



Proverbs and Sayings as reflection of National Character (In The Context of Tatar and English Proverbs and Sayings)

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ABSTRACT

The article under study aims at investigating the semantics and pragmatics of the English and Tatar proverbs and sayings from the point of view on linguo-cultural aspects. To reach the goal the researchers applied such methods of investigation as descriptive method, oppositional analysis of the English and Tatar proverbs, method of comparative analyses, statistical method, method of generalization. Proverbs and saying reflect emotional characteristics of the Tatar and the English nation, the investigated expressions either coincide in some basic categories or express polar points of view and attitudes. Being a valuable object of linguo-cultural investigations proverbs realise not just functions of lthe language but that of culture as well. Proverbs and sayings are an integral part of the national language picture of the world. As linguo-cultural texts proverbs and sayings explicit a definite layer of culture of a separate ethnic group, reflect spiritual and physical activity of culture representatives, the peculiarities of mentality and world perception of a definite linguo-cultural society.

Key words: national character, Tatar language, English language, language picture of the world, proverbs and sayings, linguo-cultural peculiarities, folk origin



INTRODUCTION

One of the most important linguistic problems of contemporary study is the problem characterized as “The language and the picture of the world”. This aspect was thoroughly studied by W.Humboldt, I.A.Potebnya. In Europe this was the sphere of interest of L.Weisgerber, in the USA the works of Edward Sapir and Benjamin Warf are among the most prominent. According to Markovina, I.Yu., Sorokin, Yu.A. (2008) the problem is not restricted just to the linguistic sphere, it remains vital in various scientific spheres: philosophy, physics, art.

Nowadays the theme of national character or mentality is rather urgent in the linguistic science. This may be connected with various factors, especially globalization and the arrangement of effective intercultural communication. In the present days it becomes doubtless that at least elementary knowledge of the culture is necessary for productive communication with the representative of this or that country.

Cultures of different nations differ from each other greatly. In order to identify these differences, it is of importance to analyze the essence of concepts that lie within. The cultural cognitive mechanisms belong to the cognitive concepts, reflecting basic beliefs, traditions, customs, etc. G.D. Tomakhin (2007) distinguishes between geographical, socio-political and ethnographic culture-specific concepts.

The aim of the article is to consider the layer of the lexis which presents cultural peculiarities of every nation, these are proverbs and sayings. Most of the proverbs are not of literary origin, but of folk one. The experience of nations, the observations of life by the ancient people are represented in proverbs and sayings, this layer of lexis is quite unique.

In the proverb the experience, habits and traditions of a certain nation are reflected, that is why the study of the proverbs enables us to get deeper into the essence of such notions as “national character”, “mentality”, “language picture of the world”. The proverb is crystallized generalization of national wisdom. Before getting into literary sources it is polished for a period of time in the spoken language.

The language picture of the world is developed simultaneously with the language. The man has been interacting with the surrounding world through the whole history, reflecting and investigating it in his activity, including speaking activity. For cognition



of the world a human being needs peculiar signs, symbolic structures in the language. On the basis of these notions and categories the man creates the language picture of the world. Thus personal achievements in the world cognition become common, and the common achievements accumulated by previous and present generations are mastered by an independent language personality of the definite community. A common language picture of the world is created for this group, regulating its behavior, people activity and providing mutual understanding, despite the age difference, differences in education and development. Such mutual understanding is realized due to the fact that there is a common semantic field, created by the implication of the language units, communication experience and the activity of the nation. Understanding means including the information into this semantic field, which is common for every speaker of the language.

The language picture of the world is created spontaneously. It is not created by the man purposefully as the language itself: a person may speak the language but know nothing of its structure. The influence of the picture of the world on an individual's mind and the whole society is not questioned. The picture of the world is unaccountable, but typical model of behavior and human activity.

