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Bachelor's thesis

EVALUATION IN ENGLISH PROVERBS AND SAYINGS

(based on The Facts on File Dictionary of Proverbs, 2007)



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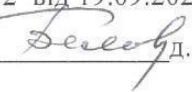
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АНОТАЦІЯ

Кваліфікаційна робота бакалавра присвячена комплексному дослідженню лінгвальних механізмів вираження категорії оцінки в англійській пареміології. Актуальність дослідження зумовлена пануванням антропоцентричного підходу в сучасній лінгвістиці, що передбачає аналіз мовних одиниць як рефlectorів ціннісних орієнтирів та морально-етичних кодів нації. Об'єктом дослідження виступають англійські прислів'я та приказки як одиниці пареміологічного фонду мови, а предметом – категорія оцінки, зокрема механізми її вербалізації, семантичні особливості та аксіологічне навантаження. Мета роботи полягає у побудові лінгво-аксіологічної моделі інтерпретації англійських паремій шляхом виявлення системної кореляції між їхньою семантичною структурою та засобами експліцитного й імпліцитного вираження позитивної та негативної оцінки. Для реалізації мети було розв'язано завдання щодо окреслення структурно-семантичних параметрів паремій, визначення сутності оцінки як лінгвістичного об'єкта та проведення кількісного аналізу дистрибуції оцінних знаків за доменами.

Методологічна база дослідження поєднує дескриптивний метод, метод компонентного аналізу для виокремлення оцінних сем та контекстуальний аналіз прагматики вислову. Доцільність застосування теорії оцінки Мартіна та Вайта зумовлена можливістю диференціювати оцінку вчинків людини, її емоційних станів та естетичних якостей об'єктів. Наукова новизна результатів полягає у систематизації стратегій вербалізації оцінки: встановлено, що негативна оцінка характеризується вищою лексичною експліцитністю, тоді як позитивна частіше спирається на імпліцитні механізми, метафоричне переосмислення та заперечення. Встановлено домінування підсистеми моральної оцінки (68%), що засвідчує регулятивну та дидактичну спрямованість паремій. Найбільш репрезентативним виявився домен «Доля та життєва філософія» (35%), що вказує на когнітивну роль прислів'їв у подоланні життєвої невизначеності. За результатами дослідження встановлено, що

англійські прислів'я та приказки є потужним аксіологічним інструментом: вони не лише фіксують культурно вкорінені ціннісні орієнтири нації, а й активно формують морально-етичні норми поведінки. Виявлена асиметрія між імпліцитним характером позитивної оцінки та експліцитністю негативної свідчить про прагматичну стратегію паремій – через заперечення та метафору досягати ефективнішого виховного впливу. Отримані результати підтверджують продуктивність теорії оцінки як аналітичного інструменту для вивчення паремій та відкривають перспективи для подальших міжмовних та міжкультурних зіставних досліджень у цій галузі.

Ключові слова: пареміологія, англійські прислів'я, категорія оцінки, аксіологія, теорія оцінки, позитивна оцінка, негативна оцінка, лінгвальні механізми.

ABSTRACT

The bachelor's thesis is devoted to a comprehensive study of the lingual mechanisms of expressing the category of evaluation in English paremiology. The relevance of the research is determined by the dominance of the anthropocentric approach in modern linguistics, which presupposes the analysis of linguistic units as reflectors of a nation's value orientations and moral-ethical codes. The object of the study is English proverbs and sayings as units of the paremiological stock of the language, while the subject is the category of evaluation, namely the mechanisms of its verbalization, semantic features, and axiological load. The purpose of the work is to construct a linguo-axiological model for the interpretation of English proverbs by identifying the systemic correlation between their semantic structure and the means of explicit and implicit expression of positive and negative evaluation. To achieve this goal, the following objectives were accomplished: outlining the structural and semantic parameters of paremias, defining the essence of evaluation as a linguistic object, and conducting a quantitative analysis of the distribution of evaluative marks across domains.

The methodological framework of the study combines the descriptive method, the component analysis method for isolating evaluative semes, and the contextual analysis of utterance pragmatics. The expediency of applying Martin and White's Appraisal Theory is determined by its capacity to differentiate between the evaluation of human behavior, emotional states, and the aesthetic qualities of objects. The scientific novelty of the results lies in the systematization of evaluation verbalization strategies: it has been established that negative evaluation is characterized by higher lexical explicitness, whereas positive evaluation more frequently relies on implicit mechanisms, metaphorical reinterpretation, and negation. The dominance of the moral evaluation subsystem (68%) was identified, confirming the regulatory and didactic orientation of paremias. The most representative domain proved to be "Fate, Fortune and Life Philosophy" (35%), highlighting the cognitive role of proverbs in navigating life's uncertainties. The findings confirm that English proverbs and

sayings function as a powerful axiological instrument: they not only encode culturally rooted value orientations of a nation but also actively shape moral and ethical norms of behavior. The identified asymmetry between the implicit nature of positive evaluation and the explicitness of negative evaluation points to a pragmatic strategy inherent in paremias, achieving a more effective didactic impact through negation and metaphor. The results confirm the productivity of Appraisal Theory as an analytical tool for the study of paremias and open perspectives for further cross-linguistic and cross-cultural comparative research in this field.

Keywords: paremiology, English proverbs, category of evaluation, axiology, Appraisal Theory, positive evaluation, negative evaluation, linguistic mechanisms.

INTRODUCTION

Relevance of the research topic. Modern linguistics is elaborated within the framework of the anthropocentric approach. In other words, scientific attention is shifted from language as a “system of signs” to the “human in language”. It is not enough to know how a sentence is built, but how a person interprets the world, what values he or she considers key and significant, what beliefs and cultural codes he/she conveys.

In this context, paremiology (proverbs and sayings) provides a unique material. It is not merely folklore; it can be seen as a “moral code” of a nation embedded in words. The English language, as a global means of communication, carries a powerful evaluative charge. Evaluation is a pervasive category in any communication because we are rarely completely neutral. We constantly mark reality as “good”, “bad”, “righteous”, or “sinful”, etc.

The **relevance** of this study lies in the need for a comprehensive investigation of the mechanisms through which English proverbs perform this evaluative function. Despite significant scholarly interest in axiology, the specifics of how evaluation is verbalized in the English paremiological worldview require systematic analysis, particularly regarding the classification of evaluative domains and the distinction between positive and negative polarity.

State of the research problem. The fundamental foundations of phraseology and paremiology were laid by prominent scholars such as Ya. A. Baran (2008), K. T. Barantsev (2006), V. V. Havrylova (2015), and Z. H. Kotsiuba (2012). It is also important to note the group of researchers who studied the category of evaluation and the axiological (value-related) aspect of language. Among them are T. A. Kosmeda (2000), who examined axiological aspects of pragmalinguistics; Zh. V. Krasnobayeva-Chorna (2016), whose works focused on lingvo-phraseological axiology; and H. I. Prykhodko (2014), who analyzed evaluation as a linguistic object. Significant contributions to understanding how language reflects positive or negative representations of a person were made by N. Venzhynovych (2010), O. A. Voitseva

(2015), and M. P. Fabian (2024). Among international scholars, the structural and semantic properties of proverbs have been most comprehensively addressed by W. Mieder (2004), whose handbook synthesizes decades of paremiological research and remains a standard reference in the field. The current state of paremiological terminology and its cognitive foundations have been revisited by A. Naciscione (2015), who argues for a cognitively grounded approach to the conceptual framework of proverb research, emphasizing that proverbs are stable figurative units retained in the collective long-term memory of a people and cannot be reduced to stereotypes or clichés. The evaluative dimension of language as a systemic phenomenon has been theorized most influentially within the Appraisal Framework by J. R. Martin and P. R. R. White (2007), whose model of Attitude, Engagement, and Graduation provides a productive analytical apparatus for the study of axiological load in proverbial utterances. The most recent comprehensive guide to comparative proverb studies, edited by H. Hrisztova-Gotthardt and M. Aleksa Varga (2015), consolidates current international scholarship on proverb definition, classification, and cognitive mechanisms, establishing the theoretical context within which the present study is situated. However, despite the wide range of studies, the structural-semantic and functional specifics of evaluation in English proverbs and sayings remain open for deeper analysis.

The **object** of the study is English proverbs and sayings as units of the paremiological stock of the language.

The **subject** of the research is the category of evaluation in English paremiology, namely the linguistic mechanisms of its expression, semantic features, and axiological load.

The **purpose** of the study is to establish a linguo-axiological model for the interpretation of English proverbs by identifying the systemic correlation between their semantic structure and the mechanisms of verbalizing positive and negative evaluation.

The **objectives** of the study include:

- to outline the structural and semantic features of proverbs as special linguistic units;
- to determine the essence of the category of evaluation in contemporary linguistics;
- to identify the linguistic mechanisms that ensure the expression of evaluation in paremiology;
- to classify the proverbs studied according to evaluative domains (spheres of life subject to evaluation);
- to study the features of verbalizing positive and negative evaluation in the English paremiological stock.

Research methods. To address the tasks, a set of methods was used: a descriptive method for inventory and characterization of proverbs; a componential analysis method for isolating evaluative semes in proverb meanings; contextual analysis to understand the pragmatics of utterances; and elements of quantitative analysis to establish the ratio of positive to negative evaluative units.

Research material. The material of the study consisted of paremiological units of contemporary English, selected through a purposive sampling method from *The Facts on File Dictionary of Proverbs* edited by Martin H. Manser (2007). The sample includes 200 proverbs and sayings.

Scientific novelty of the results lies in the attempt at a systematic classification of English proverbs according to the type of evaluative mark (positive/negative) and sphere of application, as well as in deepening the understanding of how linguistic means and tropes (metaphor, antithesis, irony) shape the axiological potential of an utterance.

Practical significance of the results. The materials and conclusions of the study can be used in the courses on English lexicology, linguoculturology, translation theory and practice, specialized courses in phraseology, and in writing textbooks and manuals for English language learning.

Structure of the work. The paper consists of the introduction, two chapters, conclusions to each chapter, general conclusion and the list of references.

Introduction points to the relevance of the topic, defines the object, subject, purpose, and objectives of the study. It also focuses on the methods, scientific novelty, and practical significance.

Chapter 1 “Theoretical Foundations of Evaluation in Paremiology” is devoted to theoretical foundations: defining proverbs, the nature of the evaluation category, and mechanisms of its expression.

Chapter 2 “Features of Evaluative Content in English Proverbs”, contains the empirical analysis, classification of proverbs, and description of positive and negative evaluation.

Conclusion summarizes the results of the research.

CHAPTER 1

THEORETICAL FOUNDATIONS OF EVALUATION IN PAREMIOLOGY

1.1. Defining the Proverb: Structural and Semantic Features

The word *paremia* comes from Ancient Greek and means “proverb, saying”, although in modern linguistics this concept encompasses a broader range of folkloric phenomena. Despite the wide use of this term in phraseology and paremiology, scholars’ views on the phenomena it covers vary. For this reason, the definition of *paremia* remains unclear.

The authors of the *Ukrainian Language* encyclopedia define a *paremia* as a folk expression articulated in a sentence, as well as in short chains of sentences that convey a simple scene or everyday dialogue. Thus, the concept includes proverbs and sayings, chants, riddles, omens, “practical” expressions, beliefs, “prophetic” dreams, divinations, puzzles, brainteasers, tongue twisters, charms, and others. As we can see, in the broad sense, practically any folkloric phenomenon can be referred to as a *paremia*. The characteristic features of *paremias* include being formulaic, having motivated meaning, the ability to enter synonymic, homonymic, and antonymic relations, and belonging to a system of syntagmatic and paradigmatic relations, which supports the classification of *paremias* as part of the language system. However, it should also be taken into account that they simultaneously belong to folklore and are therefore perceived as texts with self-sufficient meaning, capable of being used independently, situational in nature, and possessing three structural levels: linguistic, logical-semiotic, and the level of real-world references (Українська мова, 2004: p. 459).

O. Selivanova (2006: 242) interprets the term *paremia* in a narrower sense, using it “to denote stable, reproducible units of sentence structure, particularly proverbs”. O. V. Dudenko (2002: 3-6) also includes only proverbs in the class of

paremias, leaving sayings outside the scope of this concept. In the definition offered by the compilers of *Ukrainian Paremiology*, a paremia is a unit of paremiology characterized by aphoristic nature, stability, reproducibility, metaphorically reinterpreted or literal generalized meaning, and predominantly didactic content; it is a linguistic sign that conveys specific information about traditional values and views rooted in the life experience of the people and denotes a typical life situation (Koloiz, Maliuha, Sharmanova, 2014: p. 16).

Furthermore, paremias are discursive linguistic signs that illustrate a certain stereotypical situation, event, or fact that becomes the object of reflection; they generalize the properties and features of various individual events and objects, creating a global image of a holistic world, a kind of model of the world order. As linguistic signs, paremias are also stable articulatory acts reproduced in a fixed form and capable of combining with other signs (Koloiz, Maliuha, Sharmanova, 2014: p. 24–25).

Havrylova (2015) understands a paremia as an aphorism of folk origin characterized by a concise form, reproducible meaning, and, as a rule, a didactic content. The researcher proposes distinguishing between actual paremias and aphorisms (stable bookish expressions of authorial origin), which differ primarily in the nature of their content, the possibilities of their use, as well as in their compositional, rhythmic, and syntactic features. It is evident that, in this understanding, the term *paremia* refers to proverbs and sayings, since, in comparison with other folklore units (such as riddles or chants), they are marked by conciseness.

According to Kotsiuba (2012), proverbs have a distinctive set of structural and semantic features, which distinguishes them from ordinary utterances. These features are determined by their fixed form, metaphorical content, didactic function, and cultural transmission from generation to generation.

The structural features of proverbs are of special interest. Compared to spontaneous speech, proverbs have very strong formal stability. This stability manifests itself in a number of features: rhythmic patterns, alliteration, rhyme, parallelism, and other phonetic and syntactic devices that aid memorability and oral

transmission. Scholars mention that these formal features are by no means decorative; they are functioning structures that promote the main function of the proverb, namely, to be remembered and retold generation after generation (Kotsiuba, 2015).

The syntax of proverbs tends to be simple and direct. Most proverbs use simple declarative structures, although this simplicity is deceiving. However, the apparent plainness of the syntactical structure of *paremias* often conceals considerable semantic complexity. This economy of expression is one of the defining features of the form in proverbs, which allows maximum meaning to be conveyed through minimal linguistic resources.

Proverbs also have unique semantic properties which require special linguists' attention. Primary among these is their recourse to imagery and metaphor. Few if any proverbs express a meaning directly. Rather, they set up a tiny scene or appeal to a physical picture that the listener is expected to understand figuratively. Kotsiuba (2009: 34) believes that this metaphorical character is not accidental but a constitutive feature of proverbial meaning.

