lüge drücken folgende Phraseologismen aus: *den blauen Dunst vormachen* – von jmdm. etwas so darstellen, dass er sich falsche Vorstellungen, falsche Hoffnungen macht. Die Farbe wird auch in der Phrase „*das Blaue vom Himmel versprechen/ herunterlügen*“, das heißt Geschichten ohne Wahrheitsgehalt sagen / unmögliches versprechen.

Grau ist eine unbedeutende, langweilige Farbe. Die graue Farbe symbolisiert Eintönigkeit, eine ausgleichende Gerechtigkeit und ist ein Übergang zwischen den schwarzen und weißen Farben. Das Idiom „*die graue Maus*“ symbolisiert die Unauffälligkeit, sowieso „*die graue Theorie*“ – theoretisch, nicht praktisch bewiesen. Im Christentum steht *Grau* für die Auferstehung. Grau ist die Farbe des Mantels, *den Christus als Weltenrichter* auf Abbildungen trägt.

Bei der Untersuchung der Phraseologismen mit Farbwörtern als deren Komponenten stößt man auf verschiedene Quellen. Die größte Gruppe geht auf die Bibel zurück. Die feste Wendung *alt und grau [bei etw.] werden* (wörtlich: მოხუცდა და გაჭალარავდა *moghucda da gachagharavda*) im Sinne

von [bei etw.] sehr lange warten müssen (Sam 12, 2) weist auf die Bibelstelle im dem ersten Buch Samuel im Alten Testament 12, 2 hin, wo Samuel über sein hohes Alter spricht, wenn er sein Richteramt niederlegt: „*ich selbst bin alt und grau geworden* (...)“. მე მოვხუცდი და გავთეთრდი (*me movkhucdi da gavitrdi*), (wörtlich: ich bin alt und weiß geworden). (Internet). Wenn ich *alt* und *grau* bin, o Gott, verlass mich nicht (Ps 71, 18) (Internet).

Grün ist die Farbe des Frühlings, des Wassers und der alljährlichen Erneuerung in der Natur. Es ist auch die Farbe der Hoffnung, eines langen Lebens und der Unsterblichkeit. *Grün kommt* in der Natur und folglich auch in den Phraseologismen als Zeichen der Unreife sein: *noch grün hinter den Ohren sein* – ohne Erfahrung, unreif sein; *ein grüner Junge* – ein junger, unerfahrener Mensch. Der Ausdruck aus der Bibel *am grünen Holz (e)* im Sinne von dort, wo man Besseres oder zumindest weniger Schlimmes erwartet hätte (LK 23, 31) bezieht sich auf das Evangelium nach Lukas (23, 31) wo sich findet: „Denn wenn das *mit dem grünen Holz geschieht*, was wird dann erst mit dem dürren werden? (Internet). geo. „რადგან თუ ნედლ ხეს ასე ექცვიან, რაღას უზამენ ხმელს?“ geo. wörtl. Wenn der rohe Baum so behandelt wird, was wird mit dem getrockneten Baum gemacht? (Internet). **Grüne Farbe** ist auch Symbol des Umweltschutzes, die politische Partei *die Grünen* ist ein Symbol des Kampfes für eine bessere Umwelt. Im Verkehr stellt Grün das Gegenteil zu *Rot* dar. Grünes Ampellicht bedeutet *freie Fahrt* oder die Erlaubnis, die Straße zu überqueren.

Gelb ist Symbol für Energie und Wärme. Es ist die Farbe des Herbstes und zeugt von der Reife. Gelb ist eine Farbe, die häufig das Metall Gold symbolisiert, z.B. die phraseologischen Einheiten *die goldene Mitte wählen* – geo. ოქროს შუალედი აირჩიო *okros shualedi airchio*, bedeutet: den Kompromis wählen; *sich einen Goldfisch angeln* – geo. ოქროს თევზი დაიჭირო *okros tevzi daichiro*, bedeutet: *etw. wertvolles gewinnen* – zeugen von der morphosyntaktischen und lexikalisch-semanticen Übereinstimmung der kontrastierten Sprachen, wobei ein identisches Bild zugrunde liegt.

Gelb hat bilaterale symbolische Belastung. Auf der einen Seite ist es die Farbe der Freude und Fröhlichkeit, steht oft als ein Symbol der Ewigkeit, auf der anderen Seite ist es mit Feigheit, Lügen und Gier verbunden und kann auch den Neid und Gier symbolisieren. Im Georgischen sagt man „ხარბი ადამიანი ფოთოლს გავს, რომელიც შემოდგომაზე გაყვითლდება და ჩამოვარდება“ *Kharbi adamiani potols hgavs, romelic shemodgomaze gakvitldeba da chamovardeba* dt. Ein gieriger Mann sieht wie ein Blatt aus, das im Herbst vergilbt und fällt (Internet).

Negativ konnotiert (ähnlich wie grün) bedeutet *Gelb* Hass, Neid, Bosheit und Ärger. Es hängt wohl mit der Wirkung der Galle zusammen, die

eine gelbgrüne Flüssigkeit produziert. Dies zeigt sich auch in den festen Wendungen: *gelb vor Neid sein/werden/grün und gelb vor Neid werden* – außerordentlich neidisch werden, geo. შურისაგან გულზე გასკდა *shurisagan gulze gaskda* (wörtl. vor Neid platzt das Herz).

4. Äquivalenzbeziehungen

Wir gebrauchen für unsere Farbenbezeichnungen in den Deutschen und georgischen Phraseologismen drei Äquivalenztypen vollständige/totale, Partielle/teilweise und Nulläquivalenz

4.1. vollständige/totale Äquivalenz (VÄ)

Hier gibt es keine Diskrepanzen in der Bedeutung, in dem lexikalischen Bestand, in der Bildlichkeit und in der grammatischen Struktur. Sie treten sowohl im Alltag, als auch in der Wissenschaft vor. Die Komponenten werden identisch außerhalb der Phraseologismen übersetzt, denn sie als Bestandteile besitzen allgemein bekannte Begriffe. Diese allgemeinen bekannten Begriffe trifft man fast in allen Sprachen.

(VÄ) blau, grün und gold

- 1) **blaues Blut haben** – adeliger Abkunft haben – geo. ცისფერი სისხლი აქვს *tsisperi sikhli akvs*
- 2) **jmdm. grünes Licht geben** – jmdm. die Erlaubnis zu etwas geben – geo. მწვანე შუქი აუწოთ *mcvane shuki aunto*
- 3) **jmdm. goldene Berge versprechen** – jmdm. Unmögliches versprechen – geo. ოქროს მთებს დაპირდე *okros mtebs dapirde*
keine VÄ mit grau und gelb

4.2. Partielle bzw. teilweise Äquivalenz (PÄ)

Partielle bzw. teilweise Äquivalenz bezieht sich auf Unterschiede im Bereich der Lexik, Semantik, Syntax und Morphologie. Aber sie haben gleiche denotative Bedeutung und in beiden Sprachen gehören sie den idiomatischen Phraseologismen an.

(PÄ) blau

Blau gilt in der Farbenlehre als Farbe der Täuschung. Den idiomatischen Phraseologismen mit *Blau* entsprechen im Georgischen die idiomatischen Phraseologismen *ohne Farbwörter*.

- 1) **das Blaue vom Himmel versprechen/herunterlügen/ das Blaue vom Himmel lügen** – Unmögliches versprechen – geo. ზღაპრები მოუყვებ *zghaprebi mouqve* (wörtl. Märchen erzählen) (Internet)
- 2) **das Blaue vom Himmel herunter schwören** – unwahres behaupten; geo. ცას და დედამიწას ფიცულობდე *tsas da dedamitsas piculobde* (wörtl. Himmel und Erde schwören)
- 3) **Blauen Dunst vormachen** (j-m etw. vorgaukeln/vorspiegeln), geo. ზღაპრებს ავრცელებს *zghaprebs avrcelebs* (wörtlich: Märchen verbreitet); თვალეებში ნაცარს აყრის *tvalebshi nacars akris* (wörtlich: streut die Asche in die Augen), ასულელებს *asulelebs* (wörtl. macht dumm)
- 4) **auf blauen Dunst hin** – sucht etwas, was nicht wahr ist – geo. ილიზიების ძიებაშია *ilusiebis ziebašia*
- 5) **ins Blaue fahren/eine Fahrt ins Blaue** – einen Ausflug an einen unbekanntem oder nicht vorher bestimmten Ort und infolgedessen auch möglicherweise Gefährliches; geo. ალაღბედზე გასვლა *alalbedze gasvla* (wörtl. aufs Geratewohl gehen/fahren)
- 6) **blauer Montag** – ein Tag, an dem man nichts machen sollte geo. უქმი ორშაბათი *uqmi orshabati* (wörtl. müßiger Montag)
- 7) **mit einem blauen Auge davonkommen** – ohne großen Schaden davonkommen, sich leicht retten, der Gefahr leicht zu entkommen – geo. ხივათს იოლად გადაურჩა *kipats iolad gadaurcha*

(PÄ) grau

- 1) **alles grau in grau malen/sehen** – alles pessimistisch darstellen geo. ყველაფერს მუქ ფერებში ხედავს *kvelapers muk perebshi khedavs* (wörtl. alles sieht in dunklen Farben)
- 2) **sich keine graue Haare wachsen lassen** – keine Sorgen machen; geo. არ ინაღვლო, გულთან ახლოს არ მიიტანო *ar inaghvlo, gultan akhlos ar miitano* (wörtl. Mach dir keine Sorgen, bring nicht nahe ans Herz)
- 3) **in grauer Vorzeit (Zeit)** – vor unbestimmt langer Zeit; geo. შორეულ წარსულში *shoreul carsulshi* (wörtl. (in der fernen Vergangenheit)
- 4) **das graue Elend haben** – sich tief unglücklich fühlen; geo. დანაღვლიანდა, სევდამ მოიცვა *danaghvlianda, sevdam moicva* (wörtl. Er war traurig und ertrunken).
- 5) **bei Nacht sind alle Katzen grau** (wörtlich: დამით ყველა კატა ნაცრისფერია *ghamit qvela kata nacrisperia*), figurative Bedeutung: Besonderheiten fallen in der Dunkelheit auf

Sonderfall

der graue Markt – der eigentlich verbotene, aber still – schweigend gedulde-

te Handel mit Waren oder Dienstleistungen; geo. შავი ბაზარი *shavi bazari* wörtl. Der schwarze Markt (vgl. russ. чёрный рынок)

(PÄ) grün

- 1) **jmdm. nicht grün sein** – jemandem nicht wohlgesinnt sein; geo. ათვალწუნებული ჰყავს, გულზე არ ეხატება *atvalcunebuli hkavs, gulze ar ekhateba* (wörtl. j-n nicht mögen, jmd. ist am Herzen nicht gemalt)
- 2) **jmdn. über den grünen Klee loben** – j-n. übertrieben loben; geo. ხოტბა შესხა *khotba sheaskha*; (wörtl. glorreich machen); აქებს და ადიდებს *akebs da adidebs* (wörtl. lobt und verherrlicht)
- 3) **noch Grünspan hinter den Ohren haben/noch grün hinter den Ohren sein** – j-d ist noch zu jung; ohne Erfahrung; geo. ტუჩებზე დედის რძე არ შემრობია *tuchebze dedis rdze ar sheshrobia* (wörtl. Muttermilch ist an den Lippen noch nicht trocken)
- 4) **auf einen (keinen) grünen Zweig kommen** – Erfolg haben/keinen Erfolg haben; კეთილდღეობას მიაღწია (ვერ მიაღწია) *ketildghe miaghcia*; (wörtl. jmd. hat Wohlbefinden erreicht (nicht erreicht); ბედმა გაუღიმა (არ გაუღიმა) *bedma gaughima (ar gaughima)* (wörtl. jmdm. hat Fortuna gelächelt (nicht gelächelt)

4.3. Nulläquivalenz – Umschreibungen (NÄ)

Von der Nulläquivalenz wird gesprochen, wenn keine phraseologische Entsprechung für die zu kontrastierende Sprache gefunden wurde. Solche Phraseologismen muss man dann *paraphrasieren* (*sie sollten frei übersetzt werden*).

(NÄ) Blau

- 1) **einen Tag blau machen** – einen Tag ohne Arbeit und Stress erleben; **geo.** დღე უზრუნველად გაატარო *dghe uzrunvelad gaataro*; (wörtl. den Tag ohne Sorgen verbringen).
- 2) **Er hat ein Blau gemacht** – er ist ohne Verabschiedung weggegangen; **geo.** გამომშვიდობების გარეშე წავიდა *gamomshvidobebis gareshe cavida* (wörtl. Er ist ohne Verabschiedung weggegangen) (Internet, 18.03.2019)
- 3) **sein blaues Wunder erleben** – eine böse Überraschung erleben, etwas was großes Staunen, große Bewunderung erregt; **geo.** იხილო საოცარი რამ *ikhilo saocari ram*; (wörtl. Etwas sehen oder hören, was uns bewundert)

Blau kann im Deutschen Betrunkenheit ausdrücken: *blau sein (wie ein Veilchen)* – betrunken sein; **geo.** ნასვამია *nasvamia* (wörtl. ist betrunken).

Die Bedeutung des Phraseologismus ist nicht genau geklärt und hat im Georgischen kein Äquivalent. Das deutsche und georgische Idiom stimmen semantisch, lexikalisch und morphologisch nicht überein, sie sind völlig unterschiedlich.

(NÄ) grau

- 1) **der graue Alltag** – die trostlose Routine des Alltags; (wörtl. ნაცრისფერი ყოველდღიურობა *natsrisperi koveldghiuroba*), figurative Bedeutung geo. ყოველდღიური/ჩვეულებრივი ცხოვრებისეული რუტინა; *koveldghiuri/chveulebrivi rutina*; vgl. russ. *серая повседневная жизнь*
- 2) **graue Maus** – unscheinbare Person; (wörtl. ნაცრისფერი თაგვი *nacrisper tagvi*), figurative Bedeutung: შეუმჩნეველი პიროვნება *sheumchneveli pirovneba*

(NÄ) grün

- 1) **bei Mutter Grün schlafen** – im Freien übernachten; (wörtl. დედასთან მწვანედ ძილი *dedastan mtsvaned dsili*), figurative Bedeutung: ღამე გარეთ გაათიო *ghame garet gaatio* (draußen übernachten)
- 2) **grüne Hochzeit** – Tag der Heirat; (wörtl. მწვანე ქორწილი *mtvane qort-sili*), figurative Bedeutung: ქორწინების დღე *kortsinebis dghe*
- 3) **grüne Witwe** – Ehefrau, die viel allein lebt; (wörtl. მწვანე ქვრივი *mts-vane kvrivi*), figurative Bedeutung: მარტოხელა ქვრივი *martokhela kvrivi* (Witwe, die allein lebt)/

(NÄ) gelb

- 1) **Gelb vor Neid werden** – außerordentlich neidisch werden – geo. შურისაგან გულზე გასკდა *shurisagan gulze gaskda* (wörtl. Der Neid bricht ihm Herz)
- 2) **gelb und grün (vor Neid, Zorn, Wut, Ärger) werden** – geo. გაცოფთა, *gacopta*, თვალებიდან ცოფები ყარა/ნაპერწკლები ყარა; *tvalebidan copenbi zara/napertsklebi zara*.

Auch: **grün und gelb werden (vor Neid, Zorn, Wut, Ärger) werden** – geo. სიბრაზისაგან გამწვანდა *sibrasisagan gamtsvanda* (wörtl. vor Ärger wurde grün);

Hier bezieht sich georgisches Idiom auf die Farbe des Gesichts, das vom Ärger grün wird. Die Idiome sind in beider Sprachvarianten morphologisch, semantisch und syntaktisch ähnlich. In der georgischen Sprache gibt es aber nur die grüne Farbe, in der deutschen Sprache die gelbe und grüne Farben.

5. Zusammenfassung

Es werden von uns festgestellt, mit welcher Farbe die symbolischen Bedeutungen in beiden Sprachen zusammenfallen und inwieweit diese Phraseologismen nach dem positiven und negativen Sinn in beiden Sprachen in Übereinstimmung kommen.

Wir haben ungefähr 38 deutsche Phraseologismen analysiert. Dabei kommt die meisten Zahl auf Phraseologismen mit *Blau* vor. Das sind 15 Phraseologismen (5,7%). An zweiter Stelle sind 10 Phraseologismen mit den Komponenten „grün“ (3,8%), danach folgen die Phraseologismen mit den Komponenten „grau“ 9 (3,42%) und „gelb“ 6 (2%).

Es wurde sichtbar, dass die deutsche Sprache sich über eine Menge von den Phraseologismen mit den Farbkomponenten: *blau*, *grau*, *grün* und *gelb*, verfügt. Die georgische Sprache hat wenige Phraseologismen mit diesen Farbwörtern.

Was die Äquivalenzbeziehungen betrifft, weisen nur allgemein bekannte Begriffe eine vollständige Äquivalenz mit den georgischen Phraseologismen auf. Diese allgemeinen bekannten Begriffe trifft man fast in allen Sprachen und werden wörtlich übersetzt.

Die partielle bzw. teilweise Äquivalenz bezieht sich auf Unterschiede im Bereich der Lexik, Semantik, Syntax und Morphologie. Aber sie haben gleiche denotative Bedeutung und werden mit den Phraseologischen Äquivalenten übersetzt.

Bei dem Nulläquivalent hat ein Deutscher Phraseologismus kein adäquates Phraseologisches Äquivalent im Georgischen. Solche Phraseologismen muss man dann paraphrasieren (sie sollten frei übersetzt werden).

Ausgehend davon, dass das Deutsche und das Georgische zu verschiedener Sprachfamilie gehören, ist die Anzahl der festgestellten teilweisen bzw. partiellen Übereinstimmungen relativ hoch. Die Gründe für diese Tatsache könnten außerhalb der Sprache liegen, in der Geschichte der Kultur und in der Folge des Einflusses der europäischen Kultur auf die georgische und umgekehrt.

Aufgrund dieser Arbeit ist uns bewusst geworden, wie viele deutsche Phraseologismen mit den Farbwörtern im Deutschen es gibt und nur wenige im Georgischen ihnen entsprechen. Es war nicht leicht für deutsche Phraseologismen die georgischen Äquivalente aufzusuchen, aber es war dann sehr interessant, die Ähnlichkeit und die Unterschiede zu finden und analysieren, den Wortschatz zu erweitern und theoretische Kenntnisse zu gewinnen, wovon die Deutschstudierenden profitieren können.

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German and Georgian Phraseological Units Reflecting Colour Symbolism

Summary

Colours play an important role in human life in all periods and in all cultures. Therefore, it is not surprising that colours have left their marks in languages. The

aim of the paper is to analyse common phraseological units with constituents which carry symbolical value, i.e. *blau* 'blue', *gelb* 'yellow', *grau* 'grey' und *grün* 'green' from a linguo-cultural perspective on the example of German and Georgian phraseological units. The majority of Indogermanic languages differentiate between *grün* and *blau*, while others have one word for both colours. The colours carry symbolic values, for instance, *blau* symbolises deception in the German language; in Georgian, this colour is not connected with this phenomenon. *Grau* is balanced, but it is often associated with pessimism and gloomy weather. *Grün* connotes nature and the earth. *Gelb* is the symbol of energy and warmth. To some extent, the symbolism is reflected in fixed expressions, whose contrastive research is of great importance for phraseological studies. An analysis of cross-linguistic equivalents is conducted with a view to determining the correspondences and to discuss them in terms of their positive and negative markedness.

PART III

**A CONTRASTIVE ANALYSES
OF NOTIONS EXPRESSED
BY REPRODUCIBLE LANGUAGE UNITS**

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Lingvoculturological Aspect of Russian, Bulgarian and Polish Proverbs on the Subject of Human and Human Nature

Abstract. This multilingual Russian-Bulgarian-Polish research, based on the Russian paremiological minimum, is looking into paremiological units in relation to Human and Human Nature. The source of the current research is the *Russian-Slavonic Dictionary of Proverbs* published in 2000 by Kotova (St. Petersburg, Russia). The aim of this paper is to uncover possible lacunarities and culturally-tied expressions in the corpora of European cultural memory, specifically in Russian, Bulgarian and Polish languages. Taking the inner form of a paremiological unit into account, the current research presents full equivalents as well as parallels with different levels of lacunarity. The actualisation and reproductivity of the units are also reviewed during the research, supported by usage examples from various online sources helping to illustrate the 'alive' phenomenon of the paremiological unit.

Key words: *Russian, Bulgarian, Polish, paremiology, lacunarity*

1. Introduction

The main goal of this paper – paremiological lacunarity – is an aspect, which is not widely spread in paremiological research. We can mention the studies of the Russian researchers Abramova (2004), Nikitina (2014), Kotova (2016) and the works of the Polish researcher Szerszunowicz (2015).

In the frame of the current research, lacunarity is looked at as a gap in a foreign language towards our target language proverb. In our case that is, for example, lacunarity in Bulgarian on the background of Russian (or lacunarity in Bulgarian towards one Russian proverb).

The comparison of two or more languages, or, in a broader perspective, cultures, allows for determining both similarities and differences (Szerszunowicz 2015). The latter are most discernible in the case of cross-linguistic gaps, created by units in Russian with zero equivalents in the target lan-

guages of this research, Bulgarian and Polish, and vice versa. The term stems from the Latin word *lacuna* meaning 'gap' or 'lake'.

The current research recognises terminology introduced by Professor Kotova: *Complete lacunarity* as a gap of a proverbial parallel to a foreign proverb, as a sign of a situation, that is *unique* for one culture and has no proverbial parallels in one other language. *Strong fragmental lacunarity*, is a specific characteristic of a proverb, as a sign of a situation, that *does* have paremiological parallels in other language but has a *unique* inner form. Finally, *Weak fragmental lacunarity* is a specific characteristics of a proverb, as a sign of a situation, that *does* have paremiological parallels with *similar inner form or/and imagery*.

Comparing proverbial parallels across all three languages would show a wider picture of cultural ties and connections, and uncover and point to lacunae in individual linguo-culturological environments.

The concept of this research is relying heavily on a Russian paremiological core in the sense of the theory of Permyakov (1988). Earlier studies based on this theory have resulted in a publication of the *Russian-Slavonic Dictionary of Proverbs with English Parallels* by Kotova in St. Petersburg in 2000 (RSSPAS). In this current research, we are looking at one section of the dictionary including proverbs on the subjects Human and Human Nature. It is important also to point out that we are concerned about the actuality of the proverbs we are researching. The usage in living language in our time and age is one of the components of this study.

There is a total of 57 Russian proverbs that have been extracted from the RSSPAS, along with its Bulgarian and Polish parallels and variants (if such exist). Most of these proverbs (42) have parallels in both target languages; however the main point of this research is the lacunarity of the Russian proverbs and two-lingual Russian-Bulgarian and Russian-Polish connections which would show closer relationships between the cultures.

2. Russian-Bulgarian parallels: Polish lacunarity

Historically, Russian and Bulgarian languages had strong connections: while the Russian language was born under the influence of the Church Slavonic language that came to Russia from Bulgaria, the modern Bulgarian language was influenced by the Old Russian and the Russian languages. The interconnection of the two cultures resulted in a deep relationship in many aspects of the modern Bulgarian and Russian languages. The proverbs being a large part of the country's identity and the language heritage, it is not

unusual to discover similarities that would only suggest centuries of neighbourly relationships.

One of the shared aspects of the two Slavic cultures, was religion. Russian proverb *Твои бы речи да Богу в уши* [lit. If only your talk into God's ears.] clearly establishes the people's belief in the power of wishful thought and a mindful prayer being able to change the course of events. In Bulgarian we also find an identical proverb *От твоите уста в Божиите уши* [lit. From your mouth to God's ears]. The Russian proverb is widely known and used in various sources:

Твои бы речи да богу в уши. Еще знаешь сколько будет дуть холодный ветер? Нет, я без шапки не люблю. Не люблю, когда мне холодно!

http://eva.ru/static/forums/71/2004_3/118780.html

[lit. If only your talk into God's ears. Do you know for how much longer the cold winds will blow? No, I don't like to go without a hat. I don't like to be cold!]

The spread of religion had a significant impact on the development of the language and education. Some proverbs can shed some light on the history of the development of a language, the aspects of the process of writing, and studying. In the Russian proverb *Ни в сказке сказать, ни пером описать* [lit. Not to be told in a fairy tale, not to be written by a quill pen] and its Bulgarian parallel *Ни с думи да го кажеш, ни с перо да го напишеш* [lit. Not to say with words, not to write it with a quill pen] – the same image, 'quill pen', is used, showing a side-by-side development of the literature and industrial progress in the two countries. Folklore has played a large role in the Russian culture – tales have been told by generations and then later written by the most famous Russian writers. This proverb of the folk origin is referring to the imaginary world of fairy tales. In the Bulgarian proverb, however, the main point is the contrast between spoken and written, which presents us with a weak fragmental lacunarity. An example shows a modern context of usage of this classic Russian proverb:

Как известно, правила придуманы для всех. Но всегда найдутся те, кто специально или по недомыслию их нарушат... Герои сегодняшнего обзора паркуются так, что ни в сказке сказать, ни пером описать.

<http://interesno.cc/article/14307/15-umnikov-kotorye-parkujutsja-tak-cto-ni-v-skazke-skazatni-perom-opisat>

[lit. As well known, rules are written for everybody. But there are always some, who on purpose or absentmindedness break them... The heroes of this review park their cars in a way that is not to be told in a fairy tale, not to be written by a quill pen.]

The Russian proverb on the subject of studying is *Смотрит в книгу, а видит фигу* [lit. He/she) is looking into a book but is seeing nothing] could have been said about a poorly educated person who is trying to read something he doesn't understand, or about someone who seems to be fully consumed by the reading but actually does not understand what he is reading, due to being deep in thought. This proverb has an equivalent in Bulgarian: *Чете по диагоналната система* [lit. He/she reads by the diagonal system], however this proverb has a completely different shape while expressing the same meaning – someone's inability to learn from reading. Here, 'diagonal system' is used in a negative sense despite its original positive meaning as an ability to read fast. This Russian proverb has an image *фига* which is a rude synonym of *nothing* and is very culture-specific. This lacuna could fall into a cultural category listed by Newmark as "Gestures and habits". Although many gestures have become widespread across different cultures, there are still many which are culture specific. This gesture does exist as part of an expression in a few other languages, e.g. Italian *far la fica* or French *faire la figue* [lit. to make a fig], however it doesn't exist in Bulgarian, providing the strong fragmental lacunarity of the parallel. In the modern language, this proverb has wide usage in online sources due to its lower style and imagery:

Только ему это объяснить надо! А то он смотрит в книгу, а видит фигу.

<https://twitter.com/theanimebit/status/933236019905695744>

[lit. But it has to be explained to him. He is looking into a book, but is seeing nothing.]

The age of proverbs is often something that is impossible to pinpoint, however some cultural indicators, e.g. imagery, can suggest when a proverb was born or in what circumstances. The Russian proverb *Старый конь борозды не портит* [lit. An old horse doesn't spoil a plough] as well as the Bulgarian *Старият вол по-дълбоко оре* [lit. Old bull ploughs deeper] is about an elderly person who is always able to help due to his experience. This proverb is an example of a weak fragmental lacunarity as it has a very similar inner form in Bulgarian and Russian. While in Russian it's a "horse" that "won't spoil the plough", in Bulgarian "bull" does a better job at the plough – despite employing different farm animals to do the job, both cultures acknowledge the importance of experience and refer to the same common task in farming. As a well-known proverb, it has many examples of usage online:

Как всегда, была «назначена» единственным кандидатом, опытная, семидесятилетняя представительница партии власти. И «назначена» кандидатом под неофициальным, но ясным лозунгом – «Старый конь борозды не портит».

<https://ksk66.ru/2017/09/19/>

[lit. As usual, the one and only “appointed” candidate was experienced, 70 years old representative of the ruling party. And she was “appointed” as a candidate with non-official, but a clear slogan – “An old horse doesn’t spoil a plough”.]

There are a few Russian-Bulgarian paremiological parallels that refer to beauty and looks in different aspects of life. It could be mentioned in a suggestion not to blame secondary matters in something when the main reason of the negative outcome is yourself – *На зеркало неча (нечего) пенять, коли рожа крива* [lit. Don’t blame the mirror when the face is crooked] – Bulg. *Магаре застанало, магаре излязло* [lit. A donkey came in, a donkey came out.], *Не търси вината в другите* [lit. Do not look for a blame in others.]. The archaic words *неча* and *коли* indicate that this proverb has been well known in peasant times and is associated with simpler, village life. *Пенять* also gives away the conversational nature of the proverb as well as *рожа* being a rude equivalent of the word *face*. The combination of linguistically specific words makes the proverb culturally unique to the Russian language – a strong indication of lacunarity. The Bulgarian language offers two equivalents to this Russian proverb: *Магаре застанало, магаре излязло* – employing a completely different set of images while carries the same meaning, another reference to farm peasant life. The second equivalent, *Не търси вината в другите* – is only grasping the main meaning behind the wisdom, explaining the meaning without employing creative imagery. The proverb still proves popular in the modern language:

Для себя я решил, что в нашей стране роль малого бизнеса – быть зеркалом, отражающим ее печальную действительность. Коррупцию, обман, воровство, абсурдное законодательство и волчье отношение друг к другу. Как говорится, на зеркало неча пенять, коли рожа крива.

<http://www.parkgagarina.info/index.php/ekonomika/1141-2011-12-30-10-37-38.html>

[lit. Myself, I decided, that in our country the role of small business – to be the mirror, that reflects it is saddening reality. It’s corruption, fraud, theft, absurd legislation and wolfish relationships with each other. As they say, Don’t blame the mirror when the face is crooked.]

The general idea of the beauty not being the key to success is evident in the proverb *С лица воду не пить* [lit. From the face water is not drunk] – Bulg. *Не гледай лицето, а сърцето* [lit. Don't look at the face, but the heart] – it is said when the choice of the partner is not made for their looks, but for other qualities. This proverb originates from the time when the parents/family traditionally would have a say in the future marriage of their children. While the Russian proverb simply suggests that the looks shouldn't be the main factor when choosing a partner, the Bulgarian proverb opposes the looks and the heart – making the latter the obvious sensible priority. As a parallel, these proverbs both possess weak fragmental lacunarity. This proverb perfectly fits in the modern culture of self-observation and social judgment, for example:

Вот зря говорят в народе, что с лица воду не пить. Есть лица, на которые и смотреть противно. Инстинктивно отводишь взгляд, чтобы не смотреть на порок.

<https://miss-tramell.livejournal.com/1333126.html?page=2>

[lit. It is said in vain, that from the face water is not drunk. There are faces, that are disgusting to see. Instinctively you would turn your eyes away to avoid seeing the defect.]

Another parallel about beauty *Не родись красивым, а родись счастливым* [lit. Don't be born beautiful, but be born lucky] – Bulg. *Роди ме, мамо, с късмет, на ме хвърли на свет* [lit. Have me born, mother, with luck, then throw me into the world] presents a wisdom about people who, judging by their looks, don't deserve the luck and success that is given to them by fate. The importance of luck has been marked in many folk tales and proverbs. This proverb was mentioned by Dal in his work *Пословицы и поговорки русского народа* in 1853. In Dal's book this proverb had a male form and was addressed to a man, whereas these days it's often used in regard to women. While both proverbs talk about significance of being given luck at birth, the Bulgarian proverb has a completely different syntactic structure and offers a monologue with a mother, requesting luck at time of birth – an example of a strong fragmental lacunarity. This Russian proverb is also popular in the modern language, for instance:

Как говорится, «не родись красивым, а родись счастливым». В случае Лилуши – «не родись породистым...». Молодая 2-летняя британка, здоровая, стерилизованная, без проблем с лотком, с классическим для её породы нравом... Лилуша сменила уже 4 или 5 семей. Сейчас никто не скажет сколько точно. Почему?! Мы сами не знаем! Судьба, наверное.

<https://lap-uchki.com/2017/02/22/ne-rodish-krasivym-a-rodish-schastlivym/>

[lit. As they say, don't be born beautiful, but be born lucky. In Lilusha's case – 'don't be pedigree...'. Young 2 years old British blue, healthy, sterilised, with no litter issues, with typical for her pedigree character... Lilusha already has been returned by 4 or 5 families. No one knows for sure now. Why?! We don't know ourselves. Fate, perhaps.]

