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CULTURE, COGNITION, AND PRAGMATICS IN ENGLISH- UKRAINIAN PAREMIAS

Abstract. *This article investigates English and Ukrainian paremias through the lens of culture, cognition, and pragmatics, highlighting their role as both linguistic units and carriers of collective experience. The study continues the author's earlier exploration of the structural and semantic features of paremias, shifting the focus towards their cultural, cognitive, and pragmatic dimensions. Special attention is given to stability and idiomaticity as defining characteristics, the recontextualised meanings of proverbs and sayings, and the anthropocentric principle underlying their classification. The findings demonstrate how paremias function as culturally marked, cognitively loaded, and pragmatically adaptable expressions that sustain both universal and language-specific perspectives.*

Key words: *paremias; culture, cognition, pragmatics, phraseology.*

Бодик О.П. Культура, когніція та прагматика в англо-українських пареміях. У статті досліджуються англійські та українські паремії крізь призму культури, когніції та прагматики, підкреслюючи їхню роль як мовних одиниць і носіїв колективного досвіду. Дослідження продовжує попередню роботу автора з вивчення структурних і семантичних особливостей паремій, зміщуючи акцент на їхні культурні, когнітивні та прагматичні аспекти. Особлива увага приділяється стабільності та ідіоматичності як визначальним характеристикам, реконтекстуалізованим значенням прислів'їв та приказок, а також антропоцентричному принципу, що лежить в основі їхньої класифікації. Результати дослідження демонструють, як паремії функціонують як культурно марковані, когнітивно завантажені та прагматично адаптовані вирази, що підтримують як універсальні, так і мовно-специфічні перспективи.

Ключові слова: *паремії, культура, когніція, прагматика, фразеологія.*

Relevance of the research topic. The study of paremias is highly relevant, since proverbs and sayings serve not only as stable phraseological units but also as repositories of cultural memory and collective evaluation. Despite extensive research in lexicology and phraseology, the cultural, cognitive, and pragmatic dimensions of paremias remain insufficiently addressed in comparative linguistics, especially with regard to English and Ukrainian. Their structural stability, idiomaticity, and capacity for recontextualisation make them valuable material for understanding how language encodes anthropocentric perspectives and transmits cultural values. Exploring these aspects contributes both to theoretical linguistics and to practical fields such as translation, intercultural communication, and language pedagogy.

The article aims to move beyond a prior analysis of English and Ukrainian paremias to investigate their deeper cultural, cognitive, and pragmatic dimensions, specifically focusing on how their stability and idiomaticity allow them to be recontextualized. The ultimate goal is to demonstrate that paremias are culturally marked, cognitively loaded, and pragmatically adaptable expressions that convey both universal and language-specific collective experience.

Presentation of the main material

1. Characterizing Phraseological Units by Stability and Idiomaticity

Human verbal behaviour is distinguished by its unique nature, particularly evident in the existence of different standardised idioms and '*ready-made*' phrases inside the language.

The effective use of language for communication relies on an individual's speech-forming abilities and the capacity to automatically reproduce stored linguistic elements, specifically phraseological expressions, in suitable communicative contexts.

Modern English, along with German, Ukrainian, and other languages, is exceptionally abundant in such structures and idioms. They can fulfil a communicative and text-organizing function, which is also associated with the speaker, their education, and the overall cultural level of their growth, among other factors.

Embedded in the linguistic awareness of speakers of a specific language, they are utilised automatically in suitable communicative contexts. The particularity of employing certain phraseological expressions in discourse

significantly mirrors the communicative culture in English-speaking societies, as well as in others.

Phraseology is a term with multiple meanings. This refers to the collection of figurative expressions in a specific language. Phraseology is the study of phraseological units, which are words with intricate semantics that cannot be constructed according to the generative structural-semantic models of variable combinations.

The Swiss linguist Charles Bally, the originator of phraseology theory, was the first to systematise and categorise four kinds of phraseological units [21, p. 75–87]:

1. Free word-combinations, meaning word pairings that lack consistency and disintegrate after their creation.

2. Typical word-combinations, namely those with a rather flexible association of elements that permit certain modifications.

3. Phraseological series, or clusters of words wherein two analogous notions converge nearly into a singular entity. The stability of these twists is determined by their principal application. These lexical pairings facilitate the reorganisation of elements.

4. Idioms, defined as collocations in which words have forfeited their individual meanings and convey a singular, indivisible concept. Analogous combinations preclude the rearrangement of components.

Bally categorises collocations based on their stability: those capable of grouping components and those lacking this capacity. He merely provided a schematic outline of these categories without offering a full description.

The linguist categorises habitual combinations and phraseological series as intermediary forms of word combinations, identifying solely two primary categories of combinations [*ibidem*, p. 75–76]:

1) lexical units;

2) phraseological units, which are collocations whose components are consistently utilised together to convey the same idea, have forfeited their separate significance. The entire combination assumes a new significance that transcends the mere sum of the meanings of its individual components.

Bally posited that such a transition might be likened to a chemical composition, asserting that if the unity is prevalent, then, in this instance, the amalgamation equates to a mere word.

Bally proved that the phraseological character of a word combination is contingent upon the inclusion of an identification word. The scientist's ideas

subsequently established the foundation for categorising phraseological fusions into a distinct group [*ibidem*, p. 88–91].

Since the era of Charles Bally, the examination of phraseology has persisted in its advancement. Nonetheless, the contributions of this eminent scientist, produced at the inception of phraseology studies, advanced the evolution of phraseological research. Domestic scholars, particularly experts in the English language, assert that phraseology has emerged as a distinct discipline of linguistics.

