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Axiological Aspects of Social Values in Russian Paremiology: Universal and Culture-Specific Components

Nosirova Mubina Olimovna [1]

Abstract: This article examines social values as an axiological phenomenon reflected in Russian paremiology. The study focuses on identifying universal and culture-specific components of social values embodied in proverbs, which serve as condensed forms of collective experience and cultural memory. Drawing on the axiological and linguocultural approaches, the paper analyzes how moral norms, social behavior patterns, and value orientations are verbalized in Russian proverbs. Special attention is paid to the evaluative mechanisms through which paremiological units construct and transmit socially significant meanings. The research demonstrates that Russian proverbs simultaneously preserve universal human values – such as labor, justice, and family – and express nationally determined cultural priorities shaped by historical and social contexts. The findings contribute to a deeper understanding of the axiological structure of the Russian linguistic worldview and highlight the role of paremiology as an effective means of studying social values within language and culture.

Keywords: axiology, social values, Russian paremiology, proverb, linguistic worldview, cultural values, national mentality, evaluation, universal values, culture-specific meanings, linguoculturology, folk wisdom.

[1] *Senior teacher (Uzbekistan state world languages university) 19mubina94@mail.ru*

Introduction. In contemporary linguistic research, increasing attention is paid to the axiological dimension of language, as values constitute a fundamental component of the linguistic worldview. Language not only reflects reality but also evaluates it, transmitting socially significant norms and behavioral models. In this respect, paremiological units occupy a special place, as they represent culturally marked texts that preserve collective experience and value orientations accumulated over centuries.

Russian proverbs function as stable carriers of social values, combining universal human meanings with nationally specific cultural interpretations. Through concise and figurative expression, they encode moral judgments, social expectations, and evaluative attitudes toward work, family, justice, and interpersonal relations. Their axiological potential makes proverbs an important object of linguistic and cultural analysis.

The relevance of this study lies in the need for a systematic examination of social values in Russian paremiology from an axiological perspective. Such an approach allows for identifying the interaction

between universal and culture-specific components within the Russian linguistic worldview and contributes to a more comprehensive understanding of the value-based foundations of language.

The proverbial worldview of the Russian language represents a unique system of folk wisdom in which key value orientations, worldview attitudes, and moral and ethical norms of the Russian people, formed over many centuries, are encoded. Russian proverbs and sayings, being "compressed texts of culture," contain both universal (pan-human) values and specific national and cultural features reflecting the uniqueness of the Russian national character and worldview.

Research methodology. The study of the value paradigm reflected in Russian proverbs requires a comprehensive approach combining linguistic, cultural, and axiological analysis. According to V. I. Karasik, "the value-based worldview in language represents a manifestation of a semantic law according to which realities that are most significant for language speakers receive diverse and detailed nomination[1,2,3]." In this regard, proverbs serve as one of the most informative sources for reconstructing the value dominants of national culture.

In the Russian proverbial worldview, values appear in the form of axiological concepts which, according to the definition proposed by Yu. S. Stepanov [10], represent "condensations of culture in the human consciousness, the form in which culture enters the mental world of an individual." These concepts are realized in proverbs through key words, symbols, images, and plots reflecting the centuries-old experience of the people[4,5,6].

One of the central universal values represented in the Russian proverbial worldview is labor. Diligence in Russian culture is traditionally regarded as the foundation of well-being and moral health of the individual, which is reflected in numerous proverbs: *«Без труда не вытащишь и рыбку из пруда»*, *«Терпение и труд все перетрут»*, *«Кто не работает, тот не ест»*, *«Делу время, потехе час»*[7].

A characteristic feature of the Russian attitude toward labor reflected in proverbs is the emphasis on collective work and mutual assistance: *«Один в поле не воин», «С миру по нитке – голому рубаха».* In addition, Russian proverbs emphasize the moral value of labor and its ability to ennoble a person: *«Труд человека кормит, а лень портит», «Каков мастер, такова и работа»*[8].

