

BINARY OPPOSITION “MAN – WOMAN” IN RUSSIAN PROVERBS: GENDER ASPECT

Zulhumor R. Djuraeva

Candidate Of Pedagogical Sciences, Associate Professor Department Of Russian Linguistics
Bukhara State University, Uzbekistan

ABSTRACT: The article highlights the specifics of binary oppositions through the prism of the gender aspect, gives a description of the gender binary opposition “man – woman”, represented by a set of varieties in the collection of proverbs and sayings of the Russian people by V.I.Dal.

KEYWORDS: Gender, binary opposition, paremia, dichotomy.

INTRODUCTION

According to gender linguistics, differences between men and women are not determined by their anatomical gender, but are socially constructed. The term “gender” is understood as a set of cultural and social norms created by society in relation to men and women. The most expressive and colorful means of expressing gender in the language are proverbs, which contain information about the ethno-cultural specifics, traditional culture and history of a particular people. As a source of factual material, we chose the collection “Proverbs and sayings of the Russian people by V.I. Dal” [1].

MAIN PART

The task of human thinking is to streamline, categorize the world with the help of binary oppositions that determine the universal logic of thinking [2, p. 172]. Turning to the study of gender binary oppositions is quite natural, since the dichotomies “man – woman”, “husband – wife”, “father – mother”, “brother – sister”, etc. have the status of universal units and have a high connotative potential.

It should be noted that binary oppositions consist of two parts, the left part of which contains a gender positively marked lexeme, and the right part is a gender negatively marked word. In the binomial “man – woman”, as we can see, the location of the lexeme “woman” on the right side of the opposition indicates that a woman in a patriarchal society initially has a lower gender status compared to a man. This is also confirmed from an etymological point of view [3, p. 209].

One of the most frequent gender binary oppositions is the dichotomy, “husband – wife”. Paremiias -the husband is the head, the wife is the neck: wherever the neck turns, there the head will turn; The husband is the head, the wife is the soul; Without a husband, the head is not covered, without a wife, the house is not covered fix the “real” state of seed affairs: the wife influences the outcome of events, creates a special atmosphere in the family, despite the dominant role of the husband in it. Often this is motivated by the quickness and dexterity of the woman. For example, in proverbs not so much a husband with a bag as a wife with a pot; the husband does not dung with a cart what the wife does with a pot attention is focused on the fact that a woman is not inferior to a man in dexterity and housekeeping.

The gender concept sphere of proverbs often expands due to the inclusion of religious binary oppositions in their composition. For example, the proverb Let the wife of her husband be afraid, and the husband of the wife is like Satan, correlates with a precedent biblical expression. However, the “semantic vector” in the proverb changes: not only wife should be afraid of her husband, but also the wife’s husband. Moreover, the fear of the husband is exaggerated through the use of a comparative construction with a religious component (the wife is Satan).

In proverbs, binary gender oppositions about the inseparability of spouses attract attention: Without a husband, without a head; Without a wife, that is crazy; Without a wife, without a cat, without a husband, without a dog; You can't thread a thread between husband and wife; The husband is the head, the wife is the soul; What a goose without water is a husband without a wife. These expressions are endowed with a positive connotation they emphasize the inseparability and strength of the union of husband and wife.

The proverbial expressions of the Russian people show that family life can be filled with both positive and negative moments. Proverbs about assault indicate that in a patriarchal family a woman occupied a powerless position. A husband could beat his wife, and such actions of the spouse were assessed as appropriate: Love your wife like a soul, shake her like a pear; The more you beat your wife, the tastier the cabbage soup; Beat the wife before the children, beat the children before the people; Beat the fur coat - warmer, beat the wife - nicer. Many thematic groups of proverbs confirm the powerless position of women in the patriarchal family.

The gender opposition “father” – “mother” ranks second in frequency in the system of gender binary oppositions. The analyzed gender binary opposition captures the attitude of a Russian person to the process of raising children, the role of father and mother in it: Children are good - father-mother is crowned, and children are bad - father-mother is finished. But the paremiological fund of the Russian language contains units that reflect the “different level” of maternal and paternal love. Thus, the proverb Mother’s son, yes father’s hump represents the idea of exaggerated “mother’s love” and its negative impact on the son’s future. Paremiias Father about campaigns, mother about expenses (they interpret); the mother will drive in the head, and the father will not knock out reflect the degree of influence of the mother on the children.

In addition, the presence of a mother in his life is important for a Russian person (in some cases this is emphasized grammatically - by the ratio of number forms): Without a father - half an orphan, and without a mother - and the whole orphan; There are many fathers, but only one mother.

The gender opposition “son” – “daughter” is also frequent in Russian proverbs. Analysis of the material showed that it is the son who is more attached to family traditions: The son looks into the house, and the daughter looks out. This is largely due to the fact that it was in the parental home that the son brought his future wife. In addition, it is often emphasized that raising a son will bring positive results in the future: Feed your son - it will come in handy, feed your daughter - people will need it.

In addition, in Russian proverbs, one can single out a group of binary oppositions with an indirect object of nomination, in which, to update gender semantics, not systemic lexical units are used, but components of other binary oppositions that form contextual oppositions: Don't be a sheep, or the wolves will eat it; The hair is long and the mind is short.

CONCLUSION

The study of paremiological units through the prism of gender categorization showed that one of the fundamental in understanding the world in the Russian proverbial fund is the gender binary opposition "man - woman", which has deep roots that originate in ancient mythological and religious concepts, as well as in the mentality Russian people.

Gender binary oppositions are two-term oppositions with regular members having the status of usual ones, and binary oppositions built taking into account a set of associative components. Gender oppositions in Russian proverbs form binary subgroups: man - woman, husband - wife, father - mother, son - daughter.

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