The question of how to classify proverbs has been central to *paremiology* since its emergence as a scholarly discipline. Mieder (2004: 3–15) provides the most comprehensive modern survey of classificatory approaches, identifying thematic, structural, and pragmatic criteria as the three main axes along which taxonomies have been constructed, and arguing that any adequate classification must account for the dual nature of proverbs as both fixed linguistic forms and flexible discursive instruments. The categorization of proverbs is among the foundational topics addressed in Hrisztova-Gotthardt and Varga's (2015) collective handbook, where leading specialists examine the main features of proverbs, their origin, and the principles underlying their collection and classification. Lauhakangas (2015), contributing to the same volume, surveys unilingual, multilingual, thematic, and typological approaches to organizing *paremiological* material and traces their development from early European collections to the Matti Kuusi International Type System – a cross-linguistic database designed to facilitate comparative proverb

research – emphasizing that the choice of classificatory principle inevitably reflects the researcher's theoretical orientation (Lauhakangas, 2015: 49–67).

The semantic structure of proverbs typically involves what might be called a two-level meaning system. On the surface level, we have the literal meaning – the actual words and the scenario they describe. On the deeper level, we encounter the proverbial meaning – the general principle or piece of wisdom that the surface scenario exemplifies. This dual structure requires interpretive work from the listener or reader. It follows that the ability to understand these semantic levels is part of linguistic competence in any language.

Proverbs are classified into three main categories. The first type includes truisms – *paremias* that take the form of a general truth. The second type comprises proverbs that summarize certain observations from everyday experience in a figurative way. The third type consists of maxim-like expressions (illustrating norms of behavior) drawn from particular domains of wisdom and folklore (Ukrainski pryslivia, 1976: p. XX). Thus, proverbs convey a generally recognized fact, generalized experience, and a certain didactic message.

A comprehensive overview of classification systems is provided by O. Lauhakangas (2015), who surveys unilingual, multilingual, thematic, and typological approaches to organizing paremiological material and traces their development from early European collections to the Matti Kuusi International Type System, a cross-linguistic database designed to facilitate comparative proverb research. Lauhakangas emphasizes that all classification systems involve trade-offs between universality and cultural specificity, and that the choice of classificatory principle inevitably reflects the researcher's theoretical orientation (Lauhakangas, 2015: 49–67).

The structural approach to proverbs has been significantly advanced within the cognitive linguistic paradigm. A. Lewandowska and G. Antos (2015) treat proverbs as verbal stereotypes of knowledge – linguistically and culturally shaped frames through which speakers comment on, standardize, and evaluate new situations by means of established social clichés. Drawing on Lakoff and Johnson's Conceptual

Metaphor Theory, the scholars argue that proverbs operate through “proverb concepts” – complex cognitive constructs that underlie the figurative meaning of each *paremia* and require cultural background knowledge for their full comprehension. The formal properties of proverbs, such as rhythm and parallelism, are shown to reinforce these cognitive structures by facilitating memorization and oral transmission, thereby ensuring the continuity of the evaluative frames they encode (Lewandowska & Antos, 2015: 162–182).

The semantic aspect of proverb classification has been approached from the standpoint of cognitive science by R. P. Honeck (1997), who outlines seven analytical perspectives on the proverb (personal, formal, religious, literary, practical, cultural, and cognitive) and argues that a comprehensive account of proverbial meaning must integrate all of them. Central to Honeck’s idea is the “cognitive ideals hypothesis”, which holds that proverbs arise from and are comprehended through a universal human tendency to evaluate the world against idealized standards.

This hypothesis carries direct implications for the taxonomy of proverbs: figurative subtypes such as metaphoric, hyperbolic, and paradoxical proverbs differ not only in their rhetorical form but in the cognitive mechanisms through which they activate evaluative judgements in the listener (Honeck, 1997: 45–130). Honeck further demonstrates that the formal features of proverbs – rhythm, imagery, indirectness – are not decorative but functional, facilitating the recognition of an utterance as proverbial and thereby triggering the evaluative interpretive frame associated with the genre.

This claim to the expression of universal truth needs some qualification, however. As Holubovska (2004: p. 71) argues, proverbs reflect the values and perspectives of the social groups that created and preserved them. It should be noted that wisdom in one culture may be irrelevant or even mistaken in another culture. Proverbs often contradict each other even within the same language. We should not consider such contradictions to be logical failures but rather realize that proverbs offer a kind of cultural repertoire of views that can be used in situations that differ from one another. Their truth is not scientific but pragmatic, situational.

Special emphasis should also be placed on the didactic function of proverbs. Proverbs serve to guide behavior and shape attitudes of language bearers. They tell the target listener what to do and avoid, what to value, and what to disdain. This normative character refers proverbs to the ethical and axiological systems of the communities that use them. When interlocutors employ proverbs in conversation, they mobilize culturally sanctioned authoritative thoughts to support their positions or to guide others to the approved course of action.

In contrast to quotations or aphorisms, which carry the weight of an individual's authority, the authority of proverbs depends upon their traditional status and knowledge that has been tested through many generations. This collective authorship makes *paremias* a potent vehicle used to convey cultural values and norms. When the speaker uses a proverb, he speaks as an individual as well as representative of a cultural tradition.

Bulakhova (2019) underlines the function of proverbs in the transmission of culture. Proverbs are brief carriers of the consolidated experience and traditionally ground values of one generation to the next. In their own way, they thus become teaching aids to socialize young people into belief systems and behavioral norms of their respective communities. Indeed, the continuity of some proverbs across centuries speaks volumes about their pedagogic function.

In addition, proverbs have what may be termed a performative aspect. Speakers, when employing proverbs, are not simply describing the world but acting upon it – advising, warning, reproaching, consoling, or justifying. This performative aspect ties proverbial language use to larger questions about the relationship of language to action and saying to doing. Speech act theory, as elaborated by Austin and Searle, provides useful frameworks within which this aspect of proverbial communication can be understood.

In this connection, the relation of proverbs with other varieties of figurative speech is to be weighed. Whereas the proverb is substantially dependent on metaphor, it nonetheless differs in several ways from ordinary metaphor. Whereas metaphors usually occur in a specific context and may be novel creations, proverbs are fixed

metaphorical expressions that have acquired conventional status for the speakers of a language. This conventionalization entails that the metaphorical character of proverbs may become less salient over time, since speakers use them as ready-made units rather than as creative figurative constructions.

As linguistic signs, proverbs have form and meaning, but they also contain connotations, associations, and values which extend beyond their literal semantic content. Understanding proverbs requires attention to their linguistic properties together with their cultural embedding and their role in systems of meaning-making.

Another theoretical challenge is the issue of variation in proverbial forms. Although proverbs are characterized by their fixed structure, they are not always absolutely invariant. Several variants of the same proverb may coexist in a language community and vary in wording, syntax, or even in a metaphorical vehicle. A portion of such variation is diachronic since proverbs undergo changes as they are adapted to shifting linguistic and cultural contexts. Another part is synchronic as different variants fulfill different stylistic or regional functions. Barantsev (2006) has documented such variation in his lexicographical work on English and Ukrainian phraseology.

There is a strong association between the formal properties of proverbs and their memorability. Alliteration, assonance, rhyme, meter – the phonetic and rhythmic features of proverbs – all serve mnemonic functions in making proverbs more memorable and thus easier to remember and pass on orally. This conjunction of form and function is not coincidental but rather reflects the roots of many proverbs in oral cultures in which such memory aids were an essential part of cultural tradition. Even in highly literate modern societies, such formal features help to account for the enduring vitality of traditional proverbs.

The analysis of the syntactic structure of proverbs and sayings shows that many of them use parallel structures, which sets two clauses or phrases against each other. This parallelism is often antithetical as it presents contrasting ideas in opposition. It may also be complementary, when the second element reinforces or extends the first one. Proverbs may also use conditional structures with if-then relationships between

actions and consequences. Moreover, paremias use imperative forms, employed to directly command or advise particular behaviors to the target listener. These syntactic patterns are not arbitrary. They reflect the functions that proverbs serve-generalizing about experience, establishing causal relationships, and guiding conduct.

A final related temporal dimension of proverbial meaning involves the verb tense. Proverbs usually take the present tense, but this is clearly not a ‘present’ as in the here-and-now sense of the word. It is instead what grammarians refer to as the ‘gnomic’ or ‘timeless’ present, in which the utterance holds true at all times rather than at any moment in particular. This grammatical feature reinforces the claim of the proverb to utter a timeless truth rather than a passing remark.

Certain features of proverbial form and function are highlighted by consideration of the relationship between proverbs and other forms of traditional verbal art – riddles, folktales, songs. Like the mentioned genres, proverbs are products of collective rather than individual creativity. As with them, the formal features which facilitate their oral transmission are readily apparent. Unlike most of those genres, however, proverbs are normally embedded into ordinary conversation rather than being reserved for special performative contexts. This integration into everyday discourse gives to proverbs their especial potency as vehicles for the expression and perpetuation of cultural values.

1.2. The Concept of Evaluation in Linguistics

The category of evaluation has attracted the attention of many scholars, including philosophers and psychologists, and, with the emergence of the anthropocentric approach, linguists as well, since it constitutes an important component of the value-based worldview.

In the philosophical paradigm, evaluation is understood as the process of recognizing the positive or negative significance of both material objects (products of labor, works of art) and immaterial ones (natural phenomena, socio-historical events,

the aims of concrete-historical subjects). The result of this process is embodied in an evaluative judgment. In psychology, evaluation is connected primarily with the human psyche and is considered its central function within the triad cognition – evaluation – action (Brukhal, 2013). Evaluation is viewed as an essential attribute of the psyche. Agreeing with the philosophical interpretation, researchers also emphasize that evaluation is both a process and a result, defining it as the process and outcome of a subject's expression of personal views regarding the quality or nature of something or someone. In pedagogy, evaluation is regarded primarily as the process of comparing students' achievements with established requirements, as well as a means of motivation (Suleimanova, 2018: p. 58).

In linguistics, evaluation is transformed from a logical-philosophical category into a semantic one. It is examined within the structure of a linguistic unit's meaning and understood as "the speaker's judgment, his or her attitude – approval or disapproval, desire, encouragement, etc. – as one of the key components of stylistic connotation" (Suleimanova, 2018: p. 58-59). In lexicology, evaluation is interpreted as an additional subjective-modal meaning that is attached to the objective meaning of a word. At the same time, there are linguistic units in which evaluation is equivalent to meaning, for example, *good*, *bad*, *excellent*, and similar items (Suleimanova, 2018: p. 59).

Kosmeda (2000) offers the most comprehensive treatment of evaluation in Ukrainian linguistics, which covers both pragmatic and axiological dimensions of evaluative language. She views evaluation as not being purely a semantic property of certain words or constructions, but as a basic parameter of language use as such: every time we speak, we inevitably take up a stance with respect to the referent we talk about, adopting an attitude, making a judgment, and revealing values. This quality makes evaluation both ubiquitous and difficult to pin down analytically.

The interrelations of evaluation and the cognate concepts of emotion, expressivity, modality have been the focus of much theoretical debate. Ihnatieva (2010: p. 260) discusses these interrelations in detail, claiming that though evaluation, emotion, expressivity, and modality are different categories, they rather often

intersect and interrelate in real-life use. Thus, an utterance can be evaluative and at the same time express emotion, while not every emotional expression is evaluative in the strict sense. Equally, evaluative language is very often expressive, that is, it shows the subjective involvement of the speaker, while expressive language is not necessarily evaluative.

An important distinction especially relevant to the present discussion is that between evaluation and emotionality. Emotion involves affective states (feelings of joy, anger, fear, or sadness) (Buyar, 2009). Evaluation involves judgments of value, i.e., assessments of things as good or bad, desirable or undesirable, beautiful or ugly. Although emotions will often motivate evaluations, and evaluations will often trigger emotions, conceptually they are distinct. Prokoychenko (2014: p. 46) observes that failure to distinguish the emotional and evaluative dimensions of meaning has caused a great deal of confusion in the literature.

Another important aspect is the differentiation of the category of modality from evaluation. Modality is about the judgment concerning states of affairs in terms of their likelihood, necessity, or possibility. Where a speaker says that something is probable or necessary, they make a modal judgment. Where they say that something is good or bad, they are making an evaluation (Deina, 2014). Of course, the two categories can coincide, for example, where necessity itself is positively or negatively evaluated-but as categories they work on different dimensions of meaning.

According to Prykhodko (2014), there is a need for the development of a communicative approach to the study of evaluation, which will consider the functions of evaluations in real discourses, not as purely semantic properties of isolated linguistic units. In this regard, instead of being inscribed in language, evaluation is seen as a construct arising through communicative interaction. Speakers make use of various linguistic resources-lexical, grammatical, prosodic, and discourse-organizational-to express and negotiate evaluations in conversation.

The methodological basis for corpus-based investigation of evaluative language in discourse has been established by M. Bednarek (2006), who developed a multi-parameter model of evaluation applicable to large textual datasets. Bednarek

identifies evaluability, expectedness, importance, and evidentiality as key parameters through which evaluation is realized, and demonstrates how these parameters interact to produce nuanced evaluative meaning beyond simple positive-negative polarity (Bednarek, 2006: 18–55). This multi-parameter approach is directly applicable to the present study insofar as English proverbs frequently encode evaluation not through explicit marking alone but through the interplay of expectation, cultural norm, and implied evidence.

Since evaluation is a universal category and may relate to various spheres of life, and because it can be expressed at different levels of language, there exists a wide range of ways to classify evaluations (Boboshko, 2012). The most comprehensive classification was proposed by the Finnish philosopher and logician Georg Henrik von Wright, who developed it on the basis of the use of the English word “good” and its synonymous expressions. The scholar distinguished the following types:

- instrumental evaluation (concerns the functions of an object, can be verified in practice, and aims at recommendation or prediction);
- technical evaluation (related to abilities or skill and referring to three types of activity: professional, gaming, and artistic; may be used with the purpose of recommendation, but its primary function is approval);
- evaluation of contribution (connected with usefulness and with the creation of a desirable state of affairs);
- utilitarian evaluation (based on choosing what may be useful or beneficial, and therefore can be seen as a special case of the previous type);
- medical evaluation (refers to bodily organs and mental abilities);
- hedonistic evaluation (concerns the feeling itself rather than the objects that caused it) (cited in Suleimanova, 2018: p. 61).

Within linguistic frameworks, the most influential systematic account of evaluation is the Appraisal Theory developed by J. R. Martin and P. R. R. White (2005), which identifies three subsystems through which speakers express evaluative stances: Attitude (encompassing affect, judgement, and appreciation), Engagement

(the degree of dialogic openness or closure), and Graduation (the scaling of evaluative force). This framework is particularly productive for the analysis of proverbs, since proverbial utterances characteristically compress all three dimensions into minimal linguistic form, projecting categorical judgements with high graduation and low dialogic engagement (Martin & White, 2007: 35–92). S. Hunston and G. Thompson (2000) further develop the understanding of evaluation as a textual phenomenon, showing how evaluative meaning is distributed across discourse rather than being confined to individual lexical items. Their account of evaluation as simultaneously expressing the speaker's stance, building relations with the audience, and organizing discourse provides a useful multi-functional framework for the analysis of proverbial evaluation (Hunston & Thompson, 2000: 1–27).