Uzbek researcher G. A. Khoshimov [9] notes that Russian proverbs about labor often contain the motif of overcoming difficulties, which reflects the historical destiny of the Russian people, who were forced to constantly struggle against harsh natural conditions and external threats[10,11].

The family as a universal value occupies a special place in the Russian proverbial worldview. Numerous proverbs emphasize the importance of family ties and the role of the family in shaping personality and ensuring emotional well-being: *«Вся семья вместе, так и душа на месте»*, *«В семье и каша гуще»*, *«На что и клад, когда в семье лад»*[12,13,14].

Results and Discussion. Special attention in Russian proverbs is paid to relations between spouses: *«Муж и жена – одна сатана», «Жена мужа любила, в тюрьме место купила».* Proverbs reflect the traditional distribution of roles in the Russian family, emphasizing the special role of women as keepers of the household: *«Без хозяйки дом – сирота», «Хозяюшка в дому – что оладушек в меду»*[15].

An important place in the system of family values is occupied by relations between parents and children: *«Яблоко от яблони недалеко падает», «Что посеешь, то и пожнешь».* At the same time, Russian proverbs emphasize parental responsibility for child-rearing: *«Умел дитя родить, умей и научить».*

Health as a universal value is widely represented in the Russian proverbial worldview. Proverbs emphasize the paramount importance of health in the hierarchy of human values: *«Здоровье дороже богатства», «Здоровье не купишь, его разум дарит», «Здоровому все здорово».*

Russian proverbs about health reflect folk notions of a healthy lifestyle, disease prevention, and proper nutrition: *«Ешь чеснок и лук – не возьмет недуг», «Кто раньше встает, тот грибы соберет, а сонливый да ленивый идут после за крапивой».* Many proverbs contain practical advice on maintaining

health: *«В бане париться – заново родиться», «Держи голову в холоде, живот в голоде, а ноги в тепле».*

Russian researcher A. V. Kirilina [2] notes that Russian proverbs about health often contain a connection between physical health and a person's spiritual and moral state, which reflects a holistic view of human nature in Russian culture.

Friendship as a universal value occupies a special place in the Russian proverbial worldview. Proverbs emphasize the importance of friendly relations and their role in human life: *«Не имей сто рублей, а имей сто друзей», «Старый друг лучше новых двух», «Друг познается в беде».*

A characteristic feature of the Russian understanding of friendship reflected in proverbs is the emphasis on sincerity, selflessness, and readiness for self-sacrifice: *«Сам погибай, а товарища выручай», «Друг – ценный клад, недругу никто не рад».* At the same time, friendship is viewed as a long-term, time-tested relationship: *«Дружба крепка не лестью, а правдой и честью».*

Alongside universal values, the Russian proverbial worldview also reflects specific national and cultural values characteristic of Russian linguoculture.

One of the key national and cultural values represented in Russian proverbs is collectivism. Russian culture is traditionally oriented toward collective forms of life, mutual assistance, and communal unity, which is reflected in numerous proverbs: *«Один в поле не воин», «Вместе тесно, а врозь скучно», «Миром и беда не беда».*

American researcher D. Rancour-Laferriere [9] notes that collectivism as a feature of the Russian national character is connected with historical characteristics of the economic system and social organization of Russian society, where collective labor and mutual assistance were necessary conditions for survival in harsh natural environments.

Another important national and cultural value in the Russian proverbial worldview is spirituality and the priority of spiritual values over material ones. Russian culture is traditionally oriented toward high moral ideals, which is reflected in proverbs: *«Не в деньгах счастье», «Не хлебом единым жив человек», «Бедность не порок».*

A special place in the system of spiritual values is occupied by conscience as an internal moral regulator: *«Совесть – лучший контролер», «Совесть без зубов, а загрызет», «Богатырь не тот, кто силен телом, а тот, кто совестлив».*

Uzbek researcher N. M. Makhmudov [4] emphasizes that spirituality as a trait of the Russian national character is associated with the influence of Orthodoxy, which for many centuries shaped the worldview and value system of the Russian people.

