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## **Evaluation in English Proverbs and Sayings**

**Bachelor's Paper**

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«Допущено до захисту»  
Протокол засідання кафедри  
Протокол № 10 від 27.05.2024 року  
Завідувач кафедри  
д.філол.н. проф. Алла БЄЛОВА

**Kyiv – 2024**

## ABSTRACT

**Kizyma S.M. Evaluation in English Proverbs and Sayings.** - Bachelor's degree qualification paper.

This paper is devoted to the analysis of the structural, semantic and stylistic peculiarities of expressing positive and negative evaluative meanings in English proverbs and sayings. The relevance of the bachelor's paper lies in the insufficient research and analysis of the evaluation category in English proverbs and sayings. There is no clear differentiation between the expression of positive and negative evaluation in English proverbs, and the semantic groups of positive and negative evaluative proverbial expressions have not been thoroughly studied.

The purpose of the study is to organize the theoretical aspects of expressing evaluation in proverbs and sayings and to identify how positive and negative evaluative meanings are formed and manifested within these linguistic units.

The research methods used in this paper include analysis and synthesis, the method of classification, structural and semantic analysis, functional analysis, comparative analysis, and elements of quantitative analysis.

The results of the study show that evaluation in proverbs and sayings operates as a dynamic subsystem of language, manifesting through various lexical, stylistic, and figurative means. On the lexical level, adjectives, nouns and verbs with positive or negative semantics emerge as the most productive tools for conveying assessment in proverbial units as well as superlatives and tropes like antithesis, hyperbole, metaphor, simile, and personification. Syntactically, proverbs employ a variety of structures to convey evaluation, including emphatic compound sentences, non-emphatic sentences with attributive and nominal clauses, parallel constructions, and elliptical sentences without predicates. Other syntactic means, including comparative positive or negative structures, repetition, tautology, negation, and inversion further reinforce assessments. Pragmatically, only proverbs with negative connotations, acting as speech acts of warning, advice and prediction reflect evaluative meanings.

**Key words:** evaluation category, proverb, syntax, semantics, pragmatics, tropes.

## АНОТАЦІЯ

**Кізіма С.М. Оцінка в англійських прислів'ях та приказках.** - Кваліфікаційна робота на здобуття ступеня бакалавра.

Робота присвячена аналізу структурних, семантичних та стилістичних особливостей вираження позитивних і негативних оціночних значень в англійських прислів'ях та приказках. Актуальність бакалаврської роботи полягає в недостатньому дослідженні та аналізі категорії оцінки в англійських прислів'ях та приказках. На сьогоднішній день не існує чіткого розмежування особливостей вираження позитивної і негативної оцінки в англійських прислів'ях, а семантичні групи позитивних і негативних оціночних прислів'їв не були ґрунтовно вивчені.

Метою дослідження є організація теоретичних аспектів вираження оцінки в прислів'ях та приказках та визначення того, як формуються і виражаються позитивні і негативні оціночні значення в цих мовних одиницях.

Методи дослідження, використані в цій роботі, включають аналіз і синтез, метод класифікації, структурний і семантичний аналіз, функціональний аналіз, порівняльний аналіз та елементи кількісного аналізу.

Результати дослідження показують, що оцінка в прислів'ях та приказках функціонує як динамічна підсистема мови, яка проявляється через різноманітні лексичні, стилістичні та художні засоби. На лексичному рівні найефективнішими засобами передачі оцінки в прислів'ях є прикметники, іменники та дієслова з позитивною або негативною семантикою, а також вищий ступінь порівняння прикметників та художні засоби, такі як антитеза, гіпербола, метафора, порівняння і персоніфікація. Прислів'ям характерні також різноманітні синтаксичні конструкції для передачі оцінки, які включають емпатичні складні речення, неемпатичні речення зі з'ясувальними та означальними підрядними частинами, паралельні конструкції та еліптичні речення без присудків. Інші синтаксичні засоби, такі як порівняльні позитивні або негативні конструкції, повторення, тавтологія, заперечення та інверсія, додатково підсилюють оцінку. На прагматичному рівні мови лише прислів'я з

негативною конотацією, які виступають як мовленнєві акти застереження, поради та прогнозування, виражають оціночні значення.

**Ключові слова:** категорія оцінки, прислів'я, синтаксис, семантика, прагматика, тропи.

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## INTRODUCTION

In modern linguistics, one of the most relevant issues is the problem of evaluative meanings and the means of their expression in language and speech. When learning about various phenomena and objects of the spiritual and material world, human consciousness aims not only to objectively reflect the world, but also to evaluate it. The subject forms their attitude to the objects of non-verbal reality based on the evaluation of these objects.

To evaluate an object, a person must “let it through” their own perception. Evaluation primarily reflects the nature of the individual. In our language, we evaluate what is necessary (physically and spiritually) for a person and humanity. Every person realizes the importance of objects, namely evaluates them, and classifies their properties as positive or negative.

Evaluative statements combine information about the world around us and the speaker's attitude to it, which is the reason for a competent perception of what is said. Therefore, the purpose of evaluation is not just to name, but also to characterize a phenomenon, an object of reality, and to express the speaker's attitude towards it.

Scientists write that the category of evaluation is one of the most important in the speaker's linguistic worldview because its meaning carries the value system of the world around us and the value of a person in it, which is objectified in a certain form and way in linguistic units.

Idioms, sayings, and proverbs are the ones that make it possible for a person to express their attitude to what is happening in the world. The associative and figurative motif of the proverb is the basis for the formation of an assessment that determines the evaluative meaning of proverbs and sayings.

A number of scholars have devoted their work to the problem of the interaction between evaluative meanings and proverbs. A significant contribution to such research was made by T. A. Paley, G. I. Prykhodko, Y. O. Suleimanova, S. I. Velichko, and others. Among foreign scholars, the research of proverbs and sayings attracted the

attention of Ch. Banda, A. Dandes, R. Honeck, Ch. Malunga, W. Mieder, A. Naciscione, N. Norrick, R. Petrova, A. Taylor, G. White and others.

**The relevance of the bachelor's paper** is determined by the lack of detailed research and study of the evaluation category in English proverbs and sayings. There is no clear distinction between the expression of positive and negative evaluation in English proverbs, and the semantic groups of positive and negative evaluative proverbial nominations have not been studied in detail.

**The object of the study** is the category of evaluation in English proverbs and sayings.

**The subject of the study** is structural, semantic and stylistic peculiarities of expressing positive and negative evaluative meanings in English proverbs and sayings.