3. Russian-Polish parallels: Bulgarian lacunarity

While all 3 cultures subjected to this research have many parallels on many aspects of life, it came to an interesting discovery that the only two Russian-Polish parallels on the subject of Human and Human nature lie under the topic of drinking. The pretty much identical parallels *Пьяный проспится, а дурак – никогда* [lit. A drunk will sleep it off, but a fool – never.] – Pol. *Pijak się w końcu (kiedyś) opamięta, a głupi nigdy* [lit. A drunk will at the end come to his senses, when a fool – never] show that both nations agree that silly behaviour of a drunk man is due to his intoxication and is not his fault, when a stupid man would act unwise in any condition – which is a permanent quality. The Russian verb *проспаться* is only used in relation to an alcoholic intoxication – suggesting that to sleep it off is the most sensible action in this condition. In Polish, the drunk will *się opamięta*, i.e. will come to his or her senses. Despite the two languages using different verbs to describe the end of the alcoholic intoxication, both agree that a fool will never stop his foolishness. It is worth mentioning that here are a few versions of the origin of the Russian lacunae “*дурак*” (‘a fool’): some suggest referring to the old Slavic and taking it down to cillaboles “*du*” (‘two’) and “*ra*” (‘spirit/spirit’), concluding that a *durak* is someone with a lot of energy and somewhat untraditional way of seeing the world around him. The most modern meaning of the word is ‘fool’/‘idiot’ with a strong negative connotation. As the problem of drinking is as actual as ever, the proverb is often used:

Русская народная пословица гласит: «Пьяный проспится, а дурак – никогда». Но когда с рождения дурак вдобавок употребит спиртное, то расценить и осмыслить логику дальнейших действий такого человека здоровому уму не представляется возможным.

<https://bit.ly/2FFAA7x>

[lit. Russian proverb says: “A drunk will sleep it off, but a fool – never.” But when since birth the fool is also drinking alcohol, then to assess and to understand the logic of the future actions of this man is impossible for a healthy brain to comprehend.]

The other characteristic of intoxication is mentioned in another proverb: *Пьяному море по колено* [lit. For a drunk a sea comes to his knee] – Pol.

Dla pijaka nawet morze to fraszka [lit. For a drunk even sea is a trifle] – it is said about a happy and reckless mood that someone is in when under the influence of alcohol. Both Russian and Polish proverbs are employing ‘sea’ as an example of a large task or an obstacle, however, in the Russian proverb, the ease with which a drunk measures the trouble is ‘to his knee’ while in Polish it’s just a ‘trifle’. This proverb is also popular for quick judgement and sarcastic comments:

Говорят: «Пьяному – море по колено» Вот еще одно доказательство этому утверждению. Нетрезвая жительница города Атырау, что в Казахстане, на спор, ради 50 кружек пива, переплыла реку Урал.

<http://alcoformer.ru/alkonovosti/pyanomu-more-po-koleno.html>

[lit. They say: For a drunk a sea comes to his knee. Here is another proof of this statement. A drunk citizen of Atyrau in Kazakhstan, for a bet of 50 pints of beer swam across river Ural.]

4. Unique Russian proverbs: Bulgarian-Polish lacunarity

Despite all three languages and cultures of this research representing the same Slavic group and bearing indisputably close linguistic and historic relationships, the paremiological evidence points out certain unique examples of the Russian traditional life.

From the group of 57 Russian proverbs on the subject of Human and Human nature, selected for this research, there are 6 proverbs that only exist in Russian. Two of these proverbs have fallen in the RSPAS under sub-group “Health and state of mind”. *Были бы кости, а мясо будет (нарастѣм)* [lit. If there are bones, the meat will be (will grow)] – it is said about a very slim person in hope he’ll get better (direct meaning) or if spoken in encouragement about having a solid base for future success. The author suggests literal translations in Bulgarian *Стига да има кости, месо ще има* and in Polish *Były by kości, a mięso się znajdzie*. The meaning of the proverb itself takes a root from an old belief of the bones being transformed into a new life. The tradition itself of keeping the bones goes as far back as the Stone age when the hunters would preserve the bones of the prey, believing the animal to be re-born from the bones. Interestingly many fairy tales in Slavic and other cultures have a mention of a mystic significance of bones in the after-life. A very simple example of usage of this proverb below, provides evidence of the actuality of this proverb in the modern language:

Дело не в длине дистанции, а в ее функциональности. Как говорится были бы кости а мясо нарастет. не сомневаюсь. там все еще будет совершенствоваться.

<https://www.skisport.ru/news/biathlon/87986/>

[lit. The point is not in the length of the distance, but in its functionality. As they say, If there are bones, the meat will grow. I have no doubt. Everything there will only improve.]

The other proverb on the same sub-group “Health and State of mind” is *(Что) Взглянет – рублём подарит* [lit. When (someone) gives you a look – gifts you a rouble (currency)] – it is said about the expression a handsome and good looking person makes on the others or about a friendly and approachable person who is pleasant to talk to. The author suggests literal translations in Bulgarian *С поглед рублиа ти подарява* and in Polish *Gdy (Kiedy) spojrzy, to jakby rubla podaruwał*. Being an example of a complete Russian lacunarity, this proverb contains ‘rouble’ as a culture-specific lacunae. This proverb is one of many that are live in the modern Russian culture due to mention in various classic literary and movie productions. As found in an example below:

Таким примером может служить популярная современная песня про парня, который в плохом расположении духа вышел прогуляться по городу. Ему встречается девушка (в песне: “то ли девочка, то ли виденье”). Они переглянулись, а потом “я оглянулся посмотреть, не оглянулась ли она, чтоб посмотреть, не оглянулся ли я”. Вот такой нехитрый “разговор” без слов – и настроение улучшилось. Вот уж действительно, “взглянет – рублем подарит”. Еще взгляд – еще один рубль. Стоит оборачиваться.

https://www.e-reading.club/chapter.php/1018511/32/Osipov_-Edinyuy_yazyk_chelovechestva.html

[lit. As such example could serve the popular modern song about a guy, who while in a bad mood went for a stroll in the city. He met a girl (in the song: “might have been a girl, or perhaps – just a dream”). They gave each other a look, and then “I looked back to see if she looked back to see if I did”. Such a simple “conversation” without words – and the mood is lifted. So for definite, “when gives you a look – gifts you a rouble”. Another look – another rouble. It’s worth to look back.]

Three of the unique Russian proverbs on the subject of “Human and State of mind” are listed in RSPAS under sub-group “Tongue, speech – silence”. One of them – *Умные речи приятно и слушать* [lit. Clever talks are pleasant to listen to] – is usually used to address a man who was just recently upsetting others by being unreasonable and is now talking a lot more sense. The author suggests literal translations in Bulgarian *Колко е приятно да се слушат умни речения* and in Polish *Przyjemnie (miło) jest posłuchać mądrych*

słów. This is also one of many proverbs that have been mentioned in Russian literature, for example by Dostoevsky in *Crime and Punishment*, which provides actualisation of the common wisdom in the living language:

Говорят «умные речи приятно слушать», а в данном случае – читать. Столько ума, юмора, так многое тонко подмечено, такая фантазия и очарование!

https://www.facebook.com/permalink.php?story_fbid=986361481447985&id=206005856096063

[lit. They say “Clever talks are pleasant to listen to”, and in this case – to read. Such wisdom, humour, so many smart observations, such imagination and charm!]

Another aspect of life and social relationship in relation to the same sub-group can be observed in the proverb *За что купил, за то и продаю* [lit. Selling for the price I've bought it for] – this proverb, perhaps relates to the same historical period and trade's traditions of re-selling goods at higher price. It can be used by someone who has heard about what happened, but hasn't been present at the time of the event he is talking about. Used as an excuse when the information is unsupported by facts or hard to believe to relieve someone of any responsibility for the consequences. The author of RSPAS suggests literal translations in Bulgarian *За колкото съм го купил, за толкова ви го продавам* and in Polish *Za ile kupilem, za tyle /samo/ sprzedaję*. A good example of usage and actualisation of this proverb:

Пожалуйста, не судите строго, за что купил, за то и продаю, подробностей пока нет, но обещаю. Я же обязуюсь информировать Вас поподробней, по мере поступления дополнительной информации.

<https://ivanoctober.livejournal.com/1035869.html>

[lit. Please don't judge harshly, I'm selling for the price I've bought it for, there are no details yet, but they are promising. I promise to keep you informed, as soon as the details come through.]

Although falling under sub-group “Language, speech – silence”, the next uniquely Russian proverb points to a very thin line between heated talk and physical action: *Языком болтай, а руками воли не давай* [lit. Chatter with your tongue, but don't give freedom to your hands] – it is said to someone as an attempt to stop them from getting involved in a fight. The author suggests a saying in Bulgarian *Дръж си ръцете* [lit. Hold your hands] that only partially applies to the situation described in the Russian proverb. In Polish a literal translation is offered – *Trzep (miel, chlap) jęzorem, ale ręce trzymaj przy sobie*. While not being found in the Russian National

Corpus, which suggests that it is no longer in active usage, there is still evidence on the Internet of this proverb being known and used by Russian speakers:

Христианским миссионерам давно уже надо было зарубить себе на носу: «языком болтай, а рукам воли не давай». Тогда бы и данного инцидента не было, и никакого «экстремизма» не было бы и в помине.

<https://ltraditionalist.livejournal.com/1282329.html>

[lit. Christian missionaries should have learned a long time ago: Chatter with your tongue, but don't give freedom to your hands. Then this accident would never have happened, and such a thing as 'extremism' would never existed.]

The last Russian proverb that has no parallel in Bulgarian nor Polish is *Не обманешь – не продашь* [lit. Won't trick – won't sell] which is a Statement that if someone wants to be successful at sale he should learn to hide defects and imperfections/ "sell the benefits". This proverb is listed in RSS-PAS under sub-group "Devious person – simpleton". The author suggests literal translations in Bulgarian *Без да излъжеш не можеш да продадеш* and in Polish *Nie oszukasz – nie sprzedasz*. The proverb itself has a deep historical background which was acknowledged by many writers and historians: back in the 17th century Russia, the trade wasn't an easy task due to many privileged classes avoiding taxes and smaller businesses struggling to survive competing with larger organisations. As noted by many foreign observers, this situation forced Moscovite small businessmen to cheat in order to make profit. The saying, however, is still actual in the modern understanding of the trade:

Торговля подразумевает обман в том или ином виде. Пусть этот обман не грубый, пусть кто-то назовёт его преувеличением или рекламной хитростью, но по-сути это обман. Не обманешь – не продашь.

<https://mossudmed.livejournal.com/724474.html>

[lit. Trade implies trickery in one way or another. Even if not a big trick, someone may call it exaggeration or advertising move, but in fact it's a fraud. Won't trick – won't sell.]

5. Conclusion

The tri-lingual nature of this research was set to uncover the possible lacunaries of Russian paremiological units, the interconnections of Russian, Bulgarian and Polish languages. While basing the research on the Russian

paremiological minimum and targeting the Bulgarian and Polish proverbs in the search of gaps in the cultural and proverbial aspect, this research is aimed to uncover and suggest possible levels of connections within the corpora of European cultural memory.

Fifty seven proverbs on the subject of "Human and Human Nature" have been selected from the *Russian-Slavonic Dictionary of Proverbs*. During the research, it has been established that most of the selected proverbs, 42, have parallels in all of the three Slavic languages. The subjects that are best represented in all 3 are: Strength – defects (11 parallels) and Language, speech – silence (10). This shows a strong intercultural connection and deep historical relationship within the Slavic group of languages.

Of the remaining 15 proverbs from this section of RSSPAS, 7 Russian proverbs have parallels in Bulgarian only, mostly on the subject of Beauty – Ugliness (*Ни в сказке сказать, ни пером описать; На зеркало неча (ничего) пенять, коли рожа крива; Не родись красивым, а родись счастливым; С лица воду не пить*), 2 on the subject of Intelligence (*Старый конь борозды не портит; Смотрит в книгу, а видит фигу*) and 1 on the subject of Language, speech – silence (*Твои бы речи да Богу в уши*).

The research discovered that only 2 Russian proverbs are a part of bilingual Russian-Polish parallel and establish Bulgarian lacunarity, both on the subject of Drunk – Sober (*Пьяному море по колено; Пьяный проспится, а дурак – никогда*).

The complete lacunarity is represented by 6 Russian proverbs that have no equivalents in Bulgarian or Polish: 3 on the subject Language, speech – silence (*Умные речи приятно и слушать; За что купил, за то и продаю; Языком болтай, а рукам воли не давай*), 2 on the subject Health and State of mind (*(Что) Взглянет – рублём подарит; Были бы кости, а мясо будет (нарастёт)*) and 1 on the subject Devious person – simpleton (*Не обманешь – не продашь*).

This research, on an example of one common topic of Human and Human nature, discovered certain lingvocultural connections within a group of related Slavic languages. It uncovered and presented various examples of lacunarity and established a strong point of heritage between Russian, Bulgarian and Polish paremiological heritage.

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Jezykowo-kulturowy aspekt rosyjskich, bulgarskich i polskich przysłów dotyczących człowieka i ludzkiej natury

Streszczenie

Wielojęzyczna rosyjsko-bułgarsko-polska analiza, oparta na rosyjskim paremiologicznym minimum, ma na celu zbadania pola „Człowiek i ludzka natura”. Materiał badawczy pochodzi z *Russian-Slavonic Dictionary of Proverbs* [Rosyjsko-słowiańskiego słownika przysłów] opublikowanego w 2000 r. przez Kotową (Sankt Petersburg, Rosja). Celem artykułu jest wskazanie potencjalnych luk i jednostek o motywacji kulturowej w europejskiej pamięci kulturowej, na przykładzie trzech języków: rosyjskiego, bułgarskiego i polskiego. Niniejsze badanie, które uwzględnia wewnętrzną formę jednostki paremiologicznej, przedstawia pełne ekwiwalenty oraz częściowe odpowiedniki o różnych poziomach lakunarności. Brane są również pod uwagę aktualizacja i odtwarzalność, które zezemplifikowano przykładami pochodzącymi z różnorodnych źródeł online, co umożliwiło wykazanie, że przysłowia należą do „żywych” jednostek językowych.

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Rumeur et calomnie – modalités du mensonge (étude contrastive d'unités idiomatiques françaises, roumaines et bulgares)

Résumé. L'article représente une étude contrastive d'unités idiomatiques (principalement d'unités phraséologiques/phraséologismes, de parémies et de collocations) françaises, roumaines et bulgares relevant du champ thématique de la rumeur et de la calomnie. On cherche à connaître les représentations de ces deux phénomènes, leurs principales caractéristiques et le jugement qui leur est porté. On se propose aussi de voir dans quelle mesure le savoir et la sagesse contenus dans les unités figées analysées ici correspondent ou non aux connaissances apportées par les sciences humaines en ce qui concerne les deux phénomènes en question.

Mots clés: *rumeur, calomnie, mensonge, unités idiomatiques, français, bulgare, roumain*

1. Introduction

« La rumeur est partout, quelles que soient les sphères de notre vie sociale » – le constat fait par J.-N. Kapferer (1987: 10) à la fin des années 1980 concernant l'omniprésence de ce phénomène que paradoxalement l'émergence de la presse, de la radio et de la télévision n'a pas su contrer paraît encore plus vrai aujourd'hui. Si la rumeur et la calomnie sont bien des phénomènes vieux comme le monde, elles semblent, en effet, connaître ces derniers temps un essor sans précédent notamment sous l'appellation plus récente de « fausses nouvelles » (*fake news*; *фалшиви новини*; *știri false*), à tel point que l'on parle désormais d'épidémie touchant les réseaux sociaux mais parfois aussi les médias traditionnels. Car avec l'explosion des nouvelles technologies et de l'Internet, « un gigantesque et infatigable palais des rumeurs » (Aldrin 2017), ces phénomènes bénéficient, en réalité, d'une plus grande diffusion.

La présente étude a pour objet d'établir ce que la langue et notamment l'idiomatique¹ du français, du bulgare et du roumain, une source précieuse d'informations sur le savoir et les expériences accumulés au fil du temps, nous révèlent sur les rumeurs et la calomnie.

2. Principales caractéristiques de la rumeur

Afin de mieux cerner la nature de ce phénomène, nous indiquerons ici ses principales caractéristiques du point de vue de la psychologie et des sciences sociales. L'un de ses traits essentiels est son contenu non vérifié et le plus souvent faux. C'est en mettant en avant leur nature clandestine et alternative² que Ph. Aldrin qualifie les rumeurs de contre-version à la version officielle des événements, de l'histoire, de la science (Aldrin 2017). Il faudrait tout de même noter l'avis de J.-N. Kapferer qui, en soulignant le fait que les cas de rumeurs fondées ne manquent pas, indique que « la véracité ne fait pas partie de leur définition scientifique » (Kapferer 1987: 29).

Ce qui caractérise aussi la rumeur, c'est son mode de propagation³ qui est une diffusion en chaîne contournant les dispositifs institutionnels.

Parmi les autres caractéristiques de la rumeur, il y a la déformation de l'information qui est transmise, l'importance du sujet pour (une partie de) la société, son incidence sur l'état des connaissances (étant donné la pos-

¹ Il convient de préciser que nous optons pour l'adoption du terme *idiomatique* en remplacement du terme *phraséologie au sens large*. Ce que nous entendons par là, c'est l'ensemble des unités figées suivantes : expressions phraséologiques, proverbes, comparaisons et collocations (toutes des unités sur lesquelles nous nous appuyons ici), sentences, formules de bénédiction et de malédiction. Pour en savoir plus sur le terme *idiomatique*, ainsi que sur les critères de distinction entre les divers types d'unités figées, les liens entre eux et leur appartenance aux différentes disciplines linguistiques, voir Zaharieva, Kaldieva-Zaharieva 2017). Pour plus de clarté, nous rappellerons ici une brève définition notamment des unités phraséologiques/phraséologismes, partie saillante de l'idiomatique – ce sont des unités polylexicales se caractérisant à la fois par un contenu imagé et expressif, par la non-compositionnalité de leur sens et par leur fonction de dénomination secondaire, c.-à-d. supplémentaire d'entités (de choses, d'événements ou de personnes) pour lesquelles il existe déjà dans la langue une dénomination primaire (un moyen d'expression neutre) (cf. Zaharieva, Kaldieva-Zaharieva 2017: 21–23; Kaldieva-Zaharieva, 2013: 29–52).

² Émanant d'une source non officielle, c'est une nouvelle qui prétend « ouvrir sur une autre réalité, cachée au grand public » (Aldrin 2017).

³ « La rumeur se définit par son déplacement, par sa diffusion, avant de se laisser saisir par son contenu ou ses locuteurs » (Froissart 2011: 91).

sible distorsion du réel et l'éloignement de la vérité) mais aussi sur l'état émotionnel de l'être humain (dans la plupart des cas sont véhiculées des informations négatives et anxiogènes, susceptibles d'inciter à l'agression et à la haine – cf. Renard 2006: 54; Scharnitzky 2007: 36).

Un autre élément important est le lien entre la rumeur et d'autres phénomènes assez proches tels la calomnie (une fausse rumeur – pur mensonge malveillant destiné à porter atteinte à l'honneur d'une personne), les ragots (partage d'informations relevant de la vie privée des individus et portant sur des faits réels mais déformés ou exagérés), la délation (le fait de fournir au pouvoir des renseignements, généralement par écrit, concernant les idées ou le comportement d'une personne et souvent empreints de mensonges – à des fins carriéristes, pour nuire, par haine ou envie, ou bien sous la contrainte), la légende urbaine (selon Kapferer, qui rejette ce terme, ce n'est qu'un type de rumeurs – celles qui sont le fruit de la pure imagination, une histoire exemplaire se rattachant à la vie quotidienne, rapportée comme véridique par un ami – Kapferer 1992: 233–235).

On constate cependant une tendance à confondre certains de ces termes, souvent interchangeables et difficiles à distinguer, ainsi que l'existence de frontières floues entre les concepts qu'ils recouvrent (cf. DiFonzo, Bordia 2006: 23). À noter aussi l'existence de formes hybrides difficiles à classer et, en général, la difficulté de définir la rumeur de manière scientifique (Froisart 2011: 83; 89–90). On peut rajouter que du point de vue juridique, la rumeur n'a pas de définition ni de réalité propre – le droit « refuse par principe de prendre en compte ce phénomène social incontrôlable » (Bruguière 1996). La rumeur ne peut être condamnée que si elle prend la forme d'une diffamation (cf. Aldrin 2017), d'une dénonciation calomnieuse ou d'une divulgation de fausses informations de nature à provoquer une panique infondée du public et l'intervention inutile des secours.

3. Principales caractéristiques de la calomnie

La calomnie ou la diffamation du point de vue juridique est une allégation ou imputation d'un fait qui porte atteinte à l'honneur ou à la considération de la personne ou du corps auquel le fait est imputé. Elle partage les mêmes caractéristiques que la rumeur dont elle peut être vue comme une forme de cas particulier (voir ci-dessus) : source non officielle, même processus de diffusion le plus souvent. Ses conséquences sont désastreuses pour l'individu mais aussi pour la société car elles mènent à la confusion, suscitent l'hostilité et créent un climat de suspicion.

4. Lien « génétique » entre la rumeur, la calomnie et le mensonge

La langue révèle le lien étroit entre rumeur et calomnie – déjà au niveau lexical, on peut observer la synonymie de certains noms renvoyant aux deux phénomènes (*ragot, médisance* et *rumeur*; *донос, клюка* et *слух*; *bârfa* et *zvон*). Les définitions lexicographiques du mot *rumeur* et de ses synonymes dans les trois langues montrent que ce concept peut être lié au mensonge de façon plus ou moins explicite. Les définitions de *calomnie* (*клевета; calomnie*) par contre renvoient au mensonge sans équivoque.

On notera ici que le mot roumain *vorbă* (parole) a de nombreuses acceptions dont celles de ‘rumeur’ et ‘calomnie’. Un rapprochement entre les deux concepts est opéré au niveau de l’unité phraséologique (UPhr) bulgare *пускам приказка / приказки за някого* (lancer un/des mot(s) sur qqn ‘1. médire de qqn; 2. répandre des rumeurs négatives sur qqn).

Les fréquentes collocations comme F. *rumeur calomnieuse, fausse rumeur, rumeurs mensongères, démentir une rumeur*; R. *zvонuri defăimătoare, zvонuri false, zvонuri minciinoase*; В. *клеветнически слух(ове), неверни слухове, лъжливи слухове* révèlent, elles aussi, ce lien en quelque sorte génétique entre rumeur, calomnie et mensonge.

Les expressions roumaines *a umbla cu traista cu minciuni; a umbla cu plosca <cu minciuni>* (aller, marcher avec le sac / la gourde de mensonges); *a purta minciuni* (porter des mensonges), comportant l’élément constitutif *minciuni* (mensonges) en apportent aussi la preuve (on le voit aussi au niveau de leurs significations – ‘colporter des calomnies, des ragots’ et ‘mentir’) et confirment le contenu du proverbe *Bârfa și minciuna merg mână în mână* (calomnie et mensonge vont main dans la main)⁴.

Sont révélateurs du lien de la rumeur avec le mensonge les proverbes :

F. *En beaucoup de nouvelles il y a des bourdes belles; Qui croit un conteur de nouvelles, oit souvent des bourdes belles; Ce n’est pas tout évangile, ce qu’on dit parmi la ville.*

Un autre proverbe véhicule indirectement la même idée en indiquant qu’aux endroits où se réunissent beaucoup de gens, on peut entendre toutes sortes de choses, donc y compris des choses fausses, forgées de toutes pièces ou invraisemblables :

⁴ À noter la présence obligatoire de l’élément *minciuni* dans *a umbla cu traista cu minciuni* à la différence de l’autre expression où il est facultatif. Son élimination conduit à l’apparition d’une UPhr paronymique *a umbla cu traista* (aller, marcher avec le sac) signifiant ‘mendier’.

F. *À la fontaine, au moulin, au four et au lavoir, les femmes disent tout; Qui veut ouïr des nouvelles, au four et au moulin on en dit de belles; B.* *Ако слушаш хората, ще ловиш по море зайци и по гора – риба* (si tu écoutes les gens parler, tu chasseras le lapin en mer et le poisson – dans la forêt).

Le proverbe bulgare évoque bien le contenu souvent fantaisiste et mensonger des conversations. Les parémies suivantes le soulignent encore plus fort sous la forme de conseils nous invitant à ne pas tout prendre pour argent comptant :

F. *Ne crois pas tout ce que tu ois; De ce qu'on entend dire, il en faut toujours rabattre la moitié; Faudrait rien croire de ce qu'on entend.*

D'autres expressions indiquant que l'on devrait se fier davantage aux choses vues qu'à celles entendues suggèrent également que ce que l'on raconte est souvent éloigné de la vérité :

F. *Témoin qui l'a vu, est meilleur que celui qui l'a ouï, et plus sûr; Me faudrait voir pour croire; Un seul œil a plus de crédit, que deux oreilles n'ont d'audivi/d'ouïe; B.* *Виденото е по-харно от чуеното* (le vu est meilleur que l'entendu); *От чутото до виденото е много далече* (il y a loin de l'entendu au vu); *Където чуеш много череши – не вземай голяма кошница* (là où tu entends parler de beaucoup de cerises, ne prends pas de grand panier); *Невидяно чудо – по-голямо* (miracle non vu est plus grand); *По-добре вярвай на своите очи, отколкото на чуждите речи* (mieux vaut croire ses yeux que les paroles des autres).

En témoignent aussi les proverbes suivants par l'avertissement indirect qu'ils renferment :

F. *Les ouï-dire vont partout, et les fous croient tout; Les gens le disent, les fous le croient; Les papiers portent tout, et les fous croient tout.*

Le jugement extrême porté au crédule est sans doute le résultat de l'observation de nombreux cas d'induction en erreur aux conséquences fâcheuses.

5. La diffusion – condition indispensable du succès des rumeurs et de la calomnie

Afin que la calomnie puisse atteindre son objectif, à savoir nuire à la réputation de qqn (or la réputation, c'est l'opinion du public, donc d'un nombre important de personnes, envers qqn), elle doit être divulguée auprès du plus grand nombre. Cela est vrai aussi pour la rumeur – « plus une

rumeur est diffusée, plus elle convainc facilement» (Kapferer 1987: 123). Il n'est pas étonnant que les définitions mêmes de ces mots mettent l'accent sur la diffusion. On signalera aussi les lexèmes *донос*, *донесение* en bulgare et *ponosluire* (vx.) pour le roumain, synonymes de *клевета* et *calomnie* (calomnie) et étymologiquement liés à un verbe renvoyant à l'idée de diffusion (cf. *донсям* 'apporter, porter'; fig. 'répandre').

Les mots composés *radio-couloir*, *radio-coursives*, *radio-moquette*, *radio-trottoir*, utilisés pour désigner une rumeur ou sa diffusion, évoquent aussi la circulation et la propagation massive grâce à leur deuxième constituant désignant un endroit qui se caractérise par le passage de beaucoup de gens.

De nombreuses expressions idiomatiques permettent de traduire justement la **facilité** avec laquelle se répandent les rumeurs et les calomnies et l'**étendue** de leur diffusion. On mentionnera ici les collocations F. *bruit de couloir* et *des ragots de concierge*. L'image du concierge renvoie à l'idée de contact avec un grand nombre de personnes (cf. aussi le sens figuré du mot 'personne bavarde qui répand des bruits et des commérages'). On peut rajouter l'UPhr bulgare *черна станция* (station noire; '1. personne qui répand des rumeurs, de fausses informations'; 2. personne négativiste, qui désapprouve tout, qui prophétise l'échec de toute entreprise') qui d'une part se rapproche des mots composés susmentionnés et d'autre part rejoint le mot *concierge* par son premier sens.

Nombre d'autres collocations ayant pour base le mot *calomnie* ou *rumeur* (ou *клевета*, *слух*, *зvon*, etc.) renferment aussi un constituant exprimant la propagation dont elles sont l'objet ou le sujet :

F. *répandre une calomnie; colporter une rumeur; faire courir une rumeur; la rumeur circule*; B. *пръскам слух / клевета; разнасям клюки / слухове*; R. *a împrăștiia / a colporta zvonuri*.

Les expressions phraséologiques ci-dessous renvoient à la diffusion soit par le biais de l'image de l'un de leurs éléments constitutifs exprimant l'idée de transmission d'une personne à l'autre (poste, relais, gourde en bois d'habitude remplie d'alcool et associée dans la tradition populaire à de nombreux rituels et cérémonies) ou exprimant le fait de parcourir différents lieux (le sac symbolise ici un conteneur facile à transporter mensonges, histoires imaginées et calomnies); soit par le biais de l'image sur laquelle repose l'expression tout entière :

B. *пренасям думи* (transporter des paroles); *пускам <лоша> приказка / <лоши> приказки за някого* (lancer une/des paroles <mauvaises> sur qqn); R. *a duce / a purta poșta; a duce ștafeta* (porter la poste / le relais);

a umbla cu poșta / cu ștafeta (aller avec la poste / le relais); *a umbla cu plosca <cu minciuni>*; *a umbla cu traista cu minciuni* (aller avec la gourde / le sac de mensonges); *a duce vorba*; *a purta vorba*; *a purta minciuni* (porter la parole / des paroles / des mensonges).

Des constituants comme *ville*, *lume* (monde/gens), *sat* (village), *țară* (pays), *mahala* (hameau, quartier), *хорску* (des gens) contribuent aussi à rendre l'idée d'une **large diffusion**. Ils évoquent en effet la présence d'une multitude de gens (qui sont mis au courant d'une chose ou se mettent à en parler) dans *Ouïr dire va par villes* ou les UPhr R. *gura lumii <slobodă>*; *gura mahalalei*; *gura satului* (la bouche <licencieuse> du monde / des gens / du quartier, du village) désignant toutes les ragots mais aussi le médisant pour les deux dernières; *a da sfară (sfoară) în țară*⁵ (lancer de la fumée / une ficelle dans le pays); B. *хорску приказки* (paroles des gens). Dans les UPhr R. *a se face de basm* (devenir [l'objet d']un conte); B. *ставам притча во язицех* (littér.) (devenir une parabole pour les langues/les peuples), les éléments *basm* 'conte populaire' et *притча* 'parabole' suggèrent l'idée d'un récit retransmis et partagé par beaucoup de personnes.

L'UPhr roumaine *a fi talanga târgului* (être la cloche du marché / de la foire) signifiant 'répandre des rumeurs' est intéressante pour son image évoquant un tableau traditionnel de la vie rurale – la vente de bétail à la foire, souvent pendant l'automne (cf. la description du marché à Herța dans le poème *Herța* de Benjamin Fundoianu) : des moutons, des bœufs, des cochons et le son de leurs cloches se propageant au loin au cours de la journée froide et pluvieuse, et le soir – le bruit des conversations des paysans. La vague de sons provenant de toutes les directions lors de ces foires est à l'origine de l'image métaphorique représentant le propageur de rumeurs et de calomnies ainsi que la rapidité et l'étendue de leur diffusion.

Des proverbes comme B. *Коего излезе из трийсет и два зъба, напълня трийсет и два града* (ce qui sort de 32 dents remplit 32 villes); *Това, което казва един, хиляда го чуват* (ce que dit un [seul], mille [autres] l'entendent) nous renseignent également sur la diffusion massive à travers l'opposition soit entre deux entités en quantités égales mais de nature et de dimensions bien différentes (32 dents et 32 villes), soit entre deux quantités complètement différentes (*un* et *mille*). D'autres expressions évoquent en plus le mode de diffusion – **une diffusion en chaîne** :

⁵ Voir au sujet de l'origine intéressante de cette UPhr Dumistrăcel 1980: 181–182; 2001: 373.

F. *le bruit vole <de bouche en bouche>*; **B.** *Ходи като прозявка от уста на уста* (cela va de bouche en bouche comme le bâillement); *От уста на уста – на царя в ушите* (de bouche en bouche – dans les oreilles du roi); **R.** *Din gură în gură are să ajungă până la urechile lui vodă* (de bouche en bouche cela arrivera aux oreilles du prince).

6. Rapidité et irréversibilité de la diffusion des rumeurs et calomnies

Les expressions idiomatiques reflètent tout particulièrement la **rapidité** avec laquelle se répandent rumeurs et calomnies, et le mensonge en général. Cette rapidité est due au fait qu'ils représentent des actes de parole. Or, la parole possède bien cette caractéristique toute particulière de se propager promptement et sans connaître de limites d'ordre spatial, temporel ou humain. C'est ce que traduisent les expressions suivantes reposant toutes sur l'image de la parole :

F. *Méchante parole jetée va partout à la volée; La langue va plus vite que les deux pieds; Les rumeurs / les langues vont bon train; Les paroles et la plume le vent les emporte*; **R.** *Vorba de rău se duce ca glonțul* (la parole méchante va comme la balle); *Vorba rea merge din gură în gură ca fulgerul* (la mauvaise parole va de bouche en bouche comme l'éclair); *Cuvântul e ca vântul, nu se ajunge nici cu armăsarul, nici cu ogarul* (le mot est comme le vent, il ne se rattrape ni avec l'étalon ni avec le lévrier); *O minciună zboară ca glonțele* (le mensonge vole comme la balle); *Vorba de rău se duce peste nouă țări și nouă mări* (la mauvaise parole va au-delà de neuf pays et de neuf mers); **B.** *Думата е като пусната стрела – не се връща* (le mot est comme une flèche lancée – il ne revient pas); *Бърз кон се стига, а бърза дума – никога* (cheval rapide se rattrape, mais mot rapide – jamais); *Дума слог няма* (le mot frontière n'a pas).