The structure of evaluation is multicomponential and consists of the following elements: the subject from whose standpoint the evaluation is given, the object to which the evaluation refers, and the evaluative predicate (evaluative attitude), which is characterized by specific features reflecting the subject's attitude toward the evaluated object (*Filosofskyi entsyklopedychnyi slovnyk*, 2002: p. 461). Scholars add to this list the evaluation itself, which may be absolute or comparative (good – indifferent – bad; better – equivalent – worse), as well as the basis of evaluation (a cultural norm or stereotype).

The subject of evaluation may be expressed explicitly or implicitly and corresponds to the person or the community from whose perspective the evaluation is formed. The object of evaluation is the entity, event, phenomenon of reality, person, or state of affairs to which the evaluative statement refers. The evaluative predicate reflects the specificity of the subject's evaluative judgment about the object and is characterized by such features as emotiveness, emotionality, rationality, and effectiveness (for example, the verbs consider, seem, evaluate). Furthermore, within the structure of evaluation, there is always, albeit implicitly, a scale of evaluation or the stereotypes on which the subject relies when forming the evaluative judgment. Optional elements may also be present, such as motivation, various classifiers, and means of intensification or de-intensification (Suleimanova, 2018: p. 61).

1.3. Linguistic Mechanisms of Expressing Evaluation in Proverbs

Proverbs have certain characteristic features which determine how evaluation works in them, and the study of evaluation in proverbs may, in return, shed light on more general issues of evaluative language.

The evaluative character of proverbs needs to be underlined from the very beginning. Not every proverb is necessarily evaluative in its surface form, but the vast majority of them do encode judgments about what is good or bad, right or wrong, wise, foolish, etc. According to Liesnova (2012: p. 138), proverbs employ a rich array of linguistic devices to express evaluative meanings, starting with overtly evaluative vocabulary to more subtle mechanisms, which involve metaphorical framing and their syntactic structure.

The lexical expression of evaluation in proverbs works in a number of ways. First, there are a number of proverbs which contain overtly evaluative adjectives or nouns – *good*, *bad*, *wise*, *foolish*, *virtue*, *vice*. The evaluation in these cases is unmistakable. More often, though, proverbs carry evaluation through describing situations, actions, or outcomes in such a way as to invite, in the light of shared cultural values and assumptions, evaluative interpretation.

Metaphor is a primary means for the expression of evaluation in proverbs. Proverbs effect the transfer of evaluative schemata from source domains to target domains by means of metaphorical mapping. The choice of metaphor vehicle itself has evaluative entailments. Certain source domains conventionally come with positive values, others with negative values. As proverbs exploit these metaphorical resources, they evoke these conventional evaluative associations.

The structure of metaphorical evaluation in proverbs deserves detailed attention. In many instances, the source domain deals with concrete, observable phenomena while the target domain deals with abstract qualities, behaviors or relationships. The mapping from source to target carries an evaluative dimension.

Thus, metaphors which map human behavior onto animal behavior, for example, are typically evaluative since different animals carry different connotative values within cultural symbolic systems.

For instance, Krasnobayeva-Chorna (2017: p. 27-33) explores how zoosemantic and floral elements build up axiological worldviews by means of phraseology. She observes that animals and plants serve as evaluative symbols-the same species consistently show either positive or negative associations. The latter are culturally bound, but often strikingly stable within a linguistic community. When the proverbs draw upon these symbols, they bring entire complexes of evaluative meaning into play without any need to employ explicit evaluative vocabulary.

The syntactic structure of proverbs contributes to their evaluative force in several ways. The parallel structures can establish contrasts between evaluated entities, implicitly positioning them on evaluative scales. Conditional structures establish relations between actions and consequences, and the evaluative coloring of the latter feeds back onto the evaluation of the former. Imperative structures directly express prescriptive evaluation, commanding what is to be done or avoided.

The phenomenon of evaluative presupposition in proverbs deserves attention. Many proverbs presuppose evaluative frameworks without overtly stating those frameworks. The proverb assumes that speaker and hearer share in certain value commitments and that the evaluative force of the proverb depends on these shared commitments. This presuppositional structure makes proverbs powerful vehicles for reinforcing cultural values precisely because the values themselves are treated as given rather than as requiring defense or justification.

Venzhynovych (2010: p. 33) studies positive representations of human beings in Ukrainian phraseology and analyzes how certain qualities and behaviors come to be evaluated as positive through proverbial language. The scholar states that proverbs construct an idealized image of the person, emphasizing virtues such as industriousness, wisdom, kindness, and moderation. This positive representation is prescriptive since it establishes the standards against which actual behavior is measured and evaluated.

The negative evaluation of human qualities and behaviors in proverbs functions in the same but inverted way: vices, follies, and failings are mentioned by the proverbs, for the purpose of criticism and ridicule. Hrozian (2003) discusses the phraseological microsystem about human behavior in Ukrainian, from both an ideographic and an axiological perspective. This analysis shows that in this domain, the negative appraisal often appears more numerous and sometimes more developed than the positive, probably because of the function of proverbs to warn against a certain type of behavior.

The idea of evaluative domains provides a useful way of conceptualizing the operation of evaluation in proverbs. Various different proverbs address aspects of human experience such as work, family relations, friendship, wealth, knowledge, speech, and so on. All of these domains are partitioned into evaluative hierarchies in the proverbs and value principles formulated along the way. Mapping the evaluative content of the proverbs across these domains brings to light the value system of the culture producing and using them.

Voitseva (2015: p. 6) discusses the axiological features of phraseological units with the mentions of dress and its details in Ukrainian. Even the most insignificant semantic field, such as dress, is not devoid of evaluative functions. Very often, proverbs on dress use it metaphorically to talk about appearance versus reality, social status versus false pretences, and the relationship between outer presentation and inner values. The value judgments which are encoded in these proverbs represent more general cultural attitudes towards the manifestation of material qualities, social rank, and authenticity.

The intensity of evaluation in proverbs varies considerably. Some proverbs express moderate, qualified evaluations. Others express extreme, categorical judgments. This variation in intensity reflects the seriousness of what is being evaluated and the rhetorical strategy of the proverb. Strongly worded evaluations raise attention and leave little room for disagreement. More moderate evaluations are more persuasive because they appear more reasonable and less dogmatic.

In fact, the relationship between explicit and implicit evaluation is a delicate one in proverbs. Explicit evaluation is overtly evaluative in vocabulary and transparently makes value judgments (Maliarchuk, 2004). Implicit evaluation works more subtly through description, metaphor, and framing. Both are effective, but they function differently in discourse. Explicit evaluation is unmistakable but may invite resistance since listeners may bristle at being told directly what to value. Implicit evaluation may be more persuasive since it makes the listeners draw evaluative conclusions that feel like their own and not imposed judgments.

Dytsa and Romanchenko (2005) analyze the structure and emotive-evaluative potential of zoological phraseology. The researchers notice that phraseological units with animal images display a high degree of evaluative variability and that the image of a specific animal carries certain connotative values. This is the evaluative potential, which is switched on when such phraseology occurs in proverbs and adds to the proverbial statement's evaluative force in general.

Another parameter of evaluation, and one that is particularly significant in the case of proverbs, is the temporal structure of evaluation. Many proverbs propose a causal or consequential relationship between actions and outcomes. In other words, the evaluation of actions is often mediated through evaluation of their consequences. Actions leading to good outcomes are evaluated positively; actions leading to bad outcomes are evaluated negatively. This consequentialist structure of proverbial evaluation reflects folk versions of ethical reasoning, albeit ones that are often more pragmatic than systematic philosophical consequentialism.

The social function of evaluative proverbs is related to their role in moral education and the regulation of behavior. When proverbs occur in discourse, which often happens, especially across generations or in situations of advice-giving, they pass on and reinforce cultural values. The evaluative content of proverbs is simultaneously descriptive and prescriptive. *Paremiias* tell us what to value and how to behave, and thus, they function as compact moral guidebooks.

Salamatina (2013: p. 134-135) states that proverbs are means of verbalizing the value picture of the world. According to her, the evaluative content of proverbs can

be analyzed in order to reconstruct the value systems of the cultures that produced them. This axiological approach to proverbs treats the latter as cultural texts that encode collective judgments about what matters and what is worth pursuing or avoiding. In this way, systematic analysis of evaluative proverbs provides a window into cultural mentalities and worldviews.

One of the striking phenomena in proverbs and sayings is their axiological ambiguity. Many proverbs indeed state clear-cut evaluations, but a good number of others are more ambiguous and express values that can be understood in different ways depending on context or perspective. This is not necessarily a defect, for it may reflect a genuine degree of complexity in the value system which the proverbs represent. Not all questions of value have a straightforward answer, and some proverbs manifest that complexity, rather than false clarity.

According to Suleimanova (2016), the realization of evaluation and value categories is carried out within the semantics of Ukrainian proverbs with the given lexical component “water”. Even semantically specific sets of proverbs may have rich evaluative dimensions; concretely, the element will serve as a vehicle for abstract value judgments about human behavior, social relations, and life circumstances. This finding supports the contention that evaluative meaning in proverbs operates mainly through metaphorical and symbolic mechanisms rather than through literal description.

Cross-linguistic comparison of evaluative proverbs reveals both universal and culture-specific aspects of human value systems. Some evaluations seem to be near-universal: courage is valued over cowardice, wisdom over folly, generosity over greed. Still, the relative importance assigned to different values, the specific behaviors or qualities which exemplify values, as well as ways values are prioritized when they conflict, all demonstrate considerable cultural variation. Suleimanova (2017) compares the value characteristics of German mentality as reflected in proverbs containing components for water and fire, finding both parallels and differences with Ukrainian proverbial tradition.

The evaluative lexicon used in proverbs reflects the wider lexical resources of the language but often foregrounds certain terms and categories. Abstract evaluative terms-good, evil, right, wrong-are common, along with more specific terms denoting virtues and vices. The semantic fields relating to evaluation in proverbs highlight the ethical vocabularies of cultures and the concepts through which they think about value.

This is not to say that the aesthetic dimension of evaluation in proverbs should be ignored. Although the largest part of proverbial evaluation deals with ethical, practical, or social matters, some proverbs also express aesthetic judgments about beauty, harmony, and style. Having analysed the linguistic representation of negative aesthetic evaluation in Ukrainian proverbs, Kalko (2015), notes that aesthetic criteria function alongside with the other evaluative dimensions. The aesthetic qualities of proverbs and sayings, i.e., their rhythm, imagery, and verbal artistry, also carry implicit evaluative significance, as beautiful or clever formulations are valued and remembered by language bearers.

The relationship between general and specific evaluation in proverbs reflects their dual nature as abstract principles and as applicable to concrete situations. The general evaluative principle expressed in many proverbs can be applied across a range of specific circumstances. The generality of proverbial evaluation is conducive to their broad applicability but also creates interpretive challenges, as determining how a general principle applies to a particular situation requires judgment and may be contested. Hanzha and Onyshchenko (2016) state that the evaluative meaning is not static-it changes together with the changing social conditions and cultural values. Thus, traditional proverbs encode an older value system but continue to be used-and sometimes reinterpreted or adapted-in contemporary contexts. Such a dynamic quality of proverbial evaluation reminds us that language and culture are always on the move, even as certain traditional formulations retain their authority.

A final point is the evaluative function of contrast and opposition in proverbs. A large number of proverbs establish binary oppositions (e.g., rich and poor, wise and foolish, young and old) and map evaluative distinctions onto these oppositions.

Contrast sharpens evaluative distinctions and makes them more memorable. Binary thinking can sometimes over-simplify complex realities, however, and those proverbs which rely heavily on opposition probably do present overly schematic views of human experience. The evaluative content of any proverb interacts with the pragmatic context in which it is deployed. The same proverb can function differently depending on who uses it, to whom, and in what circumstances. A proverb issued by an elder to instruct a younger person carries authority derived from age and experience. The same proverb used among peers may function more as a sharing of collective wisdom than as a claim to superior insight. These pragmatic dimensions shape the effectiveness of proverbial evaluation in actual discourse.

Tyshchenko (2019) focuses on an analysis of the conceptualization of the notions of emotions and values in Slavic proverbs and phraseology, with discussions spanning from conscience to envy. The present study shows how proverb complexes encode complex assessments of mental states and moral properties—a theme that can reveal cultural knowledge about feelings and their connection to virtue and vice. The assessment of emotions within proverbs reflects more general cultural psychologies and systems of morality.

The implicit social criticism sometimes found in proverbs is another important evaluative function. While many of the texts of proverbs articulate officially sanctioned values, others express popular criticism of social hierarchies, hypocrisy, or injustice. The evaluative complexity should remind us that proverbial wisdom is not monolithic but contains multiple voices and perspectives, including dissenting and subversive ones.

It is now time to address the role of irony in proverbial evaluation. Certain proverbs use ironic formulations in order to provide evaluations that are opposite to the literal meaning. This ironic mode can be an effective rhetorical strategy, with pointed criticism obtaining memorable and quotable expression. But ironic proverbs also run a risk of misinterpretation, especially across cultural boundaries or when the context necessary for recognizing the irony is absent.

According to Ushakov (2019: p. 212), an important dimension of the image of the cultural person is the value dimension. He investigates how proverbs and other types of traditional wisdom build ideals of human excellence. The evaluative content of proverbs adds to these ideals of culture, determining certain standards against which persons are measured and toward which they are encouraged to strive. These ideals are never universal; rather, they represent a particular cultural tradition and historical circumstances.

Further, the semantic richness of proverbs is underpinned by the phenomenon of evaluative layering, whereby multiple levels of evaluation coexist (Paliey, 2016: p. 264). Thus, a proverb may evaluate an action and its consequences, or a quality and its social reception. These multiple evaluative layers can reinforce one another or exist in tension with each other, creating semantic complexity that invites interpretation and reflection.

Byessonova (2021) discusses the evaluative thesaurus as a tool in codifying values within linguistic communities. One approach treats evaluation systematically: it maps out the evaluative vocabulary and structures of a language to reveal the value systems that underlie them. Applied to proverbs, such an approach would help to highlight how proverbial language systematically encodes cultural values across semantic domains and evaluative categories. Kornilova (2020: p. 38) advocates for an axiolinguistic approach to the analysis of proverbs, placing value systems at the forefront of analysis. In addition, Prihodko (2018) insists on the urgent need to study evaluation from a communicative approach, focusing on the function of evaluation in real interactions rather than as a purely semantic phenomenon.