**The purpose of the study** is to systematize the theoretical aspects of expressing evaluation in English proverbs and sayings and determine the formation of positive and negative evaluation and its manifestations in these linguistic units.

The realization of this purpose involves solving the following **objectives**:

- 1) to summarize the theoretical aspects of the evaluation category and English proverbs;
- 2) to study the main syntactic, lexical and semantic features of English proverbs;
- 3) to highlight the typology of evaluative meanings and ways of their expression;
- 4) to study the semantic groups of positive and negative proverbs;
- 5) to identify ways of expressing evaluation in proverbs;
- 6) to determine the common and distinctive features of proverbs with positive and negative evaluation in structural and semantic aspects.

**The research material** was based on English proverbs and sayings with negative, positive, and neutral evaluation selected from reliable lexicographic resources. In particular, when searching for English proverbs, we used “The Oxford Dictionary of Proverbs” by Jennifer Speake (2003) and “The Dictionary of English Proverbs and Proverbial Phrases: With a Copious Index of Principal Words” by Preston Thomas. In addition, the materials of the Toronto World's proverb contest were utilised, which were published in the book “Book of English Proverbs” (1912).

In total, the research material includes 400 English proverbs and sayings, including 200 English proverbs with positive evaluation and 200 with negative evaluation.

**Research methods.** The complex nature of the study made it possible to use a number of general and specific scientific methods. General scientific methods involved included: analysis and synthesis (for processing theoretical sources on the problem studied) and general scientific method of classification (on the basis of which a typology of evaluative norms is distinguished). We also applied linguistic methods such as structural and semantic analysis, functional analysis, and comparative analysis. Elements of quantitative analysis are used to visualize the results of the study.

**The scientific novelty** of the qualification work lies in the in-depth study of the typology of evaluative meanings and the ways of expressing evaluation in proverbs; semantic groups of proverbs with positive and negative evaluation are studied. The paper reveals how evaluation in proverbs is expressed at the syntactic, lexical, stylistic and pragmatic levels and examines the most popular forms of the evaluation manifestation in English proverbs.

**Structure of the work.** The paper consists of an abstract in English and Ukrainian, table of contents, introduction, two chapters, conclusions, references, list of lexicographical resources, appendices, and a summary.

# 1. THEORETICAL BACKGROUND OF EVALUATION

## 1.1 Evaluation as a linguistic category

As it is well known, in the course of life, an individual constantly evaluates objects and phenomena of the world around them, situations and events, deeds and actions of other people; evaluates their capabilities and the results of their actions; takes into account their own status in the eyes of other people, etc. In fact, evaluation is necessary for a person to organize almost any act of interaction with the material world, with other people, and with society.

The concept of evaluation is an indisputable and important component of the worldview of individuals, representatives of certain social groups, and entire nations, since all events and facts of the world around us are perceived as positive, neutral, or negative depending on the established norms, rules, and personal beliefs (Buyar 2009: 145). Evaluation is an integral component of the learning process, which is characterised by a value-based approach to natural and social phenomena, without which neither activity nor human life itself is possible (Prykhodko 2013: 13). What is more, finding a text or even a sentence without any trace of evaluation is a very challenging, if not impossible, task.

The importance of this logical category was recognized by ancient philosophers, starting with Aristotle; this explains the large number of existing theories and interpretations of the nature of evaluation. The category of evaluation was the object of research of such renowned Ukrainian linguists as V. V. Akulenko (1990), K. S. Serazhym (2001), F. S. Batsevych (2004), T. A. Kosmeda (2013), A. M. Prykhodko (2013), M. D. Kyrylova (2020), etc. The study of evaluation in linguistics underwent a notable upsurge of interest abroad as well. The first years of the twenty-first century showed a lot of studies by S. E. Hunston and S. A. Thompson (2000), J. R. Martin (2000), M. Macken-Horarik (2003), M. Halliday and C. Matthiessen (2004), J. R. Martin and P. R. White (2005), R. Englebretson (2007), and M. Bednarek (2006, 2007, 2008).

Given that this category is a multidimensional and multifaceted phenomenon, the question of defining evaluation as a linguistic category remains controversial. Nowadays, there is no uniform approach to define the concept of “evaluation”.

Linguists often define it as a positive or negative characterization of an object of thought and as a positive or negative judgment of what is denoted by a particular language unit (Brukhal 2013: 259).

Thompson and Hunston define evaluation as “the broad cover term for the expression of the speaker or writer’s attitude or stance towards, a viewpoint on, or feelings about the entities or propositions that he or she is talking about”. That attitude might pertain to certainty, obligation, desirability, or various other value systems (Thompson, Hunston 2000: 9).

Hunston in her book gives evaluation the following definitions:

- Evaluation is an action – something which a person does.
- Evaluation is a set of words and phrases which express evaluative meaning.
- Evaluation is a set of meanings which might be expressed in a given text using a wide variety of language resources.
- Evaluation is a function performed by a text, or a part of a text (Hunston 2011: 11).

Furthermore, evaluation can be understood as an act of human consciousness, which involves comparing objects and correlating their properties. From the morphological point of view, evaluation is a universal category that expresses the speaker's positive or negative attitude to the subject matter of speech and is realized in parts of speech, interjections, lexemes, word combinations, phrases and speech acts.

Evaluation is an all-encompassing linguistic category due to the fact that it is present at all levels of linguistic description (Alba-Juez, Thompson 2014: 10). On the phonological level, intonation and pitch range may be markers of irony, and consequently may be used to add utterances a certain evaluative meaning. On the morphological level, evaluative prefixes or suffixes can be used, e.g., the diminutive suffix *-y* for a person’s name (Tommy for Thomas, Suzy for Suzan, etc.) (Albair 2010: 3). On the syntactic level, evaluation can also be revealed through

structural methods, such as altering the sequence of elements in a clause or phrase. Finally, the lexical level is the most evident one, because we can observe evaluation in action through the use of words or expressions carrying evaluative connotations, such as intelligent, magnificent, nasty, etc. The semantic level includes evaluative meaning that is inherent in words and expressions and can be therefore found in their semantic features, as well as the pragmatic evaluation that is context-dependent at any level. For example, the word “fat” inherently carries evaluative meaning, signifying a person or animal that is overweight. However, its evaluative polarity can vary based on factors such as culture, historical period, or the specific individual or animal in question. In the early 20th century, the phrase “a fat woman” was seen as positive, because it reflected her beauty and health. Yet, in our contemporary society, this evaluation does not hold the same positive connotation.