Étant donné le caractère malveillant et nocif des calomnies et d'une bonne partie des rumeurs, la parole est souvent qualifiée dans ces exemples de *méchante* (*лоша, rea*). Pour décrire la vélocité et la facilité de retransmission, on a souvent recours à l'hyperbole – la parole méchante se déplace plus vite que l'homme, est rapide comme le vent, la flèche, la balle de fusil, l'éclair⁶, ne peut être rattrapée ni par l'étalon, ni par le lévrier, atteint des distances très lointaines (va au-delà de neuf pays et de neuf mers). On rajoutera ici la comparaison *F. se propager / se répandre comme une traînée de poudre* qui s'emploie avec les mots *rumeur* et *bruit*.

⁶ À travers ces images, ces parémies suggèrent aussi le caractère nuisible et dangereux de la diffamation.

Les proverbes examinés avec ceux qui suivent témoignent de la compréhension du **caractère irréversible** des on-dit, des dégâts irréparables causés par les propos malveillants et médisants et de l'impossibilité d'empêcher leur circulation :

F. *Parole une fois envolée ne peut plus être rappelée; Parole de bouche et pierre ruée, qui les rattend perd sa journée;* **R.** *Vorba ce zboară odată nu se mai întoarce* (la parole qui s'envole une fois ne revient plus); **B.** *Дума назад не се връща* (la parole ne revient pas); *Дума в торба не влиза* (la parole n'entre pas dans le sac); *Думата не е врабче, а като изхвъркне, не се улавя* (le mot n'est pas un oisillon, mais quand il s'envole, il ne peut être rattrapé).

Dans les proverbes roumains *Apa, vântul și gura lumii nu o poți opri* (l'eau, le vent et la bouche du monde, tu ne peux pas les arrêter); *Apelor, vânturilor și gurilor oamenilor nu le poți pune frâu* (les eaux, les vents et les bouches des gens, tu ne peux pas leur mettre un frein), la parole (en tant que rumeurs colportées et propos médisants) est apparentée aux forces naturelles que sont l'eau et le vent, ce qui a pour effet de souligner son caractère universel et inéluctable en même temps que sa force destructrice, comparable à celles des éléments naturels. Cette idée d'irrésistibilité et d'impuissance face à ce phénomène apparaît aussi dans *Il n'y aura jamais assez de paille et assez de foin pour fermer la bouche aux médisants* de même que dans le proverbe bulgare *чуждите уста не са чувал да го зашуми* (la bouche des autres n'est pas un sac que tu peux coudre), et de façon encore plus éloquente dans *Gura lumii / gura rea numai pământul o astupă* (la bouche des gens / la bouche méchante, seule la terre l'étouffe) et *Gura lumii nici pământul n-o astupă* (la bouche des gens, même la terre ne l'étouffe pas).

7. Autres caractéristiques des rumeurs et des calomnies

Les expressions idiomatiques suivantes présentent la calomnie et les rumeurs comme des **pratiques très fréquentes** et généralisées :

F. *Les ouï-dire vont partout, et les fous croient tout; Il n'y a personne sur qui on ne médise; C'est chacun son tour de passer par la langue des gens; Ne faut personne payer pour médire; Il n'est si juste que femme ne diffame;* **R.** *Care ascultă la ușă, își aude defaima* (qui écoute à la porte entend des calomnies à son sujet); *Nici un om pe lume fără defăimare, la unul mai mică, la altul mai mare* (il n'y a pas d'homme au monde qui ne soit calomnié, les uns le sont moins, les autres davantage).

Personne n'est à l'abri de ces pratiques, même le plus honnête peut en être victime – rumeurs et propos calomnieux peuvent être entendus partout, derrière chaque porte et notamment dans un milieu se caractérisant par la servilité et la flatterie : F. *Assez serviteurs, assez rumeurs; Plusieurs valets et serviteurs, force caquets et grands rumeurs*. Ces parémies tout comme les expressions suivantes peuvent être aussi révélatrices d'une autre caractéristique de ces phénomènes – leur diffusion plus facile et rapide dans un milieu homogène où la proximité des personnes, la cohésion du groupe sont plus importantes (cf. Kapferer 1987 : 73, 115–117, 127) – village, hameau, femmes ou personnel subalterne :

F. *Où femmes il y a, enfants, oisons, caquets ne manquent à grand foison; téléphone arabe; potin de cuisine; rapport de la cuisine; tuyau des cuisines; téléphone intérieur; bruits / rumeurs de palais; R. gura mahalalei; gura satului; Unde sunt multe muieri, acolo cele mai multe și mai urâte defăimări* (là où il y a beaucoup de femmes, il y a les plus nombreuses et les plus laides calomnies).

Une autre caractéristique des rumeurs et des calomnies ne passe pas inaperçue – les **transformations** que subit souvent le message lancé initialement. Ces transformations, qui se traduisent par la réduction, l'exagération, le rajout ou l'accentuation de certains détails, pourraient s'expliquer soit par un processus de dégradation, soit par un processus constructif (permettant de trouver une interprétation satisfaisante de la réalité, de construire sa propre vérité, de mieux convaincre) ou bien par les deux (cf. Kapferer 1987: 158) :

F. *Un mensonge va s'augmentant, à mesure qu'il se répand; Ouïr, dire va et vole par tout, et s'il s'égare, un menteur le redresse en court; On fait la nouvelle d'autant plus grande, que le lieu d'où elle vient, est éloigné; De ce qu'on entend dire, il en faut toujours rabattre la moitié; Oreille trouée, langue déliée; B. Който види вълка, вика и не вика, ама който го не види, дважд вика* (qui voit le loup crie et ne crie pas, qui ne le voit pas crie deux fois); *Невидяно чудо – по-голямо* (miracle non vu est plus grand); *Щото глухо не чуе, то си го измисля* (ce que le sourd n'entend pas, il l'invente); *От едно яйце до кадията стават сто* (un œuf devient cent œufs jusqu'au cadi).

Certaines parémies laissent sous-entendre que la mauvaise parole est plus souvent proférée, entendue et donc diffusée plus vite et plus loin que la bonne :

R. *Vorba de rău se duce ca glonțul, iar cea de bine abia se aude* (la parole méchante va comme la balle, et la bonne à peine on l'entend); *Vorba rea fugе mai tare ca cea buna* (la parole méchante court plus vite que la bonne); **B.** *Лошата дума / реч отива по-надалеч* (la mauvaise parole va plus loin).

C'est un fait que d'autres proverbes expliquent par la **tendance à croire davantage les messages au contenu négatif et mensonger** :

R. *Vorba de rău omul pre lesne o crede* (la mauvaise parole, l'homme la croit assez facilement); **B.** *Лъжата по-лесно я вярват от истината* (le mensonge, on le croit plus facilement que la vérité); **F.** *À dire vérités et mensonges, les vérités seront les dernières crues; Ne te vante pas, on ne te croirait pas, ne te décris pas, on te croirait trop; Le mal que tu me diras de celui que je n'aime pas, je le croirai volontiers, quoi qu'il soit étrange, et éloigné d'apparence.*

Le dernier exemple français cité ici suggère en plus l'une des raisons possibles à cette tendance, à savoir les mauvais sentiments, la haine, l'hostilité. Ces parémies sont d'autant plus pertinentes que leur contenu semble corroboré par la science moderne⁷.

Les cas de remise en question des informations véhiculées sont plus rares – pour dénoncer une fausse nouvelle ou rumeur à laquelle il ne croit pas le Bulgare se sert des expressions *ЕЖеКа новина* (EGéKa nouvelle), *пуснаха поредната партенка* (on a encore mis [sur le marché] la énième *partenka* (chaussettes russes)) où l'abréviation (*ЕЖеКа* – de *Една Жена Каза* – Une Femme A dit) et le mot *партенка* (chaussettes russes) traduisent clairement l'ironie, le dédain face à ce que l'on reconnaît comme mensonge et le refus d'être dupe. Au contraire, il arrive, semble-t-il, plus souvent d'être persuadé que derrière toute affirmation, il existe un brin de vérité. C'est ce que suggèrent les proverbes suivants :

F. *Il n'y a pas de fumée sans feu; Il n'y a pas de plume tombée sans oiseau plumé; On ne dit guère Martin qu'il n'y ait d'âne*; **R.** *Nu iese fum fără foc* (la fumée ne sort pas sans feu); **B.** *Ако няма огън, няма и пушек* (s'il n'y a pas de feu, il n'y a pas de fumée); *Всяка крушка си има опашка* (chaque poire a une queue); *Шо се рекло, все е било* (ce qui s'est dit doit forcément avoir été).

⁷ À noter l'étude réalisée à grande échelle concernant la diffusion des fausses nouvelles sur les réseaux sociaux et affirmant qu'elles « se diffusent plus loin, plus vite, plus profondément et plus largement que la vérité parce que les humains, et pas les robots, ont plus de chances de les répandre » (Vosoughi et al. 2018).

Tout en qualifiant cette croyance populaire (*Il n'y a pas de fumée sans feu*) d'« aberration » et de « voie royale de la manipulation par la rumeur », l'expert des rumeurs Kapferer finit par réhabiliter indirectement ce proverbe lorsqu'il précise que le feu peut s'interpréter comme « l'imagination parfois fertile des témoins, des récepteurs de messages et des personnes qui lancent volontairement des rumeurs », comme un fait ambigu, mal interprété mais jugé néanmoins comme important pour être relayé (Kapferer 1987: 42, 58). On rajoutera que le feu pourrait aussi symboliser les motivations parfois inconscientes et inavouées des auteurs d'une rumeur.

Ces proverbes et quelques autres qui leur sont semblables, tels F. *On ne dit jamais tachetée à une genisse, qu'elle n'ait quelque tache; On ne dit pas blanchart à un cheval qui n'a pas de poil blanc* pourraient être interprétés à la lumière d'autres recherches menées sur les rumeurs notamment et montrant que certaines d'entre elles naissent à partir d'un détail ou d'un trait insignifiants et/ou d'ordinaire inaperçus par la majorité.

Certaines expressions suggèrent qu'il ne faudrait pas sous-estimer l'image dont bénéficie la cible éventuelle d'une calomnie ou d'une rumeur car cette image pourrait favoriser ces dernières ou au contraire leur faire barrage (Kapferer 1992: 232, 242). L'absence de failles dans le comportement ou la réputation, ou dans la représentation que les autres se font d'une personne (mais aussi d'eux-mêmes) a un rôle à jouer face à certaines rumeurs ou calomnies – cf. *Une fois appelé mille fois accusé; Une fois attrapé, cent fois accusé* – il suffit parfois d'une seule accusation, d'une seule faute pour qu'une personne devienne aisément l'objet de nouvelles accusations par la suite. D'où les multiples exemples soulignant l'importance de la bonne renommée et mettant en garde contre sa fragilité et sa perte jugée irréparable :

F. *Aujourd'hui en réputation, demain fors en putréfaction; En une heure vient et va l'honneur; Une mauvaise année se change en meilleure, mais une mauvaise renommée dure jusqu'au tombeau; B.* *За час човек често добива и за час а зазубва; R.* *Cine și-a pierdut cinstea, dă-i colac și lumânare* (à celui qui a perdu son honneur donne-lui du pain rond et un cierge).

L'expression roumaine citée est particulièrement éloquente – celui qui a perdu son honneur et sa dignité est comme mort (l'image du pain rond et du cierge, traditionnellement utilisés dans les cérémonies populaires funéraires, le donne à voir comme privé de sa place parmi les vivants et donc comme privé de vie).

La bonne renommée, l'honneur, placé bien haut dans l'échelle des valeurs des trois peuples, est perçu comme une véritable richesse :

F. *Bonne renommée vaut mieux que ceinture dorée; B.* *Чеcтма е по-скъпа от напана; R.* *Cinstea cântărește mai mult decât banul.*

8. La calomnie – offense, humiliation, destruction

La calomnie est une **injure** atroce (car représentant une accusation injuste et non méritée, inventée de toutes pièces et reprochant à quelqu'un une action répréhensible). En témoignent les UPhr polysémiques propres aux trois langues étudiées et signifiant en même temps 'calomnier' et 'insulter' :

F. *couvrir qqn de fange; traîner qqn dans la fange/ la boue; rouler qqn dans la boue / la fange; traîner le nom de qqn dans la boue; plonger qqn dans la boue; vautrer qqn dans la boue;* **R.** *a împrosca cu noroi pe cineva* (arroser de boue qqn); *a zvârli cu noroi în cineva* (jeter de la boue sur qqn); *a izbi cu noroi în cineva* (frapper/battre qqn avec de la boue); **B.** *хвърлям кал върху <лицето на> някого* (jeter de la boue sur <le visage de> qqn); *засипвам с кал някого; обливам с кал някого* (couvrir/inonder qqn avec de la boue); *обливам с помия някого* (inonder qqn avec de l'eau de vaisselle).

Tout comme la calomnie, l'injure porte atteinte à l'honneur, à l'amour-propre et à la dignité humaine et a des conséquences néfastes pour l'individu qui en est victime. En apportent la preuve également la synonymie que l'on observe parfois entre les lexèmes renvoyant aux deux phénomènes ainsi que leur rapprochement sur le plan juridique (tous les deux étant par ailleurs passibles de poursuites judiciaires).

Ces UPhr de même que certaines autres comme **B.** *стъпквам в калта някого; навирам в калта някого* (fouler/fourrer qqn dans la boue); *хвърлям сянка върху някого; хвърлям петно върху някого* (jeter une ombre / une tache sur qqn); **F.** *rendre noir qqn* (vx.) ainsi que la parémie *La calomnie est comme le charbon, si elle ne peut pas brûler, elle vous fait noir* (cf. *noircir*), renfermant toutes l'image « rendre noir, sombre, boueux, sale », traduisent bien l'effet recherché de compromission, de **dénigrement**, de **souillure** associé à la calomnie. Certains des constituants verbaux (*a izbi* 'battre, frapper'; *стъпквам* 'fouler', *навирам* 'fourrer', *rouler*, *vautrer*) contribuent à renforcer l'idée de violence et de destruction que la calomnie engendre.

Des collocations fréquentes comme **F.** *baver sur la réputation de qqn; salir la réputation de qqn; se laver d'une calomnie* et **B.** *изчиствам името си* (nettoyer son nom) montrent, elles aussi, à travers leur constituant verbal, que la calomnie est associée à la saleté, à la souillure.

Les UPhr roumaines suivantes se rapportant à la calomnie sont assez proches de celles vues ci-dessus et sont révélatrices de l'humiliation subie par la victime: *a face pe cineva albie de porci; a spăla pe cineva cu ou și cu oțet; a trece*

*prin toate apele pe cineva*⁸. L'idée de dénigrement, de souillure est suggérée ici par l'intermédiaire des images de la transformation de la victime en auge à cochon, du lavage avec des œufs et du vinaigre ou encore du passage à travers toutes les eaux.

D'autres unités mettent l'accent sur le **caractère** irréparable ou **indélébile** des dommages causés par les propos calomnieux grâce à l'image hyperbolisée de l'impossible lavage :

B. *направиха го никога вода да не го умие* (ils ont fait en sorte qu'aucune eau ne puisse le laver); *не ще го умие ни Бяло море* (ni la mer Égée ne pourra le laver); *не ще го опере ни Дунав* (ni le Danube ne pourra le laver); **R.** *Pâra ce-ți face zavistnicul nici marea nu-ți ajunge ca s-o poți spăla* (la mer ne te suffira pas pour te laver de la calomnie de l'envieux); *Defăimarea, într-un cuvânt, iar îndreptarea ei cere mii și sute de cuvinte* (la diffamation [tient] en un mot, sa réparation en demande des milliers et des centaines); **F.** *Calomniez, calomniez, il en restera toujours quelque chose.*

Elles sont révélatrices de l'influence durable que les fausses informations au sujet de quelqu'un exercent sur le comportement des autres à son égard (attestée aussi par des expériences psychologiques) – les fausses informations continuent à avoir une incidence sur nous même quand on sait qu'elles sont fausses (cf. David 2017; Kapferer 1987: 279–281).

Les parémies **B.** *Една лъжа сто истини разваля* (un seul mensonge corrompt cent vérités); **F.** *Un seul mensonge mêlé parmi les vérités les fait suspecter toutes* apportent aussi un témoignage sur les effets pernicieux des mensonges-calomnies, comparables à une souillure.

La calomnie a pour effet de souiller la réputation et l'honneur d'un individu, de blesser son âme et de le briser ainsi moralement mais aussi physiquement. C'est la raison pour laquelle les images contenues dans les UPhr ci-dessous (signifiant 'calomnier qqn, médire de qqn') renvoient à une **violence physique** exercée sur l'objet d'une calomnie – le jet de pierres, la déchirure, la mise en morceaux, l'attaque par derrière ou la réduction en ragôût (et la volée de coups qui y est associée) :

R. *a arunca cu piatră / pietre în cineva*; **F.** *déchirer qqn à belles dents; donner un coup de dent à qqn; mettre qqn en pièces; tomber sur la bosse de qqn; tomber sur le casaquin de qqn; mettre qqn en capilotade.*

⁸ Ces expressions (excepté la dernière) ont aussi le sens de 'gronder vertement qqn'.

Les trois dernières UPhr françaises ont aussi le sens de ‘battre qqn, le rouer de coups’. Les images évoquent en même temps la sensation désagréable provoquée chez l’objet de la calomnie, semblable à celle causée par une douleur physique (en effet, le syntagme *en capilotade*, élément constitutif de l’une de ces UPhr, est utilisé pour exprimer une douleur éprouvée – cf. *avoir le dos / la tête en capilotade*).

Il convient de rajouter ici quelques UPhr bulgares représentant le fait pour quelqu’un de devenir l’objet d’une calomnie comme l’action d’entrer ou de tomber dans la bouche, sur la langue ou sur la dent du calomniateur, comparables aux UPhr В. *влизам в хорските уста* et R. *a intra în gura lumii* (entrer dans la bouche des gens) :

В. *влизам/падам/попадам в устата на някого; попадам на езика на някого; падна <се> на зъба някому.*

Les unités idiomatiques ci-dessous reposant sur l’image « manger des parties des vêtements ou du corps de qqn » suggèrent l’idée de privation, de perte pour la victime. Mais leur force réside dans le fait qu’elles décrivent le calomniateur comme un animal insatiable et en dressent ainsi (y compris à l’aide de leurs constituants péjoratifs) un portrait suscitant le dégoût et la répulsion :

R. *a mânca de fund pe cineva* (manger le fond de pantalon / le derrière de qqn); **В.** *ям парцалите на някого* (manger les haillons de qqn); *гриза цървулите на някого; гриза подметките на някого* (ronger les chaussures / les semelles de qqn); *гриза кокалите/костите на някого* (ronger les os de qqn).

L’UPhr française *se jeter/tomber sur la friperie de qqn* s’en rapproche beaucoup par l’image qu’elle contient et par son sens presque identique (‘se moquer de quelqu’un, en dire du mal, nuire à sa réputation’). On rappellera ici l’UPhr mentionnée plus haut *tomber sur le casaquin de qqn* où l’élément *casaquin* est susceptible d’une triple interprétation, le mot pouvant désigner un type de vêtement de dessus, un corsage ou le corps. L’expression *гриза кокалите/костите на някого* se rapporte à la médisance sur une personne décédée. Cette UPhr illustre bien la haine féroce du calomniateur prêt à braver les convenances, à violer les préceptes liés à d’anciennes croyances et servant à prévenir les grossièretés ou le manque de respect à l’égard des défunts (cf. F. *il ne faut pas dire du mal des morts*; В. *за мъртвия – само добро или нищо*; R. *de morți nu trebuie să vorbești decât de bine*). Cette transgression de toutes les règles établies est évoquée à travers l’image du déterrement dans l’UPhr française de même sens *déterrer les morts*.

On notera ici quelques unités construites autour de l'image du **rajout** d'un élément inexistant, image qui renvoie à l'essence même de la calomnie – une accusation inventée de toutes pièces et imputée, collée à qqn :

F. *habiller qqn de toutes pièces; habiller qqn pour l'hiver; tailler un costard / une veste à qqn; habiller de taffetas à quarante sous; voilà un beau chapeau que vous lui mettez sur la tête; mettre qqn dans de beaux draps*; **B.** *скроявам кюляфа някому* (tailler un chapeau à qqn); **R.** *a scoate coarne cuiwa* (sortir des cornes à qqn); *a pune coadă cuiwa* (mettre à qqn une queue).

Les UPhr contenant les éléments *tailler* et *habiller* ont le sens de 'calomnier' et 'injurier qqn'. L'image présentant en apparence une œuvre de bienfaisance renvoie en réalité à ce que l'on rajoute, invente, fabrique, forge (cf. *forger une calomnie <de toutes pièces>*) en vue de travestir les faits, de gauchir ou de masquer la vérité (cf. *habiller la vérité*). L'UPhr bulgare citée ici en est très proche. Elle a le sens de 'causer délibérément des ennuis à qqn, le compromettre, le rendre ridicule sans qu'il ait commis la moindre faute'. Or, compromettre une personne innocente revient en fait à répandre une calomnie sur son compte. Les autres UPhr françaises reposent sur l'ironie (que l'on retrouve en partie aussi dans *habiller de taffetas à quarante sous* suggérant l'idée d'un tissu bon marché et donc de peu de qualité) – les beaux articles (chapeau et draps) acquièrent une valeur esthétique toute contraire pour devenir le symbole de la calomnie déshonorante, du dénigrement. Les UPhr roumaines suggèrent un acte particulièrement immonde et pernicieux à l'encontre de la personne calomniée grâce aux constituants évoquant les attributs du diable (cornes et queue).

L'image de la **préparation** de quelque chose à manger grâce à des procédés différents (cuire, préparer, mettre en pièces, remuer, faire bouillir (un gâteau ou une panade pour qqn)) à l'intérieur des UPhr suivantes témoigne de la bonne connaissance des procédés permettant de forger une calomnie – en imaginant et en **mélangeant** divers détails :

R. *a-i pregăti cuiwa plăcinta; a-i se fierbe cuiwa papara; a-i se pregăti cuiwa plăcinta*; **B.** *надробявам попара някому; бъркам / забърквам попара някому; сварявам / готвя попара някому*.

Leur signification ('causer des désagréments à qqn, créer une situation embarrassante et embrouillée – d'habitude en recourant à l'intrigue ou à la calomnie') révèle le lien clairement établi entre le mal ou les ennuis que l'on cherche à créer et la manière la plus fréquente de s'y prendre, à savoir les intrigues et les calomnies.

La calomnie permet la **manipulation** du milieu social. Les calomnies et les rumeurs constituent en effet un puissant moyen d'exercer une influence en semant le doute mais aussi grâce à leur charge émotionnelle (« la rumeur est une communication émotionnelle » – Kapferer 1987: 71). Elles sont susceptibles d'influer sur les humeurs, les attitudes et les comportements et d'entraîner des changements chez les gens à l'égard de quelqu'un ou de quelque chose. Les parémies suivantes en témoignent :

B. *Който слуша хората, напуца си жената* (qui écoute les gens quitte sa femme); *Шушу-мушу къща разваля* (chouchou-mouchou (onomatopée évoquant le parler) maison détruit); *Кога викнат на едно куче «бясно», то не става вече свястно* (quand on appelle un chien «enragé», il ne redevient plus normal); **F.** *Dur parler enflambe l'empire; Langue vipérine et double, cause souvent noise et grand trouble*; **R.** *Gura omului sparge cetăți* (la bouche de l'homme détruit / rase des forteresses); *Minciuna sparge casa de piatră* (le mensonge détruit / rase la maison en pierre).

Ces proverbes évoquent aussi la force destructrice de la médisance, des propos mensongers et calomnieux – grâce notamment aux verbes comme *sparge* (casser/détruire), *enflambe*, *разваля* (détériorer). L'étendue des dommages causés y transparait aussi – famille, foyer (même la maison en pierre), villes, empire – tout peut être ainsi anéanti.

Certaines collocations comme *ruiner une réputation*; *уронвам/руша репутацията на някого*; *a distruge reputația cuiva* sont aussi révélatrices de cette force de destruction.

9. Comment faire face aux rumeurs et aux calomnies

Les expressions idiomatiques prodiguant directement des conseils pour lutter et se protéger contre ce mal ne manquent pas. Il est qualifié dans les proverbes roumains suivants d'acte odieux demandant parfois d'**être** bien plus **vigilant** que face à n'importe quel autre malheur :

R. *Să te ferești de defăimare și cu mult mai mult de o năpastă mare* (garde-toi de la diffamation et bien plus que d'un grand malheur); *De clevetire să te ferești, nicicum s-o întrebuițezi, că cea mai spurcată faptă, după lege, se înțelege* (garde-toi de la calomnie, ne t'en sers pas car c'est l'acte le plus odieux d'après la loi).

En suggérant que se taire est préférable à la médisance, les proverbes *Il vaut mieux fermer sa bouche, que de mal parler*; *Quand on ne veut pas dire de*

bien des gens, il n'en faut pas dire de mal invitent eux aussi à **s'abstenir** de tout acte de diffamation.

Certains proverbes révèlent le mal que la diffamation entraîne pour celui-là même qui y a recours en concrétisant les dangers auxquels il s'expose :

F. *Qui méparle d'autrui, se brûle la langue et détruit; Qui autrui blâme, soi-même condamne et diffame; Qui mal dit, mal lui vient; R.* *Nu cu pâri și defăimări, c-asupra-ți vor cădea* ([n'utilise] pas calomnies et diffamations car elles te retomberont dessus); *Celui care se ocupă cu defăimarea adesea i se umflă spinarea* (à celui qui s'occupe de diffamation souvent son dos enfle).

Quelques proverbes bulgares et un autre roumain les rejoignent par leur message assez radical en laissant sous-entendre que la calomnie est **le mal le plus grand** pour celui qui en est victime – pire que la maladie, la mutilation ou la mort :

B. *Душа да му излезе, че дума да не му излезе* (que son âme sorte plutôt qu'une parole [calomnieuse à son sujet]); *Нека болест да стане, че дума да не става* (advienne la mort mais pas la parole [calomnieuse]); *На мома куришум пусни, а дума недей!* (contre une jeune fille lance une balle plutôt qu'une parole [calomnieuse]); *Окото да ти излезе, зла дума да ти не излезе* (que ton œil sorte, qu'une méchante parole ne sorte pas [à ton sujet]); **R.** *Decât să-ți iasă nume rău, mai bine ochii din cap* (plutôt qu'un mauvais nom mieux vaut que te sortent les yeux de la tête).

Cette façon de concevoir la calomnie se rapproche du contenu du verset biblique « Trois choses me font peur et une quatrième m'épouvante : une calomnie qui court la ville, une émeute populaire, une fausse accusation : tout cela est pire que la mort » (Ec 25: 5). Il est intéressant de noter toutefois qu'un autre proverbe définit comme pires que la calomnie la soumission totale, l'esclavage ou la dépendance – **B.** *По-добре да си на хората в устата, не в краката* (mieux vaut être dans la bouche des gens qu'à leurs pieds).

Cependant, on constate que certaines parémies évoquent une certaine **relativisation** des effets de la calomnie. Elles sont révélatrices de la foi dans l'innocence, dans la noblesse et la grandeur morale ou dans l'importance des bonnes œuvres susceptibles à terme de venir à bout de la calomnie, de ses méfaits et de la propension à y recourir :

F. *La bave du crapaud n'atteint pas la blanche colombe; Méchante parole, le bon n'affole; La lune se soucie peu des aboiements des chiens; Le(s) chien(s) aboie(nt), la caravane passe; Les paroles ne tuent pas; La réputation et la santé se reconnaissent à l'ouvrage et non à la parole; bien faire et laisser braire; Fais bien*

et laisse dire le monde; Fais ton devoir, et laisse dire les sots; R. Dreptul nu se teme de bârfa (l'honnête n'a pas peur de la calomnie); Lasă să te vorbească de rău, pe lună n-o latră câinii? (laisse les autres médire de toi, la lune, les chiens ne l'aboient-ils pas?); Câinii latră, ursul trece; Câinii latră, vântul bate (les chiens aboient, l'ours passe / le vent souffle); Lasă lumea să vorbească, numai puica să-mi trăiască; B. Кучетата си лаят, керванът си върви.

On peut aussi entrevoir dans ces proverbes le reflet de toute une gamme d'attitudes, d'états d'esprit, de systèmes de valeurs propres à une partie de la société – la résignation ou la résistance psychique pour les uns, pour d'autres – la prise de conscience du fait que ce n'est pas mortel, l'indifférence de certains à l'opinion des autres, etc., l'esprit terre-à-terre, voire un pragmatisme exacerbé (cf. notamment la dernière expression roumaine – « que les gens parlent, l'important, c'est que ma poulette soit en vie »).

D'autres unités préconisent comme un remède possible contre la calomnie l'absence de réaction, **l'indifférence** :

R. *Când te înjură pe din dos, fă-te că nu auzi sau zi tu mai bine: "Când nu sunt de față, lasă-l să mă și bată"* (quand qqn t'injurie dans ton dos, fais semblant de ne rien entendre ou mieux – dis « quand je ne suis pas là, laissez-le même me battre »); *Când oarecine te ocărăște, ori urechile să îți le astupi, sau să te grăbești a te depărta, ca să nu-l auzi* (quand qqn te calomnie bouche-toi les oreilles ou éloigne-toi vite pour ne pas l'entendre).

Les proverbes mentionnés plus haut F. *Le(s) chien(s) aboie(nt), la caravane passe*; R. *Câinii latră, ursul trece; Câinii latră, vântul bate*; B. *Кучетата си лаят, керванът си върви* pourraient s'utiliser comme une réplique (servant à rejeter avec dédain les propos calomnieux) par celui qui, convaincu d'avoir raison et d'être innocent, poursuit son chemin sans se soucier de rien. Ils confirment indirectement la conception selon laquelle il est inutile de réagir face aux calomnies, idée que l'on retrouve de façon directe dans F. *Le meilleur remède des injures c'est de les mépriser* et *La plus haute vengeance contre celui qui médit est le mépris ou l'oubli*.

Ne pas prêter attention aux calomnies est en effet souvent la meilleure stratégie à adopter selon les experts en sociologie. L'étude du phénomène montre que, contrairement aux attentes, le démenti d'une rumeur, bien loin de la faire taire, contribue le plus souvent à la diffuser plus largement⁹.

⁹ « Les études sociologiques montrent en effet qu'un démenti public augmente par trois le nombre de gens qui connaissent l'histoire et par quatre le nombre de gens qui y croient » (Froissart 2003).

Le proverbe roumain *A se lua după gura lumii este a da de prăpastie* (se laisser influencer par les médisances c'est arriver au bord du précipice) exprime encore mieux cette idée – par un avertissement contre le danger inévitable auquel on s'expose en prêtant oreille aux on-dit et aux calomnies. On trouve un enseignement similaire dans un autre proverbe roumain assimilant l'habitude d'être à l'écoute des mensonges à une pratique inutile et dépourvue de sens – *Cel ce ascultă minciuni e ca și cel ce paște vânt* (celui qui écoute des mensonges est comme celui qui mène paître le vent). Ils pourraient en fait s'appliquer à la cible d'une rumeur mais peut-être bien plus à l'ensemble des auditeurs.

Certaines expressions attirent en effet l'attention sur le rôle et la **responsabilité de l'écoutant** qui par sa complaisance et son intérêt pour les fausses rumeurs et calomnies, voire par sa disposition à les rediffuser à son tour se rend complice de leur auteur :

F. Celui qui médite et celui qui l'écoute sont également coupables; L'écoutant fait le médisant (le premier a le diable dans l'oreille et le second l'a sur la langue); La moitié du monde s'applique à médire, et l'autre moitié à écouter les médisances; Tel conteur tel auditeur; Telle nouvelle telle oreille.

Les deux derniers exemples tout comme la parémie bulgare *Всеки лъжец си има слушатели* (chaque menteur a ses auditeurs) rendent compte, en plus, du fait que le colporteur et l'auditeur partagent les mêmes caractéristiques, les mêmes valeurs, etc. Elles suggèrent aussi que « chaque rumeur a son marché » (pour citer les propos de Kapferer 1987: 104) – en fonction de l'expérience, de la psychologie individuelle ou de l'attachement à certains préjugés ou stéréotypes (cf. *F. Nul n'est moins sourd qui veut entendre; Chacun n'entend que ce qu'il veut entendre; B. На човека каквото му е по зайдата, това вярва* – on croit ce qui est [conforme] à sa cornemuse).