Phraseology has progressed from descriptive treatment to recognition as a scientific discipline. V. Vinogradov and N. Amosova laid the foundations through systematic classifications, a tradition continued in I. Mel'čuk's and A. Polguère's *Meaning-Text Theory and Lexical Functions* [36], which provided formalized models with lexicographic and computational applications. Ukrainian scholars (O. Bodyk and T. Rudakova [1], Ye. Horot et al. [8], A. Nikolenko [15], M. Mostovyi [14], L. Verba [7], V. Uzhchenko and D. Uzhchenko [19]) also strengthened the theoretical and methodological basis of phraseology as a science. In the Anglo-American tradition, H. Palmer [45] and A. Hornby [32] emphasized pedagogical and lexicographic applications, while later corpus-based studies by R. Moon [41] and lexicographic work by A. Cowie [26] consolidated phraseology as an empirical and interdisciplinary field.

In descriptive phraseology, the concept of stability is the fundamental criterion distinguishing set expressions from freely generated combinations. A. Cowie's model posits that the stability of a phraseological unit is determined by its degree of fixedness, which is itself rooted in the concept of lexicalization [25, p. 41–42].

The crucial basis for stability is non-compositionality, which refers to the extent to which the meaning of the unit cannot be derived from the literal meanings of its constituent words. When a word combination is sufficiently non-compositional, it achieves the status of a single, arbitrary linguistic sign and is stored as a unitary item in the lexicon. This process of lexicalization bypasses normal syntactic and semantic generative rules, conferring a high degree of resistance to change – or stability – upon the unit [*ibidem*, p. 125, 127, 129–130].

Cowie places phraseological units on a continuum of fixedness, moving from the least restricted (Free Combinations) to the most restricted, the Idioms. Within this framework, the Pure Idiom exemplifies maximum stability across

all key linguistic dimensions, serving as the benchmark for a fully lexicalized phraseological unit, shown in Table 1 [*ibidem*, p. 133]:

Table 1

Criteria of Maximal Stability in Cowie's Pure Idiom Classification

Criterion of Stability	Characteristics in Cowie's Pure Idiom	Examples of Pure Idioms
Semantic Invariability	The unit is semantically opaque (non-compositional). The established, figurative meaning is the only one conventionally available	<i>Bury the hatchet</i> (to make peace); <i>Red tape</i> (excessive bureaucracy)
Lexical Integrity	The lexical components are immutable. Substitution, modification, or deletion of any constituent is impossible without destroying the idiomatic meaning	<i>Spill the beans</i> (not * <i>spill the legumes</i>); <i>A storm in a teacup</i> (not <i>A tempest in a teacup</i>)
Syntactic Integrity	The unit exhibits syntactic rigidity. It resists transformations like passivization in its idiomatic sense	<i>Kick the bucket</i> (almost never * <i>The bucket was kicked</i> in the sense of 'died'); <i>Lead someone up the garden path</i> .
Conventionalization of Use	The combination is maximally conventionalized and instantly recognizable to native speakers as a single, indivisible unit of meaning	<i>Be on cloud nine</i> ; <i>Go cold turkey</i> .

This high degree of fixedness is what necessitates the treatment of a Pure Idiom not as a phrase, but as a complex word-unit with a single lexical entry, clearly setting it apart from Figurative Idioms (which show partial motivation) and Restricted Collocations (which retain compositional meaning but restrict co-occurrence).

While the Pure Idiom occupies the apex of the fixedness continuum, the majority of conventionalized language resides in the middle ground, defined by Restricted Collocations [25, p. 169–192]. This category is characterized by a significant, yet partial, breakdown of the absolute stability criteria observed in idioms. The defining feature here is not semantic opacity, but semantic restriction or bound sense.

A Restricted Collocation (RC) is a combination of two lexical items where the choice of one item is limited (or restricted) by the presence of the other. Crucially, the meaning remains largely compositional (literal), but one component sacrifices its full range of combinability to partner with the other, shown in Table 2.

Table 2

Comparison of Stability Criteria: Cowie's Pure Idiom vs. Restricted Collocation

Criterion of Stability	Cowie's Pure Idiom (e.g., <i>kick the bucket</i>)	Cowie's Restricted Collocation (e.g., <i>commit suicide</i>)
Semantic Invariability (Non-Compositionality)	Maximal Fixedness: Meaning is fully opaque ('die')	Minimal Fixedness: Meaning is largely compositional ('do' + 'self-killing'), but the verb <i>commit</i> is bound to the noun <i>suicide</i> in this context; it has no other equivalent literal use
Lexical Integrity	Maximal Fixedness: Components are immutable and resist substitution (e.g., *perform the bucket)	Partial Fixedness: The keyword (e.g., <i>suicide</i>) is fixed, but the collocate (e.g., <i>commit</i>) may allow a small set of conventional synonyms (<i>perpetrate suicide</i> is less common, but the verb <i>perpetrate</i> is a semantic near-equivalent of <i>commit</i>)
Syntactic Integrity	Maximal Fixedness: Resists most	Medium Fixedness: More syntactically flexible. The RC

	transformations in the idiomatic sense	can easily undergo grammatical changes without losing its phraseological status (e.g., <i>suicide was committed</i> , <i>they are committing suicide</i>)
Conventionalization of Use	High Fixedness: Used for its single, established figurative meaning	Maximal Fixedness: The fixedness lies in the conventional choice of co-occurrence; while <i>do suicide</i> is grammatically possible, <i>commit suicide</i> is the normative, stable phrase for English speakers

During speaking, words are incorporated into combinations and phrases, creating larger segments of the speech continuum – sentences, supra-phrasal units, and text. A lexical unit including multiple words is referred to as a word combination. Word combinations may be classified as free, where individual components maintain their literal meanings, such as *to go home* or *to play the violin*, or as stable, where the disintegration of the phrase alters its intended significance, exemplified by expressions like *to bring the house down* – (*to excite great applause*), (*to excite great applause*), *to play hookey/hooky* – (*to miss lessons*), *to eat one's heart out* – (*feel keenly unhappy, worry*).

Certain word combinations possess both literal and figurative meanings: “*To be fed up with*” – “*Naistysia, nasytysia do neskhochu*”¹; in the later instances, a pronounced degree of semantic fusion among the components of the phrase is evident.

In free word combinations, the constituent elements possess semantic and structural autonomy, but in fixed combinations, they lack such freedom.