J. Charteris-Black (2004) provides methodological grounding for the corpus-based analysis of evaluative metaphors, demonstrating how systematic patterns of metaphorical choice reveal ideological and axiological orientations that may not be apparent from the analysis of individual instances. Applied to proverbs, this approach allows the researcher to identify recurring metaphorical schemas and the evaluative hierarchies they encode across the paremiological stock as a whole (Charteris-Black, 2004: 9–34). R. Moon (1998), working from a corpus perspective,

examines fixed expressions and idioms (the broader category to which proverbs belong) and shows that their evaluative potential is inseparable from their formulaic status: it is precisely their fixedness that stabilizes and conventionalizes their evaluative force across contexts of use (Moon, 1998: 23–67).

The study of evaluation in proverbs thus reveals how these compact linguistic forms serve as vehicles for cultural values, moral instruction, and social regulation. Through lexical choice, metaphorical mapping, syntactic structure, and pragmatic deployment, proverbs express and reinforce evaluations that guide behavior and shape collective understanding of what matters in human life. Indeed, the mechanisms through which proverbs express evaluation are diverse and sophisticated, reflecting the complexity of human value systems and the ingenuity of linguistic resources.

To analyze the evaluative content of English proverbs, the practical study adopts the principles of the Appraisal Theory developed by J. R. Martin and P. R. R. White, specifically utilizing their fundamental distinction between inscribed and invoked evaluation. This approach allows for the differentiation between explicitly verbalized value judgments and implicitly encoded attitudes. Furthermore, the multi-level approach to evaluative language proposed by S. Hunston and G. Thompson serves as the basis for identifying evaluative markers at the lexical, grammatical, and figurative levels.

For the systematic categorization of the paremiological corpus, the research relies on the classification of evaluative domains adapted from contemporary linguistic axiology, which provides a framework for mapping the axiological load across various spheres of human existence such as morality, social conduct, and material values. Finally, the practical interpretative analysis incorporates the structural and semantic parameters discussed previously, focusing on linguistic mechanisms such as metaphorical mapping, antithesis, and negation to uncover exactly how positive and negative polarities are constructed in proverbial discourse. Consequently, this theoretical synthesis provides the necessary analytical apparatus

for the detailed examination of the English paremiological worldview in the subsequent chapter.

Conclusions to Chapter 1

The lexical system of a language, particularly its paremiological component, possesses the greatest capacity for expressing value-laden and culturally embedded meanings. The *paremia*, as a linguistic, cultural, and folkloric unit, has still not acquired a precise definition among scholars. We adhere to the scholarly thought that the term *paremia* encompasses proverbs and sayings. In addition to their national and cultural specificity, the features commonly attributed to proverbs and sayings by many researchers include their generalized, didactic, advisory, and goal-oriented character. The status of proverbs and sayings within phraseology remains a matter of debate, as does their differentiation from each other and their distinction from related units, such as phraseological expressions and winged expressions. In this study, it is considered appropriate to distinguish proverbs and sayings from a structural-logical (syntactic-semantic) perspective, according to which proverbs constitute closed clichés that illustrate a certain pattern, a regularly recurring phenomenon, a constant rule, or a customary practice, thus, exhibiting a higher degree of generalization than sayings. Sayings, in turn, exist in the form of open clichés that point to a specific case.

Evaluation serves as the foundation for the formation of value, which most researchers understand as the significance of an object for a subject. In distinguishing between the two notions, it should be noted that evaluation precedes value. Moreover, evaluation may involve both an act of approval and an act of disapproval. However, only that which is perceived by a community as beneficial and aligned with a certain moral and aesthetic ideal is recognized as a value. From the perspective of functioning, values are characterized by orientational, normative, and constitutive

dimensions. The classification of values is carried out with regard to various criteria, including type of civilization, function, role in a person's life, and their bearer.

Cultural connotations form part of the worldview of the speakers of a particular language, including its value-related component, which is expressed through evaluative judgments correlated with cultural codes, stereotypes, and traditional beliefs. Thus, evaluation constitutes one of the elements of connotative meaning and, in the logical-philosophical sense, is understood as a judgment about the positive or negative significance of an object of reality, whereas in linguistics, it is viewed as a component of the meaning of a linguistic unit that conveys approval or disapproval. Evaluation is considered as a component of cultural connotation, since it relates not to the real situation (the denotatum) depicted in the proverb, but to its reinterpretation based on associative and symbolic images.

CHAPTER 2

FEATURES OF EVALUATIVE CONTENT IN ENGLISH PROVERBS

2.1. Methodology and Corpus Formation

Our work deals with the description and interpretation of evaluative meaning in English proverbs and phrases, focusing primarily on the axiological valency (either positive or negative) that each item contains. The investigation is based on several different methodological approaches which are used concurrently in order to provide not only a systematic way of collecting data but also a more profound level of interpretation. The methodological choice has been determined by the nature of the object itself: proverbs, being highly concentrated cultural units, tend to evaluate using imagery and implications rather than words.

The research corpus was compiled through the purposeful sampling procedure, according to which units are extracted from a predetermined body of sources in a systematic fashion. The principal source for lexicography during corpus construction was *The Facts on File Dictionary of Proverbs* edited by Martin H. Manser (2007). The latter provided both the proverbs and contextually grounded definitions. This strategy was chosen deliberately because Manser's dictionary provides short but semantically saturated explanatory notes to the entries making it fairly easy to discern the presence of any evaluation because the definitions often contain evaluative vocabulary which corroborates or explicates the value-oriented stance taken by the proverb. Using one reliable dictionary also helped avoid inconsistencies in definition format when comparing different sources. The sampling technique used is the same for all of this source material without any prior selection in terms of its meaning so that the corpus created by applying the technique reflects the whole range of possible axiological orientations within the scope of English proverbs. The complete corpus consists of 200 items, namely 100 proverbs expressing positive evaluation (see Appendix A) and 100 proverbs expressing negative evaluation (see Appendix B). The

separation of the corpus into positive and negative items is established during the analysis stage.

To identify the evaluative content of individual units, the study employed a combination of three complementary procedures. The first involves direct dictionary consultation to establish the axiomatic correlates of the general concepts “good” and “bad”. This procedure, developed within lexical semantics, rests on the observation that evaluative meaning in English is regularly encoded by a definable set of semantically marked lexemes. Positively marked vocabulary encompasses items such as *wise, honest, blessed, cheerful, brave, content, worthy, diligent, graceful, fair*, and related adjectives, nouns and verbs whose definitions invoke notions of benefit, moral excellence, competence, or desirability. Negatively marked vocabulary includes items such as *corrupt, dangerous, cowardly, wicked, foolish, deceitful, idle, bitter, desperate, sinful*, and others whose definitions invoke harm, moral deficiency, folly, or social transgression. The essential theoretical background for the process in question is outlined in Leech’s (1981) treatment of affective meaning, which he describes as “the dimension of meaning in the lexicon expressing the speaker’s attitude to what is described.” It is clear from his research that affective meaning can be decoded from the language used by people, which is indeed done in the present work.

The second procedure is based on existing classifications of evaluative vocabulary developed in linguistic works. The most influential theory for the present purposes is the Appraisal Theory proposed by Martin and White (2007) in *The Language of Evaluation: Appraisal in English*. These scholars offer a comprehensive taxonomy of attitudinal resources in English, organised under three subsystems: Affect (the expression of emotional reactions, e.g., *happy, frightened, distressed*), Judgement (the ethical appraisal of human behaviour, e.g., *honest, courageous, foolish, irresponsible*), and Appreciation (the assessment of objects, entities, and phenomena by reference to aesthetic or social value, e.g., *beautiful, precious, worthless, elegant*). What sets this model apart from previous approaches is its ability to conceptualize assessment as something that can either be encoded directly into the

lexical meaning of an expression, or invoked indirectly by making allusions to states of being that society esteems and disapproves of. It is precisely because most proverbs included in the current corpus use the latter technique of assessing things that makes their meaning easy to decipher despite the fact that they are not directly assessed: “*A bird in the hand is worth two in the bush*” (FFDP 2007: 28) lacks any evaluative adjectives but has very clear attitude.

To substantiate the qualitative analysis of the Appraisal subsystems, a quantitative assessment of the paremiological corpus was conducted. The statistical distribution confirms the overwhelmingly prescriptive and anthropocentric nature of the English proverbial tradition. Out of the 200 analyzed units, the subsystem of Judgement accounts for the absolute majority, comprising 136 proverbs or 68% of the total corpus. This numerical dominance emphasizes that the primary function of these linguistic units is to evaluate human behavior and moral character. The subsystem of Affect is represented by 36 units (18%), indicating a secondary but stable focus on the psychological and emotional states of individuals. The subsystem of Appreciation is the least frequent, encompassing 28 paremias (14%) that assess abstract concepts, situations, or inanimate objects. The detailed numerical correlation between the attitudinal subsystems and their evaluative polarity is presented in Table 2.1.

Table 2.1. Distribution of Proverbs across Appraisal Subsystems

Appraisal Subsystem	Positive Evaluation	Negative Evaluation	Total Units	Percentage
Judgement	62	74	136	68%
Affect	20	16	36	18%
Appreciation	18	10	28	14%
Total	100	100	200	100%

Complementing this is the earlier work of Thompson and Hunston (2000) in *Evaluation in Text: Authorial Stance and the Construction of Discourse*, which remains a foundational reference point for evaluation studies in English linguistics. These scholars establish that evaluation is realised across lexical, grammatical, and textual levels and that evaluative lexical items include, at minimum, adjectives (*splendid, terrible*), adverbs (*happily, unfortunately*), nouns (*success, failure*), and verbs (*succeed, fail*). Their theory is particularly useful in drawing attention to the fact that identifying evaluation requires sensitivity to comparison, subjectivity, and social value – three criteria that proverbs, as socially transmitted generalisations, inherently satisfy. The identification of evaluative vocabulary in the present corpus therefore follows the inventory established by Thompson and Hunston, filtered through the attitudinal subcategories of Martin and White's Appraisal framework.

Thirdly, the interpretative analysis was used wherever the previous procedures could not deliver any clear-cut conclusions about axiological polarity. The interpretative analysis itself was carried out through four steps. The first step includes the semantic analysis of the proverb's denotative meaning – or rather what the expression means literally and explicitly. Second step refers to the form of evaluation – whether it is presented explicitly or implicitly through implicature, negation or associative imagination. Third step is based on the analysis of the associative image used within the proverb, as compared to the stereotypical context in which it is supposed to occur, which helps determine its implicit or transferred meaning. Fourth step entails correlating the identified evaluation to the value of the proverb in general – that is to say, determining the behavioural, moral or social ideal being promoted or criticized.

To illustrate this procedure, in the proverb "*A barking dog never bites*" (FFDP 2007: 17) (Appendix B, no. 15), the literal denotative content describes canine behaviour. The evaluative loading, however, is implicitly negative in its characterisation of those who make loud threats, and the transferred meaning construes such behaviour as impotent and ultimately dishonest. The value that emerges is a negative assessment of empty aggression or verbal bravado. In contrast,

the proverb “*Confession is good for the soul*” (FFDP 2007: 45) (Appendix A, no. 58) contains an explicitly positive evaluative adjective (*good*) in its composition, and both the inscribed lexical marking and the figurative meaning converge on a positive appraisal of moral transparency and self-accountability. It is worth noting that in some cases the polarity identified at the level of inscription diverges from the polarity implied at the level of invocation. The unit “*Better the devil you know than the devil you don’t know*” (FFDP 2007: 25) (Appendix B, no. 21), for instance, contains no unambiguously negative lexeme other than *devil*, however, the situational meaning that one should prefer a familiar harm to an unknown one shows a negative evaluation of recklessness in the face of uncertainty.

The selection of individual units from the source dictionary followed specific criteria derived from the evaluative categories described above. Positively marked proverbs were included in the corpus on the basis of three possible configurations. The first comprises units that contain evaluative positively marked lexemes both in their compositional form and in their dictionary definition, for instance, *happy as a lark* (also *happy as a clam*), defined as “very happy about a situation or what you are doing”, where the positive lexeme *happy* appears both in the surface form of the expression and in its gloss. The second configuration covers units where positive evaluative vocabulary is present in the definition alone, while the compositional form does not overtly signal polarity as in *think the world of somebody*, defined as expressing that one likes and admires a person very much, or *be in seventh heaven*, defined as being extremely happy: neither expression contains an unambiguous positive adjective in its surface form, yet the definition makes the attitudinal loading explicit. The third configuration involves units whose compositional form contains negatively marked vocabulary, but whose overall meaning is positive by virtue of negation as in *be nobody’s fool / be no man’s fool*, defined as being a wise and astute person who is not easily deceived or exploited; here the negative lexemes (*fool*, *deceived*, *exploited*) are semantically reversed by negation so that the resulting meaning is a positive appraisal of shrewdness and integrity (see Table 2.2.).

Table 2.2. Types of Evaluative Marking – Positive Proverbs

Type	N	%
Type 1: Positive lexeme in composition + definition	38	38%
Type 2: Positive lexeme in definition only	32	32%
Type 3: Negative lexeme + negation → positive meaning	30	30%
Total	100	100%

Negatively marked proverbs were selected according to a parallel set of criteria. The first comprises units with negatively marked lexemes in both their composition and their definition, for example, *be as mad as a hornet*, defined as being very angry, where the pejoratively loaded adjective *mad* appears in both the expression itself and in its gloss. The second configuration covers units where negative evaluation is carried only by the dictionary definition, not by any single overtly negative component in the expression itself as in *at one's wits' end*, defined as being very worried because one has exhausted all available solutions: the expression contains no single lexeme that is unambiguously pejorative, but the definition encodes distress and helplessness. The third configuration involves units whose surface form contains positively marked vocabulary but whose actual meaning is negative through negation or ironic reframing as in *daft as a brush*, whose definition specifies that it is used to say, in a kind or friendly way, that someone is not sensible or behaves strangely: the softened register of the gloss does not change the fact that the evaluated quality, i.e., lack of sense, is axiologically negative (see Table 2.3.).

Table 2.3. Types of Evaluative Marking – Negative Proverbs

Type	N	%
Type 1: Negative lexeme in composition + definition	42	42%
Type 2: Negative lexeme in definition only	33	33%
Type 3: Positive lexeme + negation → negative meaning	25	25%

Type	N	%
Total	10	100
	0	%

This threefold classification within the two polarities provided a more complex approach to understanding the evaluation in English proverbs than just categorizing them into positive and negative would allow.

It also illustrates the theoretical notion mentioned above in connection with the distinction between inscribed and invoked appraisal put forward by Martin and White (2007), namely that the verbalization and evaluation can be out of tune with each other.