Par l'image métaphorique de l'arbre élevé ou chargé de fruits, les unités suivantes suggèrent d'une part l'innocence et la grandeur de la personne qui fait l'objet de calomnies et d'autre part – l'une des **raisons** expliquant le plus souvent l'usage de la calomnie, à savoir l'**envie** :

F. On ne jette des pierres qu'à l'arbre chargé de fruits; Plus l'arbre est haut, plus il est battu par les vents; R. Nu se aruncă cu pietre decât în pomul cu fructe; Se găsește totdeauna cineva care să arunce cu pietre în pomul încărcat (on trouve toujours qqn pour jeter des pierres à l'arbre chargé de fruits); *B. По дърво без плод никои камък не хвърля* (personne ne jette de pierres à un arbre sans fruits); *Клеветата е като мълнията – все по високите дървета пада* (la calomnie est comme la foudre – elle frappe toujours les arbres élevés).

Pareille explication nous est fournie directement par le proverbe roumain *Pizma – numa defăimărilor* (l'envie – mère de la diffamation). Un autre proverbe roumain déjà mentionné (*Pâra ce-ți face zavistnicul nici marea nu-ți ajunge ca s-o poți spăla*) présente la calomnie des envieux comme étant la pire (à tel point que même la mer ne peut la laver). Le proverbe R. *Nici un om mare sfârșit bun n-a văzut nicidecum, că zavistia pe toți îi defaimă* fait état d'une vérité plus dure encore – aucune des grandes personnalités ne connaît de fin heureuse car l'envie les calomnie toutes.

Le **mépris** et la **haine** sont un autre mobile de la diffamation : F. *Quand on n'aime pas quelqu'un, on n'en saurait dire de bien* (cf. *Celui qui dissimule la haine a des lèvres menteuses, Et celui qui répand la calomnie est un insensé* – Pr 10: 18).

On peut déduire des proverbes suivants quasi identiques dans les trois langues d'autres causes possibles de cet acte contraire à la morale qu'est la calomnie – la **malveillance** et les intentions criminelles. Ils renferment tous l'image du chien et de sa maladie imaginaire permettant d'illustrer l'injustice et la cruauté de l'accusation mensongère ainsi que l'impasse pour la victime :

F. *Qui veut noyer son chien l'accuse de la rage; Celui qui veut noyer/tuer son chien, dit qu'il est enragé; Celui qui veut noyer son chien, dit qu'il a la gratte;*
R. *Cine vrea să-și omoare câinele, destul să zică că e turbat;* **B.** *Koemo куче искат да обесят, казват «бясно е»* (le chien qu'on veut pendre, on le dit enragé).

On peut rattacher à ces parémies le proverbe français *accusateur – menteur*. Ce constat sans appel qu'il renferme vient certainement des nombreux cas observés où une personne qui lance une accusation contre quelqu'un n'hésite pas à recourir au mensonge et en particulier à la calomnie dans le but de nuire ou de montrer à tout prix le bien-fondé de ses dires pour convaincre les autres et parvenir ainsi à ses fins.

Certaines expressions mettent en avant d'autres défauts à l'origine du comportement du calomniateur – celui-ci est dépeint comme un malappris, comme un individu dénué de bon sens ou ayant l'**esprit borné**, raison pour laquelle il peut sans cesse répandre des médisances sur chacun et sans trop y penser : R. *Numai proștii ocărăsc și necinstesc pe oricine, oricum le vine la gură; de aceea, cel care ocărăște prost om se înțelege* (cf. F. *Fais ton devoir, et laisse dire les sots*). Sa conduite ne mérite que dérision et moqueries : F. *La conduite qui offre le plus à rire est celle du sot qui passe sa vie à médire*. Ces parémies comportent aussi un avertissement implicite – il ne faut pas contracter pareille habitude.

Celui qui est moralement laid, méchant et incapable d'apprécier le bien qui lui est fait et d'en être reconnaissant est également porté à la médisance. C'est ce que suggèrent les unités suivantes :

F. Quand on a bien graissé les bottes d'un vilain, il dit qu'on les lui a brûlées; Quand on frotte les bottes d'un vilain, il dit qu'on les lui a brûlées.

À la calomnie s'opposent le rejet de toute arrière-pensée, **le refus de la haine** ainsi que l'amour fraternel et les bonnes œuvres qui permettent de jouir d'une bonne réputation, de se construire une bonne image et de gagner ainsi le respect des autres. C'est une question d'honneur tout comme le refus de la calomnie elle-même, ce que montrent les parémies suivantes :

R. Ferește-te de ocări și de defăimări, ca cinste de la toți mai mare să dobândești (garde-toi d'injurier et diffamer pour être honoré de tous); Pe nimeni sa nu pârâști, nici rău cuiwa să gândești, ci pe toți fratește pururea să iubești, ca de toți să fii iubit și cinstit (ne calomnie personne ni ne souhaite le mal à qui que ce soit, mais aime toujours tous fraternellement pour être aimé et honoré de tous); F. Si tu veux avoir bonne fame (renommée), fais bien sans cesse, nul ne diffame.

Un conseil non moins important est prodigué par les proverbes roumains *Nici să lauzi, nici să defaimi, până ce bine nu vei cunoaște; Până nu vei cerceta și bine te vei încredința, nici o pâră n-asculta ce pișpăitorii, lingușitorii și defăimătorii obișnuiesc să facă* – celui de ne recourir ni à la calomnie, ni à l'éloge avant de bien **prendre connaissance des faits**; de n'écouter aucune des accusations que flatteurs, intrigants et calomniateurs ont l'habitude d'inventer de toutes pièces avant d'avoir bien vérifié ce qu'il en est.

Un autre groupe de parémies nous invitent à **voir d'abord nos propres défauts** avant de critiquer ceux des autres : *Qui veut dire mal d'autrui, doit en premier penser de/sur lui; Quand tu voudras dire du mal de quelqu'un mets tes propres fautes en ton sein afin de les pouvoir voir et considérer.* Elles mettent aussi en avant la pureté et l'infaillibilité comme condition préalable à remplir par celui qui voudrait médire des autres : *Bien doit regarder qu'il soit net, qui de médire s'entremet.* C'est ce qui empêcherait de fait toute diffamation – *Qui d'autrui médire voudra, regarde à soi, il se taira; D'autrui parler qui voudra, regarde soi et il se taira.* En effet, cette condition est en elle-même difficile à remplir mais en même temps, par ce regard critique envers soi, on pourrait mieux se rendre compte du caractère lâche et inacceptable de l'acte même de calomnier ou de médire.

10. Conclusions

La rumeur et la calomnie apparaissent clairement, à travers les unités étudiées ici, comme deux phénomènes étroitement liés, parfois difficiles à distinguer. Leurs principales caractéristiques révélées par les unités idiomatiques sont leur lien de parenté avec le mensonge, la rapidité de propagation et le même processus de diffusion. Ce qui les caractérise aussi, c'est leur grande fréquence, leur diffusion en milieu homogène ou à des endroits où se réunissent beaucoup de personnes, les transformations inévitables qu'elles peuvent subir. Diffusées plus vite et plus loin que la vérité, elles représentent incontestablement un moyen de manipulation, ce que laissent aussi entrevoir les exemples analysés.

Finalement, le savoir que nous livrent les unités idiomatiques étudiées concernant les deux phénomènes en question recoupe dans une large mesure les connaissances apportées par la science.

Au niveau de l'idiomatique des trois langues, la calomnie se distingue bien comme un acte consistant à chercher sciemment à faire du mal à quelqu'un en attaquant sa réputation. C'est ce qui explique qu'elle soit le plus souvent représentée comme portant préjudice ou comme faisant peser une menace – à travers les images métaphoriques de l'éclaboussement, du noircissement, de la souillure (parfois ineffaçable) et/ou de la violence physique. La calomnie est assimilée à l'injure, à un grand malheur, à un acte odieux, au plus grand des maux (notamment dans certaines parémies bulgares et roumaines).

L'idiomatique révèle l'effet destructeur de la calomnie autant pour l'individu, la famille, ou la société que pour le calomniateur lui-même. Sa force destructrice est comparée dans certains proverbes roumains à celle des éléments naturels. Parmi les images spécifiques autour desquelles sont construites certaines UPhr, on notera pour le roumain – la transformation en auge, le lavage avec des œufs et du vinaigre; l'entrée dans la bouche des gens – pour le bulgare et le roumain.

On peut puiser dans une partie des unités idiomatiques des informations pénétrantes sur les raisons de recourir à la diffamation ainsi que sur celles qui poussent à prêter facilement une oreille complaisante aux propos calomnieux – l'envie, la haine, la malveillance, la présomption, l'ignorance. Les émotions négatives sont bien mises en avant comme facteur sous-jacent.

Si certaines parémies montrent le caractère irréversible des propos difamatoires et des rumeurs lancées contre quelqu'un, d'autres révèlent aussi les remèdes possibles permettant d'y faire face – l'indifférence à la mauvaise parole et l'abstention d'y recourir soi-même, les bonnes œuvres, l'honnêteté,

l'amour fraternel, le jugement critique à l'égard de ses propres défauts, la quête du savoir, l'effort de bien s'informer.

Abréviations

littér. – littéraire	B – bulgare
UPhr – unité phraséologique	F – français
vx. – vieux	R – roumain

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Rumour and slander – modalities of lie
(a contrastive study of French, Romanian and Bulgarian idiomatic units)

Summary

The paper studies the notions of rumour and slander through an analysis of French, Romanian and Bulgarian idiomatic units (mainly phraseological units, proverbs and collocations). Its purpose is to identify what the main characteristics and representations of these phenomena are, as well as how they are assessed. It also attempts to determine whether and to what extent the information encoded in the analysed linguistic material overlaps with knowledge provided by human sciences.

PART IV

**THEORETICAL AND EMPIRICAL
APPROACHES TO PROVERBS**

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A Regional Newspaper as a Repository for Proverbial Expressions – Proverbs Included in SMS Messages

Abstract. The article participates on the discussion how reproducible language units, in this case proverbs and proverbial sentences, could be detected in a corpus of speech in written form. The study confirms that proverbs remain a part of contemporary Finnish communication and everyday language, although the context of use has changed over the period which Finnish proverbs have been collected (i.e. over two centuries). Most traditional proverbs still contain agrarian terms and are relatively permanent expressions, but nowadays they are often used in a new context and with a new meaning. The corpus in question consists about 70,000 unedited text-messages sent to be published as short letters to the editor and aimed at the readers of the daily Finnish regional newspaper. These messages include more than 7000 expressions that are connected with proverbs. Although the paper examines Finnish proverbs and uses Finnish examples, many of the processes and challenges are the same, no matter which language or culture is being examined.

Key words: *everyday practices, proverb, proverbial utterance, text message, vernacular*

1. Introduction

This article focuses on proverbs in contemporary use based on my dissertation “Proverbs in SMS messages: Archaic and modern communication” (Granbom-Herranen 2018). The aim of the research has been to highlight one of the ways proverbs are used and interpreted in everyday communication using colloquial written language. To reach the goal of the research I decided to look at SMS messages in which the language is nearer to vernacular than literal expression. The article participates on the discussion how proverbs and proverbial sentences, could be detected when the basic material consists of written speech used in daily life and includes old and new language

units, i.e. contemporarily used proverbs which might be traditional or modern ones, Bible quotations or references to them. The focus is on proverbs as a part of contemporary colloquial written language in everyday use and context while the emphasis mainly is in folkloristic paremiology. The earlier oral tradition has found a place in the written vernacular. SMS messages are opinions in some special occasions and in them proverbs are used in a new context.

1.1. Concept of proverb

Today paremiology knows and uses various definitions for a proverb. This is because of the fact that the concept proverb has never been defined in a perfect way. The only current consensus focuses on the relative brevity of proverbs and on the traditionality or familiarity of proverbs. (Dundes 1994: 44; Mieder 2004: 2–3; Taylor 1981). However, “it is not always necessary, or even possible, in the dynamic research tradition to define the key concepts exhaustively, for there must always be room for new connections” (Honko 1989: 14). By using a loose definition of the proverb, this article leans primarily on the emic concept (see Headland 1990), but the etic concept also comes into play because the other kinds of utterances of various short-form genres which might, in the reader’s eyes, also represent proverbs are not considered here (see Granbom-Herranen 2016b, 2018).

The Finnish proverb displays the most commonly named characteristics of the proverb. It is a relatively short and fairly independent statement in a more or less stable form. It is or has been relatively familiar to the general public in a particular time and place and, in this case, most often in Finnish. If a proverb does not fulfil the demand of *familiarity*, it can hardly become generally used (*frequency*) (Mieder 1994: 298; Grzybek 1987: 73). Nowadays, the concept of proverb is in the Finnish context also most often used to mean *proverb and proverbial expression* both in language used in everyday occasions and the language of researchers.

In Finnish proverbs have been and still are used in vernacular language. These days, the native Finnish-speaking population of Finland can read and write Finnish.¹ This has changed the position of proverbs in Finnish language.²

¹ A long time the Bible in Finnish was a source for oral tradition. As long as people were not capable of reading Bible it was used in church services.

² Finnish proverbs are not and have not been used only in the Finnish language. They also exist in Swedish (nowadays Finland Swedish) and in Finland other languages with a special

The concept of *contemporarily used proverb* includes proverbs used nowadays, i.e. traditional proverbs, modern proverbs and Bible quotations as well as references to them. The expression *traditional proverb* in this article means an utterance that in Finland is commonly accepted to be an old proverb. Their ground forms are to be found in publications based on collections before the 1950s in Finland.³ For example the proverb *Se koira älähtää, johon kalikka kalahtaa* [That dog yelps, which is hit by a stick⁴] occurred many times in SMS messages.

- (1) *Äiti! Se koira älähtää jne. Missä olit itse dokaamassa kun poliisi joutui P:n talolla paimentamaan lastasi. Hoida jälkikasvusi, älä hoidata valtion varoin. -X- (SSS, sent 16.2.2007)*

[Mum! That dog yelps etc. Where were you yourself drinking when police had to be in P's house to herd your child. Take care of your descendant, don't do it with means of the state. -X-]

Modern proverbs are proverbs collected after 1950s or they are so new that they could be called potential proverbs, i.e. expressions that might become settled in Finnish language some day in future and so get the status of proverb. They are a part of modern tradition. The most important feature for distinguishing a proverb from a phrase is that a proverb is a statement (Granbom-Herranen 2013a). Many of proverbs transmitted from other cultural areas and languages are in Finnish modern proverbs even if they in the original language represents traditional proverbs.

- (2) *Kel onni on se onnen kätkeköön sillä se on hyvää itsetuntoa. Toki ollaan kaikki onnesta sykkyyrällä puolestane. – hengessä mukana olevat. (SSS, sent 18.7.2008)*

He/she who has much happiness does well to hide because it means having good self-awareness. Certainly we all are thrilled to bits on behalf for you. – we are there in spirit.

status based on Finnish laws. They are Sámi (nowadays Northern Sámi, Skólt Sámi and Inar Sámi) and Romany. Proverbs might also exist in Finnish and Finland Swedish sign languages which also have a special status based on Finnish laws. In 2017, more than 130 languages were spoken in Finland (Räsänen 2017).

³ Due to the historic-geographic method (also known as the Finnish method), Finnish proverbs have been collected and they are well mapped. Most of the ground forms of traditional Finnish proverbs before the 1950s are included in the published collections edited by Kuusi (1990/1953; the oldest collections made before the great fire of Turku in 1828), Nirvi and Hakulinen (1953/1948; collected in the 1930s) and Laukkanen and Hakamies (1997/1978; collected prior to the end of 1950s). There is also an online corpus including proverbs collected in the 1930s owned by the Institute for the Languages of Finland (*KOTUS / Kotimaisten kielten keskus*).

⁴ In this connection the noun stick means actually a piece of firewood which has not been split.

Some of the modern proverbs has first been in literal for like is the beginning of a poem by the Finnish author Eino Leino. Nowadays, it is a proverb and people often do not know its origin. Some of them has first been in literal for like this *Kell' onni on, se onnen kätkeköön* [He/she who has much happiness does well to hide it] is the beginning of the poem *Laulu onnesta* [Song of happiness'], which was published for the first time in 1900, in a collection entitled *Hiihtäjän virsiä* [Hymns of a skier] (Leino 1978). Nowadays, it is a proverb and people often do not know its origin.

The theoretically most unsafe part of these are potential proverbs, expressions that are used but nobody knows if they will survive, like the former ski-jumper Matti Nykänen's *Elämä on laiffii* [Life is life] or [Live is life].⁵ This was not used in SMS messages but it is widely known and used in Finland.

Some of Bible quotations and proverbs included in the Bible have become traditional Finnish proverbs. They are often easy to recognize because most of the Finnish Lutheran population still learns their Bible and Catechism in confirmation classes organized by the Evangelical Lutheran Church of Finland.

- (3) *Salossa 200 äänellä ei tullut lautakuntapaikkaa. – sitä niittää, mitä kylvää. SSS, sent 16.12.2008*

[The place in a municipal board in Salo was not achieved with 200 votes – one reaps what one sows]

In Galatians 6:7 [*Kirje galatalaisille*]:

“Älkää pettäkö itseänne! Jumala ei salli itseään pilkattavan. Mitä ihminen kylvää, sitä hän myös niittää.” (Raamattu).

[“Be not tricked; God is not made sport of: for whatever seed a man puts in, that will he get back as grain.” (*The Bible*)]

The ground form is *Mitä ihminen kylvää, sitä hän niittää* [What a person sows, he will reap] but nowadays more often in form *Sitä saa, mitä tilaa* [One gets what he or she orders].⁶

⁵ Since the end of his career as one of the most famous sportsmen in the world, Nykänen has become famous for the expressions he has used in interviews (see G-H 2013b, 2016a).

⁶ As a proverb in English “You get what you order”. Finnish-language proverbs often use passive.

- (4) *Salossa paljon mukavia ihmisiä. Jyväskylässä paljon mukavia ihmisiä. Vaasassa paljon mukavia ihmisiä jne.– sitä saa mitä tilaa* (SSS, sent 20.9.2006)

[In Salo exist a lot of nice people. In Jyväskylä a lot of nice people. In Vaasa a lot of nice people etc. – one gets what he or she orders]

Today, the same meaning is communicated in the proverb *Sitä saa, mitä tilaa* [lit. One gets what one orders]. The modern proverb might be a new way to use a proverb with updated concepts: *niittää* (reap) has become *tilata* (order).

In everyday use, a proverb is alive as long as it is referred to. This means that when we look for proverbs in speech and speech-like text, we have to look at the proverbs, shortened proverbs, or references and allusions to them (Granbom-Herranen 2014b: 378).

1.2. Some words about Finnish newspapers

Many sources are self-evident materials for some disciplines, whereas for others, they are completely unused. I needed contemporarily used proverbs in their everyday context and in written vernacular. The point is that the context creates the frame for the use and interpretation of proverbs. The newspaper with the opinion column was a way to get the proverbs in their actual context of use.⁷ If asked it is few people who remember proverbs or the context they were used.

In comparison with the opportunity to read, write and publish newspapers in one's native language elsewhere in Europe, Finnish newspapers in Finnish are a relatively new phenomenon. Prior to the 20th century, the main spoken language of Finland was Finnish, but it was rarely the written language. At the same time, the proverbs in Finnish were mostly used in speech, as part of the language of the underprivileged majority. Proverbs had an important role as informal knowledge compared to written information. The first newspaper published in Finland was *Åbo Tidningar* [Newspaper in Turku] in 1771 during the Swedish era, and it was published in Swedish. Today, the oldest newspaper in Finland, having been published since 1824, is *Åbo Underrättelser* [Notices in Turku], a newspaper in Swedish.

⁷ The context of a proverb in an SMS message consists of the idea of the SMS message, the opinion column (including previous days), the news in the paper (including previous days) and events in the society. These factors are used to determine the reasons for sending the SMS message with a proverb.

The newspaper this article focuses on is a regional daily paper “Salon Seudun Sanomat”⁸ [Newspaper of Salo district]. It was established in 1919, and it has always been published in Finnish. In 2009, the daily circulation of the newspaper was about 20,000, which means about 50,000 readers. The newspaper is targeted at the general public most often the paper version is received via subscription, which in Finland is the most common way to receive the daily papers (G-H 2017).

1.3. Theoretical background and the concept of contemporarily used proverb

Regarding the use of proverbs, the article is based on Briggs’s (1988) concept of *proverb performance*. To use a proverb is a small performance which has a target bound to the situation and words used. The use of a proverb or the proverb itself adds value to a speech event. Moreover, it appears obvious that context adds something to what is said and understood. A performance is always interaction between the sender of some message (the speaker or writer using proverbs) and the audience (a real or assumed one). A proverb as a performance might be handled as what Badiou (2009) calls “an event” (or the proverb paves the way for an event); it has the power to change the significance of the entire occasion. The successful proverb performance sums up the kernel of the performance. Proverbs are shared tradition, meaning the performer and the audience have to share some common knowledge about the past in order to be able to connect the message to the activity.⁹ In a newspaper every proverb performance is somehow an interactive and communicative occasion produced by the performer (writer) and the audience (reader) together even if the feedback does not happen immediately.

The significance of a proverb has several starting points: language is an instrument of communication but also linked to a thought (Vygotsky 1967), a proverb gets its significance by way of context (Frege 2000)¹⁰ and the use of the proverb is a violating element, marking a kind of pause in the dis-

⁸ Later abbreviated as SSS.

⁹ However, there are always listeners and readers who are incapable of understanding and/or interpreting proverbs and even less the references to proverbs (Granbom-Herranen 2008: 184; Ferretti et al. 2007).

¹⁰ The principle of Frege’s principle of contextuality states that the meaning of an expression is always bound to the context in which it is used (Rott 2000: 627).

course and bringing in new aspects (Grice 1975, 1989).¹¹ The use of proverbs is part of communicative speech that is supposed to follow Grice's cooperative principle and its categories of quantity, quality, relevance and manner. So for the search and identification, I used Paul H. Grice's cooperative principle, proceeding from the assumption that all proverbial expressions act against one or more of its categories.¹² The first three categories could be called what-is-said categories while the fourth, the category of manner, is related not to "what is said but how what is said is to be said" (Grice 1989: 27).

Proverbs function as Badiou's (2009) event: they make a full stop in communication or are elements possibly changing the direction of the sequence of actions. This is congruent with Grice's (1975, 1989) idea that the use of a proverb is an acting element, marking a pause in the discourse and introducing new aspects. The way we recognize proverbs in speech or text uses the same techniques as when recognizing metaphors (G-H 2011: 49–52).

1.4. Grice's maxims and acts against them

The main message with Grice's cooperative principle is the demand to make a "conversational contribution such as it is required, at the stage at which it occurs, by the accepted purpose or direction of the talk exchange in which you are engaged" (Grice 1989: 26). This is the basic requirement for understandable and meaningful talk exchange also when proverbs are used in speech. Grice names three features connected to successful communication. First, the participants have some common target with the communication. Second, the contributions of the participants ought to be compatible. Third, the discussion follows an appropriate style. These are expectations that proverbial speech also fulfils.

The most important aspect of speech, Grice (1975, 45–46; 1987: 27) argues, is to try to keep oneself truthful. The category of quality tells us not to say anything we believe to be false or for which we lack adequate evidence: most important is to attempt to keep oneself true when speaking. When a speaker lies or tells something that cannot be true he or she acts against this category.

¹¹ Grice (1989: 30, 33) makes a distinction between different actions that work against maxims. I prefer to use "to act against" instead of the terms Grice uses. (See more Granbom-Herranen 2013a; 2014a).

¹² The idea of a proverb acting against something in the context it is used has been brought up previously (see e.g. Krikmann 2009a: 27–28). Grice's maxims and their violations have also been seen as a possibility in folkloristic research focusing on humour (Krikmann 2004: 88–95).

- (5) *Mies! Normaalin miehen viriiliä seksuaalista halua. Tarkkaile vaimoasi. Käy vieraisissa, ehkä kaipaa "vihreää ruohoa" aidan toisella puolella. – petetty nainen (SSS, sent 8.9.2006)*¹³

[Man! That is just red-blooded desire of a normal man. Keep an eye on your wife. She plays away, 'might hunger for "greener grass" on the other side of the fence. – betrayed woman]¹⁴

Actually not a person hungers for grass as cows, horses and other animals do. The sentence is referring to the proverb *Ruoho on vihreämpää aidan toisella puolen* [The grass is always greener on the other side of the fence] and the writer says something that is not true to awake the reader to see the main point of her message. She knows because her husband (if we trust that the pseudonym is telling the truth) has betrayed her with somebody who wanted a new or better company.

The category of quantity states that a contribution should be as informative as required for the current purpose, but should not be more informative than is required; quantity is related to how much information is provided. The contribution should be as informative as required for the current purpose but the information should not be more informative than required.

Acts against Grice's category of quantity relate to how much information is given. To say too much or too little constitutes violence against the category of quantity.

- (6) *Ukki-41. Opintotuella ei osteta autoa, joten ne joilla on, ajavat vanhempien rahoilla. Kaikilla ei mahdollista vanhempien avokätiseen tukeen – pappa betala (SSS, sent 2.9.2006)*

[Grandpa-41. Cars cannot be paid with the study grant. So those who have a car get money from parents. Everybody does not have the possibility to get the generous support from parents – dad pays]

The expression *pappa betala* hardly gives any information at all and can be understood as a meaningless short sentence. However, when it is used with a pause the utterance emphasizes something and thus acts against the maxim demanding quantitatively enough information. The Finnish modern proverb

¹³ The spelling is in its original form but, in some cases, spaces between words have been added to make reading easier. The messages have not been edited by the newspaper or by myself. The translations into English are literal translations because using equivalents would mean too much interpretation.

¹⁴ English translations in all examples are literally translated and proverb parallels are not used.

is *Pappa betalar*, although the language here is Finland-Swedish (*Isä mak-saa* in Finnish). In Finnish the proverb always occurs in Finland-Swedish, the translation is never used. This SMS message refers to the discourse that deals with the student stipend provided by the state in Finland.¹⁵

Relevance requires the speech act to be relevant. However, the difficulty is that relevance is an invariable, comprehensive concept. Violence against the category of relevance is linked to events and utterances like in the next example.

- (7) *Moni kakku päältä kaunis. Autot ruostuvat muovikuorien alla. Mistä nykyisten muoviu-
autojen korin kunnan voi tietää? – Sepi (SSS, sent 23.12.2006)*

[Many cakes look good. Cars rust away under the plastic cover. How is it possible to know the conditions of body in modern plastic cars? – Sepi]

The proverb in the message is sent when the quality of used cars was topical. The context clarifies the connection. The meaning of the sentence still remains unclear if the reader does not know that the proverb continues with “but”, which stresses the opposite quality of the object. The cited proverb refers to the proverb *Moni kakku päältä kaunis, vaan on sillkoa sisältä* [Many a cake looks good but the inside is pure bark bread]. Acting against the category of relevance is linked to activities and utterances used in a speech context.

The category of manner relates to well-aimed speech. This category tells the speaker to avoid obscurity and ambiguity of expression, as well as to be brief and orderly. To give hints one after another and talk without saying anything directly acts against this category. That occurs when a speaker does not voice his or her own opinion but offers only hints. For example, shortened proverbs acts as hints. To get the message the reader must recognize and know the proverb.

- (8) *Uhkasakon uhalla pitäisi myös uhrit vaatia saapumaan oikeuden istuntoon uhrit suo-
rastaan pakenee – Silmä silmästä (SSS, sent 2.9.2006)*

[The victims ought to be demanded to be present at a court session on pain of the penalty payment. The victims are nothing less than escaping. – An eye for an eye]

¹⁵ Swedish was the official language of Finland until the country’s independence. However, in 1863 it became possible to use Finnish in official matters focusing on Finland. The proverb refers to the Finland Swedish population and to their prominent position in, for example, Finland’s economic, political and cultural life throughout the country’s history. Among Swedish-speaking Finns the standard of living has long been higher – and in many cases still is – than among Finnish-speaking Finns (see Granbom-Herranen 2014a).

Proverb *Silmä silmästä ja hammas hampaasta* [An eye for an eye and a tooth for a tooth] is known as the Code of Hammurabi and it is also to be found in Bible in various texts. Actually it does not become clear if the threat in proverb is directed towards the accused person or the victim.

All this can stay unfulfilled in speech (or in speech like writing), or the speaker can act against them consciously or subconsciously. The use of proverbs is a part of communicative speech that is supposed to follow Grice's cooperative principle.

2. Methodology and Materials

2.1. Methodology

The central research method is contemporary content analysis, which is understood to be a cluster of methods connected with conclusions based on theoretical analyses.¹⁶ Content analysis is commonly used with existing text material, such as texts in newspapers, and it differs from discourse analysis that also concentrates on communication in written form. Proverbs are taken from the ground forms of proverbial expressions. The *ground form of a proverb* is a form that might be called the proverb proper behind an utterance.¹⁷ The *basic meaning of a proverb* is always a culture-bound assumed standard proverbial interpretation. However, neither the ground forms nor the basic meanings are defined for Finnish proverbs. The expressions were searched for via the ground form of the proverbs, that is, the proverb proper behind an utterance. The expressions were linked to the context. If an expression is very frequent, it could be on its way to becoming a proverb. Along with reading, the process included searching for parts of words (tokens), entire words or combinations of words. This was especially necessary with frequent words in order to find out if they were connected to proverb-like expressions or formed potential proverbs.

Every research involves an ethical relationship with the research phenomena, a positive contact with the artefacts and the unknown participants. However, the ethical issues in this project are primarily involved with the archiving and further use of the collected materials. The proverbs published

¹⁶ The whole research process and the implementation of the method, see Granbom-Herranen 2018: 69–81. Content analysis as a process of research (G-H 2018: 72, Figure 7) presents the whole process in table form.

¹⁷ See also Kuusi (1983: 16–17) normal form ("*normaalimuoto*"), Honko (1998) "mental text" and Krikmann (2009b: 64) "a normal shape of a proverb".

in the newspaper are already public. The policy of the newspaper is to keep SMS messages anonymous. The privacy of informants is secured by using pseudonyms in print and, thus, the material remains anonymous. Only the editorial staff knows the senders' phone numbers and the newspaper has filed the material. All the published material exists in the SSS archive, whereas the unpublished SMS messages exist in the form of data.

2.2. Materials

The research material for these articles consists of proverbs and references to them. They have appeared in SMS messages which have been sent to be published as short letters to the editor and aimed at the readers of the daily regional newspaper. The corpus in its entirety consists of about 70,000 unedited SMS messages (that is messages sent by using Short Message Service) sent between 2006 and 2010 to be published as short letters to the editor and aimed at the readers of the newspaper. These messages include more than 7000 expressions that are proverbs, potential proverbs, Bible quotations or references to them. Originally one message could be up to 160 characters long.

I have read *Salon Seudun Sanomat* daily for a number of decades, so the newspaper was familiar to me. Proverbs in the newspaper were approached from the reader's point of view, which in practice means I had read the opinion column daily the way all newspaper readers do. SSS has given the material in the form of data, that is, as unedited files so the material includes both published and unpublished messages.

3. Reflections

Even if there were many references to one proverb, only very seldom were expressions identical with each other. This is to be understood to mean that in speech nearly everybody uses a proverb in a little bit different form. Many proverbs have international parallels. When a proverb settles down within a new cultural context, both the form and meaning is renewed. Using proverbs as parts of opinions confirms the active role of proverbs. Table 1 presents the summary of the final material. Most of the proverbs were mentioned or referred to only once, during the years 2006–2010.¹⁸

¹⁸ This is in line with Krikmann (1997, 2009a, 2017b). About reasons for this, see Krikmann 2017a.

Table 1. Description of the final material

Traditional proverb or Bible quotation	350
Reference to a traditional proverb or Bible quotation	1,400
Modern proverb, potential modern proverb	2,500
Reference to a modern proverb	3,000
Total: more than 7,000 expressions	

Note: Totals are approximate.

Source: own research.

The phenomenon in question is proverbs used in early 21st century Finland and the challenge is how to detect them in some everyday context. Contemporarily used proverbs might be traditional or modern ones as well as those based on the Bible. They can also be references to these since the proverbs have to be known in order for references to them to be possible. The material is a wide sample that says something about proverbs used in SMS messages sent to the regional newspaper as letters to the editor between 2006 and 2010 while the SMS messages as opinions either initiate or participate in a continuing discourse.