In contrast to words, particularly complex ones, which exhibit integral formation, phraseological units consist of distinct formations. The distinct creation of phraseological units is their fundamental distinction from individual words, which is why they are categorised as a unique category of

¹ Here and after referred to as this source [4].

complex formations and are identified as phraseological units, in contrast to words, which are units of the lexical type.

The designated semantic integrity (idiomaticity) of phraseological units can be exhibited through various outward characteristics of these linguistic formations, allowing for direct tracing in numerous instances. A phraseological unit is incorporated into the language as a cohesive entity and operates as a complete word, thereby serving as an *'equivalent of a word'*.

The equivalence of a phraseological unit to a word is evident in two primary characteristics inherent to words: semantic integrity and the existence of the phraseological unit as a pre-formed entity inside language, allowing for its reproduction.

It is important to differentiate between conventional or traditional word combinations, which, despite their frequent repetition in language, do not equate to words.

For instance, combinations of words such as *rough sketch* and *fine distinction* are prevalent in language, frequently replicated in a manner akin to phraseological units. Nonetheless, it would be erroneous to categorise them with the latter and, thus, to regard them as comparable to words. They lack the idiomaticity characteristic of similar phrases; their overall meaning is obtained from the aggregate of their components' meanings.

Idiomaticity is the primary quality of phraseological units, differentiating them from word combinations generated during speech or sentence construction. Conversely, phraseological units must be distinguished from a specific idiomatic combination, which may be referred to as idioms.

Phraseological units employed daily in the English language, such as *to get up*, *to fall in love*, and *to be surprised*, are an integral and indispensable component of linguistic structure. They are distinguished by their lack of imagery and metaphorical elements.

Discussion of a specific image underlying a phraseological unit is feasible only in relation to its genesis. This imagery is not manifested in contemporary language; its underlying metaphor is obsolete.

Speakers typically devote equal attention to its inherent structure as they do to any word with a distinct meaning framework.

A distinctly separate and markedly different category is exemplified by idioms themselves. They are idiomatic combinations grounded in the transfer of meanings, relying on metaphors readily comprehensible to speakers. A

defining feature of idioms is their vivid stylistic embellishment, emotional intensity, and deviation from the conventional neutral tone.

Examples of such idioms encompass word combinations such as:

- *to take the bull by the horns, to wash one's dirty linen in public*, which when translated into Ukrainian also possess a central imagery: “*vziaty byka za rohy/rishuche diiaty/muzhno zdolaty trudnoshchi*”, “*rozgholoshuvaty taiemnytsi/vynosyty smittia z khaty*”;
- *as dead as a doornail* – “*mertvyi, yak tsviakh v odvirku*”, etc.

It is evident that all of these are idiomatic expressions in a broad sense; however, it is indisputable that when employing the aforementioned phrases in conversation, communicators comprehend that “bulls taken by the horns”, “dead as a doornail”, etc., bear no genuine connection to the actual substance of the statement, the true essence of the thought, or the conventional manner of its articulation.

The speaker utilises the linguistic opportunity to enhance the vibrancy and figurative quality of his discourse. The creation of idioms transpires through three primary and rather straightforward methods [14, p. 46], specifically:

1. Metaphors derived from the depiction of commonplace, natural entities:

- *Much water has flowed under the bridges* – “*tse bulo duzhe davno/bahato vody splyvlo z toho chasu*”;
- *To fish in troubled waters* – “*lovyty rybu v (kala)mutnii void*”, etc.

Such idioms can be readily tracked between languages. Moreover, there exists a shared repository of idioms among historically related languages.

2. Metaphors derived from references to distinct, recognisable pictures and localised objects:

- *To sit above the salt* – “*sydity na chilnomu, pochesnomu mistsi za stolom*”;
- *To accept the (Stewardship of the) Chiltern Hundreds* – “*sklasty z sebe oboviazky chlena parlamenta*”, etc.

3. Metaphors derived from the transference of concepts between several domains of application, to which they appropriately pertain:

- *Dyed in grain or in the wool* – “*perekonanyi, spravzhnii, zavzhatyi (vyraz poxydyt vid zvychaiu farbuvaty tkanynu v stani napivfabrykatu, shchob mitsnishe trymalasia farba)*”;

- *To chuck (or throw) in (or up) the sponge/to hang out (hoist) the white flag/to throw (toss) in the towel/ to fling (throw) up one's cards/to throw up the game* – “*vyznaty sebe peremozhenym, sklasty zbroiu, zdatysia, spasuvaty; vidmovytysia vid svoikh pohliadiv (vyrazy zi slovamy sponge ta towel spochatku vzhyvalysia tilky v boksterskomu zharhoni)*”, etc.

It is important to note that proverbs and sayings, which are phraseological units having a sentence structure, can only be identified through sentences, for instance:

- *Birds of a feather flock (or will gather) together – People who have the same interests, ideas, etc. are attracted to each other and stay close together* – “*rybak rybaka piznaie zdaleka; ptakhy odnoho polotu; dva choboty para*”;

- *A blind leader of the blind (The blind leading the blind) – is a situation in which the person who is leading or advising others knows as little as they do* – “*slipyi vede slipoho (pro toho, khto daie porady, sam ne pozbyraiuchys u chomus)*”;

- *It is not with saying “honey”, “honey” that sweetness comes into the mouth – The mouth is not sweetened by saying “honey” and “sugar”, and “sugar-plum”* – “*Skilky ne kazhy ‘khalva’, a v roti solodshe ne stane*”.

Idioms are specialised stylistic procedures that enhance the expressiveness, vividness, and originality of language.

The association of proverbs, which are fixed linguistic units with a sentence structure, solely with folklore is inaccurate. Proverbs ought to be examined in both folklore and phraseology, but from distinct perspectives. They are examined in phraseology as components of linguistic phraseological composition, possessing distinct semantic, stylistic, and structural characteristics.