Quantitative analysis served as part of the methodology implemented during the last stage of corpus investigation in order to establish the number of occurrences for particular evaluative words as well as the proportional occurrence of positive and negative proverbs within the total corpus. The implementation of such quantitative data helps achieve the objectivity of observations in comparative research because this method provides a basis for making generalizations based on statistical information rather than mere impressions. As applied to the current research, quantitative data were not an ultimate goal but merely a tool for qualitative conclusions made via interpretative analysis (Kocherhan 2008).

Descriptive procedure, which persists throughout the whole research process, comprises the phases of inventarization, classification, and interpretation of the linguistic phenomena being examined. This approach has been used when analyzing the formal and semantic features of the evaluative lexical items in the corpus, while classifying proverbs on the basis of their axiological directionality, and while determining the forms of evaluation, either overt or covert, lexicologically encoded or contextually implied, inherent in the data under analysis. The classification of proverbs based on positive or negative evaluation, illustrated in Appendices A and B, is the result of such description.

The corpus established through these procedures is sufficiently varied to support both qualitative and quantitative generalisations. The 100 positively evaluated proverbs in Appendix A include units in which evaluation is carried by a single salient lexeme (*“Honesty is the best policy”* (FFDP 2007: 127); *“A friend in need is a friend indeed”* (FFDP 2007: 103)), as well as units whose positive meaning depends on the associative image as a whole (*“April showers bring May flowers”* (FFDP 2007: 11)).

The 100 negatively evaluated proverbs in Appendix B similarly range from those with explicit pejorative markers (*“Crime doesn't pay”* (FFDP 2007: 49); *“Corruption will find a dozen alibis for its evil deeds”* (FFDP 2007: 47)) to those where negative evaluation is constructed entirely through situational implicature (*“Dead men tell no tales”* (FFDP 2007: 52); *“Between two stools one falls to the ground”* (FFDP 2007: 26)). The diversity found in the corpus allows it to serve as a good representation of the various evaluation strategies used in the English proverbs discourse, forming an ideal basis for the analysis presented later on.

2.2. Classification of Proverbs according to Evaluative Domain

Any effort to categorise the proverbs collected in accordance with the evaluative domains would encounter an inherent obstacle due to the very nature of this genre: proverbs, for their part, are inherently polysemantic – the same proverb may refer at once to personal morality, interpersonal relationships, as well as to a philosophical discourse on values. The following systematisation does not attempt to reconcile these aspects but only aims to establish a degree of analytical clarity that allows for comparative study within the framework of different categories. The guiding criterion is the main object of evaluation in each individual proverb – that is, that particular sphere of human existence or human conduct which is being judged in the given proverb.

We classify the total of 200 proverbs according to several main evaluative categories singled out by Suleimanova (2018, p. 8). They are: (1) individual qualities and morality; (2) interpersonal relations and social behavior; (3) labor, hard work, and material values; (4) education, intelligence, and stupidity; (5) time, patience, and circumstances; (6) health, nature, and physiology; and (7) destiny, luck, and uncertainty of life. As can be seen from the above figures, there is an imbalance in the number of proverbs belonging to these categories, and that is an important observation in itself, as it shows what the English proverbial tradition focuses on in its evaluations.

2.4 Distribution of Proverbs across Evaluative Domains

Evaluative Domain	Positive (App. A)	Negative (App. B)	Total
Moral Character and Personal Qualities	26	22	48
Fate, Fortune and Life Philosophy	30	40	70
Social Conduct and Relationships	15	10	25
Time, Patience and Caution	9	8	17
Labour, Diligence and Material Values	9	6	15
Health, Nature and Mortality	6	9	15
Knowledge, Wisdom and Foolishness	5	5	10
TOTAL	100	100	200

The most representative domain is personal qualities and moral virtues, which constitutes a considerable amount of negative and positive subcorpora. As for the proverbs that belong to the positive set, they include the sayings that praise qualities

such as honesty (*“Honesty is the best policy”* (FFDP 2007: 127); *“Honesty pays”* (FFDP 2007: 128)), bravery and enterprise (*“Adventures are to the adventurous”* (FFDP 2007: 2); *“The best defense is a good offense”* (FFDP 2007: 20)), generosity (*“It’s better to give than to receive”* (FFDP 2007: 149); *“Charity covers a multitude of sins”* (FFDP 2007: 39)), and patience (*“Bear and forbear”* (FFDP 2007: 17); *“All things come to those who wait”* (FFDP 2007: 7)). It is noteworthy that unlike descriptive units that merely state the presence of a certain quality, normative units suggest that it is desirable. For instance, it is not just said that it is better to be brave, but also suggested that one should always be ready to defend oneself. Thus, all proverbs have an inherent normative function that makes any evaluative content found in them not purely aesthetical.

Within the negative subcorpus, the domain of personal qualities is equally well represented, though the evaluative strategy tends to differ. Where positive proverbs in this domain typically affirm virtues directly, negative proverbs more often work by condemning their opposite phenomena like cowardice (*“A bully is always a coward”* (FFDP 2007: 33); *“Cowards die many times before their death”* (FFDP 2007: 48)), dishonesty (*“Alcohol will preserve anything but a secret”* (FFDP 2007: 4); *“Corruption will find a dozen alibis for its evil deeds”* (FFDP 2007: 47)), and idleness (*“The devil finds work for idle hands to do”* (FFDP 2007: 54)). Another group of proverbs worth mentioning in this area is the one which assesses human frailty without being judgmental, that is, they do not regard negative attributes as faults to be denounced but simply as inherent parts of human nature. *“The best of men are but men at best”* (FFDP 2007: 22) is one of such proverbs. While it is clearly a negative assessment of man’s character, there is nothing in it by way of denunciation.

The second important domain relates to relations between humans and human behavior, encompassing all proverbs concerning friendships, familial ties, society, hospitality, and other behavioral norms between people. In the positive sub-corpus, many units praise the worth of genuine friendship (*“A friend in need is a friend indeed”* (FFDP 2007: 103); *“Books and friends should be few and good”* (FFDP 2007: 31)) and family loyalty (*“Blood is thicker than water”* (FFDP 2007: 30);

“Charity begins at home” (FFDP 2007: 39)). This saying is especially fascinating from the perspective of the axiological approach since the evaluation made in it is essentially conditional. The fact that one is supposed to give to those who are closer to him does not refute the positive value attributed to charity; the evaluation made is both positive and restrictive at once, which complicates polarizing this evaluation to a great extent. Units such as *“Do as you would be done by”* (FFDP 2007: 58) and *“Do unto others as you would have them do unto you”* (FFDP 2007: 67) express a universalist positive evaluation of reciprocity that cuts across both family and wider social relations.

Proverbs of negativity within the sphere of social behavior often involve topics such as the hazards of being around bad company, corruption caused by vice, and the unpredictable nature of humans in social circles. *“Evil communications corrupt good manners”* (FFDP 2007: 80) denotes a clearly negative evaluation of morally compromised social environments, while *“A constant guest is never welcome”* (FFDP 2007: 46) and *“Don’t wash your dirty linen in public”* (FFDP 2007: 66) appraise specific social behaviours, such as overstaying one’s welcome and revealing private grievances publicly as violations of tacit community norms. The above units indicate that a considerable proportion of the English folk wisdom’s negative evaluations is devoted not to some abstract notion of evil but rather to very real social misdeeds.

The third corpus, comprising sayings related to work, labor, and pragmatism, is another field where the difference between the two sub-corpora becomes particularly evident. There are numerous positive sayings, such as proverbs about diligence, thrift, and skill: *“All things are easy to industry, all things difficult to sloth”* (FFDP 2007: 7); *“Diligence is the mother of good luck”* (FFDP 2007: 56); *“The laborer is worthy of his hire”* (FFDP 2007: 162). In every case, positive evaluation is tied directly to effort, productivity, and appropriate use of resources. The language of evaluation in this context seems to be primarily functional, not necessarily moral in nature; that which is evaluated positively is evaluated thusly for its effectiveness, because it yields positive results from the perspective of the group.

The negative proverbs in this domain, by contrast, are preoccupied with greed, recklessness in expenditure, and the misuse of resources: “*Don’t kill the goose that lays the golden eggs*” (FFDP 2007: 62); “*Don’t throw good money after bad*” (FFDP 2007: 66); “*Bad money drives out good*” (FFDP 2007: 16). What is noteworthy here is that the negative evaluation is typically directed not at poverty or failure as such but at the behaviour that produces them – impatience, short-sightedness, or the refusal to respect the conditions under which prosperity is sustained.

The fourth domain, encompassing knowledge, wisdom, and their opposites, is one in which the polarity of evaluation is sometimes complicated by irony. Positively marked proverbs in this domain celebrate shrewd judgment (“*Great minds think alike*” (FFDP 2007: 110)), learning from experience (“*Experience is the best teacher*” (FFDP 2007: 80)), and careful consideration of consequences (“*Better safe than sorry*” (FFDP 2007: 25)). The proverb “*Children and fools speak the truth*” (FFDP 2007: 40) is axiologically interesting because it places foolishness and truth-telling in an unexpected proximity: the evaluation of the fool is not straightforwardly negative within this unit, since the fool's lack of social calculation is what allows for honesty. This is a case where the domain classification and the polarity assignment require separate justification.

The fifth domain covers time, patience, and timeliness, and is populated almost entirely by advisory proverbs, units that evaluate actions by reference to when they are performed rather than what they are. “*Better late than never*” (FFDP 2007: 25) and “*All things come to those who wait*” (FFDP 2007: 7) encode positive evaluations of patience and eventual arrival at one’s goals. “*Delays are dangerous*” (FFDP 2007: 53) and “*Don’t meet troubles halfway*” (FFDP 2007: 63) encode negative evaluations of hesitation and premature anxiety respectively. The shared thread is that time is treated as a morally significant dimension: the right action at the wrong time is still a failure, while the belated right action retains its value.

The sixth domain, concerned with health, nature, and physical wellbeing, is smaller than the others but contains some of the most concrete evaluative imagery in the corpus. “*An apple a day keeps the doctor away*” (FFDP 2007: 10) and “*The best*

doctors are Dr. Diet, Dr. Quiet, and Dr. Merryman” (FFDP 2007: 21) express positive evaluations of moderate, balanced living. The unique characteristic of these proverbs lies in the fact that they establish the value aspect in the physical dimension instead of the moral or social dimensions – the body itself and its condition become the focus of assessment. The downside of proverbs within this category is that the ill health and degeneration of the body are metaphorical reflections of other social/moral problems: “*Care killed the cat*” (FFDP 2007: 37), for instance, uses the image of worry killing a creature proverbially endowed with nine lives to make a point about the self-destructive potential of excessive anxiety.

Domain seven, which includes “fate,” “fortune,” and “unpredictability,” consists of proverbs that judge not human character or behavior, but rather the environment in which humans are compelled to exist. “*All good things must come to an end*” (FFDP 2007: 5) expresses a mildly negative evaluation of impermanence, tempered by acceptance. “*Blind chance sweeps the world along*” (FFDP 2007: 30) expresses a darker view of the same unpredictability. “*The best is yet to be*” (FFDP 2007: 21) counters this with a characteristically optimistic appraisal of the future. What unites proverbs in this domain is that their evaluative content is addressed less to what people should do than to what people can expect as they orient the listener toward a particular emotional and cognitive posture in relation to circumstances that are beyond their control.

The domain-oriented classification of positive and negative evaluations in English proverbs allows us to distinguish a few important regularities to be discussed later on. Firstly, the frequency of occurrence of negative and positive evaluations differs from one domain to another; thus, the domain of personal traits and attributes proves more abundant than any other domain, including the slightly positively inclined domain of fate.

Secondly, there is a definite connection between a specific domain and evaluative strategy in that, while the social conduct domain is characterized by the dominance of indirect evaluation through situation description, the moral character domain is defined as having more directly lexically expressed evaluations.

Lastly, several values appear in more than one domain, and thus, the system of values represented in English proverbs appears to be constructed by a limited set of values that include such notions as truthfulness, prudence, patience, reciprocity, and the correlation between efforts and rewards.

2.3. Structural and Lexical Mechanisms of Evaluation in Proverbs and Sayings

Evaluation in the corpus is approached on the basis of the idea suggested in the methodology, according to which evaluation takes place on two different planes in proverbs: the plane of lexical structure, in which each lexical item is loaded with either positive or negative connotations, and the plane of figurative meaning, which presupposes that the evaluation is formed on the basis of the entire figurative complex interacting with a certain cultural or situational context. As one can see, the two planes do not coincide in their function, which makes it especially interesting to look into cases when there is a conflict between the evaluation carried by the surface structure and the deeper connotation of the proverb.

In terms of composition, the simplest evaluative constructions to identify are those that involve one lexeme determining the polarity of the entire construction. In the corpus of positive evaluatives, adjectives like *good*, *best*, *happy*, *fair*, *honest*, *blessed*, and *bright* can be considered key evaluative components. To substantiate this observation, a quantitative analysis of these specific markers was conducted across the compiled paremiological corpus (see Table 2.5). The statistical data reveals a clear lexical hierarchy in the verbalization of positive evaluation, demonstrating the heavy reliance of the English proverbial tradition on fundamental, highly generalized evaluative adjectives.

The proverb “*Honesty is the best policy*” (FFDP 2007: 127) is built using a superlative *best* that places the value of honesty at the top of a comparative scale. “A

good beginning is half the battle” (FFDP 2007: 105) similarly uses *good* as a component, which links it causally to success. “*Always look on the bright side*” (FFDP 2007: 8) contains *bright* metaphorically, but the evaluative charge of the adjective is unmistakable. In all of these instances, it is the compositional positive marker that does most of the evaluation, while the figurative meaning, though present, serves to reinforce what has been conveyed lexically.

Table 2.5. Frequency of Key Positive Evaluative Markers in the Corpus

Lexical Marker	Frequency in Positive Subcorpus	Frequency in Negative Subcorpus	Total Occurrences
good	16	3	19
best	16	1	17
happy	4	0	4
honest / honesty	3	0	3
fair	2	0	2
blessed	2	0	2
bright	1	0	1
Total	44	4	48

However, for the negative category, the corresponding position is occupied by adjectives and nouns like *bad*, *dangerous*, *evil*, *wicked*, *desperate*, *coward*, *corrupt*, and *bitter*. The proverb “*Bad news travels fast*” (FFDP 2007: 16) uses *bad* as a direct marker of negative evaluation of the content being transmitted, while simultaneously implying something negative about the social mechanisms that spread it. “*Desperate*

diseases must have desperate remedies” (FFDP 2007: 53) uses the lexeme *desperate* twice, compounding the evaluative loading and suggesting that the negative quality of the situation demands an equally extreme and implicitly also negative, or at least undesirable response. These are cases of what Thompson and Hunston (2000) would describe as inscribed evaluation: the attitudinal meaning is directly encoded in the lexical choices made by the expression.