What is more, evaluation can be expressed with the help of various lexical, stylistic (colloquial words, vernacular, swear words, jargon, neologisms, slang, terminology, phraseology) and figurative (epithet, metaphor, simile, irony, oxymoron, periphrasis) means. We now see and thus define evaluation as a dynamic subsystem of language, permeating all linguistic levels.

Evaluation as a unit of linguistic analysis possesses quite a few distinct characteristics and we would like to focus on the main ones. First of all, evaluation is both subjective and intersubjective (Hunston 2011: 25). Using evaluating language, we predominantly express our personal opinion, be it positive or negative thoughts or feelings. Evaluation, thus, is personal, private, and evaluative statements are endorsed only by their speaker. Defining evaluation as intersubjective, we want to indicate that all acts of evaluation determine an alignment between a speaker and a hearer (Du Bois 2007: 130). Many linguists support the idea that evaluative language is an important factor of communication, and they see interaction as a key function of evaluation. Thompson and Hunston identify “building and maintaining relations” as one of the functions of evaluation (Thompson 2014: 23).

Secondly, evaluation is achieved and expressed by the broad range of lexical and stylistic indicators, as we have pointed out earlier. One of the most typical and widely-

used evaluative items are adjectives; for example, seeing in a text such attributes as *terrible* or *wonderful* (or, simply, *good* and *bad*), the ordinary reader would easily identify these as part of evaluation, even without a specific context. There is consensus that evaluation, being subjective language, is indicated by such a large range of lexical and other items that it would be pointless to try and list them. Not only parts of speech, predominantly including separate nouns (e.g. happiness), adjectives (e.g. marvellous), verbs (e.g. give up), and adverbs (e.g. unfortunately) frequently indicate evaluative meaning (Martin, White 2005: 10). Phrases such as *a piece of cake* can be evaluative as well, even though the individual words *piece* and *cake* are unlikely to be so. The example of a grammatical construction with an evaluative function can be “it was + adjective + of somebody to do + something” (Riloff, Wiebe 2003: 105). Thus, evaluation is part of the semantic structure of a lexical unit and is an evaluative component of the semantics of a word or phrase (Ravliuk 2003: 8).

Another feature of linguistic evaluation is its heavy dependence on context, which means that taking items out of context is potentially an unreliable indicator of evaluative meaning. Teubert reckons that a word only holds a meaning when it is encountered within a specific context. The same extends to evaluative meanings. For instance, one might connect the word “dynamic” with phrases like “dynamic movement” or “dynamic system,” viewing it as descriptive but not necessarily evaluative. However, in a context such as “his leadership style is dynamic,” the word takes on an evaluative tone, implying effectiveness and vitality; the meaning of the phrase instantly becomes evaluative, namely positive (Teubert 2003: 9). However, the same lexical items may have a positive evaluative meaning in some cases and a neutral or negative one in others. This can be defined as “contextual polarity (Wilson et al 2005: 348).” In the sentence “He's a real angel,” the word “angel” carries a positive connotation, suggesting kindness or virtue. Whereas, in the phrase “angel investor,” the word is neutral, describing a type of investor who provides financial backing to startups.

In addition to being dependent on the context, evaluation also possesses a cumulative nature. In other words, evaluative meanings have a tendency to be grouped

or connected together (Hunston 2011: 17). We can consider a book review, where the overall assessment of the book can be viewed as the accumulation of various opinions expressed about it. In cases where evaluation is subtly implied, it might be stated that it is only the accumulation of evaluation that brings attention to it. The evaluative essence of the text arises from the interaction of diverse evaluative elements that collectively contribute to the overall attitude conveyed in the passage, thereby creating a cumulative effect (Julian 2009: 216).

Furthermore, evaluation includes both a target or object and a source. In essence, an individual assesses an object, and there is an agreement that the type of evaluation depends on the nature of the object. The source of evaluation is usually the person speaking or writing (Du Bois 2007: 146). Last but not least, when researchers endeavour to identify evaluation, it becomes challenging to consistently distinguish non-evaluative elements. In fact, subjectivity and ideological biases seem to permeate even the most impartial of discourses. It is plausible to suggest that every piece of text and every spoken statement carries some form of evaluation, so that this phenomenon itself disappears and can be simply replaced by “language.”

Based on these characteristics, evaluation might be seen as performing the three functions: (1) It conveys the viewpoint of the speaker or writer, embodying their opinion and mirroring the value system of both the individual and their community; (2) it forms and sustains connections between the speaker or writer and the audience; and (3) it structures the overall discourse (Channell 2000: p.39).

The main constituent parts of linguistic evaluation (a target and a source) have been mentioned earlier in this paper, but some linguists characterise its special structure a bit differently. According to Kosmeda, evaluation consists of 1) the subject of evaluation, 2) the object of evaluation, 3) motives for evaluation, 4) evaluative predicates, and 5) “operators” (means of expressing evaluation). Among them, the object and the means of expressing the evaluation are obligatory, that is, explicitly expressed, while the subject and the evaluative predicate may remain implicit categories in the structure of the utterance (Kosmeda 2000: 270). The subject of evaluation is the person or society from whose perspective the evaluation is made. The

object of evaluation is a person, object, event or situation that the evaluation refers to. Furthermore, evaluation includes, usually implicitly, a rating scale and stereotypes that the evaluation is oriented to in the social perceptions of speakers (Brukhal 2013: 260).

We see that evaluation manifests itself through a myriad of linguistic markers across various levels of language, from phonological intonation to lexical choices and syntactic structures. Its subjective and intersubjective nature underscores its role in building and maintaining relations between speakers and listeners, while its heavy dependence on context and cumulative nature contribute to its complexity. Moreover, evaluation serves multiple functions in discourse, conveying the speaker's perspective, establishing rapport with the audience, and structuring overall communication. Evaluation fundamentally constitutes a dynamic subsystem of language, reflecting the diverse values, beliefs, and cultural norms of individuals and societies.

## **1.2 Types of evaluation and evaluative language**

Perhaps no concept in the history of linguistic studies can claim such a variety of classifications, diverse approaches to analysis, a multitude of interpretations, and a wide range of researchers as evaluation. Due to the fact that evaluation is a universal category and can be related to various spheres of life and be expressed at different language levels, there are many ways to group evaluation as a linguistic category (Suleimanova 2018: 60). It should be noted that neither sociology, nor anthropology, or even linguistic axiology has a generally accepted classification of evaluative meanings.