The study of proverbs is crucial for understanding the phraseology of contemporary English. Folklore examines proverbs primarily as a manifestation of folk art that epitomises popular wisdom and cultural traditions.

Researchers examining the textual application of phraseological units, as highlighted by V. Mokienko [13, p. 39–50], have demonstrated the significant diversity of these units in active usage and the stylistic impact of such alterations.

Such works compelled theorists, notably R. Moon, to focus on the issue of phraseological diversity [41, p. 124–129]. One outcome of these investigations is the emergence of phraseological stylistics, validated by the

research of A. Naciscione [42], A. Negreneau [43], H. Thun [49], J. O. Park and I. Milică [46], and others.

Scholarly interest in phraseology and its stylistic use has evolved significantly in Western Europe, with key contributions from researchers like A. Cowie [25] and R. Gläser [30, p. 41–52]. Cowie's work, in particular, helped establish the study of phraseo-stylistics, focusing on the communicative effects of phraseological units (PUs) and their occasional modifications in texts. This area of study has expanded, with recent research delving into the stylistic changes of PUs, especially in different genres such as media texts and advertisements [23, p. 89–113; 24, p. 77–89; 31, p. 125–143; 47].

A notable concept in paremiology is the anti-proverb, introduced by W. Mieder [38], which involves innovative modifications to traditional proverbs. While this approach works well in cases where the original proverb structure is retained, it is less effective in cases involving phraseological allusion or phraseological saturation, where multiple stylistic changes occur within a single context [22; 35; 37].

The need to study PUs in use and understand the rules and processes that guide their stylistic changes is increasingly recognized. Cognitive stylistics is positioned as an ideal framework for exploring these changes, as it focuses on the development of meaning and its cognitive underpinnings. Key areas of exploration include the relationship between phraseological meaning and thought, as well as how PUs evolve in discourse, including visual discourse [29].

This growing interest in phraseology is driven by its complex nature, the increasing focus on lexicography, and the relevance of discourse in pedagogy. A cognitive approach to stylistic analysis calls for a transdisciplinary approach that incorporates fields like psycholinguistics and cognitive linguistics, emphasizing the role of psychology in discourse comprehension and teaching. The creative use of PUs in discourse reflects non-traditional, innovative thinking, and this approach encourages an openness to new stylistic forms emerging in language.

Phraseological research is increasingly utilising historical and dialectological materials. The historical development of individual phraseological units is explained and understood, together with those from various historical periods.

Research conducted by L. Skrypnyk [17], V. Uzhchenko [18], M. Alefirenko [3], R. Moon [41], and other scholars has convincingly

demonstrated that, during the nascent stages of development, a phraseological unit lacks a stable lexical composition and exhibits significant grammatical variability, which diminishes over time as a result of various structural and semantic transformations.

Phraseological etymology emerged within the context of historical phraseology. The approach of scientific etymological analysis is well elaborated in the works of H. Walter and V. Mokienko [50], A. Ivchenko [10], R. Köster [34], R. Eckert [28], among others.

The origins of phraseological units are examined, and phraseological neologisms are documented. The issues pertaining to the study of dialect phraseology were elaborated upon in the works of A. Ivchenko [2], G. Arkushyn [6], Z. Matsyuk [12], N. Kovalenko [11], and others.

The primary categories of equivalence and non-equivalence among phraseological units were identified. A significant contribution in this section is attributed to the work of O. Zaichenko, which consolidates the findings of various researchers, delineates the analytical principles applicable to any pair of compared languages, and identifies avenues for future comparative research [9].

It is essential to note the comparative studies conducted by V. Antonenko and O. Pavlychko [5], along with K. Ryzhenko et al. [52], who concentrated on the international phraseological corpus as evidenced by the Ukrainian, English, and German languages. Researchers have demonstrated that international phraseological expressions hold a substantial position within the linguistic system of nominations.

The theoretical foundation of many elements of phraseological research has also catalysed the advancement of its applied dimensions. The normative application of contemporary phraseological units is established, a methodology for instructing on the phraseology of vernacular languages is formulated, and the issue of intonation characteristics of phraseological units is addressed. The compilation of various types of phraseological dictionaries occupies a significant position in applied aspects, including discussions on the principles of their compilation and theoretical issues in phraseology [16].

2. Exploring Proverbs and Sayings as Recontextualizing Expressions

The extensive repository of language is a rich source of folk wisdom, encompassing the most suitable and artistically expressive phrases – insights that pertain to all fundamental aspects of human existence and endeavour. This fund operates as an open system, continuously supplied by renowned aphorisms

from public personalities, artists, writers, and scientists. An aphorism attains the status of a proverb not solely due to its literal meaning, but rather because of the manner in which the notion is articulated, the structure that facilitates the embodiment of novel semantic interpretations.

The former juxtaposes folklore language with poetry expression, defined as “the best words in the best order”. Researchers of this phenomena assert that each proverb constitutes a little work of art, with its substance and aphoristic potency derived from its condensed imagery and distinctive rhythmic-melodic structure. English proverbs and sayings encompass many facets of the lives of the English populace.

The inherent difficulty in structurally defining the proverb has led contemporary scholarship, driven by figures like A. Taylor [48] and S. Arora [20], to adopt a prototypical and functional perspective. As defined by N. Norrick: “...proverbs are recurrent, pithy, often formulaic and/or figurative, fairly stable and generally recognisable units used to form a complete utterance, make a complete conversational contribution and/or perform a speech act in a speech event. This definition differentiates them from non-sentential items like proverbial phrases, idioms, binomials, etc” [44, p. 14]. Proverbs make apodictic statements like *Money talks* – (*z hroshyma bahato choho mozhna zrobyty*) or they evoke a scenario applicable to a range of analogous situations, as in *Little strokes fell great oaks* – (*nastyrlyvist vse zdolaie*); *A stitch in time saves nine* – (*stibok, zroblenyi vchasno, vartyi deviaty; roby vse vchasno*) [*ibidem*].