More analytically interesting are the cases where compositional markers are absent or misleading. A significant proportion of the corpus, particularly in the negative subcorpus, encodes evaluation through description of situations or outcomes rather than through explicitly marked vocabulary. “*Dead men tell no tales*” (FFDP 2007: 52), for example, contains no evaluative adjective. The lexeme *dead* is descriptive rather than evaluative in the conventional sense, and yet the proverb as a whole carries a strongly negative evaluative charge because it implies the acceptability, even the advisability, of killing someone to prevent disclosure. The evaluation here is invoked, in Martin and White’s (2007) terms, it arises from the situational implication rather than from any single marked word. The same is true of “*Dead men don’t bite*” (FFDP 2007: 51) and “*Catching’s before hanging*” (FFDP 2007: 37), which possess negative evaluations of violence and punishment through dry, matter-of-fact description that relies on the listener’s cultural competence to supply the attitudinal content.

Within the positive subcorpus, analogous cases of invoked evaluation are less common but equally present. “*April showers bring May flowers*” (FFDP 2007: 11) contains no overtly evaluative lexeme, yet it encodes a positive evaluation of the relationship between difficulty and eventual reward by deploying the culturally positive associations of spring and flowering against the negative associations of cold rain. The evaluation is constructed entirely through the symbolic content of the natural imagery. In the same way, the proverb “*A book is like a garden that can be carried around in one’s pocket*” (FFDP 2007: 31) does not employ a single evaluative adjective, yet the metaphor relies heavily on the cultural values of the garden, which

include cultivation, beauty, and enjoyment, to create a positive evaluation of literature.

The use of negation as an evaluative strategy calls for special consideration because it constitutes the formation of the most complicated evaluative units found in the text. In the case of English proverbs, there are two possible ways in which negation functions. First, the negation acts as a way to change the polarity of a negatively marked expression, thus resulting in a positive evaluation of an attribute: *be nobody's fool/be no man's fool* is based on the negative word *fool* but expresses a positive evaluation of one's wit and shrewdness. The proverb "*all that glitters is not gold*" (FFDP 2007: 7) is more complicated: it uses a propositional negation to downgrade the potentially positive attributes. The surface positive imagery is used as the very thing being negated, which means that the proverb's evaluative content depends entirely on understanding that *gold* is being invoked only to be qualified. This is a case where compositional and figurative evaluation pull in opposite directions, and where the figurative level takes precedence.

In the second direction, negation intensifies negative evaluation by presenting a positively valued state as inaccessible or conditional: "*Desert and reward seldom keep company*" (FFDP 2007: 53) uses *seldom* as a near-negation to express a pessimistic appraisal of the world's fairness. The positive value of reward is acknowledged, but its connection to merit is denied, producing an evaluation that is negative not about any particular quality but about the structure of social reality itself.

Comparative constructions, particularly those using *better*, constitute another major vehicle of evaluation in the corpus. The *better X than Y* structure is especially productive, appearing in forms such as "*Better late than never*" (FFDP 2007: 25); "*Better safe than sorry*" (FFDP 2007: 25); "*Better be an old man's darling than a young man's slave*" (FFDP 2007: 23); "*Better a dinner of herbs where love is than a stalled ox where hate is*" (FFDP 2007: 23); "*Better the devil you know than the devil you don't know*" (FFDP 2007: 25). What is distinctive about this construction is that it performs evaluation through explicit comparison, placing two options on a scale and assigning relative value to each. The evaluation is always relational rather than

absolute: “*Better late than never*” (FFDP 2007: 25) does not claim that lateness is good in any absolute sense, only that it is preferable to non-arrival. “*Better safe than sorry*” (FFDP 2007: 25) similarly evaluates caution not as an intrinsic virtue but as superior to its alternative.

This comparative mode of evaluation is particularly characteristic of the English proverbial tradition's pragmatic orientation. Rather than asserting absolute moral truths, many of the most widely known English proverbs establish value hierarchies that are calibrated to specific situations. The evaluation is conditional and contextual, it tells what to prefer given a choice, rather than universally prescriptive. This stands in some contrast to the more directly normative units such as “*Honesty is the best policy*” (FFDP 2007: 127) or “*Do as you would be done by*” (FFDP 2007: 58), which assert values in categorical terms.

The grammatical category of the evaluative vocabulary also warrants consideration. In the positive subcorpus, adjectives are the most frequent evaluative markers at the compositional level, followed by nouns and then verbs. The predominance of adjectives is consistent with Martin and White's (2007) observation that Appreciation and Judgement, the two attitudinal subsystems most concerned with the stable assessment of qualities, are characteristically realised through adjectival and nominal resources. Verbs carry evaluative meaning less frequently at the compositional level in this corpus, though they play a significant role in the figurative dimension: the verb *is* in “*Experience is the best teacher*” (FFDP 2007: 80) is implicitly negative (failure is what experience corrects), while *grow* in “*Laugh and grow fat*” (FFDP 2007: 163) encodes a positive evaluation of the physical and psychological outcome of cheerfulness.

In the negative subcorpus, nouns carry a heavier evaluative load than in the positive group. Lexemes such as *coward*, *fool*, *bully*, *sorrow*, *evil*, *crime*, *corruption*, *vice*, and *curse* function as concentrated negative evaluative anchors that require little contextual support to signal their polarity. This difference may reflect a broader tendency in the language, noted by Thompson and Hunston (2000), for negative evaluation to be more heavily lexicalised than positive, that is, for the language to

have accumulated a richer vocabulary of condemnation than of praise. In the proverbial tradition, this asymmetry manifests as a greater reliance on explicit nominal markers of negative qualities, while positive evaluation more often works through implication, image, and comparison.

The analysis also reveals a subset of proverbs in which positive and negative evaluative components coexist within the same unit, producing what might be called mixed or contrastive evaluation. The proverb “*All good things must come to an end*” (FFDP 2007: 5) is positive in its acknowledgment of good things and negative in its insistence on their impermanence. While the proverb “*The best is yet to be*” (FFDP 2007: 21) seems to be inherently positive in its meaning, it has an underlying sense of melancholy in that it implies that the current situation is not the best one. On the other hand, “*Half a loaf is better than no bread*” (FFDP 2007: 113) expresses both devaluation (half a loaf is less than a whole one) and appreciation (it is still more than nothing), making it impossible to identify this unit purely as negative or positive. It is precisely in cases like these that the analytical technique comes into play and is needed to determine the predominant evaluation of a particular phraseological unit – and they are also the cases where the limitations of dichotomous categorization of proverbs as positive or negative are revealed most clearly.

The collocational patterns within the corpus further illuminate how evaluative meaning is constructed. In the positive subcorpus, strongly evaluative adjectives tend to collocate with abstract nouns denoting virtues or desirable states: *good conscience*, *happy couple*, *bright side*, *best policy*, *honest dealing*. The pairing of evaluative adjective with abstract positive noun reinforces the evaluative content by accumulating two sources of positive marking in a single nominal phrase. In the negative subcorpus, the equivalent collocational tendency pairs evaluative nouns or adjectives with images of destruction, excess, or transgression: *desperate diseases*, *evil deeds*, *bad penny*, *dirty water*, *burnt child*. In both cases, the collocational environment is part of the evaluative signal, not merely a backdrop to it.

There is one more aspect related to the evaluative component analysis, namely the question of the evaluative target. In most cases, the evaluative target in the

proverbs is a particular person described through his/her qualities and behavior: an honest man, a lazy man, a coward, a patient man, a greedy man. Thus, the evaluation of human qualities prevails over any evaluation of objects, events, or even state of affairs in English proverbs, which indicates the anthropocentrism of this tradition. When some objects or natural phenomena are mentioned in the proverbs – such as rain, gold, fire, bread, or the sea – they usually become figurative means for evaluating human qualities rather than evaluative targets themselves.

2.4. Positive and Negative Dichotomy of Evaluation in English Proverbs and Sayings

Having established the evaluative domains into which the corpus divides and having examined the structural and lexical mechanisms through which evaluative content is encoded, it is now possible to address the question of what is distinctive about the way English proverbs handle positive and negative evaluation, not just what they evaluate, but how the two polarities function differently as modes of discourse and as expressions of cultural value.

The most immediately observable difference between the positive and negative subcorpora concerns the relationship between explicitness and evaluative force. Proverbs expressing positive evaluation tend, in a greater number of cases, to state their values openly and directly. “*Honesty is the best policy*” (FFDP 2007: 127), “*The best things in life are free*” (FFDP 2007: 22), “*A friend in need is a friend indeed*” (FFDP 2007: 103) – these units make their evaluative content available at the surface level of the text, with minimal interpretive work required of the listener. The positive evaluation is inscribed rather than invoked, to use Martin and White’s (2007) terminology, and the dominant communicative function is affirmation: the proverb endorses a value and presents that endorsement as a matter of communal consensus.

Negative evaluation, on the other hand, frequently works indirectly. Many of the proverbs marked as having negative evaluation in the corpus attain their

evaluation without resorting to direct denunciation, but rather through description, cautioning, or irony. Examples of such indirect evaluation would include the following: “*Dead men tell no tales*” (FFDP 2007: 52); “*The dog always returns to his vomit*” (FFDP 2007: 58); “*Curses, like chickens, come home to roost*” (FFDP 2007: 50). None of these examples contain a direct negative evaluation of an attribute. What the negative evaluation comes down to here, rather, is that which arises from the situations mentioned. Thus, we can evaluate as negative the act of rendering another individual silent once and for all; the need to go back to the same revolting thing again and again; finally, the belief that evil done by someone or another will come back to haunt him in time.

The difference in terms of explicitness is not an arbitrary distinction. It points to an underlying asymmetry in the way that positive and negative values work in the tradition of proverbs. In the case of positive values in the corpus, they are more aspirational in nature, in that they represent something that humans should aspire to, and their manner of statement suits this purpose. Negative values, on the other hand, tend to be more realistic in nature in that they talk about how things really are – how wickedness works, how foolishness works, how the world punishes you for breaking the rules – rather than just telling the reader what not to do. This mirrors Leech’s (1981) distinction between the prescriptive use of evaluative language and its descriptive use.

The second distinctive attribute relates to the emotional tone of evaluation. Positive proverbs within the corpus imply warmth, optimism, and harmony. The proverbs “*Cheerful company shortens the miles*” (FFDP 2007: 39); “*Cold hands, warm heart*” (FFDP 2007: 44); “*Happy is he that is happy in his children*” (FFDP 2007: 114) create a sense of shared enjoyment of pleasant things in life. The attitude expressed by a proverb is also inclusive since the speaker is not concerned with who already has this admirable trait and who doesn’t have it yet, but suggests that anyone can cultivate the valuable trait. The societal purpose of such units is, therefore, to bring the community closer by promoting communal values.

Proverbial expressions of negativity exist in a broader emotional spectrum. Some are simply advisory and convey a warning message using a voice that is plain and not loaded with emotions: “*Delays are dangerous*” (FFDP 2007: 53); “*Don’t bite off more than you can chew*” (FFDP 2007: 59); “*Don’t go near the water until you learn how to swim*” (FFDP 2007: 61). Other proverbs are distinctly darker in their emotional coloring, denoting fear, disgust, or resignation: “*Blood will have blood*” (FFDP 2007: 31); “*The devil looks after his own*” (FFDP 2007: 55); “*Cowards die many times before their death*” (FFDP 2007: 48). There are still others that carry irony or sarcasm as their tone – they use negative facts in a way that conveys grim humor under the assumption that the audience would understand the cynicism of the statement: “*Conscience gets a lot of credit that belongs to cold feet*” (FFDP 2007: 46); “*The devil was sick, the devil a saint would be*” (FFDP 2007: 56). This diversity of tones among the negative sub-corpus is actually an important finding – it indicates that the English proverbial tradition does not see negative assessment as a single approach but varies its usage based on the gravity of the offense and the social consensus about it.

The third point of distinction relates to human agency. For positively labeled proverbs, human agency is always emphasized in the sense that any good thing that happens to an individual is a result of a deliberate decision and effort on the part of that individual. “*Diligence is the mother of good luck*” (FFDP 2007: 56) implies that luck is not random but is produced by effort. “*A good beginning makes a good ending*” (FFDP 2007: 105) suggests that everything depends on the way you start off your actions. Even proverbs that seem to describe external states like “*Happy is the bride that the sun shines on*” (FFDP 2007: 114) tend to frame those states as reflections of internal qualities or deserved rewards rather than as purely contingent events. The positive evaluation is almost always attached to a human actor who has done something, or is the kind of person, that merits the positive outcome.

In the negative subcorpus, agency is treated more ambiguously. Many negative proverbs place the source of negative outcomes in forces that are partially or entirely beyond human control: chance (“*Blind chance sweeps the world along*” (FFDP 2007:

30)), the nature of evil as a kind of autonomous force (“*The devil looks after his own*” (FFDP 2007: 55); “*The devil always leaves a stink behind him*” (FFDP 2007: 54)), or the structural injustice of the world (“*Desert and reward seldom keep company*” (FFDP 2007: 53)). This tendency to attribute negative outcomes to impersonal forces rather than to individual human choices produces a different evaluative stance: rather than condemning a person for a failing, these proverbs identify conditions that make bad outcomes likely regardless of what individuals do. The evaluation is directed at the world's structure as much as at human behaviour.

There is, however, a substantial subset of negative proverbs in which human agency is clearly implicated and the condemnation is directed at the individual. “*A bad workman quarrels with his tools*” (FFDP 2007: 17); “*Don’t bite the hand that feeds you*” (FFDP 2007: 59); “*Evil doers are evil dreaders*” (FFDP 2007: 80) – these units hold individuals responsible for their failures, ingratitude, and self-defeating behaviour. What distinguishes this subset from the positive proverbs in which agency is celebrated is the emotional coloring: where positive proverbs celebrate agency with warmth and encouragement, these negative proverbs condemn it with a certain astringency, as if the failure of agency were not merely unfortunate but contemptible.

The distribution of the corpus across Suleimanova’s categories of cultural values is instructive in this respect (Suleimanova, 2018, p. 8). The values identified in English proverbial material include friendship, honesty, diligence, prudence, patience, reciprocity, family loyalty, modesty, sobriety, timeliness, generosity, health, and the proper relationship between effort and reward. These values are affirmed positively in the corpus through direct celebration and through the negative route of condemning their opposites. Honesty is affirmed both by “*Honesty is the best policy*” (FFDP 2007: 127) and by the negative treatment of deception in proverbs such as “*Alcohol will preserve anything but a secret*” (FFDP 2007: 4). Diligence is affirmed both by “*Diligence is the mother of good luck*” (FFDP 2007: 56) and by the negative treatment of idleness in “*The devil finds work for idle hands to do*” (FFDP 2007: 54). This double articulation of values, i.e., positive celebration and negative

condemnation of the opposite, is one of the defining structural features of the English proverbial tradition's evaluative discourse.