According to Dullieva, K.M. (2008) a specific language picture is created by semantic arrangement of the language vocabulary (semantic, notional, thematic fields). However it should be taken into consideration that the originality of the language picture is created by categories of reality and depend on the figurativeness of the language, in which the psychology, world perception, world-view and way of living are reflected. Proverbs and sayings represent a rich source of information, especially for linguo-cultural investigations being a unique means of cognition and interpretation of culture, mentality of language representatives.

1. METHODS

To realize the study the researchers selected material from the monolingual and polylingual dictionaries and other literary sources in the Tatar and Russian languages. Among the methods of data analysis are the following ones:

- descriptive method, based on observation,
- oppositional analysis of the English and Tatar proverbs,



- etymological analysis,
- method of comparative analyses (used to identify and to distinguish main peculiarities and differences of the studied object in the compared languages),
- statistical method,
- method of generalization.

2. DISCUSSION

The material for analysis was borrowed from Oxford Dictionary [Electronic resource]. - en.oxforddictionaries.com, Kunin A.V. English-Russian Phraseological Dictionary.(1984), The Wordsworth Dictionary of Proverbs. G.L.Apperson. Wordsworth Editions (2001).

As the proverbs and sayings are characterized by diversity, we may find such aspects as seasons: As September, so the coming March; Сәвердәге явым – савып торган явым. Days of the week: A stranger on Monday means a stranger all the week. Animals: An old dog will learn no new tricks. Качаган мал кашкырга жим. Very often the authors of different literary sources combine proverbs, sayings and omens as all these expressions refer to the folklore.

Even if we consider the proverbs on the surface it is possible to notice that names of domestic animals predominate in English proverbs (a cat, a dog), in Tatar proverbs and sayings names of wild animals prevail (буре, аю, куян, төлке) witnessing of the nation's nomadic way of living.

Such an aspect of life as man and woman status in general and in family life in private is determined in proverbs and sayings. In the Tatar folklore the man is depicted as the main acting person, regulating the progress of life: Ирсез өй – көнсез өй. In the English language the attitude to the man is less enthusiastic: A man can do no more than he can. But the English women have great requirements to the men connected with the financial support: A man without money is a man without an arrow. A man without money is not man at all. But the attitude of Englishmen to their wives is quite ambiguous: A man's best fortune or his worst is a wife. The Englishmen ironize women's talkativeness: A woman's tongue is the last thing about her that dies. The Englishmen prefer their women to stay at home: A woman is to be from her house three times – when she is christened, married and buried.



Both of the investigated languages extol knowledge, studies: Learning is the eye of the mind. Learning makes a good man better, and a bad man worse. Абыз атасыннан олырак. Абыз сөйлэгәндә авыз йом. We feel the expressiveness of the Tatar expressions, they are more straightforward, express the idea without excessive politeness.

Let us analyze the attitude of the Tatar and the English nation to some aspects of human life. Being honest is preferable in both of the languages: A clean fast is better than a dirty breakfast. Better go to bed supperless than rise in debt. Урлап ашаган йокмас. Азлап капсаң тук булырсың, зур капсаң тыгылырсың.

In spite of the great hospitality of Tatar people the patience is not boundless: Ай да килгәндә аяк, көн дә килгәндә таяк. The Englishmen absolutely agree with them in this aspect: A constant guest is never welcome. In this case we observe not the differences witnessing the unique peculiarities of the nation, but something common, uniting them. Thus we made sure that proverbs and sayings are the sore of old words and dialects, as they get their origin in the ancient times.

3. RESULTS

According to Yarmi, H. (1960) thanks to the division of proverbs and sayings into some groups revealing the attitudes of nation representatives to spheres of life we can come to the conclusion that their perception is quite the same, but in some definite cases their points of view are polar: Too many cooks spoil the broth. Ашны бергәләп пешерсәң, кые була. We see the individualization of the English nation and positive attitude of the Tatar nation to the common work. The Englishmen try to avoid working together.

