LEXICAL MEANS OF EXPRESSION OF TOTAL QUANTITY IN BELARUSIAN AND ENGLISH PROVERBS

MIJLOACE LEXICALE PENTRU EXPRIMAREA NOŢIUNII DE CANTITATE TOTALĂ ÎN PROVERBELE DIN BIELORUSĂ ŞI ENGLEZĂ

(Rezumat)

Acest articol este dedicat studiului contrastiv al caracteristicilor funcţionale şi semantice ale mijloacelor beloruse şi engleze de realizare a setului universal de proverbe a două limbi de tipuri structural diferite. Sunt studiate componentele lexicale beloruse şi engleze care se corelează cu noţiunea logică de cuantificator universal. Analiza semantică a proverbelor şi zicătorilor (735 beloruse şi 513 de proverbe engleze) a identificat 8 unităţi cantitative beloruse şi 10 engleze, care pun în aplicare un set total de valoare explicită. Se identifică tipologii comune de percepţie a cantităţii, iar pe fundalul acestora se profilează caracteristici naţionale specifice care subliniază unicitatea reprezentării cantitative a fiecărui grup etnic. În perspectivă, rezultatele studiului comparativ al mijloacelor beloruse şi engleze de punere în aplicare a setului universal pe materialul proverbelor beloruse şi engleze vor oferi date importante pentru identificarea mecanismelor de dezvoltare a sumei figurative din lumea nativă a beloruşilor şi britanicilor.

Key-words: quantitativity, quantitave meaning, universal set, total set, universal quantifier, quantitative units.

Cuvinte-cheie: cantitativ, valoare cantitativă, set universal, set total, cuantificator universal, unităţi cantitative.

One of the most important concepts of the modern understanding of the world, along with space, motion, time is the amount. The language means of quantitative representation demonstrate the features of perception of a particular ethnic group under the influence of extra- and intralingvistic factors. In Belarusian linguistics and literary studies the means that express the category

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of quantity have been analyzed in the works of A.E. Suprun, P.V. Verhov, M.A. Zhidovich, A.I. Narkevich, A.I. Chabyaruk (Супрун 1996; Вярхоў 1961; Жыдовіч 1969; Наркевіч 1976; Чабярук 1977). However, the category of quantity in the Belarusian language in comparison with non-closely related languages has not yet become the subject of a separate research of scientists.

This article is devoted to the contrastive study of the Belarusian and English components with explicit form of expression of the quantitative seme «total quantity» («full set output») which is correlated with the logical concept of the quantifier of generality. The quantifier of generality is defined as a condition that is true for all elements of the designated set. The semantic analysis of the proverbs (735 Belarusian and 513 English items) has assigned 8 Belarusian and 10 English quantitative units that convey explicit meaning of the total quantity.

In Belarusian and English paremiological texts the following components convey the meaning of generality: Belarus. *усё* 'all; everything', *кожны* 'every, each', *усе* /pron./ 'all; everybody', *усякі / усялякі* 'any, anybody, each, every, everybody', *увесь* 'whole', *усе* /adj./ 'all; everybody', *цэлы* 'whole', *любы* 'any, anybody, each, every, everybody'; Eng. *all* /adj./, *every*, *all* /pron./, *everything*, *everyone*, *whole*, *any*, *everybody*, *each*, *anything*.

Common quantitative units that correlate with the value of the total quantity in Belarusian and English proverbs are Belarus. *усё* 'all; everything', *усе* /pron./ 'all; everybody', *усе* /adj./ 'all; everybody', and Eng. *all* /pron./, *all* /adj./: ***Усё*** *чалавеку трэба, аднаго ліха не трэба* – literally 'A man needs everything but misfortune'. *Услугу* ***ўсе*** *прымаюць, да часта яе забываюць* – literally 'All are glad to receive a good turn but often forget about it'. *У нашай сянні ма́мі* ***ўсе*** *бліны кама́мі* – literally 'Our mistress's pancakes are all lumps'. ***All*** *lay loads on a willing horse*. ***All*** *men can't be masters*.

The presence of Belarus *усё* 'all; everything' and Eng. *all* components that manifest the value of generality, are often accompanied by increased expressivity of the whole proverb. Herein, the basic meaning of quantitative units can take the middle ground: *Хоць ты плюй ў глаза –* ***усё*** *божʼя раса* – literally 'Even if you spit into his eyes – it's all God's dew for him'. ***All*** *work and no play makes Jack a dull boy*. *Life is not* ***all*** *cakes and ale (beer and skittles)*.