The first substantial typology of evaluative predicates was proposed in the 1950s by the English linguist Patrick Nowell-Smith, which included the following types of contexts of evaluative predicates: preference, advice, instruction, recommendation, praise, approval implying a recommendation, making various competitive and other qualifications, evaluative adjectives in combination with names of specialized objects indicating their effectiveness, evaluative adjectives in combination with functional nouns indicating skills (names of professions) (Nowell-Smith 1957: 87).

One of the most comprehensive classifications was also suggested by Finnish philosopher and logician Georg Henrik von Wright, who developed it based on the use of the English word “good” and synonymous words. The researcher distinguished the following types:

- instrumental evaluation relates to the functions of an object, can be tested in practice, and is aimed at recommendation or prediction, e.g., a good table, a good knife. Instrumental evaluation is described as more comparative than any other. When it comes to the “intended” item, the one that best fulfils its purpose is chosen. This type of evaluation is not descriptive, although it possesses some descriptive content, relating to the possible fact.
- technical evaluation refers to a person's abilities, skills, dexterity, proficiency, or, in short, prowess in a particular activity, e.g., a good cook, a bad teacher. It concerns three types of activities: professional, game, and creative. These three activities are closely linked: professional skills can evolve into creativity. In contrast, creative activity is often lowered to the level of the average profession. Technical evaluation statements can be used for recommendation purposes, but another function, that of praise, is more natural to them.
- beneficial evaluation is related to the benefit and creation of a desired situation, e.g., good sleep or physical exercises are good for the man.
- utilitarian evaluation is based on the choice of what can be useful and favourable, so it can be considered as a special case of the previous type of evaluation, e.g., a good chance, a bad plan. The utilitarian good is defined without any reference to class. Utilitarian and beneficial kind are in a contradictory relation to "useless".
- medical evaluation concerns organs of our body and some mental abilities – a good heart, good memory. This type characterizes the basic functions of the body.
- hedonic evaluation refers to the feeling itself, not to the objects that caused it - a good joke, good weather, good music.

Ethical evaluation (good will, good intention, a bad act) is seen by von Wright as being secondary, a derivative of beneficial evaluation (Wright 1963: 23).

In addition to that, general and special types of evaluation are usually distinguished. In evaluative judgments, we can talk about both the properties of the object of evaluation that are actually present in it and those properties that are attributed to it by the subject. In the first case, a general evaluation is manifested: a good apple, a beautiful painting; in the second case, a special evaluation is manifested: a talented singer, a kind person (Suleimanova 2018: 61).

In our paper, we want to pay attention to the modern classifications of evaluation. Fedorova in her studies identifies emotional, rational and rational-emotional types of evaluation. Rational evaluation, included in denotation, is based on logical judgments about the positive or negative properties inherent in the object of evaluation, and therefore such an evaluation tends to have a descriptive meaning (Fedorova 2013: 119). Thus, the scale of rational evaluation has the form of opposition “normal”/ “abnormal” which can be demonstrated by oppositions “appropriate”/ “inappropriate”, “true”/ “false”, “good”/ “bad”, etc. Moreover, rational evaluation is usually expressed in a definition. Evaluation markers in the definition fall into two broad categories: “good” and “bad”. The choice of words is based on the principle of the presence of a seme “good”/ “bad” in the meaning of the word (Chmel, Ahmad 2016: 3).

Emotional evaluation expresses the speaker's feelings and attitude towards the subject of evaluation, and, accordingly, is a component of connotative meaning. Due to the absence of a clear definition of emotions and their diversity, the scale of emotional evaluation is general in nature. The main feature of the scale is the interplay between the categories of “disapproval” and “approval”, which implies a generalized “positive/negative” evaluation. Within the positive emotional evaluation, the following subtypes can also be distinguished: 1) tenderness (most often refers to women and children), 2) mischief, 3) admiration, 4) support, sympathy, and 5) humour. The types of negative emotional evaluation can be represented by the following variants: 1) judgmental (e.g., rascal), 2) disrespectful (e.g., loser), 3) destructive, 4) despicable, 5) scolding (e.g., jerk), 6) offensive (e.g., imbecile) (Chmel, Ahmad 2016: 4).

The third, rational-emotional type of evaluation organically combines reasoning and feelings (Fedorova 2013: 119). Rational and emotional evaluation demonstrate a close relationship, since evaluation determines emotions and is a precondition for them (Hamziuk 2000: 75).

In Onishchenko's classification, the evaluation appears as 1) positive/negative/neutral; 2) absolute/comparative; 3) subjective/objective; 4) intellectual and logical/emotional/emotional and intellectual; 5) sensory/sublimated/rationalistic; 6) evaluation determined by specific concepts/evaluation based on abstract concepts (Onishchenko 2004: 6). There are several contradictory points of view regarding the need to distinguish neutral (zero) evaluative statements. Ostrovska believes that evaluation can be either positive or negative, but it can never be neutral, since it either exists or does not exist at all (Ostrovska 2004: 97).

In Korotun's opinion classification that describes positive, negative and neutral evaluation is, as a matter of fact, the most important one. These types of evaluation are characterized by transformation, which is possible at the speech level: in the context, neutral lexemes acquire positive or negative connotations; positive lexemes turn into negative, and negative ones turn into positive (Korotun 2001: 86).

The problem of expressing evaluation in language is one of the most difficult scientific issues. In terms of semantics, the seme "evaluation", according to most linguists, can be a denotative or connotative component, as well as it can permeate both aspects of lexical meaning. Depending on the contextual modification of the evaluative connotation, lexemes have direct nominative-evaluative meaning and figurative nominative-evaluative meaning. Such a linguistic analysis of evaluation is reflected in the division of evaluative items into proper evaluative ones (with a primary evaluative meaning) and contextually evaluative ones (with a primary neutral meaning that acquires evaluative connotations in the context) (Nahel 2007: 104).

Fedotova classifies evaluation according to its basis into empirical (perceived by the human senses) and motivated (formed in the process of learning) (Fedotova 1996: 70). The category of evaluation should also be considered from the standpoint of distinguishing between the content level and the expression level. Thus,

in terms of content, evaluation is categorized into negative and positive, and in terms of expression - into implicit (indirect) and explicit (direct) (Ostrovskaya 2001: 3). Explicit evaluation is conveyed by linguistic means with a clear direct positive or negative connotation, while implicit evaluation requires a more complex and in-depth indirect process of interpretation (Kots 2021: 19).

Evaluation typologies and classifications depend on compliance with the norms and principles that exist in a particular language community. In our general consciousness, the universality of the evaluation category is inseparable from the national specificity of the world perception. Socio-cultural and ethnographic rules emphasise the distinctive character of each society.