Proverbs are typically regarded as aphoristic statements containing didactic substance, structured in a rhythmic format. Proverbs are invariably complete sentences. They aim for a didactic objective (to educate, caution, etc.). In contrast to other forms of permanent statements, proverbs frequently consist of intricate sentences. A proverb can serve as either a standalone statement or a component of a complicated sentence.

The saying “*The proof of the pudding is in the eating*” – (*yakist pudynhu vyznachaietsia tym, shcho yoho zidaiut; vse pereviriaietsia praktykoiu*) signifies that the quality of custard is defined by its consumption; in essence, all things are ultimately assessed through practical experience. It is prevalent in the writings of English authors.

You must not forget that there is still the possibility that the girl Cataline Perez was deceived. The proof of the pudding is in the eating (W.S. Maugham).

They will tell you that the proof of the pudding is in the eating and they are right (G.B. Shaw).

While several English proverbs include lengthy expressions such as “*A bird in the hand is worth two in the bush*” – “*Krashche synytsia v zhmeni, nizh zhuravel u nebi*”, the majority are succinct and precise factual statements.

The aforementioned examples demonstrate that ellipsis is more prevalent in proverbs than in any other category of phraseological units (PUs). Proverbs exceeding ten lexemes typically become obsolete. Many lengthy proverbs have become obsolete; for instance, the proverb “*Measure the cloth ten times, though can't cut it but once*” has been supplanted in conversation by the more succinct “*Measure thrice and cut once*” – “*Sim raz odmiriai, a raz odrizh*”. The inclusion of archaisms in a proverb leads to its obsolescence.

The proverb “*He that has had one of his family hanged may not say to his neighbour, hang up that fish*” is supplanted by a distinctly different adage: “*People who live in glass houses should not throw stones*” – “*Yakshcho zhyvesh u sklianomu budynku ne povynen kydaty v inshi kameni*”, it suggests that individuals lacking perfection should refrain from judging others.

The notion of a saying in contemporary folklore is ambiguous, as it encompasses several structural-semantic categories of fixed figurative expressions. The sole unifying factor among these many word combinations is that they are not proverbs, in some instances when their proximity is undeniable.

In English and American linguistic literature, a clear boundary between a proverb and a saying is absent. This elucidates why English dictionaries of proverbs encompass utterances that lack the defining attributes of proverbs.

A saying is a communication phraseological unit lacking the characteristics of a proverb. Sayings lack the same didactic quality as proverbs. Typically, these are appropriate metaphorical parallels and twists of phrase employed to provide emotional resonance and vibrancy to a remark, as well as to accurately characterise a person, object, event, or phenomenon. Sayings do not fully articulate a notion; they merely suggest it.

Early attempts to define the saying structurally, such as those by G. Milner (four-part structures) [39; 40] and A. Dundes (topic-comment descriptive elements) [27], ultimately proved inadequate as comprehensive definitions, functioning more successfully as classification systems:

- Milner's Model: Proposed a four-part structure with binary values, but failed to account for short proverbs (e.g., *Time flies – Chas bizhyt*) and relied on unconvincing notions of “hidden structure”.
- Dundes's Model: Used the descriptive element (topic-comment) as the basis, distinguishing between equational (*Time is money – Chas – tse hroshi*) and oppositional (*All that glitters is not gold – Ne vse te zoloto, shcho blyshchyt / Blyshchytsia, yak zloto, a vseredyni – boloto*) proverbs. The effectiveness of this model, however, derives from the Functional Sentence Perspective (FSP) of the Prague School.
- Functional Basis: This reliance on FSP reveals that the most effective analyses are functional rather than strictly structural. A functional definition allows researchers to recognize structurally disparate sayings (e.g., *Opposites attract – Protylezhnosti pryiahuiutsia* vs. *Easy come, easy go – Yak pryishlo, tak i pishlo / pryishlo makhom – pishlo prakhom / lehko pryide – prakhom pide;*) as proverbs because they all fulfil the same theme-rheme descriptive role in discourse.

Acknowledging L. Wittgenstein's concept of ‘family resemblances’ (*Familienähnlichkeit*) for cultural institutions, the consensus is that no single proverb unites all characteristic features; instead, they exist as a family of related sayings [51, p. 142]. The notion of proverbiality itself is viewed as a matter of prototypicality [20, 1984].

Proverbs fall into general groupings based on their function and form:

- Generalizable Scenario: Proverbs that sketch a scenario to comment on a range of analogous situations (e.g., *The early bird catches the worm – Ranni ptashky rosu piut, a pizni slizky lliut / Khto rane vstaie – tomu Boh daie / Khto vstaie z rana, vyide na pana*).
- Formulaic Statements: Examples that make a literal statement using fixed formulas (e.g., *Like father, like son – Yake korinnia, take y nasinnia / Yabluko vid yabluni nedaleko padaie*).
- Specific Statements: Proverbs that make a direct, usually less figurative, statement about a particular matter (e.g., *Money talks – Hroshyma bahato choho mozna zrobyty*).

Sayings are predominantly evaluative statements. They may articulate positive as well as negative evaluations. Presented below are such instances:

- Sayings reflecting a positive evaluation: “*One's word is as good as his bond*” – “*Buty khaziainom svoho slova, na noho mozna poklastysia*” and similar expressions.

- Sayings conveying a negative evaluation: *“Is your mother aware of your absence?”* – *“U tebe moloko na hubakh ne obsokhlo”*; *“Your sins will find you out”* – *“Vid doli ne vtechesh nikudy, ne zakhovaieshsia vid sebe / Rano chy pizno chas rozplaty, bez vyniatku dlia vsikh nastane, nashi hriky ne zakhovaty”* and others.

- Non-evaluation sayings are solitary: *“Where do you hail from?”* – *“Vidkilia vy rodom?”* Sayings are distinguished by their clarity and lack of ambiguity.

Sayings, like proverbs, are sentences. However, these phraseological units exhibit substantial distinctions in their functional aspects, as sayings lack a directive and didactic-evaluative role. Proverbs embody folk wisdom and are distinguished by a greater level of abstraction compared to sayings.