The value of freedom, which Suleimanova (2021) identifies as common to English and certain other European proverbial traditions, is present in the corpus in a somewhat muted form. It surfaces most clearly in proverbs that evaluate independence of judgment positively ("*Great minds think alike*" (FFDP 2007: 110); "*Be nobody's fool*" (FFDP 2007: 26)) and dependence or subjugation negatively ("*Better be an old man's darling than a young man's slave*" (FFDP 2007: 23)). The value of love, which Suleimanova notes as connecting English and Ukrainian proverbial cultures in particular, is present in the positive subcorpus in proverbs that evaluate affective bonds between people ("*Absence makes the heart grow fonder*" (FFDP 2007: 1); "*Blood is thicker than water*" (FFDP 2007: 30)) as well as in negative proverbs that evaluate the dangers of the absence of love ("*Better a dinner of herbs where love is than a stalled ox where hate is*" (FFDP 2007: 23)). In both instances, love is considered a prerequisite for the growth of human life and not as something that stands on its own; it is valuable because of what it facilitates, and it is judged to be negative only by virtue of what its lack results in, not due to its inherent value.

Beauty, on the other hand, holds an extremely ambiguous role within the English proverbial tradition. A number of proverbs in the positive sub-corpus emphasize the beauty of something ("*Beauty draws with a single hair*" (FFDP 2007: 18); "*Beauty is a good letter of introduction*" (FFDP 2007: 18); "*Beauty is truth, truth beauty*" (FFDP 2007: 19)). However, they always have proverbs which either question this feature or at least hint that beauty does not necessarily reflect the intrinsic goodness ("*All that glitters is not gold*" (FFDP 2007: 7); "*Fine feathers make fine birds*" (FFDP 2007: 98) – this is irony, after all. Thus, the evaluation of beauty in the current proverb collection is rather dialectic: although beauty is recognized as one of the values, it is constantly reminded that it is superficial, ephemeral, and potentially misleading. It appears that the approach taken by the English proverb tradition to evaluating the beauty of something differs significantly

from what Suleimanova defines as the positive valuation of the beauty of things in proverbs.

One of the most consistent features of positive evaluation across the corpus is what might be called its orientation toward durability. The qualities and conditions that are positively evaluated – honesty, patience, diligence, friendship, health, wisdom are all presented as having lasting value, as things that endure and that continue to pay dividends over time. “*Grace will last, beauty will blast*” (FFDP 2007: 109) makes this temporal dimension explicit: grace – an inner quality – outlasts beauty – a surface quality – and is therefore more valuable. “*The good that men do lives after them*” (FFDP 2007: 109) extends this orientation beyond the individual lifespan, suggesting that positive values are precisely those that survive the individual who embodies them. The preference for durability is a fundamental aspect of the evaluative structure of the positive subcorpus.

In the case of negative evaluation, the imagery of damage, waste, and irreversibility are common tropes used within the subcorpus. “*Blood will have blood*” (FFDP 2007: 31) suggests that violence perpetuates itself in ways that cannot be undone. “*Don’t kill the goose that lays the golden eggs*” (FFDP 2007: 62) describes the permanent destruction of a source of value through short-sighted greed. “*A burnt child dreads the fire*” (FFDP 2007: 33) refers to an irreversible transformation in a person’s attitude from naïveté to suspicion. Irreversibility is at the heart of many of the negative proverbs contained in the corpus. Secrets spilled can never be recovered; chances lost cannot be retrieved; resources wasted are gone forever; trust broken cannot be mended. It is the irreversibility of the proverbs in the negative subcorpus that lends them their unique sense of urgency.

The relationship between positive and negative evaluations on the level of individual sayings and the corpus as a whole indicates, therefore, a consistent, albeit complicated, set of axiological attitudes. The Anglo-Saxon proverbial tradition places its emphasis on the good earned, on that which lasts, on that which is truthful, and on that which maintains social ties and relations within human communities over time. At the same time, that which deceives, that which lacks foresight, that which brings

about destruction instead of construction, and that which functions contrary to the laws of nature governing human activity is rejected. Such values, however, are not presented in an abstract way; rather, they become ingrained in the very concrete language of the proverb genre.

Conclusions to Chapter 2

The analysis of Chapter 2 has resulted in some discoveries concerning both the nature of the specific body of English proverbs examined and the process of evaluative meaning formation as a whole.

First of all, it should be noted that domain-based classification of the 200 proverbs shows that evaluative interest of the proverbial tradition of the English language is not uniformly represented in different thematic spheres. In particular, the biggest group among both positive and negative sub-corpora is concerned with fate, fortune and life philosophy, comprising 30 items in the first case and 40 items in the second – thus reaching a total size of 70 proverbs, which is equal to 35% of the whole set of the corpus. This predominance of fateful proverbs means that one of the principal interests of the English proverbial tradition was not merely advice on virtuous behavior, but rather an orientation towards a certain kind of the world where one's merits would not be necessarily appreciated or vices punished.

Second on the list comes the domain of the moral character and personality qualities, with 26 items falling into the positive and 22 falling into the negative category, thus making up 48 units (or 24% of the entire corpus). The symmetry of positive and negative representations within this domain should be noticed: for each saying promoting such qualities as integrity, bravery, or charity, there exists another one denouncing hypocrisy, cowardice, or villainy. This dual approach to morals by which the positive quality and its antipode are both affirmed and condemned is characteristic of the corpus in question and corresponds to the didactic role of the

sayings. Instead of merely observing what people are like, proverbs provide standards of conduct from two perspectives.

The classification of evaluative marking types yielded results that were helpful to the domain analysis. Positive sub-corpus includes three kinds of marking types – evaluative lexeme in composition and definition (38%), evaluative lexeme in definition only (32%), and negative lexeme with negation (30%). The fact that all the above-mentioned types occur in roughly equal quantities shows that the process of positive evaluation in the domain of proverbs in English is carried out using a broad spectrum of linguistic means, and no one of them plays dominant role here. One can say that the fairly great number of type 3 units – units where positive evaluation is performed due to negation of negative property – proves the tendency of defining virtues as absence of negative qualities in the positive proverbial tradition.

As regards the negative sub-corpus, the frequency of distribution is somewhat different. Units of Type 1, characterized by negative words in their meaning, make up 42 percent of all negative sayings. No such large share of a single type can be observed in the positive group. Thus, the obtained results confirm the conclusion that negative evaluation expressed in English proverbs uses more lexically explicit forms than positive evaluation. While expressing disapproval towards some phenomenon, the traditional wisdom mentions it explicitly; while praising a thing, it does not do it.

Based on the study, the evaluative world created by the English proverbial tradition is built upon a set of practical, relational, and ethical values that are communicated through linguistic techniques. Unlike some proverbs that either totally reject or accept the world, the English proverbial tradition embodies a unique balance between hope and reality, between admiration for good and acceptance of evil prevailing in the world.

CONCLUSIONS

The present study set out to examine evaluative content in English proverbs and sayings with the aim of identifying the linguistic mechanisms through which positive and negative evaluation is encoded, classifying the evaluative units according to domain and marking type, and characterising the cultural values that the English proverbial tradition affirms and condemns. The analysis was conducted on a corpus of 200 units selected from *The Facts on File Dictionary of Proverbs*, edited by Martin H. Manser. The theoretical component of the research confirmed that the assessment performed in stable linguistic forms like proverbs is twofold: on the one hand, this assessment is manifested in the lexical level of language when separate words have conventionally positive or negative connotations, and on the other hand, in the figurative meaning of the expression where the assessment is generated by the interaction of the whole phrase with the cultural and situational context. The proposed theoretical framework, which is based mainly on the distinction between inscribed and invoked assessment, was crucial for the analysis of the data corpus as a considerable number of proverbs contained an implicitly expressed assessment of the world.

In Chapter 2, the methodology was composed of several tools, namely the technique of continuous sampling, use of dictionaries for identifying evaluative words, applying the taxonomy, as well as interpreting analysis. This approach made it possible to deal with simple cases of proverbs with obvious markers, as well as more complicated examples of proverbs using negation, irony, comparisons, and inverted figures of speech. The classification of the corpus across seven evaluative domains showed that the domain of fate, fortune, and life philosophy is the most numerically prominent in the English proverbial tradition, accounting for 35% of the total corpus. This finding reflects a deep structural feature of the genre: proverbs are not only prescriptive guides to virtuous conduct but also cognitive tools for orienting individuals toward the uncertainties and injustices of the world. The domain of moral character and personal qualities is the second largest, confirming the centrality of virtue ethics to the English proverbial worldview.

An examination of the types of evaluative markings found showed that positive and negative evaluations in English proverbs are accomplished via strategies that share similarities but have differences. The two sub-corpora utilize the three types of evaluative markings outlined in the methodology – direct lexical inscription in both the compositional and definitional forms, direct lexical inscription in the definitional form only, and polarity reversal via negation – although their frequency rates differ significantly from each other. Positive evaluations rely more on indirectness through definition and negation, which provide the positive information withheld by the compositional form, while negative evaluations rely more on the direct inscription of negative information in the compositional form. This shows that English indeed has an abundant stock of negative vocabulary to express condemnation compared to praise, thus making the positive evaluative system of the language dependent on figurative and constructional methods. Cultural values revealed in the proverbs have shown that the English proverbial world view matches the conclusions of comparative proverbial studies very well. Values highlighted in the text are those of patience, prudence, honesty, and good health – all practical and interpersonal in nature, as opposed to being metaphysical or abstract. There is also a certain degree of love, though less numerically represented than the other values. The English proverbs treat beauty dialectically – accepting the value but constantly criticizing it. It becomes obvious that English proverbs are an example of well-developed and systematized source of evaluation; without taking into account the relations between form, metaphorical meaning, and cultural context in which the unit functions, it would be impossible to comprehend the evaluation embodied in each particular proverb. These results can be employed in the wider sphere of evaluative phraseology study; they may become the basis for cross-cultural comparative study of evaluations revealed in proverbs.

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APPENDICES

APPENDIX A. Proverbs and sayings with positive evaluation

№	Proverbs and sayings	Definition
1	Absence makes the heart grow fonder	Your affection for those close to you increases when you are parted from them [p. 1]
2	Adventures are to the adventurous	Those who are not bold will not have exciting lives or achieve spectacular things [p. 2]
3	All arts are brothers, each is a light to the other	The arts should not be considered as separate entities but as parts of one whole [p. 4]
4	All good things must come to an end	Nothing lasts forever [p. 5]
5	All is grist that comes to the mill	Everything can be put to use [p. 5]
6	All men are created equal	No person is born superior or inferior to another [p. 6]
7	All's fair in love and war	Any action is permissible in certain situations [p. 6]
8	All's for the best in the best of all possible worlds	Everything that happens does so for a good reason [p. 6]
9	All's well that ends well	Problems and misfortunes along the way can be forgotten when everything ends satisfactorily [p. 7]
10	All that glitters is not gold	People and things are not always as attractive or valuable as they seem [p. 7]
11	All things are easy to industry, all things difficult to sloth	Anything can be achieved by those who are prepared to work hard [p. 7]

№	Proverbs and sayings	Definition
12	All things come to those who wait	If you are patient you will have what you desire [p. 7]
13	Always look on the bright side	You should always take the optimistic or positive view [p. 8]
14	An apple a day keeps the doctor away	Fruit is an important part of a healthy diet [p. 10]
15	April showers bring May flowers	Something unpleasant often leads to something more desirable [p. 11]
16	As you sow, so shall you reap	The way you behave determines what will happen to you in the future [p. 14]
17	A bad excuse is better than none	It is better to give a poor excuse than to have no explanation at all [p. 16]
18	Bear and forbear	Patience and forgiveness are valuable qualities in all walks of life [p. 17]
19	Beauty and honesty seldom agree	It is rare for a person to be both good-looking and honest [p. 18]
20	Beauty draws with a single hair	A beautiful woman has great powers of attraction [p. 18]
21	Beauty is a good letter of introduction	Beautiful people make a better first impression on strangers than ugly people do [p. 18]
22	Beauty is truth, truth beauty	The qualities of beauty and truth are inseparable and interlinked [p. 19]
23	The best art conceals art	Artistic excellence lies in making something appear simple and streamlined [p. 20]
24	The best defense is a good offense	You are more likely to win if you take the initiative and make an attack [p. 20]

№	Proverbs and sayings	Definition
25	The best doctors are Dr. Diet, Dr. Quiet, and Dr. Merryman	The best recipe for good health consists of eating and drinking sensibly and having plenty of rest [p. 21]
26	The best is the enemy of the good	By constantly striving for the best we risk destroying something good [p. 21]
27	The best is yet to be	No matter how good or bad the present may seem something better lies ahead [p. 21]
28	The best of friends must part	Friends cannot always be together [p. 21]
29	The best of men are but men at best	Even the greatest people have their failings and limitations [p. 22]
30	The best things come in small packages	Size has no bearing on quality [p. 22]
31	The best things in life are free	The most rewarding or satisfying experiences in life are often those that cost nothing [p. 22]
32	Better a dinner of herbs where love is than a stalled ox where hate is	It is better to be poor in a loving environment than to eat well in an atmosphere of discord [p. 23]
33	Better a good cow than a cow of a good kind	A person's character is of more importance than his or her family background [p. 23]
34	Better be an old man's darling than a young man's slave	It is better to marry an older man who will cherish you [p. 23]
35	Better late than never	It is better that somebody arrives later than expected than not at all [p. 25]
36	Better luck next time	Hopefully things will go better for you next time [p. 25]

№	Proverbs and sayings	Definition
37	Better safe than sorry	It is wiser to take precautions than to risk disaster [p. 25]
38	The better the day, the better the deed	An action is of greater value because it is performed on a holy day [p. 25]
39	A bird in the hand is worth two in the bush	Something you have for certain now is of more value than something better you may get [p. 28]
40	Birds in their little nests agree	People who live or work together should try to do so in harmony [p. 28]
41	Blessed are the dead that the rain rains on	Rainfall during a funeral is a blessing on the corpse [p. 29]
42	Blessed are they who expect nothing, for they shall not be disappointed	It is better to have no expectations of happiness to avoid disappointment [p. 30]
43	Blessings brighten as they take their flight	People often fail to appreciate the good things that they have until they lose them [p. 30]
44	Blood is thicker than water	Bonds of loyalty and affection between family members are strong [p. 30]
45	Blushing is a sign of grace	A person's blushes may be interpreted as a proof of a good and sensitive character [p. 31]
46	A book is like a garden carried in the pocket	A book can bring as much pleasure and contain as much variety as a garden [p. 31]
47	Books and friends should be few and good	It is best to be selective both in your choice of reading and of friends [p. 31]
48	Charity begins at home	You should look after those nearest and dearest to you before you turn your attention to others [p. 39]