Thus, to summarize the classifications of evaluations and evaluative meanings discussed above, we would like to note that in linguistics the following types of evaluation are distinguished:

- 1) instrumental, technical, beneficial, utilitarian, medical and hedonic evaluation (Wright);
- 2) general and special (Suleimanova);
- 3) emotional, rational and rational-emotional (Fedorova);
- 4) positive, negative and neutral (Ostrovskaya, Korotun);
- 5) absolute and comparative (Onyshchenko);
- 6) subjective and objective (Onyshchenko);
- 7) intellectual and logical, emotional, emotional and intellectual (Onyshchenko);
- 8) sensory, sublimated and rationalistic (Onyshchenko);
- 9) evaluation determined by specific concepts and evaluation based on abstract concepts (Onyshchenko);
- 10) contextual and proper (Nahel);
- 11) motivated and empirical (Fedotova);
- 12) implicit and explicit (Ostrovskaya).

A comprehensive study of the existing classifications of evaluation in linguistics allows us to draw a conclusion about the versatility of evaluation as a linguistic

category. Evaluation is not a permanent component of the structure of a particular linguistic unit; it often depends on the contextual environment, manifests itself at a particular historical stage of language development, and is determined by the material and spiritual culture of society and a particular individual. A detailed review of the types of evaluation proves the importance of creating a universal classification of evaluative meanings and the necessity of introducing generally accepted definitions for the types of evaluation in modern terminology, which may be the subject of further research on the discussed issue.

### **1.3 Linguistic peculiarities of English proverbs and sayings**

For centuries across the globe, the wisdom found in proverbs provided valuable guidance for individuals in managing their social interactions. These concise and formulaic expressions encapsulate everyday experiences and common observations, making them easily memorable and instantly applicable as powerful rhetorical tools in both spoken and written communication (Mieder 2004: 11). Proverbs have been collected and studied for centuries as informative and useful linguistic units containing insights about cultural values and views. There are proverbs for every imaginable context, and they are, thus, as contradictory as life itself. Despite occasional views, proverbs remain relevant and valuable in contemporary society. While their usage may differ across individuals and situations, proverbs wield substantial rhetorical power across diverse forms of communication, spanning from casual conversations to impactful political orations, religious teachings, literary works, and influential media platforms (Mieder 2007: 394).

The definition of a proverb has long perplexed scholars from various fields throughout history. Numerous endeavours, spanning from Aristotle to the scholars of the modern era like Kindstrand (1978) and Russo (1983), have been made to define proverbs. These efforts encompass philosophical reflections as well as straightforward lexicographical definitions. The American paremiologist Wolfgang Mieder summarised his definition of a proverb as follows: “Proverbs [are] concise traditional

statements of apparent truths with currency among the folk. More elaborately stated, proverbs are short, generally known sentences of the folk that contain wisdom, truths, morals, and traditional views in a metaphorical, fixed, and memorable form and that are handed down from generation to generation” (Mieder 1996: 597).

According to Stephen D. Winick, “proverbs are brief (sentence-length) entextualized utterances which derive a sense of wisdom, wit and authority from explicit and intentional intertextual reference to a tradition of previous similar wisdom utterances” (Winick 2003: 595).

The linguist Neal R. Norrick emphasizes the distinction among a proverb, a proverbial phrase and an idiom. He states that a proverb is a traditional figurative expression capable of standing on its own as a complete utterance. This characteristic sets the proverb apart from the proverbial phrase, which cannot function independently, as for instance “to kick over the traces,” which lacks a subject. Proverbial phrases with figurative meanings are often labelled as idioms in linguistic terms (Norrick 2015: 7). Seiler introduces another criterion, differentiating proverbs from proverbial phrases: proverbs need to be self-contained expressions, meaning that none of their essential syntactic elements can be substituted (Seiler 2019: 119).

Some general features of proverbs can, thus, be retrieved from these definitions, which include traditionality, self-containedness (sentence structure), didactic content, fixed form, metaphoricity (or imagery), figurativeness, etc (Norrick 2015: 13).

Proverbs, when employed, refer to social circumstances, and it is within these social contexts that they receive their meaning. They function as indicators of human behaviour and social contexts, and that is why they must be studied from both structural and semantic perspectives.

The semantic characteristics of individual proverbs are inherently intriguing and may be helpful in understanding proverbial essence. One of the central semantic features is polysemy of proverbs (Kirshenblatt-Gimblett 1973: 821), as for example, the proverb *a penny saved is a penny earned*. This proverb can mean that saving money is equivalent to earning money, emphasizing the value of thriftiness. It can also imply that small savings can accumulate over time to become significant, highlighting the

importance of frugality and financial prudence. Secondly, proverbs may sometimes contain puns, which introduce the potential for polysemy as well, where either meaning can prevail in a specific discourse context (Norrick 2015: 17). For instance, the proverb *the grass is always greener on the other side* can imply that people often perceive others' situations as better than their own or that appearances can be deceiving, and what seems desirable from a distance may not be so upon closer examination. Thirdly, a proverb that includes absolute modifiers and adverbs such as no, never, all, and always tends to involve exaggeration. Examples of this include expressions like *no pain, no gain* and *all's fair in love and war*. Moreover, proverbs often incorporate irony (e.g., *you cannot make an omelette without breaking eggs*), tautology (e.g., *what goes around, comes around; what's done is done*), paradox (e.g., *keep your friends close and your enemies closer; the more you learn, the less you know*), which tends to reinforce their didactic content (Golopentia-Eretescu 1971: 626).

Proverbs generally possess some inherent connotations, which play a significant role in shaping their comprehensive meaning. Proverbs often carry folksy, rural, and pre-industrial connotations, as seen in examples like *don't count your chickens before they hatch* and *don't put all your eggs in one basket*. Additionally, many proverbs display biblical or religious connotations, as evidenced by phrases like *that which is crooked cannot be made straight* and *evil communications corrupt good manners*. Biblical proverbs can be applied to various real-life scenarios where individuals metaphorically deviate from the path of righteousness or face moral dilemmas (Petrova, Stepanova 2017: 298).

Special attention should be paid to the different sorts of imagery distinguished in proverbs. They frequently include metaphors and personification (Ramirez 2015: 24, as in *time heals all wounds* or *love is blind*). Proverbs can sometimes be partially metaphoric, as demonstrated by *a crooked tree will have a crooked shadow*, where only the noun “tree” needs to be interpreted in a broader figurative sense, representing any creature or thing. Synecdoche can also be singled out in proverbs like *many hands make light work* where “hands” is used to refer to all crew members, indicating that everyone is needed to help with a task or situation (Norrick 2015: 21).