It is important to observe that proverbs possess a literal interpretation of all elements: *“All is well that ends well”* – *“Dobre te, shcho dobre zakinchuietsia / kinets vinchaie dilo”*; *“Appearances are deceptive”* – *“Zovnishnist omanlyva”*; *“Better late than never”* – *“Krashche pizno, nizh nikoly”* and others pertain to stable phraseological expressions.

Proverbs are defined by the stability of their lexical structure and the invariability of lexeme arrangement, which is linked to syntactic constraints and the extensive use of expressive techniques.

Many proverbs are subject to a negative assessment about their semantic aspects:

- *“One law for the rich, and another for the poor”* – *“Dlia bahatykh odyn zakon, dlia bidnykh – inshyi”*; *“A thief passes for a gentleman when stealing has made him rich”* – *“Zlodiia nazyvaiut dzhentlmenom, koly vin staie bahatym”* and others;

- war is denounced: *“War is the sport of kings”* – *“Viina – zabava koroliv”*, implying that it serves the interests of monarchs rather than the populace;

- fools are derided: *„A fool’s bolt is soon short”* – *“U durnia hroshi dovho ne lezhat u kysheni / Duren shvydko vtrachaie svoi mozhlyvosti / Durne dilo ne khytre”*; *“Fools rush in where angels fear to tread”* – *„Durniam zakon ne pysanyi”*; *“He who is born a fool is never cured”* – *„Kheto durnem urodyvsia, tomu durnem i vmerty / Durnia vchyty, shcho mertvoho lichyty”*;

- the indolent are condemned: *“Idleness is the root of all evil”* – *“Bez dila psuietsia syla”*; *“The devil finds work for idle hands to do”* – *“Liudy, yaki*

nichoho ne robliat, maiut bilshe shansiv potrapyty v nepryiemnosti abo skoity zlochyn; Linoshchi - maty usikh vad / Linoshchi psuiut liudynu".

Proverbs impart lessons on frugality and diligence: "A penny saved is a penny gained" – "Shcho zberih – yak prydbav";

"Take care of the pence and the pounds will take care of themselves" – "Berezhy pensy, a funty sami sebe zberezhut" (considering *Kopiika karbovanets berezhe*);

"He that would eat the fruit must climb the tree" – "Shchob rybu yisty, treba u vodu lizty / Treba nakhylytysia, shchob z krynytsi vody napytysia / Nikomu sama ptakha v ruky ne letyt / Ne pobihaiesh — ne poobidaiesh", among others.

Numerous proverbs convey a positive assessment: "A great ship requires deep waters" – "Velykomu korablevi – velyke plavannia";

"Brevity is the soul of wit" ("Hamlet" Act II, Scene 2) – "Styslist vyrazu – osnova dotepnosti / Styslist – sestra talantu";

"Good health is above wealth" – "Naibilshe bahatstvo – zdorovia";

"Little strokes fell great oaks" – "Ne tym kraplia kaminets dovbaie, shcho sylna, a tym, shcho chasto padaie / Nastyrlyvist vse zdolaie", among others.

The interpretation of proverbs might be wholly or partially redefined. Proverbs with metaphorical significance of a single element: "Calamity is a man's true touchstone" – "Liudynu piznaiut u bidi / (Pry hóri ta) v lykhu hodynu uznaiesh virnu liudynu / Druzi piznaiutsia v bidi"; "Familiarity breeds contempt" – "Chym bilshe znaiesh liudynu, tym krashche bachysh yii nedoliky / Chym krashche znaiesh shchos, tym menshe yoho boishsia abo tsinuiesh"; "Like begets like" – "Ternyna hrushok ne rodyt / Yaka yablunka, taki y yabluchka"; "Like cures like" – "Klyn klynom vybyvaiut / Vid choho zakhvoriv, tym i likuisia"; "Necessity is the mother of invention" – "Bida vsoho navchyt / bida vymuchyt – bida i vyuchyt"; "Punctuality is the politeness of princes" – "Tochnist – vvichlyvist koroliv"; "Make hay while the sun shines" – "Kosy kosa poky rosa"; "Time is a great healer" – "Chas – naikrashchyi likar".

Modern English contains a considerable quantity of proverbs having comparative significance: "Blood is thicker than water" – "Krov ne voda, a sertse ne kamin / Khto ridnishyi, toi i tsinnishyi"; "A miss is as good as a mile" – "Koly vzhe promakhnuvsia, to odnakovo na skilky / Promakh ye promakh / Malo-malo ne vvazhaietsia".

A defining trait of proverbs is their unambiguity. This is likely influenced by the extensive generalisation of their meaning and their static nature within the text.

3. Classifying Phraseological Units by Anthropocentrism

Anthropocentrism has been a longstanding focus of phraseological studies. This is mostly ascribed to a functional characteristic, interpreting anthropocentrism as the tendency of phraseological units to represent the human realm. The interpretative essence of meaning is acknowledged, and opportunities in cognitive science are examined.

The objective of our analysis is to examine anthropocentric aspects of phraseological meaning that are independent of the semantic function of phraseological units.

We believe it is essential to categorise linguistic winged words and aphorisms based on the anthropocentric concept [44, p. 8–9]. This principle posits that the primary classification is HOMO SAPIENS, with comparisons in each instance serving as a backdrop, prioritising the individual as a bearer of a distinct language and culture.

The proverbs and sayings we have emphasised can be categorically grouped into the following groups:

1. Individuals and their perception of the natural environment.
2. Individuals and their perceptions of the food they consume.
3. Individuals and their perspectives on leisure time.
4. Individuals and their comprehension of life values.
5. Human attitudes towards the surrounding animal world.

We examine not only aphorisms that vary in their structural composition, such as the pairs: “*The burnt child dreads the fire*” – “*Obpecheshsia na molotsi, to dmesh i na vodu / Naliakav mikh, shcho y torbi strashno*”, but also those that are, to varying extents, characterised by national and cultural significance.

Let us examine instances for each category of our classification.