The use of a proverb always has one or more purposes. This is what happens with the SMS messages – both the proverbs used in the SMS messages and the SMS messages themselves have a purpose. The internal idea is private but the delivered idea is public. Proverbs are used as rhetorical tools and this is why the reader meets them often when reading daily newspapers. The use of proverbs most likely comes with the expectation that readers are aware of their basic meanings and, thus, proverbs can be used in published texts. Proverbs might be a kind of culmination in the evolution of various expressions. An aphorism might become a proverb and the same is possible with, for example, poems, songs or utterances as such. Hardly ever is it the other way around, although proverbs can be included in all of them.

4. Conclusions

The use of a proverb acts against one or more of the categories included in Grice's cooperative principle and makes an utterance to differ from the ongoing discourse Grice's cooperative principle can be used when trying to detect unspecified proverbs in wide materials. Especially when in everyday use, a proverb is alive as long as it is referred to so we have to look at the proverbs, shortened proverbs, or references and allusions to them.

Grice's cooperative principle and particularly acts against it might help us to recognize proverbs in vernacular language (oral and written), although it does not solve the problem of reference. Meaningful speech understood as a wholeness of meaningful utterances, for example proverbs, surely points to meaningful references that make interpretation possible; although the interpretation or the understood meaning is hardly the same for everybody – not even for the parties in the talk exchange. Additional challenges emerge when we reach the changes that have occurred in the boundary between oral tradition and written culture. In Finnish, written colloquial language has become increasingly similar to spoken language, in particular in texts that speech like writing is used (e.g. e-mails, text messages and Internet).

In the new context, proverbs are not always similar to their predecessors, because modern proverbs use modern colloquial language. Even though proverbs may not always appear with the same form and meaning as they did in the past, they continue to be used in a range of contexts. During the last century in Finland, mass media has also had an impact on vocabulary, special expressions and so forth. Nowadays, the use of the proverbs in everyday life and the proverbs in written sources (literature) have merged, especially in colloquial written language. At the same time, proverbs from literary sources are used in everyday language.

Apart from everyday use, proverbs belong to formal speech on special occasions such as congratulatory and memorial speech as well as in written form, for example, in obituaries. It could be said that, apart from everyday communication, proverbs are suitable for situational extremes. Another dichotomy in the use of proverbs is connected with the assumed receivers of a speech act. This is an obvious aspect of a newspaper. If the text is directed at local people, proverbs can easily be referred to and various contemporarily used proverbs can be used in the SMS messages that serve as short letters to the editor. However, with a national audience, traditional proverbs would be a safer choice since almost everyone can be expected to recognise them.

Proverbs are a part of the vernacular that people are familiar with. For many, proverbs represent something familiar, domestic and old-fashioned while also reflecting a modern Finnish way of thinking. Using proverbs, therefore, is an acceptable way to generate interest. Use of proverbs and the media share a common history and maybe also a common future. As a phenomenon, Finnish proverbs seem to have a status that promotes their continued use in the context of modern urban society, new technology and mass media.

Despite many changes in recent decades to Finnish society and lifestyle as well as many changes in life and everyday practices, proverbs still belong to everyday use and communication. The proverbs may not always appear with the same form and meaning as they did in the past, but they are used.

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Eine regionale Zeitung als Aufbewahrungsort für sprichwörtliche Ausdrücke – Sprichwörter in SMS-Nachrichten

Zusammenfassung

Der Beitrag konzentriert sich auf Sprichwörter im alltäglichen Gebrauch Finnlands des frühen 21. Jahrhunderts sowie die Frage, wie diese im alltäglichen Kontext wahrgenommen werden können. Zeitgenössisch verwendete Sprichwörter können traditionelle wie auch moderne und biblische sein. Auch können sie Verweise auf diese sein, da Sprichwörter bekannt sein müssen, damit Verweise auf sie möglich sind. Das gesamte Material besteht aus etwa 70,000 unveröffentlichten SMS, eingekopiert zwischen 2006 und 2010, um als Zuschriften, gerichtet an die Leser der Zeitung,

veröffentlicht zu werden. Diese Kurzmitteilungen enthalten mehr als 7,000 Wendungen, in Form von Sprichwörtern, möglichen Sprichwörtern, Bibelziten oder Verweisen auf sie.

Sprichwörter sind ein Teil der Umgangssprache mit der die Menschen vertraut sind. Für viele stellen sie etwas vertrautes, heimisches und traditionsverbundenes dar, während sie zugleich auch eine moderne finnische Denkweise zum Ausdruck bringen. Die Verwendung eines Sprichworts verstößt gegen eine oder mehrere Kategorien, die in Grice' Kooperationsprinzip beinhaltet sind, und führt dazu, dass sich eine Äußerung vom laufenden Diskurs unterscheidet. Grice' Kooperationsprinzip kann dazu verwendet werden, um nicht spezifizierte Sprichwörter in unterschiedlichen Materialien aufzuspüren. Da ein Sprichwort im alltäglichen Gebrauch lebendig ist, solange auf es verwiesen wird, müssen wir uns die Sprichwörter, die verkürzten Sprichwörter oder Verweise und Anspielungen auf sie ansehen. Grice' Kooperationsprinzip hingegen könnte uns helfen, Sprichwörter in der Umgangssprache (mündlich und schriftlich) wahrzunehmen, wenngleich es auch das Verweisproblem nicht löst. Ausdrucksstarke Sprache, verstanden als Gesamtheit aussagekräftiger Äußerungen, wie zum Beispiel Sprichwörter, verweist sicherlich auf aussagekräftige Verweise, die eine Interpretation zulassen; wenngleich auch die Interpretation oder die verstandene Bedeutung kaum für alle gleich ist – nicht einmal für die Parteien im Gesprächsaustausch.

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Weather Proverbs/Sayings as Modes of Exhorting People to Take or Refrain from Action

Abstract. The paper is an attempt to scrutinize and categorize the weather proverbs/sayings pertaining to human action with the use of a semantic approach, often applied in linguo-cultural analysis. Such weather texts are commonly based upon people's (in particular, sailors, farmers, travellers, fishermen and shepherds) careful observations and scrutiny of atmospheric conditions, and among other social functions, they represent speech acts exhorting people to either do or refrain from doing something. The corpus for analysis constitutes a major paremiographical collection titled *Weather wisdom: proverbs, superstitions, and signs* (1996) edited by S. A. Kingsbury, M. E. Kingsbury and W. Mieder. Under selected key words, such as rain, cloud, sky, wind and sun, related to five occupations, i.e. sailors, farmers, travellers, fishermen and shepherds, two groups of the examined weather proverbs/signs/superstitions are distinguished and analysed in terms of their content and referent. In one category a prospective and/or suggested human action is not directly stated, e.g. *Wind right, sun right, fish bite*. The other category of proverbial weather texts constitutes the one where the weather statement overtly implies a need to take a certain activity, e.g. *When wind comes before rain, soon you may make sail again*. The obvious inference is that proverbs/signs/superstitions which express the relation between atmospheric conditions and human action either explicitly or implicitly exhort their hearers to make use of fine weather and take some steps or to escape inclement weather and avoid particular work. What remains of special interest in the pragmatic analysis of weather proverbial utterances, though, is the precise referent and/or the type of action that are presupposed by such texts, and which constitutes another major concern of the article in question.

Key words: *weather proverb/saying, weather sign, human action, speech acts, category, semantics*

1. Preliminary remarks, aims and research material

Proverbs belonging to miscellaneous thematic categories are communicative strategies that exhibit different semantic possibilities and therefore are employed for various social situations in a linguistic community (Kispál

2015: 233). As maintained by Krikmann (1974a, 1974b) this alleged ‘semantic indefiniteness’ of proverbs, to put it differently and more accurately, occurs as a result of such factors as their hetero-situativity, poly-functionality and poly-semanticity (see also Mieder 2004: 9). Accordingly, similarly to other formulaic utterances they serve multiple practical functions in the context of everyday communication, among others, offering certain conduct, expressing doubt, instructing, advising or exhorting people to either do or refrain from doing something. Viewed in this way, proverbs in general might represent so-called speech acts, and proverbs/sayings about weather in particular – which constitute the target category of the study – might be treated as special cases of indirect speech acts rather than mere statements about atmospheric settings. According to such scholars as, for example, Austin (1962), Searle (1969, 1975) and Grzybek (2014), indirect speech acts are used in a context where a person formally utters a sentence (the locutionary act) but actually means something different (or additional). In such cases an illocutionary act (intentional) is performed which has some (perlocutionary) effect on the addressee of the utterance. The discussed situation may be more clearly explained by Searle (1975: 60) where the author states that “the speaker communicates to the hearer more than he actually says by way of relying on their mutually shared background information, both linguistic and nonlinguistic, together with the general powers of rationality and inference on the part of the hearer”.

What is important to remember, though, is the unquestionable fact indicating that proverbs are “limited pieces of folk wisdom that are valid only in certain situations” (Mieder 2004: 134) and exclusively “analysis of the use and function of proverbs within particular contexts will determine their specific meanings” (Brunvand 1996: 1254). Note that as early as the beginning of the 20th century a leading representative of functional cultural anthropology, Raymond W. Firth, referred to the importance of proverb context when he wrote:

The essential thing about a proverb is its meaning, – and by this is to be understood not merely a bald and literal translation into the accustomed tongue, nor even a free version of what the words are intended to convey. The meaning of a proverb is made clear only when side by side with the translation is given a full account of the accompanying social situation, – the reason for its use, its effect, and its significance in speech. (Firth 1926: 134)

Another noted anthropologist who considered proverbs from the contextual viewpoint was Edward Westermarck in his *Wit and Wisdom in Morocco. A Study of Native Proverbs* (1930). Subsequently, other scholars followed suit,

such as, among others, Cyril L. Nyembezi with his *Zulu Proverbs* (1963) and Charles L. Briggs with 'The Pragmatics of Proverb Performances in New Mexican Spanish' (1985). More recently, Grzybek (2014), following after Morris's (1938, 1946) line of reasoning, in his considerations about semiotic and semantic aspects of proverbs, gives a deep insight into the three-dimensional and triadic study of semiotics (the pragmatical, syntactical and semantical dimensions) and highlights the importance of pragmatics as the use of a sign system in contexts. More precisely, the author draws our attention to the fact that the paremiological line of research, being affected by pragmatical issues, has been concerned with "the study of negotiating proverbs in natural communication (oral or written), and social life, i.e., with the analysis of speech act performances, focusing on the 'why' and 'how' of verbal exchanges" (Grzybek 2014: 70). This being the case, accurate pragmatical analysis of the type of meaning intended by the speaker and inferred by the hearer in the context in which the proverb is uttered is crucial to the correct interpretation of the text.

As hinted in the foregoing, the focus of the study is the category of proverbs/sayings related to weather, which out of the whole proverbial repertoire represents a fairly controversial group, due to its inconsistencies in both term and nature. The controversies over the terminology and nature of weather proverbs are identified and discussed in publications offered by, among others, Dundes (1984), Szpila (2003), Grzybek (2016) and Kochman-Haładyj (2018). The authors unanimously underscore that many proverbial texts about weather should not be regarded as true proverbs because of having only literal meaning and therefore context restrictions. Ergo, the broad and general term that is suggested and used in the present study to refer to such texts is weather proverbs/sayings.

Furthermore, it is beyond question that proverbs/sayings about weather seem to depict the most universal topic whose triviality obviously makes everyone interested in it, to a greater or less extent. Nevertheless, weather's true impact cannot be underestimated because it is clear that its state and conditions affect everyone's life every single day. Naturally, weather impacts our decisions and is checked daily for practical reasons, among others, for clothes to wear or activities to plan, but also for explanations of our physical or mental health and functioning (Yeager 2010: Introduction). Nowadays, forecasting the approximate weather conditions with the use of high-tech computers and algorithms seems to be a fairly easy task; however, in the past folks had to rely mostly on observation of the natural phenomena and rudimentary tools to foretell the weather conditions of the coming hours, days, weeks, months or years. Then, such people as, for instance, farmers,

fishermen, sailors, merchants, shepherds, hunters and travellers appeared to be of great help as they predicted the weather with the use of handy and catchy utterances on the basis of their keen observations and scrutiny of wind directions, cloud formations, temperatures, colours of the sky or animal behaviour rather than scientific principles or evidence.¹ Obviously, the aforementioned people placed great importance on weather conditions in relation to their occupation, more precisely to their potential daily or future activities of various kinds. Therefore, the relation between weather proverbs/sayings and human action seems to be, so to say, a natural occurrence, easily observable in proverb lore about weather, and which constitutes the subject given to analysis in the study that follows. One more significant remark which needs to be emphasized at this point is that the above-mentioned interdependence emerged from the author's earlier pioneering research on the semantic interpretation and categorization of American proverb lore about weather (Kochman-Haładaj 2018) and appeared to be a topic worth further scientific identification and scrutiny. Besides, it is essential to underscore that the human aspect in proverbs in general has been frequently consentaneously affirmed by many linguists in recent decades, such as, for example, Paczolay (1997: 3.1), Bradbury (2002: 275), Krikmann (2007: 6), Villers (2014: 280–287).

It is also noteworthy to underline at the outset that even a cursory reading of proverbial wisdom referring to weather in general terms, or specifically pertaining to weather and human action, lets one distinguish two groups of proverbs/sayings. Suffice it to mention that already in the Biblical proverbial lore one can observe a general tendency pointing to the fact that in one category of weather proverbs/sayings a prospective and/or suggested human action is not clearly expressed in the wording of a text. For example, in the New Testament (Mathew 16.2–3)² Jesus, when talking to a group of fishermen says: 'When it is evening, you say, *It will be fair weather, for the sky is red* and in the morning *It will be stormy today, for the sky is red and threatening*.' Interestingly, in the former proverbial text he is not telling them about a statement of weather, rather he is encouraging them to benefit from the fine weather and take appropriate action. In the latter proverbial utterance, on the other hand, he is warning them against taking any action because of the incoming unfavourable weather conditions. In turn, the other category of weather proverbs/sayings is the one where the weather statement overtly implies a need to take a certain action, e.g. *When clouds look like black smoke, a wise man will put on his cloak; When grass is dry at morning light, look for rain*

¹ See <https://naldc.nal.usda.gov/download/IND43747864/PDF>.

² See <http://bible.oremus.org/?passage=Matthew+16>.

before the night; When the forest murmurs and the mountain roars, then close your windows and shut your doors (Kingsbury, et al. 1996). The overall inference that may be formulated at the start is that proverbs/sayings which express the relation between atmospheric conditions and human action either explicitly or implicitly exhort their hearers to make use of fine weather and take some steps to escape inclement weather and cancel a planned action. What remains of interest, though, is the exact and expected referent and/or the type of action that are presupposed by weather proverbs/sayings, and which forms another major concern of the article in question.

The corpus for the analysis constitutes a major paremiographical publication offered by Stewart A. Kingsbury, Mildred E. Kingsbury, and Wolfgang Mieder titled *Weather wisdom: proverbs, superstitions, and signs* (1996) which includes 4,435 texts on weather wisdom expressed in the English language in the form of proverbs, superstitions and signs. The main entries of the collection are arranged in alphabetical order according to the most significant key word, usually a noun, and equipped with a list of sources and available variants. Although, as the authors state, the proverbial texts “lack the scientific precision of modern technology, [...] they contain the collective wisdom of generations of people who depended on knowing at least to some degree of certainty what the weather might bring” (Kingsbury et al. 1996: Introduction). On that premise, in the analysis that follows the aforesaid human collective intelligence and experience embodied in weather proverbs/sayings is explicated by means of texts under selected key words, such as rain, cloud, sky, wind and sun, and related to five occupations: sailors, farmers, travellers, fishermen and shepherds. In such preselected subcategories the two above-mentioned groups of weather proverbs/signs/superstitions in terms of their reference to human action are distinguished and examined with the use of the linguo-cultural approach.³

2. The interdependence between atmospheric conditions and human action in proverbs/sayings about weather

While browsing the weather proverbs/sayings in *Weather Wisdom: proverbs, superstitions, and signs* by Kingsbury, et al. (1996) one can instantly observe a tendency indicating the fact that a substantial number of proverbs/

³ The relationship between language and culture has been particularly extensively analysed in recent years by Russian researchers (see e.g. Vorobyov (1997), Maslova (2001), Karasik & Slyshkin (2003), Alefirenko (2011)) and Bulgarian scholars (see e.g. Petrova (2003, 2010, 2014), Panchev (2005)) who successfully employ the linguo-cultural approach for studying such linguistic units as, among others, paremias.

sayings pertaining to weather may be applied in various contexts not only to an average person but also, and perhaps above all, to people of the occupations whose life and work much rely on the weather. Interestingly, by the use of the aforementioned proverbs/sayings one may link their message to people from such walks of life even if the proverbial texts do not include in their wording constituents directly referring to these professions. This happens because most weather proverbs/sayings are context-dependent and only the particular situation in which the text is uttered determines its exact meaning, function and in many cases the intended referent. Accordingly, depending on the circumstances the relation between weather and human action in such proverbs/sayings may be clearly discernible, though conveyed in most cases indirectly. The discussed observation may be evidenced by an exemplary text *A green cloud is a sign of hail* whose message, based on the observation and scrutiny of natural phenomena, might pertain to such referents as, for instance, farmers, shepherds, travellers, woodsmen or fishermen and suggest refraining from doing a planned activity forasmuch the weather is going to change for the worse soon. Nevertheless, a minute examination of the corpus allows one to select the proverbs/sayings where the relation between weather and human action in the aforementioned occupations is more or completely apparent. Again, their number is quite substantial in the examined text material and consequently the scope of the analysis had to be restricted exclusively to proverbs/sayings under chosen key words, such as rain, cloud, sky, wind and sun, in order to outline the subject in question. More precisely, the primary purpose ascribed to the study is to select proverbs/sayings whose message relates weather with the work of such professions as sailors, farmers, travellers, fishermen and shepherds in terms of exhorting them to do or refrain from doing certain activities.⁴

Another remark that arises from the initial data analysis points to the fact that most of the proverbs/sayings that link weather and human action belong to the group of weather signs⁵ that “state upcoming weather patterns based on the observation of natural phenomena such as cloud formations, wind directions, temperatures, animal behavior, etc.” (Kingsbury et al. 1996:

⁴ The publications offering English old and traditional weather proverbs linked to certain occupations are, inter alia, *The Shepherd's Legacy* (1670) and *The Shepherd of Bandury's Rules to Judge of the Changes of the Weather* (1748) by John Claridge, or various farmers' almanacs, notably Benjamin Franklin's *Poor Richard's Almanac* (1733–1758).

⁵ Other proverbial categories within weather wisdom except for weather signs are proverbs, which express folk wisdom in a metaphorical fashion and superstitions, which are formed without any rational or scientific basis (Kingsbury et al. 1996: Preface). For more detailed information on superstitions embedded in proverbs, see Dixon (2014).

Preface).⁶ Importantly, proverbial weather signs, similarly to superstitions, differ from normal folk proverbs due to context restrictions as some of them have no metaphorical character (see Arora 1991; Dundes 1984) and, being an outcome of long observations of the natural and climatic transformations, their dominant pragmatic function is prognosis, prediction, or forecasting (see Permyakov 1972). Interestingly enough, they merely contain prognostic statements and their “intent is to establish a causal or logical relationship between two natural events which will lead to a reasonable statement concerning the weather of the next hour, day, week, month or even year” (Kingsbury et al. 1996: Introduction). To put it another way, they are often limited to precise weather conditions and are mostly interpreted literally, contrary to *bona fide* proverbs which customarily take on a figurative meaning. In view of this line of reasoning, they “[...] are not proverbs in the pure sense of that folkloric genre, but they nevertheless express folk beliefs or wisdom about the weather in more or less proverbial language” (Kingsbury et al. 1996: 3–4). One more overall finding which needs to be underscored prior to the analysis is the fact that the proverbial texts’ intention expressed in the form of weather signs is to advise people how to plan the daily or future affairs of life without too many climatic uncertainties or surprises and/or to aid people in coping with the problems and challenges that the approaching weather may bring. With regard to superstitions, in turn, Dixon (2014: 288) accentuates that “people developed a superstitious outlook on the world” out of a fear of the forces of nature, “[...] ascribing to such forces a divine origin and hence often revering them”. Moreover, as added by the author (2014: 289), “superstitious expressions usually involve warnings or advice, blessings or wishes, curses/spells/enchantments/countercharms/incantations, etc., as well as instructions on what to say or how to behave when performing a spell”. Finally, in addition to all the foregoing, it is also essential to bear in mind that paremiological items on weather, on a general basis, have their “own specific traits, at least because of geographical and climatical reasons” (see Baran 2015: 315).

Turning our attention to the subject-matter and purpose of the analysis, it is primarily worth referring to Kingsbury et al. (1996: 4) who state that “weather proverbs as well as superstitions and signs can be classified according to their content or referents”. Therefore, the subcategory of proverbs/sayings pertaining to weather and human action is, firstly, divided in the study into five groups depending on the occupation of the referent, thus constituting seventy-one (71) weather texts including proverbs, signs

⁶ A pioneering analysis on American proverbs pertaining to weather expressed in the form of weather proverbs and weather signs is offered by Kochman-Haładaj (2018).

and superstitions⁷ directed towards people whose life and livelihood are determined by the weather, viz. sailors, farmers, travellers, fishermen and shepherds. Obviously, for centuries people of, among others, these professions have observed the natural world and weather, associated changes in nature with rhythms or patterns of weather elements, formulated certain utterances and promulgated their wisdom in a rhymed and catchy proverbial form. Secondly, within the group of weather proverbs, signs and superstitions given to analysis there is a further subdivision into those whose content either implicitly or explicitly reveals the relation between weather and human action of the discussed occupations. Strictly speaking, in what follows there are weather proverbs/signs/superstitions that indirectly exhort people to take or refrain from taking action only by stating the weather conditions and insinuating some action. Notwithstanding that, as shown below, there are also the weather items, which are underlined for the purpose of distinction, that are not intended to be mere statements about atmospheric conditions but in which by the use of an imperative (positive or negative), a clause or a verb phrase, a specific action or inaction is (fairly) clearly suggested and/or expected. Also, it is necessary to note that the analysed collection of weather lore contains many registered variants following some main entries; however, in the analysis that follows in these cases exclusively the first proverb/sign/superstition under the given key word is provided.

The final comment of utmost importance to the analysed theme, which needs to be emphasised a priori, concerns the fact that weather proverbs, as indicated by Villers (2014: 281), never apply to weather itself and humans are at the centre of the proverbs even if man is referred to by the use of metaphor. Moreover, as one can read in Kleiber (2000: 46), “pure weather proverbs refer directly or primarily to human activities, while weather sayings and other superstitions may refer to them but only indirectly”. The suggested criterion, following after Villers (2014: 283–285), makes it possible to separate proverbs and weather sayings. Nonetheless, as specified above, within the analysed corpus in the study a somewhat different distinction is made and applied. To wit, if the weather paremiological text contains in its wording a direct reference to the (fairly) exact referent’s activity by the use of a specific verb structure, then a proverbial text is classified as directly referring to

⁷ From now on the analysed weather proverbs/sayings pertaining to human action are differentiated in the study and termed as weather proverbs/weather signs/weather superstitions. Note that such differentiation and terminology of weather texts is indicated in the title and registered in the publication *Weather wisdom: proverbs, superstitions, and signs* (1996) by Kingsbury et al.

human action, but if the weather text does not comprise any grammatical constituents implying a certain referent's activity, then the text indirectly applies to human action.

And so, the first and the most numerous group within the proverbs/signs/superstitions excerpted from the corpus, and given to analysis whose both content and referent pertain to weather and human action in a more or less apparent way, are texts directed towards **sailors** (35 proverbial texts). In proverbial utterances within this group the link indicating the discussed interdependence between weather and sailors' activity, directly and indirectly expressed, is clearly evident because of such constitutive elements as *sailor(s)/seamen, to/a sail, sea, ship(s)*. As the analysed weather texts show, through the centuries the above-mentioned people noted and scrutinized: wind shifts (e.g. To get wind when sailing, stick a knife blade into the mast; As the wind blows, you must set your sail; When wind comes before rain, soon you may make sail again; Hoist your sail when the wind is fair; If sailors can catch a louse, and put him on the leech of the mainsail, wind is promised, provided the louse crawl upward; If you sail with a bad wind, you must understand tacking; The wind gall or prismatic coloring of the clouds is considered by sailors a sign of rain;⁸ *Every wind is ill to a crazy ship [crazy means 'broken']; If the boom of a sailboat creaks while the boat is in motion, the wind will soon die out; Slow wind also brings the ship to harbor*), colours of the sky (e.g. Evening red and morning gray will send the sailor on his way, but evening gray and morning red will bring rain down upon his head; Red sky at night, sailor's (or shepherd's) delight; red sky in the morning, sailors take warning; When the evening is gray and morning is red, the sailor is sure to have a wet head; Sailors call just enough blue sky to wipe one's face with a precursor of fine weather; Mackerel sky and mare's tails, make lofty ships carry low sails [mackerel scales and mare's tails refer to cirrocumulus clouds]; Bright sky at night, sailors delight; Blue sky at night is a sailor's delight; Pink sky at night, sailor's delight; pink sky in morning, sailor's warning), and shapes and/or colours of the clouds (e.g. *Clouds in the morning, sailors take warning; If clouds look as if scratched by a hen, get ready to reef your topsail then; Horses' tails and fishes' scales, make sailors spread their sails* [horses' tails and fishes' scales refer to clouds]; Mares' tails, mares' tails, make lofty ships carry low sails [horses' tails refer to cumulus clouds]; Hen scarts and filly tails make lofty ships wear

⁸ It is important to note that within the proverbial statements listed in the corpus there are texts that appear more than once under different key words because in their wording they possess references to both, for instance, wind and clouds, as in *The wind gall or prismatic coloring of the clouds is considered by sailors a sign of rain*. However, in the study they are provided only once under the headword appearing first in the weather text.

low sails [*hen scarts (scratches)* are light clouds that resemble the scratches of hens on the ground, *filly tails* are clouds that resemble the tails of young mares]; *Mackerel scales and mare's tails make lofty ships carry low sails* [*Mackerel scales and mare's tails* refer to cirrocumulus clouds]; *Mackerel scales, furl your sails*; *When at sea, if the stratocumulus cloud appear on the horizon, it is a sign that the weather is going to break up*; *When scattered patches or streaks of nimbus (cloud) come driving up from the southwest, they are called by the sailors "Prophet Clouds," and indicate wind*; *A small cloudless place in the northwest horizon is regarded both by seamen and landsmen as a certain precursor of fine weather or a clearing up*). They also carefully scrutinized the colours of the sun (e.g. *Sun red at morning, a sailor's warning*; *sun red at night, a sailor's delight*) and closely paid attention to rain and wind directions and associated their appearance with certain activities (e.g. *If the rain comes before the wind, lower your topsails and take them in*; *if the wind comes before the rain, lower your topsails and hoist them again*; *When the rain comes before winds, you may reef when it begins*; *but when the wind comes before the rain, you may hoist your topsails up again*; *Rain in the morning, sailors take warning*; *When wind comes before rain, soon you may make sail again*; *Wind from the east, sailors feast*; *Winds at night are always bright, but winds in the morning, sailors take a warning*). A peculiar exemplary proverbial text excerpted from the corpus whose basic thought does not explicitly point at a precise referent but may be classified into the analysed group on the basis of its inferred meaning is *Back the wind and front the sun*. The proverb is an old mariners' rule which suggests either running from a storm or gale (the wind brings the bad weather and the sun indicates good weather) or turning your back to the wind as in that way you can quickly and easily set your course. The text can also be applied in a metaphorical meaning suggesting that if the figurative 'wind' is at your back, then life may go more smoothly and in the desired direction.

The second group of referents of the analysed weather-related proverbial texts in terms of the number of occurrences found in the corpus are **farmers** (14 proverbial texts). Here the constituents in the form of farm activities in the weather text's wording (e.g. *making hay, sowing or planting*), farm animals/plants (e.g. *a lamb, corn, grain, wheat*) or other lexical items referring to work on the farm (e.g. *crop, hay, stock*) determine the potential statement's receiver. As stems from the content of the proverbial utterances within this group, farmers acutely watched: the appearance of the sun (e.g. *Make hay while the sun shines*), colours of the sky (e.g. *Red (sky) in the west, the lamb and 'll go safe to rest*), presence/absence of rain (e.g. *If there were no rain, there'd be no hay to make when the sun shines*; *Rain on Good Friday and Easter Day, you'll have plenty of grass, but little good hay*; *On June 2nd a rain signifies a poor*

crop of blackberries; A shower of rain in July, when the corn begins to fill, is worth a plough of oxen, and all belongs theretill; Rain in May, makes the hay; Midsummer rain spoils hay and grain; Midsummer rain spoils wine, stock and grain) and wind directions (e.g. If the wind's in the east on Easter Day, you'll have plenty of grass, but little good hay; If the wind is northeast at vernal equinox, it will be a good season for wheat and a poor for corn; but is south or southwest, it will be good for corn and bad for wheat; The south, with his showers, refreshes the corn; the west to all flowers may not be forlorn; The wind of the south will be productive of heat and fertility; the wind of the west, of milk and fish; the wind from the north, of cold and storm; the wind from the east, of fruit on the trees) to give possible information of what is likely to occur in the near or distant future and plan various agricultural tasks, such as, e.g. sowing and reaping (e.g. Sow dry and plant wet). Note that the above-mentioned proverb Make hay while the sun shines may function as solid advice to farmers by clearly specifying the suggested type of action but it also might be used metaphorically in various contexts to encourage people to take advantage of a good situation and act appropriately.

The next group of people who repeatedly observed nature and weather conditions, and consequently learned how to foretell the approaching weather on the basis of, for instance rain or wind directions, are **fishermen** (12 proverbial texts). The relation between weather and obvious fisherman's activities within the analysed proverbs/signs/superstitions can be inferred from the text's wording because of the constituent elements, such as *fish/fisher/fisherman*, as exemplified by (e.g. Near the surface, quick to bite, catch your fish when rain's in sight; When the wind's in the north, you need not go forth; when the wind's in the south, the bait goes into their mouth; when the wind's in the west, the fish will bite the best; When the wind is in the north, the skilful fisher goes forth). In turn, a suggested fishermen's action, dependent on the circumstances provided in an implicit way, may be illustrated by the following proverbs under such key words as rain, wind, sun: *Fish bite best before a rain; Fish bite least with wind in the east; Wind right, sun right, fish bite; When the wind is in the east, the fisher likes it least; when the wind is from the west, the fisher likes it best; Fisherman in anger froth, when the wind is in the north; for fish bite best, when the wind is in west; When the wind is in the north, then the fishes do come forth; Wind from the north scares the fishes off; When the wind is south, it blows the bait to the fish's mouth; When the wind is west, the fish bite best.*

Travellers (6 proverbial texts) make up another representative group of people in the examined proverbial texts who relied on weather lore to foretell near or more distant future atmospheric conditions. They closely observed

the colours/signs of the sky (e.g. *If at morning the sky is red, it bids the traveler stay in bed; Evening red (sky) and morning gray will send the traveler on his way, but evening gray and morning red will bring rain down upon his head*)⁹ and the clouds (e.g. *Red clouds in the morning, a traveler's warning; red clouds at night, a traveler's delight*) or other climatic conditions, such as rain (e.g. *All who travel in rain, get wet; For morning rain leave not your journey*) or wind (e.g. *South or north [wind], sally forth; west or east, travel least*) and learned to explain and foresee the current or future state of weather. In the proverbs shown above the lexical items *to travel*, *traveller* and *journey* expressly point to the exact addressee of the proverb, thus not only their content but also referent matches the discussed group of the subcategory analysed in the study.

Finally, as emerges from the analysis the least numerous group are **shepherds** (4 proverbial texts) who also showed a keen sense of observation of natural phenomena and weather conditions and quickly associated changes in nature with rhythms or patterns of weather and recalled them in the form of short predictive sayings often embodied in rhyme for ease of memory. The implied link between weather and shepherds' potential deeds, being obvious because of such constitutive elements as *shepherd* or *lamb*, may be demonstrated by the following proverbs, which implicitly suggest an action: *A red sky at night is the shepherd's delight, a red sky in the morning is the shepherd's warning; The circle of the sun wets a shepherd*, whereas a clearly defined action may be depicted on the basis of the following proverbial text *Red (sky) in the west, the lamb and 'll go safe to rest*.¹⁰ Note that shepherds also closely scrutinised the behaviour of animals and through repeated observation learned to foresee the weather, as in e.g. *When sheep do huddle by tree and bush, bad weather is coming with wind and slush*.