Individualization is a positive notion for Englishmen as independence and selfsufficiency. For Tatar people it is synonymous to selfishness, it is considered that a person should come to the rescue of others no matter what the request is.

Both of the nations confess that appearance is not the most important as it may be deceptive: A honey tongue – a heart of gall. Many a fine dish has nothing on it.

Бәрәңгене буяу белән алама итеп булмый. Агачы кыек булса да, алмасы тәмле була.

The common feature is that the representatives of the Tatar and the English nations believe in fate, in the English language the role of coincidence, chance is important: An



unfortunate man would be drowned in a teacup. Between the cup and the lip a morsel may slip. Ризыгын булмаса, Кытайга барып та чэй эчә алмый кайтырсын. Язмаган ризык авыздан кире төшәр.

Speaking about such basic notion as “gratefulness” we notice that the Englishmen tend to material reward – a person must pay for the service, for everything done for him. In the Tatar language this category is presented as desirable but not obligatory. Fine words butter no parsnips. After dinner comes the reckoning. Узең ипи киссәң, ипи кисәрләр. Алдыңа куйган ашны хурлама.

The majority of the Tatar proverbs are more categorical, even sharp: Сарымсак ашамаганның авызыннан ис килмәс. Аз капсаң тук булырсың, зур капсаң тыгылырсың. Ит дигәч исең китә, ашасаң – эчең китә.

The proverbs and sayings of both languages are quite equivalent in their attitude to patience: Soon ripe, soon rotten. Who has never tasted bitter knows not what sweet is. Ачыны сөймәгән татлыны ашамас. Тиз пешкән жимеш тиз чери. Religious peculiarities are represented in the proverbs and sayings as well: Авызга кергән арагы әрне сыгып чыгара. We cannot disagree with Dullieva, K.M. (2008) that proverbs and sayings are rather significant in accumulating and conveying the experience of society from generation to generation.

All the above mentioned facts let us make the conclusion that proverbs and sayings touch every sphere of human life, as the wisdom of the nation is accumulated in them, judging by these expressions we make conclusions connected with the preferences of the nations, climate conditions, peculiarities of religion, that is to get deeper into the essence of the notion “language picture of the world”.

4. CONCLUSIONS

Summing up, we made sure that proverbs and sayings reflect even emotional characteristics of the nation. The English proverbs are more reserved, the Tatar ones are more emotional, expressive, sometimes even intemperate. Undertaken comparative analysis has revealed differences, which can be explained by the cultural and social differences. The peculiarities of the temperament find their reflection in proverbs and sayings, though some reactions and attitudes may be common in both languages.

Nadirov, I.N. (1987) maintains the differences may be explained not only by



temperament peculiarities, but by such aspects as climate conditions (the heat of Asia and the cool climate of England).

As proverbs and sayings cover the most important vital aspects, we can make a conclusion about the preferences of the nation in food, about climate conditions, specific character. Our research does not pretend to provide or to disclose all the information on the issue under consideration, though it can be characterized by both theoretical and practical significance.

The received data shows that the principle of politeness dominates the pragmatic principle of priority in the English linguo-cultural society, and there are such brightly expressed features of the English language personality as individuality, responsibility, low level of community sense.

Quite the opposite results found out through the analysis of the Tatar proverbs and sayings let us come to the conclusion that the principle of tact in the Tatar linguo-cultural society is not basic and competes with the principle of priority. Among the identified features peculiar to the Tatar language personality may be pointed out communality, high level of community sense, the tendency to submission.

The common features and national cultural peculiarities of the English and Tatar linguo-cultural societies were identified; equivalent proverbs and sayings were revealed in the languages studied: the specifics of English and Tatar culture attitudes to various aspects of life and the frequency of the lexeme usage in English and Tatar proverbs and sayings were found out in our study.

5. ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

The research is performed according to the Russian Government Program of Competitive Growth of Kazan Federal University.

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