1. The first cluster of proverbs and sayings pertains to the geographical location of Great Britain, an island nation bordered by the North Sea, the Irish Sea, and the Atlantic Ocean. The reliance on the caprices of water elements is inevitably mirrored in the aphorisms of the English language, which convey the arduous and perilous nature of maritime labour, offering guidance on how to navigate specific challenges and what considerations to heed prior to embarking on a voyage.

These constitute sayings:

- “Any port in a storm” – “*U bidi vsiakiyi vykhid hodytsia / Na bezrybi i pak ryba*”.
- “As the days grew longer, the storms are stronger” – “*Dali v lis, bilshe trusku*”.
- “Welcome as water in a leaking ship” – “*Potribnyi, yak sobatsi piata noha (piate koleso do voza, lysomu hrebin, slipomu dzerkalo, torishnii snih) / Duzhe nebazhanyi (nevchasnyi) / Pryshyi kobyli khvist*”.
- “While it is fine weather mend your sail” – “*Hotui litom sany, a vzymku voza*”.

Proverbs and adages elucidate the characteristics of the water, imparting the understanding that life, in its entirety, mirrors the ocean. Below are several instances of such expressions:

“Every flow must have its ebb” – “*Zlety i padinnia / Pryplyv ta vidplyv / Zanepad i rozkvit (vidrozhennia) / Prohres ta rehres / Ziavliatysia i znykaty*”.

“A small leak will sink a great ship” – “*Vid malenkoi techi mozhe potonuty velykyi korabel / Khoch richka y nevelychka, a berehy lamiae*”.

“There are as good fish in the sea as ever out came of it” – “*Nichoho boiatysia nestachi / khoch hreblu haty, ne tilky svitu, shcho u vikni*”.

The aphoristic context of these maritime language units necessitates comparative explication in linguistic and regional studies for effective language communication instruction. We will examine their parallels in the Ukrainian language.

We assert that throughout the era of the formulation of numerous proverbs and sayings, Ukraine was a nation where the sea held minimal significance. The lack of a ‘sea’ motif is evident in Ukrainian phraseological expressions: “*Pry hóri ta v lykhu hodynu piznaiesh virnu liudynu*” – proverb; “*Dali v lis – bilshe trusku*” – saying; “*Potribnyi yak sobatsi piata noha*” – saying; “*Hotui sany vlitku, a voza vzymku*” – proverb; “*Shchastia i neshchastia na odnim koni yizdiat*” – saying; “*Svit [ne] klynom ziishovsia / [Ne] klynom zemlia ziishlasia*”.

2. Let us examine the second category of proverbs and sayings. In many cultures, both the cuisine and the manner of its presentation might vary in content and formality. English food varies significantly from Ukrainian cuisine, and the characteristics of the former are evident in the language and regional context of native English speakers. The subsequent notions constitute

elements of the linguistic and regional context associated with the most prevalent varieties of cuisine:

“eggs and bacon” – *“yaiechnia z bekonom”*;

“eggs in moonshine” – *“Yaitsia v samohoni (strava z yaiechnykh zhovtkiv, zvarenykh u pidsolodzhenomu aromatnomu sousi z rozhevoiu vodoiu, yaki vyhliadaly yak malenki misiatsi v tumannii ridyni) – vyraz, shcho vidnosytsia do zastariloj idiomatychnoi frazy, yaka oznachaie vyhadlyve, nerealne abo smishne poniattia”*;

“omelette” – *“omelette” – tse strava zi zbytykh yaiets z dodavanniam ridyny (moloka, vershkiv, vody) ta soli, shcho hotuietsia shliakhom smazhennia na skovorodi abo zapikannia.*

The British passion for eggs is reflected in the following aphorisms: the proverb “*Don’t teach your grandmother to suck eggs*” corresponds to the Ukrainian versions – *“Yaitsia kurku ne vchat / Ne vchy vchenoho yisty khliba pechenoho (vchyty, navchaty kohos starshoho abo bilsh dosvidchenoho za sebe)”*.

The saying “*You cannot make an omelette without breaking eggs*” corresponds in Ukrainian to *“Ne rozbyvshy yaiets, yaiechniu ne pryhotuiesh”*. The distinctions between these two sayings illustrate the atypical nature of omelette within traditional Ukrainian cuisine.

The saying “*After meat comes mustard*” (to prove, say, defend, etc. something when it is too late) – *“Vse dobre u svii chas / Yak mertvomu pryparka / Doroha lozhka do obidu; 2) Rozmákhuvaty kulakámy [písliá blíky]”*. This comparable is characterised by national peculiarity and possesses a substantial historical and cultural context: it is well-known that in Rus, any holiday was typically accompanied by a brawl, most frequently occurring inebriated.

The saying “*Every cook praises his own broth*” signifies that every cook extols his own dish; the Ukrainian counterpart is *“Vsiak kulyk do svoho bolota zvyk”*. Bouillon, a dish in Ukraine, gained popularity in the 19th century, mostly among the aristocracy due to the extensive influence of French culture. The national and cultural significance of its counterpart is noteworthy; the swamp in Ukraine, unlike in England, has historically been and continues to be a characteristic landscape feature due to specific natural conditions and social factors. In European nations, any land where swamp drainage was intentionally executed to increase usable land has consistently been valued.

The *wading bird* (wader) is a long-legged bird (such as herons, bitterns, storks, and ibises) that wade in water in search of food, but for an Englishman, the term ‘*wader*’ refers to a marine bird called ‘*sandpiper*’ with an extended beak.

The subsequent saying in the examined cluster is, in our view, the most emotionally charged: “*Too much pudding will choke a dog*” means that even something pleasant or desirable can be harmful if there is an excess of it; it is a metaphorical expression for the concept “too much of a good thing” – the Ukrainian sayings “*Vse dobre v miru / Dobre nahrebesh, dodomu ne donesesh / Mira – vsiakii spravi vira*”.