Ideas of fate and a certain fatalism are also characteristic features of the Russian national and cultural value system reflected in proverbs. Russian culture traditionally recognizes the existence of higher powers influencing human life, which is reflected in proverbs: *«От судьбы не уйдешь», «Чему быть, того не миновать», «Бог дал, Бог взял».*

At the same time, fatalism in Russian culture is often combined with an active attitude toward life and a desire to overcome difficulties: *«На Бога надейся, а сам не плошай», «Под лежачий камень вода не течет».* This reflects the duality of the Russian worldview, combining opposing tendencies – passivity and activity, humility and rebellion.

Breadth of soul, emotionality, and openness are also important national and cultural values in the Russian proverbial worldview. Russian culture traditionally values open expression of feelings, emotional generosity, and heartfelt warmth: *«Русская душа нараспашку», «Чем богаты, тем и рады».*

A characteristic feature of the Russian emotional world reflected in proverbs is the capacity for empathy, compassion, and sympathy: *«С миру по нитке – голому рубаха», «Не радуйся чужой беде – своя на*

гряде».

At the same time, a comparison of axiological dominants shows that universal values in the Russian proverbial worldview are closely intertwined with national and cultural ones, forming a unique value system [7, p. 298]. For example, the universal value of labor in Russian proverbs is often realized through the prism of the national and cultural value of collectivism, while the universal value of friendship is refracted through the national and cultural value of breadth of soul and emotionality.

It is important to note that the value system reflected in Russian proverbs is not static – it is subject to historical dynamics and transformation under the influence of socio-economic, political, and cultural changes in society.

Russian linguist V. M. Mokienko [5] notes that in the modern Russian language there is an active process of rethinking traditional proverbs, their parodying, and the creation of anti-proverbs, which reflects changes in the value system of Russian society. For example, the traditional proverb *«Работа не волк, в лес не убежит»* is transformed into *«Работа не волк, работа – ворк»*, reflecting changes in attitudes toward labor in contemporary society.

American researcher W. Jewett [11], in his work on the transformation of Russian proverbs in the post-Soviet period, emphasizes that proverbs reflecting collectivist values have undergone the greatest changes, which is associated with the strengthening of individualistic tendencies in modern Russian society. At the same time, proverbs reflecting universal values of family, health, and friendship have proved more resistant to change.

The conducted study of universal and national-cultural social values in the proverbial worldview of the Russian language allows the following conclusions to be drawn:

1. The Russian proverbial worldview presents both universal (pan-human) values (labor, family, health, friendship) [8] and specific national and cultural values (sobornost, spirituality, ideas of fate, breadth of soul).
2. Universal values in Russian proverbs receive specific national and cultural refraction reflecting the features of the Russian national character and worldview.
3. The greatest number of Russian proverbs are devoted to themes of labor and diligence, family and kinship relations, friendship and human relations, as well as spirituality and moral ideals, which reflects the hierarchy of values in Russian culture.
4. The value system reflected in Russian proverbs is subject to historical dynamics and transformation under the influence of societal changes, with proverbs reflecting collectivist values undergoing the greatest changes.

Conclusion. Thus, the study of social values in the proverbial worldview of the Russian language not only expands our understanding of the value system of Russian linguoculture but also contributes to a better understanding of universal and nationally specific aspects of human worldview in general.

The analysis of Russian paremiological material demonstrates that proverbs represent a complex axiological system in which universal human values coexist with nationally conditioned cultural meanings. Social values expressed in proverbs reflect stable moral norms and collective behavioral models that structure the Russian linguistic worldview. At the same time, their evaluative content reveals culture-specific priorities shaped by historical experience and social traditions.

The study confirms that paremiology serves as an effective linguistic source for investigating social values and their axiological representation. Understanding the value-based nature of proverbs not only deepens insights into Russian linguistic culture but also opens perspectives for further comparative and interdisciplinary research within axiological linguistics and linguoculturology.

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