In a language, numerous words and phrases can serve as synonyms, and proverbs are no exception. At times, their meanings align, allowing for interchangeable usage within a context (Gotthardt, Varga 2014: 68), as for instance the proverbs *appearances are deceptive* and *never judge a book by its cover*. Nevertheless, even when proverbs seem semantically similar, they often cannot be considered absolute synonyms. This is because there is a nuanced difference in expressiveness, leading to varied usage in different cases and situations. Consequently, proverbs possess distinct pragmatic and sociolinguistic features; some are predominantly employed in formal (official) settings, while others frequently emerge in informal (oral) conversations (Gotthardt, Varga 2014: 5). Antonymous proverbs are found in many languages of the world as well: *birds of a feather flock together* and *opposites attract*.

Proverbs without a doubt can also be analyzed from the syntactical point of view, and syntax, as such, always was relevant for paremiology, given the large number of paremiological studies which include syntactical studies (Grzybek 2014: 73). Proverbs are frequently structured in the way that would be regarded as ungrammatical by conventional standards. Similar to other idiomatic expressions, proverbs challenge the norms of dominant linguistic paradigms (Chafe 1968: 111). They often incorporate archaic or dialectal words and constructions, as seen in the expression *a man who would fight will find a cudgel in every hedge*. Moreover, proverbs commonly adhere to formulas that deviate from typical sentence grammar, as illustrated by phrases such as *like mother, like daughter* or *the sharper the storm, the sooner it's over*. The syntactic structure of proverbs itself is noteworthy, some of them often lack verbs such as *no pain, no gain, young saint, old devil*, and *business before pleasure*, or sayings like *much cry and little wool* and *always a bridesmaid, never a bride*.

At the same time, proverbs encompass various syntactic structures. Numerous widely recognized proverbs exemplify standard sentence types, such as subject-verb-direct object, as seen in *every bird must hatch her own egg*, or subject-verb-indirect object-direct object, illustrated by *a fool may give a wise man counsel* (Bhuvanewar 2003: 2).” As proverbial dictionaries show, statements and commands are the most dominant among the proverbs while questions (e.g., *why keep a dog and bark*

*yourself?*) and exclamations are quite rare, when taking into account major syntactic classes for simple sentences (Bhuvanewar 2003: 17).

Complex sentence proverbs with both coordinate and subordinate clauses can also be encountered quite often. The example of coordination in a proverb can be *give a man rope enough and he will hang himself* and examples of subordination are seen in the proverbs like *you cannot lose what you never had* and *if you run after two hares you will catch neither*.

English proverbs and sayings exhibit a rich array of linguistic peculiarities that contribute to their enduring relevance and effectiveness. From their concise and memorable structure to their use of metaphors, personification, synecdoche, and other literary devices, proverbs encapsulate profound wisdom in simple yet impactful language. The syntactic diversity of proverbs, ranging from standard sentence structures to unconventional constructions, adds to their linguistic intrigue. Moreover, the semantic nuances and cultural connotations embedded within proverbs provide valuable insights into the English language and its evolving usage over time.

## **Conclusion to Chapter 1**

Evaluation is a multifaceted phenomenon that plays a fundamental role in language and communication. Linguists define it as a broad cover term for the expression of the speaker's or writer's attitude, stance, or feelings towards entities or propositions. Evaluation is not limited to a specific linguistic level but is rather a universal category expressed across all linguistic levels, from phonological to pragmatic. It operates as a dynamic subsystem of language, manifesting through various lexical, stylistic, and figurative means. As evidenced by the diverse perspectives outlined in this chapter, evaluation encompasses subjective and intersubjective dimensions, shaping both individual opinions and interpersonal relations. It relies heavily on context, with evaluative meanings changing based on contextual polarity, and has a tendency to be grouped together within discourse. Furthermore, evaluation consists of the following constituent parts: a subject, an object,

motives, evaluative predicates, and operators. It involves both a target, representing what is being evaluated, and a source, typically the person speaking or writing. Ultimately, a nuanced understanding of evaluation not only enhances our comprehension of linguistic phenomena but also enriches our insights into the diverse ways in which individuals perceive, interpret, and engage with the world around them.

In examining the multifaceted realm of evaluation within linguistic studies, it becomes evident that its classification is as diverse and intricate as the concept itself. From the pioneering work of Patrick Nowell-Smith and Georg Henrik von Wright to the comprehensive typologies presented by scholars such as Korotun, Fodotova and Onyshchenko, evaluation has been explored through various lenses, each reflecting the nuances of language and culture. The classifications of evaluation in linguistics encompass a wide array of types: general and special evaluation; emotional, rational, and rational-emotional evaluation; positive, negative, and neutral evaluation; absolute and comparative evaluation; subjective and objective evaluation; implicit and explicit evaluation, etc. Despite the efforts to categorize evaluative meanings, there is no universally accepted classification.

Evaluation is determined by the system of preferences in society. This characteristic of the evaluative category is directly related to proverbs and sayings, which are descriptive in nature. Proverbs serve as invaluable repositories of cultural wisdom and insight, encapsulating centuries of collective experience and values. Our analysis has been focused on understanding of proverbs as concise, metaphorical expressions that embody truths and morals passed down through generations. Their semantic richness, encompassing polysemy, puns, and connotations, adds layers of complexity to their interpretation and application. Furthermore, proverbs exhibit a remarkable syntactic diversity, challenging conventional grammatical norms and incorporating archaic and dialectic elements. This syntactic intricacy, coupled with their diverse forms, underscores the dynamic nature of proverbs as linguistic artifacts. Studying evaluation within proverbs offers a profound insight into the intricate interplay between language, culture, and societal values.

## **2. EVALUATIVE MEANING IN ENGLISH PROVERBS AND SAYINGS**

### **2.1 Ways of expressing evaluation in English proverbs and sayings**

For centuries, scholars have gathered and analysed proverbs, defining them as useful linguistic expressions that convey cultural values and ideas (Mieder, 2004: 12). This demonstrates that they have long acknowledged the evaluative nature characteristic of proverbs. According to Petrova, the essence of proverbial meaning is centred around a concept that carries either a positive or negative connotation and is linked to a cultural entity (Petrova, Stefanova 2017: 295).

The close connection between proverbs and evaluation is determined by the fact that the linguistic category of evaluation is influenced by societal preferences. This aspect of evaluation is closely associated with proverbs and sayings. On the one hand, proverbs describe the real world, and on the other hand, they indicate that the point of reference is humans and their value system.