Last but not least, within the category of weather statements in relation to human action under the discussed key words one can also encounter a large number of texts whose message applies to weather and a clearly specified human action, but the precise referent is not identified, thus they lie outside the scope of present analysis. The discussed point may be illustrated by, for example, *After you have seen a rosy sky, make preparations for a hailstorm; When the wind backs, and the weather glass falls, then be on your guard against gales and squalls*. It might only be presumed, though, that the hearer/addressee of

⁹ Note that predicting the weather by the signs of the sky might be directed towards a sailor, shepherd, traveler, etc., as in *Red sky at night, sailor's delight; red sky in the morning, sailors take warning; A red sky at night is the shepherd's delight, a red sky in the morning is the shepherd's warning; If at morning the sky be red, it bids the traveler stay in bed*.

¹⁰ The discussed proverb, however, as mentioned above may also be applicable to another referent, namely a farmer.

the proverb could be either an average person or somebody of the occupation whose life and work chiefly depend on weather and could be particularly affected by its sudden changes.

3. Conclusion

As stated in the foregoing, in the literature of the subject (see, e.g. Baran 2015: 315) one can read that proverbs/sayings concerning weather possess a certain unique characteristic which makes them fairly different from other proverbial thematic categories. This distinctive feature results from the fact that climates and weather patterns vary throughout the world, and a weather-related proverb/saying based on observations in one area may not be valid in other locations. In particular some proverbial weather signs, cannot easily migrate and disseminate abroad, and consequently cannot become universally understood and applied in various linguo-cultures (see Kochman-Haładaj 2018). To put it differently, due to geographical, climatic or natural reasons they may be only applicable in a given form and meaning in the culture where they originated.¹¹ However, on the basis of the proverbs/signs/superstitions discussed above it might be concluded that the aforementioned tendency does not seem to unreservedly apply to the proverbial texts analysed within the selected occupations because in some cases their content appears to be fairly universal and thus may be prevalent in other languages as well. For example, such English weather signs as the one provided in the analytical part *Mackerel sky and mare's tails, make lofty ships carry low sails* may possess broader geographical and linguistic distribution as an identical text may be found in another European language, i.e. Polish *Makrelowe niebo i pierzaste chmury na wysokich masztach zdejmuj żagle z góry*¹² or its quite similar versions in terms of meaning in languages outside Europe, for example *Black clouds bring rain* (Persian) or *Clouds are the sign of rain* (African) (see Kingsbury et al. 1996: 5).

Another general conclusion that may be formulated from the analysis, but which was already alluded in the initial section of the study, is that proverbs/sayings about weather are truly much the same as proverbs

¹¹ An illustrative example which refers to the discussed point is an American weather sign *It's always cool weather when the chinquapin blooms* (note that the *chinquapin* is a North American chestnut tree).

¹² For more examples of weather signs that have a larger linguistic distribution in the European languages, see Szpila (2003: 69).

of other thematic groups in terms of treating them as speech acts because, like other formulaic utterances, weather proverbs/sayings are meant to accomplish diverse social pragmatical functions of, among others, warning, advising, urging, prophesying or as presented above in terms of suggesting or pushing people to do something or deterring them from some action on the basis of climatic conditions. In other words, besides its various pragmatical functions, the ultimate intention of enunciating a weather proverb is to direct people towards doing something good or prevent them from a wrong action. Thus, the analysed weather proverbs/signs/superstitions are often intended to be indirect speech acts and therefore can be truly viewed as such because the speaker of the proverbial text is not merely uttering the words concerning atmospheric settings but performing a certain linguistic act for a particular social purpose, i.e. committing another person/persons to an action proposed by the linguistic signs that a proverb is made up of. More precisely, the user expects or wants the hearer to do something in accordance with the suggestion presupposed in the wording of the proverb in question, as in e.g. *If the rain comes before the wind, lower your topsails and take them in; if the wind comes before the rain, lower your topsails and hoist them again*, which besides its suggested action may also be perceived as advice, recommendation or warning. Here the proverb is employed both nonlinearly and indirectly because the speaker avoids bluntly directing their audience and resorts to a proverb to soften the effect by distancing himself/herself from the advice or warning, letting the general wisdom implied in the proverb do the talking. Therefore, it might be generalised that proverbs/signs/superstitions about weather are indirectly exploited to convey a particular directive speech act. Besides, as stressed in the foregoing, due to the fact that they are actualized in the context of everyday communication, only then can one be certain of the exact literal meaning and proper interpretation as for a suggested action and a precise receiver towards whom the proverb/sign/superstition is directed. The discussed controversial point might be exemplified by *When the wind backs, and the weather glass falls, then be on your guard against gales and squalls*, where neither the precise type of speech act nor the exact referent is apparent. Another uncertainty may be related to the situation when the addressee is obvious from the proverb's wording but the action is not clearly expressed, as in, e.g. *Red clouds in the morning, a traveler's warning; red clouds at night, a traveler's delight*, where the text is seen not only as a statement of weather prophecy, but also implicitly expresses the illocutionary act of exhorting someone to travel or refrain from taking a journey.

In addition to that, as alluded to in the analytical part consisting of seventy-one (71) weather texts, a different criterion for division of weather statements was adopted. And, as stems from the analysis, a more numerous group of proverbs/sayings found in the corpus under chosen key words constitute the ones that are not underlined (38 out of 71). These are the proverbial texts in which their content implying a specific activity is only determined by the context. Thus, they do not contain any constitutive words that convey a specific action, occurrence or state of being, but they merely indirectly insinuate a need to take some sort of action in accordance with the observed state of the weather. Put another way, in a given context a hearer can interpret the speaker's communicative intention not from the proverb's linguistic devices but rather from extra-linguistic unconventional devices, as exemplified in *When at sea, if the stratocumulus cloud appear on the horizon, it is a sign that the weather is going to break up*. The other slightly less numerous group in terms of the number of occurrences (33 out of 71) constitutes the ones meant to be speech acts in which their exact meaning in terms of taking a specific activity is explicitly delivered, as in e.g. *To get wind when sailing, stick a knife blade into the mast*. Nevertheless, in both groups the exact referent within the discussed occupations is quite apparent because of relevant constituents in the texts' wording.

It is also to be noted that within the analysed proverbial texts that implicitly encourage referents to act in a certain way there are proverbial texts that may be classified as belonging to a controversial group. These are the weather proverbs/sayings in which there appear certain verb structures applied to the specific receiver, yet a concrete action is not clearly specified. The aforesaid cases, for instance in the group directed towards sailors, are as follows: *The wind gall or prismatic coloring of the clouds is considered by sailors a sign of rain; Clouds in the morning, sailors take warning; Red sky at night, sailor's (or shepherd's) delight; red sky in the morning, sailors take warning; When the evening is gray and morning is red, the sailor is sure to have a wet head; Sailors call just enough blue sky to wipe one's face with a precursor of fine weather; When scattered patches or streaks of nimbus (cloud) come driving up from the southwest, they are called by the sailors "Prophet Clouds," and indicate wind; A small cloudless place in the northwest horizon is regarded both by seamen and landmen as a certain precursor of fine weather or a clearing up; Winds at night are always bright, but winds in the morning, sailors take a warning*.

Moreover, in accordance with what has been mentioned above, indeed a large majority (65) of the analysed proverbial texts referring to weather and human action in the study are expressed in the form of a weather sign, which most frequently maintains a consistent meaning regardless of the context and

is to be interpreted literally, as exemplified by, e.g. *When the wind is in the north, the skilful fisher goes forth*. However, there are also single instances of true proverbs (4), such as, e.g. *If you sail with a bad wind, you must understand tacking; Every wind is ill to a crazy ship; Slow wind also brings the ship to harbor*, which may be used metaphorically in various contexts. Let us, for instance, take a closer look at the proverb *Make hay while the sun shines*, which besides its literal advice directed towards farmers may also be applicable in other contexts unrelated to weather in the sense of taking advantage of favourable conditions and making the most of an opportunity when it is available. Furthermore, one can also encounter two examples of superstitions (2) which have no rational or scientific basis, are to be interpreted literally and impose constraints with regard to certain behaviours. The discussed instances are *If sailors can catch a louse, and put him on the leech of the mainsail, wind is promised, provided the louse crawl upward; To get wind when sailing, stick a knife blade into the mast*.

The final, but no less important, remark concerns the observation suggested by Kleiber (2000: 46) where the author states that pure weather proverbs refer directly or primarily to human activities, while weather sayings/signs and other superstitions may refer to them but only indirectly. However, according to what has been shown in the analysis of the study such a distinction does not seem to apply here because many of the underlined weather signs provided above refer to human action in a direct way, due to the constituent element in the text's grammatical structure indicating a need to take a clearly identified action, as in, e.g. *Near the surface, quick to bite, catch your fish when rain's in sight*.

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Przysłowia/powiedzenia pogodowe jako sposoby nawoływania ludzi do podjęcia lub powstrzymania się od działania

Streszczenie

Celem artykułu jest próba analizy przysłów/powiedzeń dotyczących pogody w odniesieniu do ludzkiego działania z wykorzystaniem podejścia semantycznego, często stosowanego w analizie języko-kulturowej. Jednostki paremiologiczne zostały zaczerpnięte ze słownika pt. *Weather wisdom: proverbs, superstitions, and signs* (1996). Pod wybranymi słowami kluczowymi, takimi jak *deszcz, chmura, niebo, wiatr i słońce*, związanymi z pięcioma zawodami, tj. marynarzami, rolnikami, podróżnikami, rybakami i pasterzami, dwie grupy badanych przysłów/znaków/przesądów pogodowych są wyróżnione i analizowane pod kątem ich treści i potencjalnego adresata. Jak się okazuje w jednej kategorii bezpośrednie i/lub sugerowane działanie ludzkie nie jest wyraźnie stwierdzone, np. *Wind right, sun right, fish bite*. Druga kategoria tekstów pogodowych to taka, w której przysłowie/powiedzenie dotyczące pogody wyraźnie sugeruje potrzebę podjęcia określonej czynności, np. *When wind comes before rain, soon you may make sail again*. Ogólnym wnioskiem jest stwierdzenie, że przysłowia/znaki/przesady, które wyrażają związek między warunkami atmosferycznymi a działaniem człowieka, bezpośrednio lub pośrednio zachęcają swoich odbiorców do korzystania ze sprzyjającej pogody i podjęcia danej czynności bądź też ostrzegają przed jakimś konkretnym działaniem ze względu na złe warunki pogodowe. To co interesuje najbardziej w pragmatycznej analizie przysłów/powiedzeń pogodowych jest dokładny odbiorca i/lub rodzaj czynności implikowany przez dany tekst paremiologiczny, i co stanowi kolejną istotną kwestię niniejszego artykułu.

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Better Familiar Bad than Unfamiliar Good. Re-evaluation of Common Values by Proverb Use

Abstract. The premise of this study is to expect that proverbs live by being reinterpreted or transformed to suit pluralistic and ambiguous commonplace situations. The proverbs are either transformed or framed in the situations in order to be interpreted according to the aims of their users. The content of proverbs, interpreted through metaphors or without, emphasis concrete, reasonable and predictable things as esteemed aims. A familiar proverb justifies a decision, which supports traditional procedures. But in ambiguous decision situations these normally agreed upon values do not always function. This study aims to clarify, how a familiar proverb pattern may serve as a triggering factor for the acceptance of otherwise doubtful opinions. The Matti Kuusi international typology of proverbs is used for measuring the emphasis of common values in traditional proverb lore. General patterns make impressive modifications possible. The author will demonstrate, how the modifications work in traditional and social media.

Key words: *typology of proverbs, proverb usage, patterns of proverbs, social media*

1. Background for the aim of this study

The so called “wisdom of many” is a concept undefinable enough to be promoted as national heritage. It is easy to say that this national heritage, which one can call ‘proverb lore’, strengthens, supports and maintains common values. But what does a common or shared value mean? In this study the starting point is to use the Matti Kuusi international type system of proverbs (Lauhakangas 2001). Proverbs typically remind next generations with the experienced voice of the previous generations of the unchangeable reality of inequality, permanency of pairs like ‘man and God’, ‘masters and hired men’, ‘the rich and the poor’, women’s place and right hi-

erarchy. If we look closer at the spectrum of proverb texts of each language or dialects of different people, we will soon find out that many proverb texts seem to carry ironic attitudes maintained by poor, especially rural people.

In an example from the Finnish tradition *Köyhä on aina väärässä* (lit. The poor man is always wrong) you can hear an ironic voice of experience. Same testimony comes from Estonian tradition: *Kel raha sel õigus*. (lit. He who has the money has the right). A proverb in German tradition takes this observation even further: *Wer gelt hat, der mag alles recht machen, was unrecht ist* (lit. The one with money can turn any unjust just).

Proverbs have preserved most of their familiar images and wordings. At least every dialect put their flavor to them or they have got local additions and humorous contexts like e.g. in an Irish wellerism "*There isn't any luck except where there's discipline*", as the son said while beating his father¹. Same kind of process is going on nowadays concerning new proverb like expressions, those, which find their ways to slang or jargon of special communities or those which spread quickly out by international contacts in social media.

The aim of this study is to find a representative way to follow the social strategies of proverb use. The focus is on re-evaluation of common values. What are the means of supporting your arguments in ambiguous situations? In the next chapters we will find a productive pattern of proverb to demonstrate how proverbial transformations develop.

2. How to strengthen less obvious reasoning?

Although dimensions of values are quite universal and not comparable with each other, they have an order in people's world view². Ambiguous decision situations may test the order of values of people involved. They raise a need to use an apt proverb. A discussion about artificial intelligence is a typical topic to arouse critical feelings about future. For an expert of future research there is a challenge to interpret the predictable situation. Re-evaluating a preconceived opinion may succeed by referring to an old and familiar proverb. A discussion in a Finnish radio program brought up

¹ This Irish wellerism is excerpted from Carson Williams (2002: 261).

² The ten basic values by Schwartz (1992): Self-Direction. Stimulation. Hedonism. Achievement. Power. Security. Conformity. Tradition. Benevolence. Universalism. Every value can be characterized by describing its central motivational goal.

an example of how a proverb can be referred to as a well-known concept. In the next fragment of the discussion one of the debaters refers to a universal proverb (type A1a 17 in Kuusi's typology), *Fire is a good servant but a bad master*, which she expects to be familiar to Finnish radio listeners.

This is the traditional '*Fire – hired man or the master*' question. We have got along with fire from ancient times, then why not with artificial intelligence? (Leena Romppainen, Electronic Frontier Finland, in a morning radio program 'Ykkösaamu' of Yle1, 24th of August, 2018.)

Contacts to other cultures cause a pressure for a traditional or narrow point of view to check if the adopted personal procedure is working. The communication situation may sometimes be so tricky that normally agreed upon values are difficult to recognize from the comments. This is how an example taken from recent international politics can be read.

The participation of North Korea in the PyeongChang Olympic Winter Games in South Korea had not as much news value as the meeting of those countries itself, according to Reuters. The initiative for discussions came from the North. The chairman of North Korea's Committee for Peaceful Reunification, Ri Songwon said very metaphorically: "This winter there have been more snow storms than ever, and rivers and mountains are frozen. It is not exaggeration to say that the relations between Koreas have been even more frozen."

The South Korea unification chief Cho Myoung-gyon answered: "*The first step is half the journey, but the first spoon doesn't yet fill the stomach.*" (Reuters, 9th of January, 2017)

The purpose of the above communication may be just to say something assertive and metaphorical from one side and from the other side to answer similarly without giving any possibility that the comment would become exhaustively interpreted. Thus, the analyzers of both parties are left to evaluate the "opinions" in a way they want to do it.

At its best, new circumstances may transform attitudes, *Do at Rome as the Romans do*. Suitable proverbs are used to strengthen the less obvious reasoning. A good example of making an argument against the normal order how 'own and familiar' always goes before 'strange and foreign' is a south-west African proverb *Iitsikalya yi vule iikunwa*, which tells that "Transplanted grain is stronger than one grown from seed". It is explained: A member of a foreign tribe becomes a courtier. (Kuusi 1970: nb 1989.) Thus, foreigners are not automatically suspects. Besides, you should understand that you in turn will be a foreigner in another country.

Another southwest African proverb deals with the value of promises. The practice to give real help rather than only a promise is valued. *Okukondela ku vule oku hala* (lit. Gathering for someone is better than wishing, *ibid.* 370.) An interesting and seemingly differing from the European view is the proverb *Etimaumbwile li vule ekuta*. (lit. A promise of a meal is better than a full stomach, *ibid.* 153.) It represents a deviation of a common European proverb type (J1i 23 in Matti Kuusi international type system), which says that *Besser ist wenig besitzen als viel zu erwarten* (lit. Better to own a little than to wait for a lot). It also seems to deviate from other proverb types that warn about trusting on promises J1i³. European mind does not catch the possibility to get strength from a promise in hard circumstances. In African wisdom 'a promise of meal' means a request to orientate to the next meal. If we look closer at the proverb, it does not mean to rely on anybody's promise. Actually, southwestern African people would rely on continuous trying, *Onkambadhala yi vule mwena* (lit. Trying is better than nothing, *ibid.* 1801.) unlike an English proverb, which teaches: *Better never begun than never ended*. (In Kuusi's typology M6c 21)

Another interpretation of the aforementioned African 'promise of a meal' brings it nearer to a universal advice, in which proverbs serve to postpone concrete and immediate results. This is the main message in the previous mentioned group M6c⁴ E.g. *With patience all is done* (Greek). Direct, close at hand or easy satisfaction of one's needs are recommended to be delayed. That is how it is also taught in Marathi, India: *If you bear trouble, you will see happiness*.

We must ask, what a common or shared value might mean inside one culture or one and the same language area. Use of proverbs most often reinforces traditional or shared values inside one culture. Still in practice, in recurrent situations of proverb use a familiar proverb is often called for to explain or justify someone's personal opinion or decision. Proverbial speech is suitable when some outward support is needed in an ambiguous situation (Lauhakangas 2004). Those situations can be morally difficult or only in hindsight clear.

³ J1i = subgroup is 'promises and keeping one's promises'.

⁴ M6c subgroup is 'enterprise, perseverance and toughness are more valuable than shortsightedness, giving up easily, the easy way'.

3. The aims of comparing in proverbs

3.1. 'Better' as an opening of a proverb pattern

It seems a universal pattern of proverbs to begin with a comparative adjective 'better'. In any alphabetically arranged European proverb collection you find a long list of proverbs beginning with 'Better'. A quick check to a collection of Chinese proverbs compiled by John S. Rohsenow (2002) proves that this holds true for Chinese tradition, too. 'Nìng' (Better) is repeated e.g. in proverbs like the following

N49. *Nìng chī guòtóu fān; mò shuō guòtóu huà.* (lit. It is better to overeat than to overstate.)

N50. *Nìng chī xiān táo yīkǒu; bù chī làn xìng yī kuāng.* (lit. It is better to have only one mouthful of the celestial peach than to eat a basket of rotten apricots.)
Figurative meaning: It is better to have fewer and better than to have more but worse; quality is more important than quantity.

In Matti Kuusi's *Ovambo proverbs* (1970) collection this opening formula is missing, but from the word index you can check that there are proverbs with the same idea including the word 'vula' (lit. 'to be better' or 'to surpass'). Thus the 'Better x than y' pattern is universal enough to reveal the ways people deal with general and expected values in their society.

Browsing *The Matti Kuusi international type system of proverbs* (Lauhakangas 2001) you get an overview of what values or aims are positive and esteemed practically in every human community. In the first place, you are reminded of the value of concrete, reasonable and predictable things contrasted to uncertain and imaginary things. E.g. *Better an egg today than a hen tomorrow* or *Besser ist wenig besitzen als viel zu erwarten* (lit. Better to own a little than to wait for a lot). This idea is in its clearest in Kuusi's subclass C3c "Concrete, close at hand and certain is better than distant, uncertain or something only in the future". You should be satisfied, if you have resources like 'near', 'sure', 'today', 'concretely in hand', 'already caught' and 'own', although resources would be much fewer than those 'far', 'intangible', 'strange', 'not yet caught', 'promised' and 'wished'.

Proverbs having the idea of Kuusi's subclass C3c:

C3c 11 *Better an egg today than a hen tomorrow / Besser heute ein Ei als morgen ihrer drei / Ad praesens ova cras pullis sunt meliora (Latin) / È meglio oggi l'uovo che domani la gallina*

C3c 12 *A bird in the hand is worth two in the bush / A sparrow in hand is better than a pigeon on the roof / Besser ein kleiner Fisch, als gar nicht auf dem Tisch*

C3c 15 *Stretch your legs according to your coverlet / Make not your tail broader than your wings / Cut your coat according to your cloth / Strecke dich nach der Decke / Selon le drap la robe*

C3c 20 *Catch the bear before you sell the skin / First catch your hare, then cook it / Vender l'ucello sulla frasca / A supposed antelope is not cooking in the pot (Ovambo/Afr.)*

C3c 22 *Catch not a shadow and lose the substance / Ein Gewiss ist besser als zehn Ungewiss / Mal si lascia il certo per l'incerto*

The social strategy⁵ of proverbial speech is to increase our readiness to accept hardships and value things not obviously satisfying. Another subclass of the Matti Kuusi typology E1d “minor, inferior, late etc. is better than nothing” deals with a question of conforming to deprivation, misfortune or minimal resources. Proverbs convince that ‘a little’, ‘one small fish’, ‘half an egg’, ‘bad bread’, ‘wishy-washy broth’, ‘dirty water’, ‘some of pudding’, ‘a little stream’, ‘patched cloth’, ‘bare-foot’, ‘one-eyed’, ‘a bad bush’ (as a shelter) or ‘late’ is good enough if it is compared to ‘none’, ‘empty’, ‘never’, ‘being without’, ‘loosing much’, ‘being empty-handed’, ‘stone (totally) blind’, ‘empty shell’, ‘a hole out’, ‘naked’, ‘legless’ or ‘in the grave’.

E1d 10 *A little is better than none / Etwas ist besser als gar nichts / È meglio qualche cosa che niente*

E1d 12 *Better one small fish than an empty dish / A louse is better than no meat / È meglio tale che senza nulla stare*

E1d 14 *Better half an egg than an empty shell / In der Not frisst der Teufel Fliegen*

E1d 15 *Better some of pudding than none of a pie / Besser Laus im Kohl als gar kein Fleisch*

E1d 17 *A little stream will quench a great thirst / An kleinem Brunnen löscht man auch den Durst*

E1d 19 *Better a clout than a hole out*

E1d 20b *There is no hair so small but has its shadow / es ist kein Busch so klein, daß er nicht Schatten gäbe / il n'est si petit buisson qui ne porte son ombre*

E1d 22 *Better one-eyed than stone-blind / Besser schein als blind*

E1d 23 *A bad bush is better than no shelter*

E1d 27 *Better lose much than lose more / Better lose the saddle than the horse / Besser ein Arm als den Hals gebrochen / Meglio perdere un dito che la mano*

E1d 28 *Better late than never / It is never too late to mend / Zur Bässerung ist es nie zu spät / Mai troppo tardi per far bene / Potius sero quam nunquam (Latin)*

⁵ Proverbs in communication can be seen as ‘social strategy’ as K. Burke (1957) already did.

The sub-classes H2b and H4b underline the importance of ownership, self-sufficiency and home district compared to dependence on others and strange places.

H2b 21 *Dry bread at home is better than roast meat abroad / Unser Kohl schmeckt wohl / Et proprius panis magis extat in ore suavis*

H4b 24 *Smoke of a man's own house is better than the fire of another's / Fremdes Feuer ist nicht so hell wie der Rauch daheim / Patriae fumus igne alieno luculentior* (Latin)

Interestingly, proverbs with the better-opening do not always follow just predictable pairs of comparison. Although better-proverbs mostly promote ethic and pedagogical rules of the community, they can serve as justifications for deviations. This may base on the use of proverbs most often in tense situations. Although proverbs ground on tradition and familiarity, the use of proverbs may aim at reasoning nonconformist argumentation.

In the same way use of proverb patterns can justify nonconformist claims dressed in familiar clothes. The strict rules and social order are a good breeding ground for creating exceptions and comparisons that change habitual ways of thinking.

3.2. 'Better x than y' proverb pattern and nonconformist argumentation

Many proverbs beginning with 'Better' seem to represent a not self-evident comparison. They rather pursue and peddle us to satisfy with the given conditions and recommend us to appreciate a value that is not obvious.

Better a good name than riches

Better go to bed supperless than rise in debt

Better be first in a village than second at Rome

Better alone than in bad company.

If you consider the social contexts of proverb use, the value supported by the proverb text can be either accepted or questioned. In studying of proverb use you can apply analysis of rhetoric studies. In situations, where some tension is present, use of a proverb is most often aimed to settle the ambiguity (Lauhakangas 2004). The basic idea of rhetoric from the point of view of a speaker (analyzed by Perelman, 1996: 28) is to relocate the listener's approval of the opponent's previous suggestion to the speaker's opinion. It requires a linkage between these different opinions. The speaker has to persuade the listener(s) to take a new way to regard the difference. The speaker may underline that she/he accepts the opposite point of view, but (s)he converts it as a part of her/his way of understanding while enhancing her/his own opinion. Using a proverb is a signal of the speaker's need

to position the main point of the discussion in an acceptable way and often it is a signal of the speaker's effort to get the last word.

There are also grammatical ways to prepare the ground for acceptance of your new idea. Anneli Kauppinen (2006) writes about consonance or compatibility between opinions reached in negotiations. The Finnish way to use conjunction 'vaikka' ('although' or 'despite') is a practical tool for that. You can find this way to position the message with 'vaikka' conjunction in Finnish proverbs, too. A Finnish-Karelian proverb expresses an ostensibly contradictory request *Ilo pintaa vaik syvään määrätköö*. (lit. Show your joy, although your heart will rot.)

Many traditional proverbs live even nowadays by being framed or transformed to suit pluralistic and ambiguous commonplace situations. Framing can be the way how the proverb user interprets the situation and maybe marks it. You might introduce a proverb by mentioning that "there is a worn-out saying", which is still true or remind what your "grandmother used to say". A proverb can also be reframed, for example, in a comic mode like a joke, which can be adapted to the everyday issues of its user. That is a way to redefine, understand and organize daily matters (Laineste 2008: 31).

If framing or even reframing is not enough, a common proverb must be transformed according to the aims of their users. For this we have a kind of build-in ability to recognize proverb formulae. Instead of an original proverb the familiar proverb pattern serves as a triggering factor for the acceptance of our opinion.

3.3. Transformation of familiar better-than comparisons

A proverb transformation is efficient, if you turn the familiar claim around. The new point of view to a common proverb *Action speaks louder than words* (J1h 17) or in Finnish *Tee enemmän, puhu vähemmän* (lit. Do more, speak less) can be reached by a proverb-like expression *Parempi puhe kuin teot* (lit. Better speech than acts). The host in the Radio Speech (The Finnish Broadcasting canal Yle-Radio Puhe) applied this slogan explaining it with another more familiar claim "You change the world by speech" (2018). Turning around the comparison between action and words forces the listener to define the general value of action anew. Speech can be action.

In the next example Oleg Vishnepolsky has created a proverb like expression as a title for his short story (almost a tweet): "*Better to have a good boss in a bad company, rather than a bad boss in a good company!*" Vishnepolsky tells a story that ends well and in the end he mentions a crucial criterion for recognizing a good boss: "You can tell a good boss very quickly by how they

treat other people". The habitual way of thinking would presumably be getting a job in a good company – but Vishnepolsky wants to make a divergent assertion. He changes the agenda: Try to get a good boss. He hurries to tell that the company of that good boss was actually also good, but he would have been ready to work with him even in worse conditions, because he(or she) will stand up for you, will trust you, will listen to you, will make yours a good job even in a weak company."⁶

What is a normative way to say something contrary to norms? E.g. the rational norm is according to the universal proverb 'The shoe should fit the foot and not the foot the shoe'. But you can target to somebody a Karelian proverb *Paremb rakko jallas kun ruppi kengäs* (lit. Better a bristle in your foot than a crinkle in your shoe). Using this proverb you do not exactly reveal your opinion. It can be taken as a parody of the reasonable norm 'Better a crinkle in your shoe than a bristle in your foot'. You have also learned the suitable tone and context to use it: "Said mocking" or "an opinion of a snob" (Miettinen; Leino 1971: nb 7721.). But (contrary to those explanations) there might be situations, where it would be just a right moment to defend your opinion that it is better to endure a little pain than stop smiling, at least in societies where attracting positive attention is more valued than revealing loser's looks.

In order to say something from a new point of view and even contrary to common norms often requires a trick like an anti-proverb. Anti-proverbs or twisted proverbs are most often based on linguistic structures that remain the same even as slight verbal changes introduce dramatically new images and ideas (Litovkina 2014: 333). Some of them are easily translatable like an ancient wisdom with a modern addition: *To err is human – to totally muck things up needs a computer* (Mieder, Litovkina 2006: 9–10).

3.4. Better good –x than bad +x

If you browse the Matti Kuusi typology in order to find material of proverbs with the better-comparison structure, you will notice how often a thing of seemingly little worth combined to something esteemed is compared to a desirable thing combined to something bad. In the Table 1, there are at first three Karelian proverb examples (1)–(3), which are equal in their structure: Better good –x than bad +x. The first (–)loaded part combined with a (+)qualifier and the second (+)loaded part with a (–)qualifier.

⁶ <https://www.linkedin.com/pulse/better-have-good-boss-bad-company-rather-than-agree-oleg-vishnepolsky/> November 21, 2017, Global CTO at DailyMail Online and Metro.Co.Uk (visited 17.12.2018).

Table 1. Karelian proverbs

The Karelian proverb ⁷	The first member of comparison (-)	+ qualifier	The second member of comparison (+)	- qualifier
1. Better a copper at home than a rouble in the village.	copper ~penny	c. at home	rouble ~pound	r. in the village
2. Better be a good man's whore than a bad man's wife.	whore	good man's wh.	wife	bad man's old wife.
3. Better a wise bad (man) than a stupid good (man).	bad man	wise b. m.	good man	stupid g. m.
4. Better to escape than to die as young. (Karelian)	escape (-/+?)		die (-)	die as young (+/-?)

Source: own research.

The last Karelian proverb type (4) *Parmeibi on pagenemiini kun nuorena kuolemiini*. (Ibid. 7702.) does not fit to the common pattern of the three first proverbs. According to Kuusi's type system the positive idea of escaping (4) occurs at least in German, Greek and Persian proverb lore (M4d 23). An African proverb also tells that 'The wise person runs away and saves him/herself'. (4) seems to disclaim the common value of man's honor to die in the battle as a young hero, which bases both on the European⁸ and Oriental tradition: 'Better die in honor than live in disgrace' (Vietnamese, F1a 23 in Kuusi's typology). Its masculinity and virility are connected to fighting as in a Japanese proverb: 'Life seems insignificant compared to honor for a warrior'. Escaping gets its positive load from the comparison to the second part of the proverb.

This difference of proverb contents does not prove from straight hand anything about the cultural differences, because the popularity of proverbs differ and those expressions always get their tone from the actual situations of their usage. It is still important to study different emphasis of same means (in this case proverbs) in various cultures and value systems.

⁷ Karelian proverbs in the original language

(1) Parembi on kodihine kopeikka kun kylähine rupla. (Miettinen & Leino 1971: 7673.)

(2) Parempi hyvän miehen huora kuin pahan miehen akka. (Ibid. 7657.)

(3) Parembi on viizas paha ku tuhmu hyvä. (Ibid. 7754.)

⁸ For example, Tyrtaeus of Sparta (7th century BC) was a Greek elegiac poet on military themes.

An experiment done by the Google search machine using a text string “is better than bad” offered the following proverb-like expressions.

It is better to be alone than in bad company. – George Washington

War is better than bad peace

Good war is better than bad peace

Divorce is better than bad marriage

No company is better than bad company

Loneliness is better than bad company अकेलापन बुरा कंपनी से बेहतर है Hindi

*No news is better than bad news*⁹

No advice is better than bad advice

Good silence is better than bad argument

No policy is better than bad policy

The productivity of a special structure in the above listed examples with comparison of ‘No x is better than bad x’ leads us to study further this way of supporting an argument.

3.5. ‘No x is better than bad x’ as a proverb-like pattern

We just learned in the chapter 3.1. that “minor, inferior, late etc. is better than nothing” (E1d in Kuusi’s typology) is a commonly supported proverb idea. Same kind of proverbial thinking is in Kuusi’s proverb types elsewhere, too: *A bad compromise is better than a good lawsuit* (H7k 15). Same idea is in a German proverb *Ein schlechter Friede ist besser als ein gerechter Krieg* (lit. A bad peace is better than a righteous war) and in Livius’ maxim *Melior tutiorque est certa pax, quam sperata victoria* (lit. sure peace is better and safer than a hope for victory). The proverb *Even a bad decision is better than no decision* also belongs to this way of thinking. We can take an example of Finnish use of this proverb in context.