A large group of proverbs which are correlated with a class of full set output represent the texts with the components: Belarus. *кожны* 'every, each', *усякі / усялякі* 'any, anybody, each, every, everybody', Eng. *every, everything, everyone, any, everybody, each, anything*: ***Кожны*** *па часе мае розум* – literally 'Every man has his mind at a certain time'. ***Кожная*** *птушка ляціць у сваю чараду* literally 'Every bird flies in its turn'. ***Усякі*** *кравец сваім кроем крое* – literally 'Each tailor cuts in his own way'. ***Усяк*** *жыве сваім розумам* –

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literally ‘Every man lives by his own mind’. ***Every*** *man likes his own thing best*. ***Everything*** *is good in its season*. ***Any*** *port in a storm*. *He that commits a fault thinks* ***everyone*** *speaks of it*. *He who pleased* ***everybody*** *died before he was born*. *The thief doth fear* ***each*** *bush an officer*. *Gain savours sweetly from* ***anything***.

Quantitative components: Belarus. *увесь* ‘whole’ and Eng. *whole* objectify the meaning ‘all , whole, entire’ in the proverbs: *Калі сказаў бабцы, то так, як* ***усёй*** *грамадцы* – literally ‘If you tell a secret to a woman, all people will know it’. *Не відаўся крупеннікаў, дарам, што шляхта,* ***усю*** *крупеню пераелі* – literally ‘Rich people eat up all lumps’. *You may know by a handful the* ***whole*** *sack*. *A fair death honours the* ***whole*** *life*. In the proverbs these quantitative units are often elements of the opposition one – whole and emphasize the dependence of a whole object or a group of objects from their low-level part or component. Herein the emphasis is on the negative impact of a single object: *Скажы* ***адной*** *курыцы, а яна* ***ўсёй*** *вуліцы* – literally ‘Tell a secret to one hen, it will tell the whole street’. <***Адна***> *паршывая (шалудзівая, паганая) авечка аўца* ***увесь*** *статак (гурт, усю чараду) псуе (сапсуе)* – literally ‘One scabby sheep infects a whole flock’. ***One*** *drop of poison infects the* ***whole*** *tub of wine*. ***One*** *scabby sheep will mar a* ***whole*** *flock*. ***One*** *link is broken, the* ***whole*** *chain is broken*.

The components of explicit objectification of full set output are elements of the proverbs (27 Belarusian and 7 English paremiological texts) which are based on the comparison of logical concepts of necessity and sufficiency: *Алтарысты і арганісты не* ***ўсе*** *на рукі чысты* – literally ‘Priests and organists are not all honest’. *Не* ***ўсе*** *старыя шчукі карасёў хватаюць* – literally ‘Not all old pikes can grab crucians’. *Не* ***ўсе*** *сабакі кусаюць, што лаюць (брэшуць)* – literally ‘Not all dogs that bark bite’. *Не* ***ўсякі*** *той пан, у каго штаны навыпуск* – literally ‘Not all are masters that wear trousers untucked’. *Не* ***ўсякі*** *спіць, што храпіць, не* ***ўсякі*** *вясёлы, што паець* – literally ‘Not every man that snores sleeps, not every man that sings is merry’. ***All*** *are not merry that dance lightly*. ***All*** *are not saints that go to church*. ***All*** *are not friends that speak us fair*. The sign contained in the second part of each proverb is necessary but not sufficient to assigning an object to the class defined in the first part.

The semantic analysis revealed the proverbs that contain the following contrasting oppositions:

1) total quantity – zero quantity (26 Belarusian and 29 English proverbs);

2) total quantity– quantity *one* (36 Belarusian and 20 English proverbs);

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3) total quantity – indefinitely small quantity (15 Belarusian and 10 English proverbs);

4) total quantity – indefinitely large quantity (17 Belarusian and 6 English proverbs).