Linguists generally agree that the evaluation status found in proverbs and sayings is also defined by their distinction from other linguistic nominative units. While the main purpose of words is to name objects and phenomena, proverbs serve another role in language. They not only nominate specific situations but also provide the evaluation of relationships by recommending how to act based on common sense and established societal norms.

The actual meaning of the proverb, isolated from the context, is generalized and implies a large number of interpretation options. Such contextual ambiguity is due to the variety of associative and symbolic meanings of the key words in the proverbial expression, which contribute to the disclosure of pragmatic, in particular evaluative, meaning (Suleimanova 2016: 160).

The act of evaluation in proverbs and sayings can be expressed both through direct (explicit) and indirect (implicit) speech acts (Nizhenets 2010: 21). Due to the fact that evaluation in these expressions can be ambiguous, it is in most cases quite

hard to determine whether it was expressed explicitly or implicitly, that is why we will not use this differentiation further in our research.

We find it relevant to analyse the means of expressing evaluation in proverbs and sayings on different linguistic levels, namely:

- lexico-semantic,
- syntactic,
- pragmatic.

Implementation of evaluation in proverbs and sayings at the lexical level is manifested by: 1) words with positive and negative semantics, 2) numerals, 3) literary devices (tropes and figures of speech), 4) verbs.

By words with positive and negative semantics, we mean stylistically and emotionally marked vocabulary with negative or positive connotations. Most often evaluation is achieved with the help of such vocabulary units as nouns (*experience does not make **fools** wise, the road to **hell** is paved with good intentions*), adjectives (***soft** fire makes **sweet** malt; **great** engines turn on **small** pivots, **handsome** is as handsome does*) and verbs (*a burnt child **dreads** the fire, all that **glitters** is not gold, he who **sings** drives away sorrow*).

Closer attention should be paid to the verbs as indicators of evaluation. Maliarchuk dedicated one of her papers to the study of the verbal evaluative means. She identified the following variants of the semantic verbal field “evaluation”:

- 1) indicative verbs, i.e. those that emphasize evaluation;
- 2) representative verbs, i.e. those that express evaluation;
- 3) linking verbs;
- 4) modal verbs (Maliarchuk 2014: 195).

In proverbs and sayings, we commonly find linking and modal verbs that express or indicate a certain kind of evaluation: *when spider webs unite, they **can** tie up a lion; the king **can** do no wrong; a wilful man **must** have his way; the labourer **is** worthy of his hire*. From these examples, we can see that linking verbs express the existence of a certain quality or state that is characteristic of the subject. Modal verbs convey a person's subjective and objective attitude to the actual phenomena and various

connections between them, i.e., they express their assessment in terms of uncertainty, assumptions, probability, and absoluteness.

We will now examine imagery and figurative language within proverbs. The association of proverbs with figurative meaning goes back to Aristotle, who mentions proverbs as examples of metaphors (Ahmed 2022: 40). Literary devices often found in proverbs and sayings that help express evaluation include:

- Metaphor: *the eyes are the windows of the soul*.
- Hyperbole: *faint heart never won fair lady; when spider webs unite, they can tie up a lion*. Exaggeration of the features of an object or phenomenon gives the proverb an emphatic character.
- Simile: *march comes in like a lion; hell hath no fury like a woman scorned*.  
Proverbs also often incorporate comparison with the like +noun, like + noun structure: *like father, like son; like mother, like daughter; like people, like priest*.
- Oxymoron and paradox: *nothing is certain but the unforeseen; old men are twice children*.
- Irony: *the cobbler's children have no shoes; a bellowing cow soon forgets her calf*.
- Personification: *actions speak louder than words; death pays all debts; bad news travel fast*.

Moreover, evaluation in proverbs is often achieved with the help of such a poetic device as rhyme: *a friend in need is a friend indeed; as the day lengthens, so the cold strengthens*.

Last but not least, lexical means of expressing estimation in proverbs are numerals, which can be illustrated with the following examples: *one boy is a boy; two boys half boy; three boys no boy; truth is always one; second thoughts are best*. The presence of a numeral in a proverb often provides some unique qualities to the phenomenon it refers to.

Analyzing English proverbs and sayings, linguists come to the conclusion that the use of syntactic means to express evaluation is more frequent than the use of

semasiological and stylistic ones (Paley 2016: 265). We will consider the main syntactic tools that can convey or indicate evaluative language.

A common structural type of proverbs is an emphatic compound sentence with an attributive subordinate clause introduced by the pronoun “that”. The emphatic nature of the sentence is what makes the evaluation most apparent. For example, *it is an ill wind that blows nobody any good; it is the last straw that breaks the camel’s back*. There are as well non-emphatic sentences with attributive clauses with evaluative meaning: *the nail that sticks up gets hammered down; revenge is a dish that can be eaten cold*.

Very often in proverbs with the structure of a complex sentence, the evaluation is emphasized by repeating predicates: *he who has no shame has no conscience; he who wills the end, wills the means*. Moreover, in complex sentences, parallel constructions can be used to express estimation. For example, *a man is as old as he feels, and a woman is as old as she looks; young folks think old folks to be fools, but old folks know young folks to be fools*. Playful variation with repetition results in such memorable proverbs as *you can take the boy out of the country, but you can't take the country out of the boy*.

A special group of English proverbs is made up of those with an elliptical sentence structure. Elliptical sentence construction involves the omission of words from a sentence (O’rinboyeva 2021: 938). The reduction of words results in the conciseness and expressiveness of the proverb’s nature: *the greater the sinner, the greater the saint; cold hands, warm heart; soon ripe, soon rotten; the better the day, the better the deed*.

Evaluation is frequently achieved in the proverbs and sayings with an omitted linking verb: *different strokes for different folks*, which is said to mean that people are different and that some individuals or groups have different needs and wants from others (Collins Dictionary). Another example is *better a good dinner than a fine coat*.

Another way to express evaluation in proverbs is with the help of a rhetorical question (Paley 2016: 265). Examples of such proverbs include: *what can you expect*

*from a pig but a grunt? What is a workman without his tools? What is worse than ill luck?*

In a large subclass of proverbs, evaluation is expressed with the help of various comparatives. The first evaluative marker is adjectives in the comparative form of comparison with conjunction “than”: *a king’s chaff is worth more than other men’s corn; example is better than precept*. The second very common structure is a double comparative with the+ comparative + noun (+ verb) pattern: *the sharper the storm, the sooner it’s over, the nearer the bone; the sweeter the meat; the greater the sinner, the greater the saint; the better the day, the better the deed*. The structure as + adjective + as is also prevailing: *a change is as good as a rest; enough is as good as a feast; Jack is as good as his master*.