№	Proverbs and sayings	Definition
49	Charity covers a multitude of sins	A kind and loving person is prepared to forgive a great deal of wrongdoing [p. 39]
50	Cheerful company shortens the miles	A journey seems much shorter when you have pleasant people to talk to [p. 39]
51	Children and fools speak the truth	Children and foolish people have a tendency to say what is true [p. 40]
52	Civility costs nothing	You have nothing to lose by being polite [p. 42]
53	A civil question deserves a civil answer	If somebody asks you something politely you should respond in the same manner [p. 43]
54	Cleanliness is next to godliness	Personal hygiene indicates a pious or virtuous nature [p. 43]
55	A clear conscience can bear any trouble	People who have done no wrong find it easier to face the demands of the world [p. 43]
56	Clothes don't make the man	You should not judge a person by the way he or she is dressed [p. 43]
57	Cold hands, warm heart	People whose hands feel cold to the touch are kind and affectionate by nature [p. 44]
58	Confession is good for the soul	Owning up to wrongdoing will ease your conscience and make you feel better [p. 45]
59	A contented mind is a continual feast	Those who are satisfied with their lot in life are far happier [p. 46]
60	Content is more than a kingdom	Contentment is more valuable than material riches [p. 47]
61	Courtesy is contagious	If you are polite to other people they will be polite to you [p. 48]

№	Proverbs and sayings	Definition
62	Cream always comes to the top	People of great worth or quality will ultimately enjoy high achievement [p. 49]
63	Crosses are ladders that lead to heaven	Suffering and misfortune often bring out the best in a person's character [p. 49]
64	The customer is always right	You should always do what your customers want to maintain goodwill [p. 50]
65	A deaf husband and a blind wife are always a happy couple	A recipe for a successful marriage requires tolerance on both sides [p. 52]
66	Deeds, not words	What a person does is more important than what he or she says [p. 53]
67	Diligence is the mother of good luck	Those who work hardest are most likely to enjoy good fortune [p. 56]
68	Distance lends enchantment to the view	Distance in space or time makes things seem better than they are [p. 57]
69	Do as you would be done by	Treat other people in the way that you would like to be treated [p. 58]
70	A dog is man's best friend	Dogs are more faithful than any human companion [p. 58]
71	Do right and fear no man	Take courage from a clear conscience [p. 66]
72	Do unto others as you would have them do unto you	Treat other people as you would wish them to treat you [p. 67]
73	Experience is the best teacher	People learn best from what happens to them [p. 80]
74	Fair and softly goes far in a day	Proceeding gently and carefully often leads to success [p. 91]

№	Proverbs and sayings	Definition
75	Fine feathers make fine birds	People are judged by their appearance and clothes [p. 98]
76	Forgive and forget	You should not only pardon an offense but also put it out of your mind [p. 100]
77	A friend in need is a friend indeed	A true friend is one who helps you when you are in trouble [p. 103]
78	Gather ye rosebuds while ye may	Live life to the full while you are still young enough to enjoy it [p. 98]
79	A golden key can open any door	With money you can gain access to anything you want [p. 105]
80	Good Americans, when they die, go to Paris	Paris is regarded as a kind of paradise by certain Americans [p. 105]
81	A good beginning is half the battle	If you make a good start you are halfway to success [p. 105]
82	A good beginning makes a good ending	Something well planned is likely to end in success [p. 105]
83	Good company on the road is the shortest cut	A journey seems shorter when you have pleasant people to talk to [p. 106]
84	The good that men do lives after them	People are remembered after their deaths for their good deeds [p. 109]
85	Good wine needs no bush	A good product does not need advertising [p. 109]
86	Grace will last, beauty will blast	A good character will outlive superficial physical attractiveness [p. 109]
87	Great minds think alike	People often make the same decision coincidentally [p. 110]

№	Proverbs and sayings	Definition
88	Half a loaf is better than no bread	We must be grateful for what we get even if it is less than desired [p. 113]
89	Handsome is as handsome does	People should be valued for their good deeds [p. 113]
90	Happy is he that is happy in his children	Parents derive much pleasure from their well-behaved children [p. 114]
91	Happy is the bride that the sun shines on	A woman who has a sunny wedding day will have a happy marriage [p. 114]
92	Honesty is the best policy	Being truthful and trustworthy is the best way to conduct your life [p. 127]
93	Honesty pays	You will ultimately reap the benefits of being honest [p. 128]
94	Hope and have	If a person wants something badly enough he or she is likely to achieve it [p. 128]
95	Hope for the best and prepare for the worst	Remain optimistic but make sure that you are prepared to cope with disaster [p. 128]
96	It's better to give than to receive	The act of giving is more worthy and spiritually satisfying than receiving [p. 149]
97	It's better to laugh than to cry	It is better to see the funny side of an unfortunate situation [p. 149]
98	The laborer is worthy of his hire	Those who work for others are entitled to be paid for their efforts [p. 162]
99	Laugh and grow fat	Cheerfulness and merrymaking are good for your health [p. 163]
100	Life is short and sweet	Life seems all the more pleasurable for being brief in duration [p. 168]

APPENDIX B. Proverbs and sayings with negative evaluation

№	Proverbs and sayings	Definition
1	The absent are always in the wrong	People who are not present to defend themselves are often blamed [p. 1]
2	Accidents will happen in the best-regulated families	No matter how careful you are mistakes can occur [p. 1]
3	Adversity makes strange bedfellows	In times of hardship people often befriend those they would normally avoid [p. 2]
4	After death the doctor	Help sometimes comes too late [p. 3]
5	Alcohol will preserve anything but a secret	People have a tendency to talk too freely and become indiscreet when drunk [p. 4]
6	All bad things come in threes	Misfortunes supposedly occur in groups of three [p. 5]
7	Anger improves nothing but the arch of a cat's back	There is nothing to be gained by losing your temper [p. 9]
8	Anger without power is folly	It is futile to get angry about things you can do nothing about [p. 9]
9	An ape's an ape, a varlet's a varlet, though they be clad in silk or scarlet	The true nature of a person or thing cannot be changed by appearance [p. 9]
10	Appearances are deceiving	Things are not always as they seem [p. 10]
11	Bad money drives out good	The availability of something inferior tends to make things of better quality scarce [p. 16]
12	Bad news travels fast	Unfavorable gossip tends to be disseminated far more quickly than good news [p. 16]

№	Proverbs and sayings	Definition
13	A bad penny always turns up	Undesirable people will always return [p. 16]
14	A bad workman quarrels with his tools	Workers who lack skill blame their equipment when things go wrong [p. 17]
15	A barking dog never bites	People who make the loudest threats are the least likely to take action [p. 17]
16	A bayonet is a weapon with a worker at each end	The weapons of war are used by ordinary people against ordinary people [p. 17]
17	Beggars can't be choosers	We must accept without complaint what we are given when we lack resources [p. 19]
18	Believing has a core of unbelieving	Sometimes you need to start from a position of skepticism to arrive at the truth [p. 20]
19	Better be dead than out of fashion	Some people are so intent on following fashion that they would rather die [p. 24]
20	Better death than dishonor	People should be prepared to give up their lives to avoid disgrace [p. 24]
21	Better the devil you know than the devil you don't know	It is preferable to stay with things you know despite their faults [p. 25]
22	Between two stools one falls to the ground	Failure to choose between alternative courses of action may lead to disaster [p. 26]
23	Beware of Greeks bearing gifts	It is wise to be suspicious of offers made by enemies or opponents [p. 26]
24	Big fish eat little fish	Small organizations tend to be destroyed by those that are powerful [p. 27]
25	The bigger they are, the harder they fall	The downfall of an important person is catastrophic [p. 28]

№	Proverbs and sayings	Definition
26	The biter is sometimes bit	Those who criticize others are not immune from criticism themselves [p. 29]
27	A bleating sheep loses a bite	Those who talk too much may miss an important opportunity [p. 29]
28	Blind chance sweeps the world along	Life is governed by chance rather than by destiny [p. 30]
29	Blood will have blood	One act of violence provokes another by way of revenge [p. 31]
30	Borrowing brings sorrowing	Debts often lead to grief and trouble [p. 32]
31	Bread always falls buttered side down	The least desirable of possible outcomes is the one that will occur [p. 32]
32	A bully is always a coward	Bullies only pick on those who are weaker than themselves [p. 33]
33	Burn not your house to scare away the mice	Do not try to solve a minor problem by taking action that causes greater harm [p. 33]
34	A burnt child dreads the fire	Somebody who has had an unpleasant experience shrinks from its cause [p. 33]
35	The buyer needs a thousand eyes, the seller wants but one	A buyer must exercise great caution to avoid being exploited [p. 34]
36	Cards are the devil's tools	Card games played for money lead to trouble or evil [p. 37]
37	Care is no cure	Worrying about something does nothing to put it right [p. 37]
38	Care killed the cat	Too much worrying can be injurious to your health [p. 37]

№	Proverbs and sayings	Definition
39	Catching's before hanging	Offenders can only be punished when they are caught [p. 37]
40	Catch not at the shadow and lose the substance	Do not allow yourself to be distracted by irrelevancies [p. 37]
41	A cat in gloves catches no mice	It is sometimes necessary to be ruthless to achieve your ends [p. 38]
42	Children are certain cares, but uncertain comforts	Children are bound to cause their parents anxiety [p. 40]
43	Choose the lesser of two evils	If forced to choose between two undesirable options pick the less harmful one [p. 42]
44	Clergymen's sons always turn out badly	Children of ministers often lead bad lives as a reaction against their upbringing [p. 43]
45	Confess and be hanged	There is little incentive for confession when punishment is the inevitable result [p. 45]
46	Conscience does make cowards of us all	People troubled by guilt often reveal it by acting fearfully [p. 46]
47	Conscience gets a lot of credit that belongs to cold feet	An act commended as conscience may simply be cowardice [p. 46]
48	A constant guest is never welcome	Visitors who turn up too frequently will find they are unwanted [p. 46]
49	Corporations have neither bodies to be punished nor souls to be damned	Large organizations are not accountable like individuals for immoral behavior [p. 47]
50	Corruption will find a dozen alibis for its evil deeds	Those guilty of corruption will easily make excuses for what they have done [p. 47]

№	Proverbs and sayings	Definition
51	Cowards die many times before their death	Cowards who fear for their lives suffer an experience similar to death [p. 48]
52	A creaking door hangs longest	Those who have many minor ailments often outlive those who do not [p. 48]
53	Crime doesn't pay	Criminal activity ultimately leads to a loss of liberty [p. 49]
54	Crime must be concealed by crime	One crime often leads to another to avoid detection [p. 49]
55	Criticism is something you can avoid by saying nothing, doing nothing, and being nothing	Whatever you say or do somebody is bound to criticize you [p. 49]
56	Curiosity killed the cat	Inquisitiveness can lead you into trouble [p. 49]
57	Curses, like chickens, come home to roost	Wrongdoers ultimately have to suffer the consequences of their bad deeds [p. 50]
58	The danger past and God forgotten	People forget their religious faith as soon as a crisis is over [p. 51]
59	Dead men don't bite	A dead person can no longer do others any harm [p. 51]
60	Dead men tell no tales	It may be expedient to kill somebody who could betray a secret [p. 52]
61	Death defies the doctor	All patients will eventually die whatever the doctors do [p. 52]
62	Death is the great leveler	Nobody is exempt from dying [p. 52]
63	Death keeps no calendar	Death can strike at any time [p. 52]

№	Proverbs and sayings	Definition
64	Death pays all debts	The dead no longer have any obligations to the living [p. 52]
65	Delays are dangerous	Hesitation may lead to trouble or disaster [p. 53]
66	Desert and reward seldom keep company	People are often not rewarded for their good deeds [p. 53]
67	Desperate diseases must have desperate remedies	Drastic action is called for in a particularly difficult situation [p. 53]
68	The devil always leaves a stink behind him	Evil always leaves its taint behind [p. 54]
69	The devil can cite scripture for his purpose	Passages from the Bible are sometimes quoted to support a bad idea [p. 54]
70	The devil dances in an empty pocket	The poor are easily tempted to do evil [p. 54]
71	The devil finds work for idle hands to do	Idle people may find themselves tempted into wrongdoing [p. 54]
72	The devil gets up to the belfry by the vicar's skirts	Wicked people may operate among good people to enact their schemes [p. 54]
73	The devil is in the details	There may be hidden drawbacks in any project you undertake [p. 55]
74	The devil is not as black as he is painted	People are rarely as bad as others say they are [p. 55]
75	The devil looks after his own	Bad or undeserving people often prosper and thrive [p. 55]
76	The devil makes his Christmas pies of lawyers' tongues and clerks' fingers	Beware of unscrupulous lawyers and their assistants [p. 55]

№	Proverbs and sayings	Definition
77	The devil's children have the devil's luck	Bad people often have good luck [p. 55]
78	The devil takes care of his own	Evil people frequently avoid consequences [p. 56]
79	The devil was sick, the devil a saint would be; the devil was well, the devil a saint was he	People promise to reform when in trouble only to revert to their former ways [p. 56]
80	Dirty water will quench fire	You cannot afford to be too fastidious at a time of great necessity [p. 57]
81	Divide and conquer	The best way to control a group is by encouraging them to fight among themselves [p. 57]
82	The dog always returns to his vomit	People always return to the scene of their crime or wrongdoing [p. 58]
83	Dog does not eat dog	A member of a group should not take action that harms another member [p. 58]
84	Don't bite off more than you can chew	Do not take on a task that is larger or more difficult than you can manage [p. 59]
85	Don't bite the hand that feeds you	Do not behave ungratefully toward those on whom you depend [p. 59]
86	Don't cast your pearls before swine	It is pointless to waste fine things on people incapable of appreciating them [p. 59]
87	Don't cut off your nose to spite your face	Do not take action to spite others that will harm you more [p. 60]
88	Don't get mad, get even	Take positive action to retaliate rather than wasting energy in angry recriminations [p. 60]

№	Proverbs and sayings	Definition
89	Don't go near the water until you learn how to swim	Do not put yourself in a dangerous situation until you can handle it [p. 61]
90	Don't jump from the frying pan into the fire	Do not go from a bad situation to a worse one [p. 62]
91	Don't kill the goose that lays the golden eggs	Take care not to destroy something valuable through greed or impatience [p. 62]
92	Don't let the fox guard the henhouse	Do not put somebody in a position where they will be tempted to wrongdoing [p. 62]
93	Don't make the same mistake twice	You should learn from your errors rather than repeating them [p. 62]
94	Don't meet troubles halfway	Do not worry about problems before they actually happen [p. 63]
95	Don't shoot the messenger	Do not vent your anger on the person who brings bad news [p. 64]
96	Don't throw good money after bad	Do not waste further money on a venture that seems likely to fail [p. 66]
97	Don't throw out the baby with the bathwater	Do not discard something entirely when only part of it is unacceptable [p. 66]
98	Don't wash your dirty linen in public	Do not discuss private disputes or family scandals openly [p. 66]
99	Evil communications corrupt good manners	Good people can be led astray by associating with bad people [p. 80]
100	Evil doers are evil dreaders	Criminals and wrongdoers have a tendency to fear all those around them [p. 80]