The opposition of total quantity – zero quantity that is presented in the proverbs, gives an idea of the impossibility of positive result of an action perpetrated against a large number of objects simultaneously: *Папа ведаюць* ***усе****, а поп* ***нікога*** – literally 'Everybody knows the priest, but the priest knows nobody'. ***Ніхто*** *на сябе нічаго, да* ***ўсё*** *на каго* – literally 'Nobody wants to take responsibility, but everybody wants somebody being responsible'. *Прыкласць* ***ніхто*** *не прыкладзець, а ўзяць* ***усякі*** *вазме́ць* – literally 'Nobody wants adding, everyone wants taking'. *«Дай»* ***ніхто*** *не любіць, а «на»* ***ўсякі*** *чуець* literally – 'Nobody likes giving, everybody likes taking'. ***Ніхто*** *не бача, як сірата плача, а* ***кожны*** *бача, як сірата скача* – literally 'Nobody sees an orphan crying, everybody sees an orphan dancing'. *He that serves* ***everybody*** *is paid by* ***nobody****. If you try to please* ***all*** *you will please* ***none****. A friend to* ***all*** *is a friend to* ***none***. The quantitative items that verbalize the seme 'all'' (instead of 'a lot; many') provide the expressive reinforcement of the meaning «full set output», while the components that realise the seme 'none / nothing' itensify a negative assessment of the action.

The binary opposition total quantity – quantity *one* is characterized by the following features:

a) sufficiency of the single amount to influence (positively or negatively) the set: ***Усе*** *за* ***аднаго*** *і* ***адзін*** *за* ***ўсіх*** – literally 'All for one and one for all'. *Праз* ***аднаго*** *баран* ***ўсё*** *стада пагана* – literally 'One sheep will mar the whole flock'. ***One*** *day will pay for* ***all***. ***Every*** *family cooking-pot has* ***one*** *black spot*.

b) insufficiency of a single amount to influence the set: ***Адзін усім*** *не ўгодзіць* – literally 'One man cannot satisfy all people'. ***Адным*** *канём* ***усё*** *поле не аб'едзеш* – literally 'You cannot plough the whole field with one horse'. ***One*** *size does not fit* ***all***. ***All*** *feet tread not in* ***one*** *shoe*.

The contrasting opposition total quantity – indefinitely small quantity: *Сямейка* ***малая*** *– работы* ***ўсім*** *хапа́е* – literally 'The family is small and everybody has enough duties'. *When* ***all*** *men have what belongs to them it* ***cannot be much***.

The opposition total quantity – indefinitely large quantity which is characterized by:

a) a neutral connotation: ***Многага*** *хочацца, да не за* ***ўсё*** *зможацца* – literally 'You want much but are not able to get all'. *Love does* ***much****, money does* ***everything***;

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b) a negative connotation: *Маю* ***шмат****, ды* ***ўсім*** *вінавat* – literally 'I have got a lot and am guilty towards all people'. *Too* ***much*** *liberty spoils* ***all***.

And only in Belarusian proverbs can we find a positive connotation of the binary opposition: total quantity – indefinitely large quantity: *Хто аб* ***усім*** *пытае, той* ***многа*** *знае* – literally 'Who asks about everything, knows a lot'.

The comparative study of lexical means of explicit representation of the total quantity in Belarusian and English proverbs revealed the presence of typologically general and specificly national features. A common feature of Belarusian and English proverbs is the widespread use of quantitative units: Belarus. *усё* 'all; everything', *усе* /pron./ 'all; everybody', *усе* /adj./ 'all; everybody' and Eng. *all* /pron./, *all* /adj./, correlated with the meaning of the total quantity. The presence of components: Belarus. *усё* 'all; everything' and Eng. *all* that objectify the meaning of generality is often accompanied by increased expressivity of the entire proverb. In addition, the seme of full set output is manifested by Belarusian components . *кожны* 'every, each', *усякі / усялякі* 'any, anybody, each, every, everybody' and their English analogues *every*, *everything*, *everyone*, *any*, *everybody*, *each*, *anything*. In both Belarusian and English proverbs the lexical units *увесь* 'whole' and *whole* are often found as elements of the opposition pair one – whole, emphasizing the dependence of the whole object or group of objects from their low-level part or component. Herein the emphasis is on the negative impact of a single object. The components that explicitly objectify the seme «full set output» are included in the proverbs which are based on the comparison of logical concepts of necessity and sufficiency. An isomorphic feature of two languages of different structure is the presence of these contrasting oppositions in the proverbs: 1) total quantity – zero quantity; 2) total quantity – quantity *one*; 3) total quantity – indefinitely small quantity; 4) total quantity – indefinitely large quantity.

The specific feature of the Belarusian proverbs is the positive connotation of the binary opposition total quantity – indefinitely large quantity.

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