During July 2018 the world news agencies followed efforts of rescuers in Thailand, where a football team of youths had got into isolation in the Tham Luang cave. The rescuers (one of them a Finnish diver) were in a situation where they were expected to bring twelve boys and their football coach out of the cave before monsoon rains on the weekend or the boys may be trapped for the monsoon season.

⁹ This may have originated with King James I of England, who allegedly said *No news is better than evil news* (1616). *The American Heritage® Idioms Dictionary*. But nowadays more common is the one ending with a positive load: *No news is good news*, a slogan, which became internationally common during the World Wars.

A Finnish diving trainer Jouni Piispanen commented for the newscast: “When rescuers soon will have only a limited time, they see that *even a bad decision is better than no decision*. Having back to the wall they are obliged to make some decision.”¹⁰

We could happily follow the news for the next 10 days to witness that the decision to act was inevitable and a success. The proverb got its confirmation.

Contrary to this traditional proverb idea you can find the same proverb pattern turned around like in the title of this chapter. Discussion forums in the Internet use this kind of reasoning. One example comes from Patrick Meier’s *irevolutions.org* pages. He tells about the lively discussion, which followed his question about the argument *No data is better than bad data*. Meier had heard this proverb-like slogan used before.

I recently tweeted the following: “*No data is better than bad data...*” really? if you have no data, how do you know it’s bad data? Doh.

This prompted a surprising number of DM’s, follow-up emails and even two in-person conversations. Everyone wholeheartedly agreed with my tweet, which was a delayed reaction to a response I got from a journalist who works for The Economist who in a rather derisive tone tweeted that “no data is better than bad data.” This is of course not the first time I’ve heard this statement so lets explore this issue further (...)¹¹

Bob Martens deals with the same proverb-like argument, when he writes about business and technology. He starts a discussion asking if *No data is better than bad data*.

nateberan: Too many people create data then put it in places or in formats where it just goes to die a lonely death. With all your data there should be a strategy for its useful life.

BM: Absolutely. That’s the other side of it.

Itskeptic: I’m inclined to think *bad data is better than no data* SO LONG AS YOU KNOW IT IS BAD. – – The trick then is to start measuring folk using it. They’ll soon fix it :)

BM: I still think no data is better since it forces a person to think. You have nothing else to base your decision off of. Give humans an “out” and they’ll choose the path of least responsibility almost every time. – In the same breath, ideally you’d know what you are working with and then make decisions with both eyes open.¹²

¹⁰ Yle News in the Finnish Broadcasting company 4.7.2018.

¹¹ <https://irevolutions.org/2011/06/22/no-data-bad-data/> (visited 17.12.2018).

¹² <http://bobmartens.net/2015/04/no-data-is-better-than-bad-data/> (visited 17.12.2018).

Marten seems to keep the last word when he closes the conversation and serves his own opinion that “no data is better since it forces a person to think”. This way of using the proverb-like expression resembles a spoken conversation, in which a proverb is brought out as a support to one’s own decisions.

3.6. *No deal is better than a bad deal* slogan as a political mantra

Using a proverb is a signal of the speaker’s need to position the main point of the discussion in an acceptable way and often it is a signal of the speaker’s effort to get the last word. This is what UK’s prime minister Theresa May has tried with her proverb-like expression about Brexit in her Lancaster House speech in January 2017: *No deal is better than a bad deal* with the EU.

The slogan really had an effect. Many pointed out its foolishness, its lack of realism. She stopped using it for a while. But after some months she and her ministers started again and repeated it several times – and got applause. But in the 28th of May 2017 the newspaper *Independent* asks why the slogan is back.

(...) for May, the prospect of such a backlash from her media allies and backbenchers¹³ might seem worse than the bad deal, even if she fully understands the economic consequences of no deal for the country.¹⁴

John Springford and Simon Tilford from UK dealt with May’s argument in June 2017 in the *CER bulletin* of EU in their article titled “Why no deal would be much worse than a bad deal”. The insert of the article tells that

Theresa May and several of her ministers have claimed that no Brexit deal would be better than a poor deal. They are wrong. UK economy of failing to strike a deal would dwarf those of signing up to a bad deal.¹⁵

After a year the same discussion was still going on. Liam Fox, the international trade secretary, defended the hard alignment in a BBC interview:

¹³ Boris Johnson etc.

¹⁴ <https://www.independent.co.uk/voices/brexit-theresa-may-tories-no-deal-better-bad-deal-brussels-destroy-british-economy-a7760026.html> 28.5.2017 (visited 17.12.2018).

¹⁵ www.cer.eu/sites/default/files/bulletin_114_js_st_article1.pdf CER Bulletin, issue 114. June/July 2017 –3 (visited 17.12.2018).

The prime minister has always said that *nothing is agreed until everything is agreed* and that *no deal would be better than a bad deal*. I think it's essential as we enter the next phase of the negotiations that the European Union understands that and believes it.¹⁶

At the same time a petition text attacked May's politics.

The most extreme and dangerous Brexit of all is one where we leave without a deal. The Government should drop its mantra that 'no deal is better than a bad deal' and rule out any prospect of leaving the European Union without one.¹⁷

Janet Daley's article in The Daily Telegraph known as a paper of right wing had a headline in the 14th of July: There will be no going back from May's Orwellian Brexit deal.¹⁸

All these interpretations of the situation with or without the need of negotiations used the same slogan or proverb-like saying as a concrete thing to keep or drop. There were no traditional, absolute and shared wisdom to be relied on. Still the familiar proverb pattern was used behind this argument. It was suitable for political speeches.

4. Conclusions

Re-evaluating a preconceived opinion may succeed by referring to an old and familiar proverb, but in this study we searched for situations and motivations, which would transform a common proverb according to the aims of their users. The focus was in a few familiar proverb patterns that served as a triggering factor for the acceptance of otherwise doubtful opinions. The Matti Kuusi international typology of proverbs was used for measuring the emphasis of common values in traditional proverb lore. Proverbs live by being reinterpreted or transformed to suit pluralistic and ambiguous commonplace situations.

One aim of this short research was to test how common proverb patterns live in contemporary media. You could find different ways of using proverb-like expressions both in the discussion forums of the Internet and

¹⁶ <https://www.independent.co.uk/news/uk/politics/brexit-latest-theresa-may-no-deal-threat-bluff-liam-fox-eu-boris-johnson-david-davis-a8413021.html> 23.6.2018 (visited 17.12.2018).

¹⁷ https://www.open-britain.co.uk/theresa_may_has_no_mandate_for_hard_brexit 23.6.2018 (visited 17.12.2018).

¹⁸ <https://www.telegraph.co.uk/politics/2018/07/14/will-no-going-back-mays-orwellian-brexit-deal/> 14.7.2018 (visited 17.12.2018).

in political speeches and comments. In the same way as proverbs in spoken conversations both reframed proverbs and transformed expressions based on a familiar proverb pattern were brought out to support speaker's own aims. This is one of the universal social functions of proverb speech.

The most difficult political situation in Britain led the prime minister to use a slogan made of a familiar proverb pattern. The whole Brexit process seems to be a reconstruction of George Washington's proverbial saying: *It is better to be alone than in bad company*.

This study opened a few rhetorical ways proverbs and proverb-patterns influence in very ambiguous and sometimes societally critical situations. As a paremiologist you can at least be aware of the use of them.

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Besser vertraut schlecht als unbekannt gut. Neubewertung gemeinsamer Werte durch Sprichwortgebrauch

Zusammenfassung

Eine Neubewertung einer vorgefassten Meinung kann erfolgreich sein, wenn auf ein altes und bekanntes Sprichwort Bezug genommen wird. In dieser Studie haben wir jedoch nach Situationen und Motivationen gesucht, die ein gemeinsames Sprichwort entsprechend den Zielen seiner Nutzer verändern würden. Im Mittelpunkt standen einige bekannte Sprichwortmuster, die als Auslöser für die Akzeptanz sonst zweifelhafter Meinungen dienten. Die internationale Typologie der Sprichwörter von Matti Kuusi wurde zur Messung der Betonung gemeinsamer Werte in der traditionellen Sprichwortkunde verwendet. Sprichwörter leben, indem sie neu interpretiert oder transformiert werden, um sich an pluralistische und mehrdeutige gewöhnliche Situationen anzupassen.

Das Ziel dieser kurzen Forschung war es zu testen, wie gängige Sprichwortmuster in zeitgenössischen Medien leben. Es gibt verschiedene Möglichkeiten, sprichwortartige Ausdrücke sowohl in den Diskussionsforen des Internets als auch in politischen Reden und Kommentaren zu verwenden. Auf dieselbe Weise wie Sprichwörter in gesprochenen Gesprächen wurden sowohl umgesetzte Sprichwörter als auch transformierte Ausdrücke, die auf einem bekannten Sprichwortmuster basieren, zur Unterstützung der eigenen Ziele des Redners herausgebracht. Dies ist eine der universellen sozialen Funktionen der Sprichwortsprache.

Die schwierigste politische Situation in Großbritannien veranlasste den Premierminister, einen Slogan zu verwenden, der ein bekanntes Sprichwortmuster verwendete. Der gesamte Brexit-Prozess scheint eine Rekonstruktion von George Washingtons sprichwörtlichem Spruch zu sein: Es ist besser, alleine zu sein als in schlechter Gesellschaft.

Diese Studie eröffnete einige rhetorische Möglichkeiten, wie Sprichwörter und Sprichwortmuster in sehr vieldeutigen und manchmal gesellschaftlich kritischen Situationen wirken. Als Paremiologe können Sie sich zumindest der Verwendung dieser bewusst sein.

PART V

**PHRASEOLOGICAL UNITS
AND THEIR TEXTUAL POTENTIAL
IN LITERARY AND POLITICAL
DISCOURSE**

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“With an Open Soul and Heart”: Nikita Khrushchev’s Translated Messages to the American People

Abstract. Linguistic and cultural differences cause significant challenges while translating metaphorical expressions and transferring them from one language and culture to another. This paper provides a comparative cross-linguistic analysis of the store of metaphorical conceptions of *soul* and *heart* employed in the political speeches of Soviet Premier Nikita Khrushchev during his two visits to the USA (1959–1960) and its English translations. The article aims to discover how phraseological units containing the words *soul* and *heart* are translated from Russian into English, as well as how conceptual and linguistic metaphors in these languages reveal differences and similarities, both in conceptual structure and in culture.

Key words: *metaphor, Nikita Khrushchev, the concept of “heart”, the concept of “soul”, translation*

1. Introduction

“Are human beings composed of two parts, a material body and non-material soul? Or are humans purely physical beings? Many Christians and believers of other faiths as well, hold, or (at least assume) a dualist account. However, many scientists and philosophers today suppose that the person is but one substance – a physical body” (Murphy 1998: 1). This quotation neatly sums up two common assumptions held today regarding the nature of human beings, and of that entity which is known as the soul.

It is not uncommon to read two definitions of *soul*: “one that identifies it as something immaterial, with independent existence from the body (...), and another that sees the soul as that which reflects the ‘deepest core of living entities’, part of a more holistic tradition identified in the Hebrew Bible,

Aristotle and Aquinas” (Hickman 2014: 5). It is clear that different conceptions of the soul involve different ways of looking at the world, not just at the individual self. Moreover, the speakers of different languages conceptualize reality in different ways, and in a communicative act such as translation (in which languages influence each other), the interpreter faces the challenge of understanding these different ways.

The rendering of idioms is one of the issues a translator has to deal with. Translation of metaphors is itself often conceptualized using a conduit metaphor, in which the translator is expected to extract meaning from a source text and transfer it into a target text. As stated by Kuzmin (1977: 9), “an interpreter must have a good knowledge of the idioms of the two languages as well as take decisions to the best of his/her knowledge and taste”.

2. Previous Research

Metaphor translatability and transfer methods have been extensively studied within the discipline of Translation Studies (Newmark 1988; Vinogradov 2001). The cognitive shift in metaphor research (Lacoff; Johnson 1980) has, by focusing on the level of thought instead of on the level of words, opposed the Aristotelian view of metaphor as a linguistic decoration, an ornament and mere device of poetic imagination. The cognitive approach makes it clear that translatability is not only a matter of words but that is also inextricably linked to the conceptual systems of the source and target culture, since one’s conceptualization of reality depends on the language one speaks. This is the phenomenological domain to which abstract matters, such as feelings and values, belong (Ostanina-Olszewska; Despot 2017).

The fact that the Russian word *дыша* (lit. soul) has both much a wider range of use and a much higher frequency than the English word *soul* has already been noted by Anna Wierzbicka (1989). She pointed out that in English translations of Russian novels, the word *дыша* is sometimes translated as soul; in most cases, however, it is either omitted or replaced with either the word *heart* or the word *mind*. Undoubtedly, the linguist was well aware of the fact that the frequency of the literal equivalents of the lexeme *дыша* mainly depends on the translator’s knowledge, attitude and intuition. References to people’s souls sound natural and fairly typical for Russian narrative. Nevertheless, if the translator tries to render the word *дыша* as soul (rather than omit it), the English text sounds unnatural and odd. Anna Wierzbicka (1989) argues that this can be explained by cultural differences: it is very uncommon

for Anglo-Saxon culture to talk much about souls. As she claims, "English prose does not tolerate as many references to people's souls as typical Russian prose would. If the translator of a Russian novel does try to render *дыша* as soul wherever possible (rather than simply omit it), the high frequency of the word *soul* gives the English prose a slightly odd flavor, whereas a wide scope of the use of *дыша* in Russian is fully accepted" (Wierzbicka 1989: 41). In political discourse, it is sometimes the case that one can find references to people's souls as well.

Political discourse can be defined as "the totality of all speech acts used in political discussions, as well as the rules of public policy, consecrated by tradition and tested by experience" (Baranov; Kazakevich 1991: 6). According to Sheigal (2000: 9), the main characteristics of political discourse are: a) preponderance of a mass recipient; b) the dominant role of actual communication; c) semantic uncertainty; d) mediation of political communication by media factor; e) theatricality; f) the dynamic nature of the policy language, conditioned by the volatility of the situation and the urgency of the reflected realities; g) esotericism as a result of the use of manipulative strategies. According to Bazhalkina (2009: 63), "the connection between a language and politics is manifested in the fact that there is no political regime that can exist without communication".

One of the features that determines a politician's manner in which he/she makes speeches and creates a certain emotion background is the aphoristic character (i.e. idioms, proverbs, metaphors, etc.) which is notable for the novelty and originality of thought. Internationally acknowledged paremiologist Wolfgang Mieder questioned the assumption that proverbs are more applicable for common parlance of everyday communication than for any formal environment. In a number of celebrated books and enlightening articles, the scholar provided much evidence that some well-known erudite public figures were masterful employers of proverbs in their political speeches as well as in their writings¹. There is some scholarship on the use of proverbs by such Soviet/Russian leaders as Vladimir Lenin, Joseph Stalin, Nikita Khrushchev, and Mikhail Gorbachev².

¹ For the use of proverbs in the political rhetoric of American public figures (Abraham Lincoln, Frederick Douglass, Elizabeth Cady Stanton and Susan B. Anthony, Franklin Roosevelt, Martin Luther King, Barack Obama), see Mieder (2001; 2005; 2008; 2009; 2010; 2013).

² For the discussion of the employment of proverbial texts by Soviet/Russian leaders, see Wein (1963); Zhigulev (1970); Morozova (1979); Meščerskij (1981); Mokienko (1997); McKenna (2002); McKenna (2003); Reznikov (2005).

The main difficulties of translation occur when the metaphors in languages do not coincide conceptually. For political discourse this turns out to be so important that errors and inaccuracies can significantly distort the speaker's communicative plan³.

In his seminal article on political discourse and translation, Mikhail Brodsky mentioned the fact that "metaphors in different languages do not match the frame-slot composition, and there are cases of metaphorical lacunae" (Brodsky 2011: 105). He illustrates his statement with a number of examples from the translation of Lacoff's book (1995). In relation to this book, Mikhail Brodsky stated that "where the word *heart* is present in the English metaphors, in the Russian language the word *soul* is usually used" (Brodsky 2011: 105).

While Nikita Khrushchev's inclination towards the employment of proverbs and proverbial expressions has been noticed and paid some attention to⁴, there is merely a very short study that refers to his use of a variety of proverbial phrases illustrated by textual examples⁵, and the metaphorical matters with a special focus on their translation have not been scrutinized yet. Thus, this gap in the research needs to be filled. The paper provides a comparative cross-linguistic analysis of the arsenal of metaphorical conceptions of *soul* and *heart* in Nikita Khrushchev's public speeches made in the USA in 1959–1960⁶ and their English translations.

³ In his enlightening book *Khrushchev*, Roy Medvedev described the incident that happened at the American exhibition in Moscow in June 1959, when Vice-President Nixon and Nikita Khrushchev with a group of Soviet leaders toured the exhibits. Nixon and Khrushchev were discussing various aspects of American-Soviet relations. "Heated by the dispute, Khrushchev said that if the United States tried to test the resolution of the USSR, 'My pokazhem vam kuz'kinu mat' (a popular expression meaning like 'We'll teach you a lesson'). The American interpreter was stumped and translated this as 'We'll show you Kuzma's mother'. Naturally, Nixon could not make head or tail of this, and the Soviet interpreters had to supply a more comprehensible translation" (Medvedev 1983: 146).

⁴ For example, in his article in "The New York Times" (September 13, 1959), Horace Reynolds wrote that "'One cannot live without proverbs' is one of several Russian sayings that praise the proverb. As all the world knows, Premier Nikita S. Khrushchev is a devoted subscriber to this adage" (Reynolds 2006: 28). This is in line with Kevin McKenna's view that this Soviet leader "showed a thorough appreciation for the usage and rhetorical effect of Russian proverbs and proverbial expressions" (McKenna 2000: 218).

⁵ See Carter (2015a; 2015b; 2015c; 2015d; 2016).

⁶ Nikita Sergeevich Khrushchev, Chairman of the Council of Ministers of the USSR, was on his first visit to the United States, September 15–27, 1959. During his stay in New York, September 19 to October 13, 1960, he was Chairman of the Soviet delegation to the Fifteenth Session of the United Nations General Assembly.

3. Corpus and Methodology

In the present research, metaphors for *soul* and *heart* were examined in the parallel corpus, i.e. "a corpus that contains source texts and their translations" (McEnery; Xiao 2007: 20), which includes 28 Russian speeches by Soviet leader Nikita Khrushchev delivered in formal setting as well as in unofficial environments during his two visits to America and their translations into English⁷. According to McEnery and Xiao (2007: 18), such corpora can give new insights into the languages compared – insights that are not likely to be noticed in studies of monolingual corpora; they can be used for a range of comparative purposes and can increase our knowledge of language-specific, typological and cultural differences, as well as universal features; they illuminate differences between source texts and translations, and between native and non-native texts; they can be used for a number of practical applications, e.g. in lexicography, language teaching and translation.

After compiling a parallel corpus, the original Russian texts and their translations were searched for the target words *soul* and *heart*, and then a sub-corpus was created using all the examples of parallel sentences in which the translation of the lexemes appeared. After compiling a parallel corpus of text fragments containing both grammatical and derived forms of the words *душа* и *сердце* (lit. soul and heart) and their translations, each example was analyzed in terms of conceptual metaphors and metonymies and their possible extensions and constrains.

4. Analysis

In Nikita Khrushchev's Russian speeches made in America, the lexeme *душа* in all its grammatical and derived forms appears 19 times. The English translation provides only 2 instances of the lexeme *soul*.

The soul can serve as the vehicle that provides mental access to the person as a whole. In his speech at the reception in the Des Moines Chamber of Commerce on September 22, 1959, while speaking about Soviet agriculture and future plans in this area, Nikita Khrushchev employed the expression *на душу населения* (lit. per soul), the phrase that is used when talking about people living in the country. The translator of the English text changed the Russian phrase *на душу* into the common Latin expression *per capita*. Although, in English, the original metonymic expression was not kept and not

⁷ See Khrushchev (1960; 1961); *Khrushchev in America* (1960); *Khrushchev in New York* (1960).

translated with the same metonymic expression, there is no doubt about the correctness of the interpretation.

Да, наш народ выдвинул лозунг: „Догнать и перегнать Соединенные Штаты по производству продукции **на душу** населения”. (Khrushchev 1960: 241)

It is true that our people have adopted the motto: “Overtake and outstrip the United States in output **per capita** of population”. (*Khrushchev in America* 1960: 157)

A few of the linguistic metaphors found in Nikita Khrushchev’s political discourse do not reflect any other (more specific) metaphors, except for the disembodied soul metaphor. The traditional view is that the metaphorical expression *копаться в душах* (lit. dig into souls) conveys negative overtones (Ozhegov; Shvedova 2003: 183). This phrase was applied by Nikita Khrushchev at the meeting with a group of representatives of the U.S. business and commercial world in Washington on September 24, 1959. The speaker employed this idiom to express his unwillingness to tactlessly interfere in American businessmen’s lives with the purpose of seeking their candor. It is evident that the translator put it figuratively. The interpretation does not cause any confusion: it clearly indicates the soul as an immortal part of a person that should be protected from anybody’s intrusion:

Американский народ – миролюбивый народ, и, как все народы мира, он не хочет войны. Причем еще раз подчеркиваю, я не разделяю американский народ на деловые, политические круги, не отделяю его и от правительства. Возможно, что деловые люди более склонны к мирному развитию событий. Но я не хочу **копаться в душах**, это – трудное дело. (Khrushchev 1960: 262–263)

The Americans are a peaceful people and, like all nations of the world, they do not want war. In saying so, I emphasize again that I do not divide the American people into business and political circles. Nor do I make any distinction between them and the government. Businessmen are, possibly, more inclined toward a peaceful development of events. But I do not want to **dig into souls**. (*Khrushchev in America* 1960: 182)

In the speech focused on the expectations from the upcoming visit to America, the Soviet leader gave a metaphorical description of the atomic icebreaker “Lenin”⁸ that was believed to pave way to nations’ peaceful coexistence. While expressing his hope that nuclear energy would be used only

⁸ The Soviet atomic icebreaker “Lenin” was both the world’s first nuclear-powered surface ship and the first nuclear-powered civilian vessel. It was launched in 1957.

for people's needs, Nikita Khrushchev employed the metaphorical expression *на согревание его души и тела* (lit. to warm his soul and body). As far as we can see, the translator kept *soul* as it was used in the original, because of the Christian religious frame (assuming the dualist account of human beings) that is common to Russian and English as well:

Наш атомный ледокол „Ленин” будет ломать не только льды океанов, но и льды „холодной войны”. Он будет прокладывать путь кумам и сердцам народов, призывая их совершить поворот от соревнования государств в гонке вооружений к соревнованию в использовании атомной энергии на благо человека, **на согревание его души** и тела, на создание всего необходимого, в чем нуждаются люди. (Khrushchev 1960: 83)

Our atomic icebreaker *Lenin* will break not only the ice of oceans, but also the ice of the cold war. She will blaze the road to the minds and hearts of nations upon them to turn from the competition between states in the arms race to a competition in uses of nuclear energy for man's weal, **to warm his body and soul**, to create everything that he needs. (*Khrushchev in America* 1960: 11)

In all of the examples below, apart from the disembodied soul metaphor, at least one more specific conceptualization is present, that of the soul being the locus of emotionality, moral judgment, and reason:

Представители многих стран, которые голосуют за предложения США, приходят потом к нам и разъясняют свою позицию. Они говорят: мы **душой с вами**, но мы в таком положении, что не можем голосовать против Америки, вынуждены пока голосовать за то, что предлагают США. (Khrushchev 1961: 456)

Representatives of many countries that vote for the proposals of the United States later come to us and clarify their position and say that "we are **wholeheartedly** with you but due to our position, we cannot vote contrary to the United States; we are compelled for the time being to vote for the United States proposals." (*Khrushchev in New York* 1960: 176)

Бог его знает, я не вижу разницы между тем капитализмом, о котором писал Маркс, и тем, о котором сегодня говорил Лодж. Я говорю напрямик, чтобы вы знали, с кем имеете дело, такая ясность улучшает отношения: социализм нам **по душе**, а капитализм не подходит. (Khrushchev 1960: 123)

God knows, I see no difference between the capitalism Marx wrote about and the capitalism Lodge spoke of today. I speak bluntly, so that you should know who you are dealing with. Such clarity improves relations: We **like** socialism, while capitalism does not suit us. (*Khrushchev in America* 1960: 48)

The first extract is from Khrushchev's television interview with David Susskind that took place on October 9, 1960. As we can see, the Russian

politician chose the expression *душой с вами* (lit. our soul is with you), describing the position of the representatives of some countries who had to vote for the USA but at the same being sure in the rightness of the policy of the Soviet Union. To ensure adequate communication, the translator rendered it into English as *wholeheartedly with you* (i.e. the substitution of the word *душой* (lit. soul) with the “heart-root” word is observed).

The second passage represents Nikita Khrushchev’s speech at the luncheon given by Robert Wagner, mayor of New York on September 17, 1959. He used the Russian idiom *по душе* (lit. to our soul) that definitely has positive overtones (Teliya 2014: 524). Even though the English translation is descriptive (*like*), it seems to be satisfactory for the purpose because its usage cannot be imagined beyond the scope of attractiveness. The choice of this particular phraseological unit reflects the speaker’s excitement and strongly positive attitude to the political system he lived in and he spoke about.

In his speech delivered at the session of the UN General Assembly on September 18, 1959, the Soviet leader employed the phrase *кривить душой* (lit. your soul tells a lie). This expression is often used in the negative form *не кривя душой* (lit. your soul doesn’t tell a lie). The suggested English metaphor may be “not to act against one’s conscience” (Macura 1999: 732). In the passage given below, where *soul* is the locus of morality (and morality is purity and honesty), the English translation provides the expression *honestly say* (i.e. the Russian idiomatic phrase is translated by means of a description). Although the translation seems to be adequate (it conveys the meaning), it is definitely not idiomatic.

Кто может утверждать, **не кривя душой**, что гонка вооружений помогла урегулировать хотя бы один, даже самый простой, международный вопрос. (Khrushchev 1960: 153)

Who can **honestly say** that the arms race has helped to solve a single, even the simplest international problem? (*Khrushchev in America* 1960: 76)

In his television interview with David Susskind on October 9, 1960, Nikita Khrushchev applied the metaphor *уяснять душой* (lit. to understand deep in one’s soul) to convince the American people that socialism and communism were more progressive political systems for the mankind in comparison with capitalism. It is interesting that he appealed to the soul as “the part of a person that is capable of thinking” (*Macmillan English Dictionary for Advanced Learners* 2002: 1366). While rendering this utterance (where soul is conceptualized as the locus of reason), the translator adequately used the expression *understand deep in one’s heart*. He replaced the word *soul* into the word *heart*, thus making it clear to the English-speaking audience.

Если Вы **душой уясните**, что такое социализм и коммунизм, то Вас, как от хорошего кушанья, за уши не оттянешь. (Khrushchev 1961: 451)

If you **understood deep in your heart** what socialism and communism really were, nobody could tear you away from them. (*Khrushchev in New York* 1960: 171)

Usually, linguistic expressions containing the lexeme *soul* do not reflect only one conceptual metaphor, but are instead blends of a number of conceptual metaphors, which are bound together and result in very vivid linguistic image metaphors. In this connection, the speech delivered by the Russian politician at the reception in San Francisco on September 21, 1959 may be of particular interest. In the excerpt presented below, one can almost feel the pleasant warmth the soul might be "touched", since we know from our sensorimotor experience what is like to be warmed by the sun. In this case, the Russian idiom *согреть наши души* (lit. to warm our souls) is substituted by another English metaphorical phrase *warm our hearts*. This metaphor here indicates the soul as a physical organ and emotional experience as physical experience. Its physical construction is intended to be understood both in terms of binding and metaphor.

Но не одно солнечное тепло **согревает наши души** в столь далеком от родины краю. Нас приветливо встречают и принимают калифорнийцы. Хотелось бы, чтобы дружба между нашими народами была неугасимой и яркой, как ваше южное солнце. (Khrushchev 1960: 226)

But it is not sunlight alone that **warms our hearts** so far from home. We are being met and received cordially by the Californians. We would like the friendship between our people to be as inextinguishable and bright as your southern sun. (*Khrushchev in America* 1960: 142)

In the Russian original political texts made by Nikita Khrushchev, the word *сердце* in all its grammatical and derived forms has 13 appearances. In the English translations, the lexeme *heart* appears 12 times.

It is particularly noteworthy that one of the figurative meanings of the word *heart* given in the dictionaries is "the soul, a seat of emotions" (Wheeler; Unbegaun 2000: 844). It is defined as "the organ as a symbol of the soul, feelings, emotions and moods" (Ozhegov; Shvedova 2003: 712).

The interpreter who wants to make his/her translation idiomatic has to look up a dictionary of Russian idioms to be sure of the phrase's meaning and then to find an adequate English equivalent in a dictionary of English idioms. The following examples with the interpretation of a rather frequently used Russian phraseological unit *от всего сердца* (lit. from the bottom of one's

heart)⁹ conveying positive overtones are good illustrations of such an “ideal” process¹⁰. The choice of this idiom by the Soviet Premier in two different official situations¹¹ could help him to communicate his good intentions which seemed to be properly understood by the audience:

Некогда отсталые районы высвобождаются из-под колониальной зависимости, на месте прежних колоний и полуколоний образуются новые независимые государства. Разрешите мне **от всего сердца** горячо приветствовать представителей этих государств, находящихся в данном зале. (Аплодисменты). (Khrushchev 1960: 150)

Once backward peoples are coming free of colonial dependence, and new independent states are arising in place of former colonies and semi-colonies. Permit me to extend warm greetings **from the bottom of my heart** to the representatives of those states present in this hall. (Applause.) (*Khrushchev in America* 1960: 74)

От всего сердца спасибо вам за доброе гостеприимство, за хлеб-соль. Я хочу пожелать, чтобы в отношениях между нашими странами мы все чаще и чаще пользовались коротким, хорошим американским словом – “о’кей!” До свидания, друзья! (Khrushchev 1960: 289)

I thank **from the bottom of my heart** for the kind hospitality – for your bread and salt. I would like to wish that we more and more frequently use in the relation between our countries, the short and good American word – “O.K.” Good-bye, friends! (*Khrushchev in America* 1960: 207)

However, it is a well-known fact that interpreters are not able to deal in their work only with the idioms that may have their ready-made equivalents in English. Translators have to be ready to create what might be called “contextual equivalents” which do not exist in dictionaries. While making his speech at luncheon at the Twentieth Century-Fox Studios in Los Angeles on September 19, 1959, Nikita Khrushchev told a story that happened to him in the past¹². He employed the phrase *вселять в сердца*

⁹ See Ozhegov; Shvedova. (2003); Wheeler; Unbegaun (2000).

¹⁰ See the analysis of the idiomatic phrase *заноза в сердце* (lit. a thorn in a heart) in Elena Carter’s article “*With an Open Heart*”: *Somatic Idioms in Nikita Khrushchev’s Political Discourse in America* (Carter 2015a: 351).

¹¹ The first speech was delivered at the session of the UN General Assembly on September 18, 1959; and the second one is N. S. Khrushchev’s farewell speech on his departure from the USA made on September 27, 1959.

¹² “I recall certain incidents of our Civil War, my meetings and conversations with intellectuals of the former, czarist Russia. I was in the Red Army when we beat the White Guards and drove them into the Black Sea. My unit was stationed in the Kuban region, and I was quartered in the house of an educated family. The landlady was a graduate of the St. Petersburg Institute

(lit. to instill in hearts) to emphasize the special role that Lenin's communist party played in the lives of the Soviet people. While the instance clearly shows the speaker's highly positive attitude to the party as the source of faith, the English translation seems to sound matter-of-fact. Nevertheless, there is no doubt that the message was well understood due to the context.