Pudding, a quintessential dish of traditional British cuisine, is linked to numerous cultural connotations, whereas in Ukrainian cuisine, pudding is perceived as an alien concept, lacking national essence; it is not surprising that the term was adopted into the Ukrainian language via transliteration.

3. Individuals and their perspectives on leisure time.

The saying “*The best fish smell when they are three days old / Fish and visitors smell in three days*” parallels the Ukrainian saying “*Ne slid zlovzhyvaty hostynnistiu (hosti i ryba cherez try dni psuiutsia)*”.

The Ukrainian saying advocates for delicacy, reflecting the renowned friendliness and hospitality of the Ukrainian people, where treating a guest with ample food and care is customary. In contrast, the English saying illustrates the typical insularity of English homes towards guests, as an Englishman is more likely to invite you to sit in a pub or restaurant. He will extend an invitation to you as a guest only in extraordinary circumstances.

The saying “*Lookers-on see most of the game / Standers-by see more than the gamesters*” means that people who are not directly involved in a situation or activity often have a clearer, more objective, and better perspective than those who are participating. The Ukrainian expression “*Zboku vydnishe*” signifies the same entity.

The sayings “*Life is not all cakes and ale / Life is not all beer and skittles*” use ‘*cakes and ale / beer and skittles*’ as a metaphor for the good things in life, such as good times, material pleasures, and simple joys, suggesting that these are not the only aspects of existence, and symbolise a conventional leisure activity of the normal Englishman, which is entirely atypical for a Ukrainian. The Ukrainian equivalents “*Vik prozhyty – ne pole pereity / Na viku, yak na dovhii nyvi, vsoho trapliaietsia: i kukil i pshenytsia / Vik izvikuvaty – ne paltsem perekyvaty*” indicates that human existence is a

multifaceted, unexpected odyssey replete with challenges, pleasures, and grief, necessitating sagacity and experience to traverse it with grace.

The saying “*He who pays the piper, calls the tune*” incorporates the term ‘pipe’, referring to the bagpipe, a national wind instrument that enhances the leisure of Great Britain’s residents during traditional holidays. This non-equivalent notion in Ukrainian language and culture is mostly linked to Scotland and the Scots. The Ukrainian equivalent “*Khto platyt hroshi, toi i komanduie*” analogous in significance to the English one and denotes that the person who provides the money for something decides what will be done, or has a right to decide what will be done.

4. Individuals and their comprehension of life values.

The emergence of such aphorisms in both languages is attributable to the existence of certain moral principles and personal attributes of local speakers. We believe there is no substantial distinction between Ukrainians and Englishmen regarding their perspectives on good and evil, as well as material values. Consequently, we assert that the semantic and lexical structures of the English and Ukrainian versions are nearly identical.

“*A burden of one’s own choice is not felt*” – “*Svii tiahar ne tiazhyt / svoia nosha ne nosha*”;

“*Self-praise is no recommendation*” – “*Samovykhvaliannia shche ne rekomendatsiia / Ne khvaly sam sebe, nekhai tebe liudy pokhvaliat / Hrechana kasha sama sebe khvalyt*”;

“*Beauty is but skin-deep*” – “*Zovnishnist obmanlyva / Krasa ne vichna / Z oblychchia vody ne pyty*”;

“*Old friends and old wine are best / Old tunes are sweetest and old friends are surest*” – „*Nemaie nichoho krashche, nizh staryi druh i stare vyno / Staryi druh lipshyi novykh dvokh / Dlia pryiatelia novoho ne puskaisia staroho / Odezha krashcha nova, druzi krashchi stari*”.

“*Friends may meet, but the mountains never greet*” – “*Hora z horoiu ne skhodytsia, a cholovik z cholovikom kolys ta y zustrinetsia*”.

5. Human attitudes towards the surrounding animal world.

The selection of animals in proverbs and sayings is shaped by various geographical locations. Consequently, specific animals residing in England frequently feature in English proverbs and sayings, while those located in Ukraine are prevalent in Ukrainian expressions. Nevertheless, we contend that numerous English and Ukrainian paremias are synonymous. “*A cat has nine lives*” – “*Zhyvuchy yak kishka*”; “*If you run after two hares, you will catch*

neither” – “*Za dvoma zaitsiamy pozheneshsia, zhodnoho ne vpiimaiesh*”; “*Two dogs over one bone seldom agree / Two cats and a mouse never agree in one*” – “*Dva vedmedi v odnii barlozi ne zhyvut / Dva koty v odnomu mishku ne pomyriatsia*”; “*A leopard can’t (doesn’t) change its (his) spots*” – “*Yak vovka ne hodui, a vin vse odno v lis dyvytsia / Z chornoï kishky biloi ne zrobysh*”; “*It is good fishing in troubled waters*” – “*Lehko lovyty rybu v (kala)mutnii vodi*”.

Conclusions. Based on the analysis of approximately 100 English and Ukrainian paremias, the concluding observations underscore the divergence between the two linguacultures while simultaneously mapping the core thematic concerns of the Ukrainian language's lexical content. A minor, yet significant, 10% divergence is attributed to extralinguistic factors, primarily linguistic and regional historical disparities stemming from the comparison of remote cultures. Lexically, the degree of non-equivalence in aphorisms totals 20%, contrasting with a high presence of background vocabulary (50%) and connotative vocabulary (30%). These lexical components align with the overall thematic statistics of the Ukrainian language, confirming an anthropocentric focus structured around five key areas: 1) Individuals and their perception of the natural environment (25%), 2) Individuals and their perspectives on the food they consume (25%), 3) Human attitudes towards the surrounding animal world (20%), and equal emphasis on 4) Individuals and their comprehension of life values (15%) and 5) leisure time (15%). This analysis confirms that while a small portion of paremias is non-equivalent due to cultural distance, the majority reflects fundamental, shared human concerns channelled through language-specific conventional vocabulary.

Further research should focus on expanding the comparative analysis to a larger corpus of non-equivalent paremias and applying cognitive mechanisms like conceptual metaphor theory to systematically account for the observed linguistic and regional historical disparities.

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