Говоря по правде, если бы меня тогда спросили, а что же у вас будет, я, может быть, и не смог бы толком объяснить, но я твердо верил, что впереди будет лучшая жизнь. Веру в это **вселила в наши сердца** партия Ленина. (Khrushchev 1960: 192)

Frankly speaking, if I had been asked at that time just what we are going to have, I might not quite have known what to say, but I was certain that there was a better life ahead. I was Lenin's Party that had **instilled** this certainty **in our hearts**. (*Khrushchev in America* 1960: 110)

It is common knowledge that two or more words/phrases are "synonymous if and when some of their functions coincide" (Kuzmin 1977: 29). The words *душа* and *сердце* have their own (different) meanings, but they perform the same function of "doing something sincerely" (Mokienko; Nikitina 2008: 215) in the expressions *с открытой душой* (lit. with an open soul) and *с открытым/чистым сердцем* (lit. with an open/clean heart). Consequently, it means that both of the phrases can be translated by the common English idiomatic equivalent *with an open heart* (Kuzmin 2004: 184). The cases shown below convincingly prove the fact that Nikita Khrushchev made frequent use of these synonymic idiomatic expressions to add emotional intensity to his speeches as well as to strengthen the point that he arrived in America on a friendly mission of trying to do his best to improve the relationship between the USA and the Soviet Union.

for young ladies of gentle birth. As for me, I suppose I still smelled of coal when I was living in the house. There were other educated people in that house – a lawyer, engineer, teacher, and musician. We Red Army men mixed with them. (...) The mistress of the house saw that we Bolsheviks were not at all the sort of people our enemies made us out to be. Members of the old intelligentsia convinced themselves more and more that Communists were honest people who sought no personal gain and dedicated themselves to the common weal. We were still unpolished, uneducated workers at that time, but we wanted to receive an education, to learn to govern the state, to build a new society, and we devoted all our energy to it. I remember the landlady asking me: "Tell me what you know about ballet? You're a simple miner, aren't you?" To tell the truth, I didn't really know anything about ballet at that time, because I hadn't seen any ballet then and, moreover, had never seen a ballerina. (Laughter.) I had no idea what it was all about, so to speak. (Laughter.) But I said to her, "Just wait, we're going to have everything, ballet too" (Khrushchev in America 1960: 109–110)

Мы приехали к вам **с открытой душой** и добрыми намерениями. Советский народ хочет жить в мире и дружбе с американским народом. (Khrushchev 1960: 85)

We have come to you **with an open heart** and with good intentions. The soviet people want to live in peace and friendship with the American people. (*Khrushchev in America* 1960: 14)

Я уже говорил, что мы прибыли в вашу страну **с открытой душой**. Мы находимся здесь не для того, чтобы просить что-либо или навязывать вам что-нибудь. (Khrushchev 1960: 97)

I have already said that we came to your country **with an open heart**. We are here not to ask anything or impose anything on you. (*Khrushchev in America* 1960: 26)

Прежде всего, хочу подчеркнуть, что мы приехали к вам с самыми лучшими намерениями и **чистым сердцем**. (Khrushchev 1960: 89)

First of all, I wish to stress that we have come to you with the best intentions and **with an open heart**. (*Khrushchev in America* 1960: 19)

Могу сказать еще, что встречных вопросов такого рода я вам задавать не буду, так как приехал в США с другими целями, приехал с добрыми намерениями и **чистым сердцем**. (Khrushchev 1960: 100)

I can add that I will not ask any counter-questions of this kind, because I have come to the United States with other aims, because I've come **with** good intentions and **an open heart**. (*Khrushchev in America* 1960: 28–29)

Я уже не раз говорил, что в Соединенные Штаты мы приехали **с открытым сердцем** и честными намерениями. Мы хотим одного: жить с вами и с другими народами в мире и дружбе. (Аплодисменты). (Khrushchev 1960: 227)

I have already said on several occasions that we have come to the United States **with an open heart** and honest intentions. We want only one thing: to live in peace and friendship with you and with other nations. (Applause). (*Khrushchev in America* 1960: 144)

5. Conclusions

Thus, in view of the findings, it seems safe to conclude that disembodied soul metaphor is shared by both the Russian and English languages conceptually, culturally (religiously) and linguistically, which allows the transfer of meaning from a source text to a target text using the direct strategy. But

as it appeared, the soul as the locus of emotion, moral judgment and reason is not shared by the languages in question culturally, and this is the reason why the substitution as a translation strategy is mostly used. The evidence indicates that the translator frequently applied another conceptual metaphor with the word *heart* (the heart as the locus of emotions, morality and reason) to sound natural for the English-speaking audience and to ensure adequate communication that might help both countries to find a common language on a number of questions of mutual interests.

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„Z otwartą duszą i otwartym sercem”: tłumaczenie przekazu Nikity Chruszczowa do narodu amerykańskiego

Streszczenie

Ze względu na fakt, że rozumienie takiego abstrakcyjnego konceptu jak dusza jest niemal całkowicie metaforyczne w artykule podjęto próbę zbadania paralelnego korpusu metaphor odnoszących się do duszy użytych w przemówieniach politycznych sowieckiego przywódcy Nikity S. Chruszczowa (w rosyjskim i angielskim tłumaczeniu) podczas jego wizyt w Ameryce w 1959 i 1960. Artykuł zawiera również analizę komparatywną systemu metafor serca mającą na celu wskazanie podobieństw i różnic wśród konceptualnych i językowych metafor w badanych językach. Szczególną uwagę zwrócono na wykorzystane strategie translatorskie, za pomocą których przeniesiono metaforyczne połączenia wyrazowe z jednego języka i obszaru kulturowego do drugiego.

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Use of Figurative Language in *The Land of the Sun* by Hanan al-Shaykh

Abstract. When expressing ourselves, whether in speaking or writing, we construct our discourse according to specific patterns suited to what we want to communicate. The various types and forms of figurative language are used for many different reasons and are still considered a prerogative of high literature. In her short story *The Land of the Sun* (*Arḍ al-Shams*, 1994) the Lebanese writer Ḥanān al-Shaykh (b. 1945), like all Arab authors, makes extensive use of different figurative devices. In the present paper, the focus of the analysis is to determine the specific rhetorical figures and techniques al-Shaykh employs in order to create the canvas of her narrative and to convey her message to the readers. Working within the frame of cognitive semantics and stylistics a literary interpretation of the story *The Land of the Sun* is offered.

Key words: *story, narrative, figurative expressions, idioms, cognitive stylistics*

1. Introduction

Hanan al-Shaykh started her career as a writer in the late 1960s, making her mark in 1980 with the publication of her famed Lebanese Civil War novel, *The Story of Zahra*. She has also penned half a dozen other novels, two collections of short stories and two plays that deal mainly with women's role in society, conservative religious traditions, the relationship between the sexes, and the institution of marriage. She is one of the leading women writers in the Arab world and "is without doubt one of the most accomplished fiction writers in Arabic today" (El-Enany 2006: 185).

Hanan al-Shaykh is remarkably persistent with the themes of her stories. In Ghandour words:

She is clear about what she disdains – mores that harangue female potential, traditions immune to the times, the veil as identity politics, people devoid of humor, the mosque in the public square. But, although she is unfettered in her candor, she doesn't wield an ax. Al Shaykh is just interested in telling stories, and she tells them with a simplicity that abhors self-conscious thought.

In the short story *The Land of the Sun*, included in the collection *I Sweep the Sun off Rooftops* published in 1994, al-Shaykh does exactly this. She tells a simple, but disturbing and thought-provoking story, which clearly implies solutions to the issues raised in the story. In her narrative, al-Shaykh chooses to employ extensively different rhetoric figures such as simile, metaphor and metonymy as well as quite a few phraseological units (PUs). For this reason, the first aim of the present paper is to explicate al-Shaykh's textual choices; that is to say, how she employs the Arabic language and many interwoven figures of speech when she narrates her story of a car accident in the desert, and of two characters, their mindset, feelings and ways of expressing themselves. The second aim is to elucidate how cognitive linguistics and stylistics approaches can facilitate the process of literary interpretation. I consider exploring the figurative language and cognitive structure of a story to be of great significance for the literary analysis of the text. This is because the "creative interplay of language and thought is particularly evident in figurative language" (Katz et al. 1998: 3).

1.2. A short summary of *The Land of the Sun*

The short story *The Land of the Sun* is an account of a dramatic chain of events that unfolds in a very short period of time. Although the narrator is not prominent, he is omniscient and takes up the role of a silent observer. He explores his characters from inside and outside. Furthermore, the reader feels his presence and emotional involvement not only through the topic of the story, but also through the language choice.

A car with four passengers hits a camel on a desert road, turns over several times and halts beside the road, badly damaged. A team of "hired workers," who make their living by catching and selling live "creatures with unusual markings," have a camp near the place of the accident. Two young men from the camp see the accident and rush to save the people in the car, hoping they are alive under the scorching desert sun. They manage to turn the car upright and pull out two men and a child, all dead. There is a fourth passenger – an injured woman, still alive, but because of the accident, her scarf is down, uncovering her hair and earrings. Worse than that,

her dress is up, exposing her naked belly and belly button with fine hairs around it. The two men, who have never seen an uncovered woman, feel uncomfortable and cannot bring themselves to touch her and pull her out of the car. Nevertheless, one of them, Jāsim, after watching for some time the gasoline leaking out and realizing how dangerous this is, darts forward in a desperate attempt to drag the woman out of the wrecked car but fails to save the only passenger alive before the car explodes. The final lines of the story reveal the feelings of shame and anxiety of the young man who will definitely remember the car accident, but most of all, the image of the half-naked woman for a long time. The reader is left to speculate whether such a grotesque experience has changed anything in the men's traditional mentality.

2. Theory and methodology

Before moving to the main goal of the paper, some theoretical considerations and methodology explanations are in order. I shall present first some essential tenets of narratology theory, followed by a summary of the methodology for extracting figurative expressions. Finally, an outline of cognitive linguistics theory and metaphor is given.

2.1. Narrative and story

To begin with, I shall briefly define *narrative*, *story* and their *components* as I will be using some of them in my analysis. As Barthes perceptively noticed, "narrative is international, trans-historical, transcultural: it is simply there like life itself" (Barthes, 1977: 79). For the cognitive scholar Turner (1996: 4–5) the narrative is fundamental for the human way of thinking: "Narrative imagining – story – is the fundamental instrument of thought. Rational capacities depend upon it. It is our chief means of looking into the future, of predicting, of planning, and of explaining. It is a literary capacity indispensable to human cognition generally". Furthermore, for the literary scholar Brooks (1992) and the philosopher Ricoeur, (1984–8) narrative is related to understanding of our very existence.

Mieke Bal in her international classic *Narratology. Introduction to the theory of Narrative* defines a *narrative* text as a "text in which an agent relates ('tells') a story in a particular medium, such as language, imagery, sound, buildings, or a combination thereof". Further, she defines important concepts in narratology as follows:

A story is a *fabula* that is presented in a certain manner. A *fabula* is a series of logically and chronologically related *events* that are caused or experienced by actors. An *event* is the transition from one state to another state. *Actors* are agents that perform actions. They are not necessarily human. To *act* is defined here as to cause or experience an event. (Bal 1997: 5).

It should be underlined that the distinction between story and narration is important since “a story may have a separate existence from its narration. As such, it can be told in different ways by different narrators” (Porter Abbott, 2007: 40). Then the narration of the story “would be different, with different words, different emotional inflections, different perspectives, and different details” (Ibid.). As mentioned above, I am interested in examining the textual choices made in the writing process by al-Shaykh in her narration of the story. In order to give a comprehensive account of these and the rhetorical purposes of the story I shall follow Popova’s use of “story” and “narrative” interchangeably to refer to a coherent series of reported events thus deliberately disregarding the “distinction often drawn between true (factive) and imagined (fictive) events” (2015: 2). On the other hand, it is necessary to note that dealing with lexical semantics makes “a degree of subjective judgement inescapable” (Toolan 2009: 4). Toolan raises yet another especially important issue that is directly related to the present case which deals with a not very well-known culture like the Middle Eastern and Arabic in particular. He expresses it in the following way:

The words on the page that we read and make sense of, find the story in, and derive expectations and feelings and understanding from, always come to us integrated within a context of situation and of culture. A variety of kinds of background knowledge informs our reading of a present narrative text (...) (Toolan 2009: 5)

2.2. Method for identifying metaphor and figurative expressions

Methodologically the study can be placed within the field of cognitive stylistics since it is a combination of “rigorous and detailed linguistic analysis” and “theoretically informed consideration of the cognitive structures and processes that underlie the production and reception of language” (Semino & Culpeper 2002: ix). For the purposes of the present paper, the detailed linguistic analysis is primarily concerned with identifying linguistic metaphors and related figuratively used words and expres-

sions. To do so MIPVU (Metaphor Identifying Procedure) method is used (Steen et al. 2010).

The MIPVU procedure is a revised and extended version of MIP. Both MIP and MIPVU are utilized to identify linguistic metaphor at the level of the lexical unit. It is assumed that there is "a one-to-one correspondence between words, concepts and referents" in the text. The words on the page "evoke concepts, and these concepts in turn designate referents in the projected text world" (Steen et al. 2010: 92). As the researchers state that the identification of metaphors in discourse using MIP is not concerned with "identifying metaphorical utterances or with finding conventional linguistic metaphors that may arise from postulated conceptual metaphors" (Pragglejaz Group, 2007: 2). Analysts applying MIP have to work through a series of four systematic steps. First, they have to read the entire text-discourse carefully in order to establish a general understanding of the meaning. Then they have to determine the lexical units in the text-discourse. In step 3a, the analysts must first specify the contextual meaning of the lexical unit, that is, "how it applies to an entity, relation or attribute in the situation evoked by the text" (Pragglejaz Group, 2007: 3). In step 3b, they have to determine whether the lexical unit "has a more basic contemporary meaning in other contexts than the one in the given context" (Ibid. 3). Such basic meanings are likely to be more concrete [what they evoke is easier to imagine, see, hear, feel, smell, and taste]; related to bodily action; more precise (as opposed to vague); [and] historically older. Basic meanings are not necessarily the most frequent meanings of the lexical unit (Ibid. 3). The last fourth step is to mark the lexical unit as metaphorical (Ibid. 3). In order to specify the contextual and basic meanings, analysts can adopt different dictionaries or reference works.

An important issue is the fact that a quite frequent form of metaphor in fiction is "directly expressed metaphor, which occurs in the form of similes, analogies and other non-literal comparisons" (Steen et al., 2010: 92). Steen and his colleagues consider these expressions "direct" since the words in the text activate concepts that "refer directly to their referents in the text world, that is the source domain terms are used directly ("literally") at the linguistic level". (Ibid. 93). Since MIP is an identification procedure that is based on detecting indirect lexical meanings it "cannot deal with such manifestations of metaphor in discourse, for in simile there is no formal incongruity" (Ibid.). Although such lexical units "are not metaphorically used themselves, they are related to metaphor" (Ibid. 94). In order not to lose these directly expressed metaphors and their signals, MIPVU as an extended MIP is employed in this paper.

2.3. Cognitive linguistics and conceptual metaphor

One of the main tenets of conceptual metaphor theory is that “[o]ur ordinary conceptual system, in terms of which we both think and act, is fundamentally metaphorical in nature” (Lakoff & Johnson, 1980: 3). Applying this approach means that in everyday language the metaphors with their underlying conceptual structures are considered as primary. On the other hand the metaphors in literature are believed to be creative and novel manipulations of the same underlying conceptual structures.

Another important theme in cognitive linguistics and more specifically cognitive semantic research has been the insight that “the relation between words and the world is mediated by the language user him/herself. That is why quite a number of our concepts are directly related to aspects of our bodily experience” (Taylor 2006: 577). According to Sweetser the large-scale conceptual metaphor “Mind-as-Body” is very probably *motivated* by correlations between our external experience and our internal emotional and cognitive states ...” (1990: 28). Thus, “the vocabulary of physical perception shows systematic metaphorical connections with the vocabulary of internal self and internal sensations” (1990: 45). Sweetser also proves that verbs of sense and perception in English and Indo-European, which depict the sensory modality of sight (vision) and hearing, conceptualize abstract senses of mental activity. These activities for vision are: knowledge, intellection, mental ‘vision’, understanding, mental or physical manipulation, control (1990: 33–38; see also Lakoff and Johnson 1980). For hearing: mental attention and understanding, but also heed. The other senses – smell, taste and touch are often linked to subjective expressions of emotion and personal preference (Sweetser 1990: 35). Lakoff, Johnson, Gibbs and other cognitive linguists called these linguistic phenomena of understanding and conceptualizing the world through our bodily experience “embodiment” (Johnson 1987; Lakoff 1987; Lakoff & Johnson 1999; Gibbs 2005).

In the following pages, the abundant use of such conceptualizations utilized in *The Land of the Sun* will be examined.

When reading literary texts people tend to be more aware of metaphors and generally figurative language since in literature they are “more prominent or noticeable than those in other types of discourse” (Dorst 2015: 4). As Dorst points out, people usually expect literary texts to contain more metaphors and other rhetorical figures “due to their aesthetic function, but this expectation need not correspond to actual usage” (Ibid.). In her analysis of the interaction between register and relation to metaphor, Dorst revealed

that in all four registers she investigated (academic, news, fiction and conversation) “fiction was not the register with the highest number of metaphor-related words” (2015: 11). However, the selected story *The Land of the Sun* in a way ‘breaks’ this rule, since it contains a significant number of figurative expressions, even though it is very short (about 600 words).

3. Figurative expressions in *The Land of the Sun*

Applying the above-discussed method for identifying figurative language to the text of *The Land of the Sun* yielded seven phraseological units (PUs), more than fifteen metaphoric expressions, eight similes and five metonymic expressions. There are many definitions of PU, but here PU is defined as a stable, cohesive combination (Naciscione 2010: 32) of two or more words that create a compound whose meaning “cannot be fully explained by the syntactic and semantic regularities of the combination” (Burger, cited in Dobrovól’skij et al. 2005: 31). For considerations of space, all types of figures will be given in the discussion part as they appear in the English translation with literal translation when the Arabic original is different.

4. Discussion of the findings

The great number of figurative expressions identified in a story of 600 words is ample evidence for the significant role they play in the narrative and the development of the story itself. In what follows, I shall examine closer their functions in the narrative.

The physical environment of the desert, or the “situational context”, as Kövecses calls it (2018), is depicted in the story in a perceptible and sensible way, easy to imagine and even possible to feel physically. This is achieved mainly through a few metaphors and metonymies. They address readers’ general knowledge about deserts and prompt inferences that are directly or indirectly communicated by the text (see Leech & Short, 2007). Boundless and ageless, hot and lethargic the desert, desert animals and natural phenomena are present throughout the entire story of al-Shaykh. The place where the events unfold is “*expanses of land so vast that the eye was scarcely able to take them in*. It is a *silent land*, (lit. silent emptiness) *where there was nothing* (lit. devoid of everything) but the *sun burning the sand tirelessly* day after day, *the intense shimmering brightness of mirages*, the sudden gusts of wind and the night frosts”. The two young men had the remaining passengers

out *on the burning sand* (lit. on the flames of the sand) *in the full glare of the sun ...*"

To emphasize yet again the vastness and metaphorically the immensity of the desert the author describes the car as a "*green spot*"; the tent camp as a "*larger splash of color on the sand*" (lit. colored spot) pitched in the "*bare landscape* (lit. in the nakedness of the desert)".

Desert animals add more details to the scene. The team of hired workers is "roaming the sands (lit. until they almost get lost in the desert) in pursuit of "*creatures* (lit. what still lives in the sand) *with unusual markings* (lit. with rare colored skins)". The dying camel is "*beating the sand in a terrifying flurry of movement like a cyclone*".

Desert phenomena and animals are employed in describing the crashed car – the machine looks "*as if it were a species of lizard he had not seen before* or *as if it were a mirage created by the desert* and at the end when the wreckage of the car explodes turning *into a mirage burning in its own dryness.*"

The daily life of the hired hunters is presented as "*a peaceful humdrum existence* (lit. within the frame of peaceful daily rhythm), *disturbed only by occasional bad dreams* (lit. spoiled only by befalling of unpleasant dreams from time to time)".

It is possible to see that the language utilized to picture the desert follows a smooth, flowing pattern. This helps conceiving the desert as a silent witness of the transience of human life and against its vastness and eternity, the drama and the conservative "narrow" frame of mind and upbringing are situated.

Even though the author presents the small number of events in the story by employing figurative phrases or literal language depending on the incident itself, the frame of the story is generally designed figuratively. Thus, the two most important events that provide the setting for the whole story are presented figuratively with the intention of creating an atmosphere of especially intense anticipation and drama. The story begins with the description of a car that "rolled over and over before it *sank to the ground like a slain bird*" and later the reader learns that it had hit a camel on the road. An important event at the end of the story is when "*the strong-smelling fluid* [the leaking gasoline] *took the decision out of their hands, igniting spontaneously* and *in a flash* (lit. in the blink of an eye) *transforming the car* (lit. the heap of the car) *into a mirage burning in its own dryness: it was a long time since it had been filled with water*". In between these two major events, minor, nonetheless important incidents take place. The narrative explicitly and directly follows the physical actions of

two young men who are trying desperately to pull the passengers of the car before it explodes. The content is such that it does not allow much use of figurative language, since it primarily depicts concrete people, and concrete actions.

The actors or the agents in the story are the two youths from the camp. Their physical actions are described by various active verbs: *hurrying in the direction, trying to drag, arrived at a run, got the crumpled door open, managed to free, looking at each other, moved to avoid, rushed back, leaned, reached out his arms to take hold, backed away, regretting his retreat, begging him for support, trying not to look or listen*. To comment briefly, it is clear that some of the verbs and verbal nouns (also in Arabic) and their complements are chosen conscientiously to have strong semantic connotations that make the plot especially vivid and intense.

The narrative in this part of the story is disrupted here and there by accounts of the mental and psychological state of Jāsim and his comrade. Steen and his colleagues (2010: 98) have observed in fiction texts the tendency to increase use of figurative language when it comes to describing characteristics of people, their mental or emotional states. This is applicable to the present story. Thus the two young men with *silent complicity disregarded* what they had seen and *devoted their energies* to dragging the driver, who appeared *dead* (lit. has parted with life). They choose to 'save' the two other people in the car who obviously cannot be rescued and put them "*on the burning sand* (lit. on the flames of the sand) *in the full glare of the sun, which made the blood run more furiously and hastened their deaths* (lit. hastened the departure/ascending of their souls)".

One of the main focal points in the whole story is the tangible and detailed description of the only passenger alive and worth saving. This is a woman and she is half-naked. The other central point in the story is the reaction and the feelings experienced by Jāsim, the youngster who arrived first to the scene of the accident. He is *gazing in shock* (lit. as if struck by lightning) at the horrible sight and nudity of the woman. His companion, comes later, and is also shocked by the scene and nakedness of the injured woman. They *catch each other snatching a look at the woman* but decide to ignore her. "The two youths stood quite still looking at each other, *exchanging unspoken words* (lit. froze in their places, exchanging silent glances and dialog)". The reason for this peculiar behavior of the two men and especially Jāsim's is graphically depicted employing several similes and PUs: He had never seen a woman's nakedness before. "He had never seen a woman at all *without yards of material wrapped around her, covering her from head to her black-hennaed feet, and revealing only her*

eyes behind a gauze opening in the cloth, like two insects caught in a fishing net (lit. without meters of material wrapped around her from head/tip to toe(s) hidden by black henna, revealing only her eyes as if they were two insects behind an opening in the cloth weaved like a fishing net)". The story finishes as the two men set about the task of dragging the three victims out of reach of the blazing wreck "with great application, trying not to look or listen as *the fire consumed the woman*, although *the feel of her stomach would stay with Jāsim for a long time* (lit. would not leave Jāsim's hand)".

For reasons of space, it is not possible to comment extensively on all PUs, metaphors, similes, metonymies etc. present in the text, but some important observations and characteristics should be explained. First, the extensive use of concrete and physical similes creating realistic, sensible and tangible images must be emphasized. Animals, natural phenomena and objects are the source domains. For example: the crashed car is like a *slain bird, mirage and lizard*, the dying camel is beating the sand like a *cyclone*. The eyes of women are like *insects*, caught behind an opening weaved like a *fishing net*. Body parts (*eye, hand, head, toes, heart, blood, soul*) are often employed in metaphors and metonymies that involve cross-domain mappings which also provide the reader with a "vivid visualization of images rather than concepts" (Steen et al., 2010: 96; Dorst, 2011a: 287–314).

It is important to emphasize that personification as a type of metaphor is often used in the story. It is recognized that this is one of the most basic and frequently used metaphors. Even though that personification has been studied extensively "there is still much debate about the actual definition of personification" (see for overview Dorst 2011b: 113). For the purposes of the present paper, I adopt the definition Hamilton (2002: 409) gives for literary studies:

We personify when we metaphorically ascribe agency to normally inanimate objects, turning non-existent or imaginary entities into realistic actors or agents. As cognitive linguist would describe it, to personify is to 'map' information from a 'source domain' onto a 'target domain'.... Mapping occurs simultaneously at conceptual and linguistic levels.

It is natural that people use human beings as "their prototypical or default frame of reference" and thus inanimate objects acquire human properties (Dorst 2011b: 115).

In the story, a few inanimate objects serve as realistic actors or agents, such as the desert, the sun, the car, the gasoline, the fire and some body parts. In order to identify personifications in discourse, it is important to see

how they are realized linguistically. In the examined story, most of them are nominal conceptual personifications but “depend heavily on the use of verbs” (Dorst 2011b: 117). Nominal personification is when both source and target domains are expressed by nouns. Consider the following examples:

- (1) *the sun burning the sand tirelessly day after day*
- (2) *in the full glare of the sun, which made the blood run more furiously and hastened their deaths* (lit. hastened the departure/ascending of their souls)
- (3) *the green dot [the car], which was still shuddering and clanging painfully.* (lit. the green dot, whose joints were scarred and still shuddering because of the rolling and the violent jolts that it suffered.)
- (4) *the strong-smelling fluid [the leaking gasoline] took the decision out of their hands, ... transforming the car* (lit. the heap of the car) *into a mirage burning in its own dryness*
- (5) *expanses of land so vast that the eye was scarcely able to take them in*
- (6) trying not to look or listen as *the fire consumed* [lit. ate] *the woman*
- (7) *as if it [the car] were a mirage created by the desert*

The inanimate entities in the examples above, whether it be the desert, the sun or the car (presented through a metonymy), metaphorically perform activities associated with real actors. Dorst is right in arguing that the assignment of agency happens “via a violation of selection restrictions” (Dorst 2011b: 117) revealed through linguistic analysis. However, in order to identify the particular agent, the analysis has to be at a conceptual level (Ibid.). Hence, in the case of example (1–2) it is possible to say that the relevant conceptual metaphor could be SUN is a DESTROYER or a KILLER. For (3–4) – CAR/GAZOLINE is a PERSON.

As for examples (1), (5), (6) and (7), the verbs used mean concrete actions and the basic senses of these verbs involve human agents. However, the contextual senses involve non-human entities, but these verbs have acquired abstract metaphorical meaning that is so conventional that their human origins are barely noticeable. This means that these verbs can be considered “instances of conventionalized linguistic personification” (Dorst 2011: 121–2).

Examples (4–6) are very interesting from another point of view because they comprise not only personification but also metonymy simultaneously. Thus, in example (4) hands as body parts are metonymically used for a person (part for the whole). In example (5), eye stands metonymically for brain, intellect or a person.

The examined personifications have clear communicative and expressive functions in the text together with a strong visualizing effect.

In the discussed story seven PUs were identified – quite a significant number for such a short text. Two of the PUs mean ‘to die’, but are based on slightly different images as part of their inner form. The PUs *fāraqa l-ḥayāta* – dead (lit. has parted with life) and *ṭulū’u ’arwāḥihim* – their death (lit. the departure/ascending of their souls) present death from two different perspectives. These two PUs are employed in a close proximity to each other and thus the author not only achieves expressiveness and vividness but also hints at the ineffectiveness and inadequacy of the choice the two men have made. Two other very common PUs *min ḥīnin ’ilā ’ākḥara* – occasional (lit. from time to time), *khaybātu l-’amali* – disappointments (lit. dashed/shattered hopes) are used in one sentence. In this part of the story, after the abrupt start, comes the description of the “silent emptiness and vastness” of the desert and the humdrum existence of the workers. Thus, the PUs fit well in the narrative and contribute to the fluency and richness of the discourse.

There is one very long sentence that includes the PU *min ra’sihā ’ilā ’akhmaṣi qadamayhā l-mukhtabī’ayni bi-l- ḥinnā’i* – from head to her black-hennaed feet (lit. from head to her toe(s) hidden by black henna). The last component of this PU is extended with a whole phrase (*hidden by black henna*), after that two similes, (*eyes ... like two insects (...) cloth weaved like a fishing net*) come. The entire sentence is elaborated and deliberately composed in order to explain a central issue. It adds not only expressiveness to the narrative but serves particular discourse goals. This specific PU metaphorically emphasizes and reiterates one of the main ideas in the story – women’s imprisonment as members of the society.

Another PU *yaḍribu ...kaffan ’alā kaffin (nadaman)* (lit. he struck one palm against the other (out of remorse)) seems also to be carefully and consciously selected. It is employed together with the metaphoric expression *he felt a sudden pang in his heart* (lit. as if stung in the heart) and the adverbial *all of a sudden*. Thus, all these phrases underscore Jāsim’s immediate and deep regret for backing off and being unable to pull the injured woman out of the car.

The PU *bi-lamḥati baṣarin* (lit. in the blink of an eye, in a flash) is utilized in the final passage when everything is happening very fast and nothing can be done to rescue the woman as the gasoline takes the decision instead of the two men and they have to watch the woman being consumed (lit. eaten) by the fire. The last expression is considered a fixed phrase close to a PU.

As we noted above, Sweetser and other cognitive linguists have proved the systematic connections between semantic meanings and the domain of perception. Al-Shaykh in her story creates an especially material world. Moreover, there are a great number of verbs and nouns related to vision and hearing. Thus, for example, verbs such as *to see, to appear, to look, to become*

evident, to gaze, snatch a look, stare or nouns like *eye, vision, appearance, the blink of an eye, glance, sight, shimmering, brightness, glittering, mirage* establish connection between vision and intellection. They can be seen as a foundation of the cognitive metaphor UNDERSTANDING IS SEEING. Verbs and nouns expressing notions related to hearing such as *to moan, to die away, to wait in ambush, quiet, silent, noiseless, noise, sound, cry, groans, screams* are linked to understanding and knowledge as well. The visual and audible nature of the metaphors throughout the story helps in creating an especially real and sensible world for the reader on the one hand. On the other hand, it clarifies, emphasizes, and provokes thought, and, maybe, brings back distant memories. The author chooses to exploit the same conceptual metaphor in different ways in the story, and this repetition most likely makes the narrative more coherent and accessible to the reader (see Kreuz & Roberts 1993). Moreover, this metaphor in concert with the other rhetorical figures, contributes to the persuasive power of the story.

In *The Land of the Sun*, Al-Shaykh makes an attempt to convince her readers about the surreal and grotesque situation in which both sexes in the Middle East live due to conservative social and religious norms and dated cultural traditions. In reality, and metaphorically in the story, women are trapped physically in their houses and clothing. Men are trapped psychologically in their minds by the way they are brought up. The main character makes a desperate attempt to escape from his confinement; he seeks help and support from his companion but is unsuccessful. He is conscious about his and his friend's inability to break through and deeply regrets that but it is too late. Al-Shaykh leaves open the question of whether this tragic incident has changed or will change in the future Jāsim's and his companion's mindset.

5. Conclusions

In this article, I have examined the broad use of rhetorical figures and PUs employed in *The Land of the Sun*. I hope to have illustrated how they allow the author to express multiple discourse goals simultaneously – to tell a story about women's vulnerable position in society, relations between sexes, reign of conservative traditions and religious beliefs, and how they lead to tragic consequences. Through the story and its graphic and powerful images, al-Shaykh asks the question of whether all this is necessary or functional in a society or in life general.

In Ḥanān al-Shaykh's story figurative language as a whole and metaphor and metonymy in particular, play a significant role in how the narrative is built on both the cognitive-linguistic and emotional levels. At the same time, their importance is revealed through the generated very special subtle connotations that contribute to aesthetic appreciation of the text and the story itself, and achievement of desired discourse goals. Recent research on the effects of metaphors and other figures of speech shows that they create more dynamic and interesting texts, attract attention, generate emotional responses, and stimulate taking action (Larson 2013). All this is very true about the text world created by al-Shaykh in her short story *The Land of the Sun*.

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Gebrauch der Bildsprache im *The Land of the Sun* von Hanan al-Shaykh

Zusammenfassung

In der Konstruktion des Hintergrunds ihrer Kurzgeschichte *The Land of the Sun* bedient sich die berühmte arabische Schriftstellerin Hanan al-Shaykh einer beeindruckenden Vielfalt figurativer Elemente.

Mein Vortrag geht der Frage nach, in wie weit der Diskurszweck und die thematische Bedeutung al-Shaykhs Text mittels einer detaillierten linguistisch-konzeptuellen Analyse identifiziert werden können. Auf der Grundlage der Analyse einer signifikanten Anzahl figurativer Elemente, die via MIPVU identifiziert wurden, zeige ich, wie es der Autorin möglich war, in ihrer Kurzgeschichte eine Anzahl verschiedener Diskurszwecke simultan zu verfolgen: das Erzählen einer Geschichte über die verwundbare Stellung von Frauen in der Gesellschaft, Beziehungen zwischen den Geschlechtern, die Vorherrschaft konservativer Traditionen und Glaubensauffassungen, und wie diese zu tragischen Konsequenzen führen.