One more syntactical tool for achieving evaluation in proverbs and sayings is negation. The expressions with negative particles would in most cases indicate an estimation of something: *one half of the world does not know how the other half lives; no man is a hero to his valet; there’s no place like home; he who does not honour his wife, dishonours himself*.

The realization of evaluation in proverbs on the pragmatic level is another part of our analysis. It is undeniable that the emergence of pragmatics, discourse analysis, and conversation analysis shifted the focus towards understanding the role of proverbs in text. It became apparent that proverbs could be associated with specific speech acts which carry evaluative meaning. According to Norrick, proverbs represent indirect speech acts, where an indirect relationship exists between the structure and communicative function of an utterance. Proverbs can be categorized based on their structure (sentence-based, phrase-based; declarative, imperative) and their impact (descriptive: providing an explanation, influencing an attitude; directive). The inherent characteristics of proverbs also influence their purpose and the manner in which they are employed for communication. (Norrick 2007: 381).

Studying the semantics and pragmatics of evaluative expressions, linguists have come to the conclusion that the primary evaluative speech acts are the acts of approval and disapproval, often represented by proverbs and sayings (Prykhodko 2017: 73). The

following proverbs clearly express positive evaluation with stress on approval: *the early bird catches the worm*, meaning those who act promptly and decisively are more likely to succeed; or *actions speak louder than words*, meaning what someone does is more significant than what they say. Proverbs *a rolling stone gathers no moss* and *empty vessels make the most noise* carry evaluative meaning with the help of disapproval.

The act of predicting as a way of expressing evaluation is also often encountered in proverbs: *he that has many irons in the fire some of them will cool; dirty water will quench the fire*. In these examples, prediction is achieved with the modal verb “will” which is used to express the future. Proverbs and sayings with a warning tone frequently carry evaluative meaning as well: *a small spark makes a great fire; in the coldest flint there is hot fire*.

Our analysis underscores the importance of examining the various linguistic levels through which evaluation is expressed in proverbs and sayings. At the lexico-semantic level, evaluation is manifested through stylistically and emotionally marked vocabulary, figurative language and literary devices. Syntactically, evaluation is achieved through various structures such as compound sentences with attributive subordinate clauses, parallel constructions, elliptical sentences, and comparatives. On the pragmatic level, proverbs serve as indirect speech acts, conveying approval, disapproval, prediction, and warnings.

## **2.2 Positive evaluation in proverbs and sayings**

Proverbs and sayings, being concise expressions, possess a remarkable ability to convey positive evaluation, affirming, encouraging, and uplifting individuals in diverse contexts.

Most often, meliorative units (units expressing positive evaluation), present in proverbs, are used in interpersonal communication when expressing sympathy, approval and praise (Korotun 2001: 87).

Taking into account the correlation between emotional and evaluative senses in the structure of melioratives, they can be divided into three main groups:

- laudatives, which express positive rational evaluation;
- affectionals, the semantics of which is focused on conveying the emotions of love and tenderness;
- perspectives, in which positive emotion and evaluation are balanced to a certain extent (e.g. promising, decent) (Sovenko, Dorda 2012: 103).

In English proverbs and sayings, we find both laudatives and perspectives for the expression of positive evaluation.

The basis of positive evaluation is sympathy, a natural human property that is neither regulated by the subject of sympathy nor its object (Sovenko, Dorda 2012: 103).

The corpus of this study comprises 200 proverbs and sayings with positive evaluation. They were analysed as complete units, meaning they were studied in the form they are found in collections of proverbs and dictionaries.

Positive evaluation in proverbs and sayings is realized through various universal concepts and values. We grouped proverbs into the following thematic groups with positive evaluation:

1. Friendship: *a friend in need is a friend indeed; short reckonings make long friends; a good Jack makes a good Jill; a father is a treasure, a brother is a comfort, but a friend is both; a friend in court is as good as a penny in pocket; a good friend never offends; a rich friend is a treasure; friendship is the most sacred of all moral bonds; friendship multiply joys, and divide griefs; he's a good friend that speaks well of us behind our backs; it is a good friend that is always giving, though it be ever so little; the best mirror is an old friend; a good friend is better than silver and gold; familiar paths and old friends are the best; old friends and old wine are the best; good company make short miles.*
2. Inner beauty: *a blind man's wife needs no paint; a deformed body may have a beautiful soul.*

3. Godliness and religion: *he is a good dog who goes to church; all things are possible with God; God makes the back to the burden; God never sends mouths, but he sends meat; God tempers the wind to the shorn lamb; heaven protects children, sailors, and drunken men.*
4. Home: *there's no place like home; a house well-furnished makes a good housewife; masters are mostly the greatest servants in the house; home is where the heart is.*
5. Looks and beauty: *fine feathers make fine birds; nine tailors make a man; beauty draws with a single hair, she who is born handsome is born married; beauty opens locked doors; beauty's tears are lovelier than her smiles; good clothes open all doors; fancy goes a long way; fair faces need no paint.*
6. Experience: *experience is the best teacher; experience is the father of wisdom; experience keeps a dear school; those are wise who learn caution from their own experience; but those are wiser who learn it from the experience of others; experience is the mistress of fools.*
7. Value of small things: *many a little makes a mickle/many a mickle makes a muckle; small is beautiful; a little boy often harbours a great soul; a mouse may help a lion; a small spark makes a great fire; little pigeons carry great messages.*
8. Love: *love will find a way; absence sharpens love, presence strengthens it; he that plants trees loves others besides himself; love conquers all; love is the touchstone of virtue.*
9. Authority: *kings have long arms; king can do no wrong; ill kings make many good laws; authority and example lead the world.*
10. Unity: *union is strength; when spider webs unite, they can tie up a lion.*
11. Patience and time: *nature, time and patience are the three great physicians; nothing is more precious than time, yet nothing less valued; patience, money and time bring all things to pass; pleasant hours fly fast; time is a great healer; time works wonders; time heals all wounds.*

12. Language and conversation: *good language cures great sores; good words cool more than cold water; good words cost nothing, but are worth much; conversation teaches more than meditation; a good tongue is a good weapon; sweet discourse makes short days and nights.*
13. Knowledge: *knowledge is a second light, and hath bright eyes; knowledge is treasure, but practice is the key to it; reading makes a full man; knowledge is power; knowledge in youth is wisdom in age.*
14. Silence: *silence is wisdom, when speaking is folly; a quiet tongue shows a wise head; speech is silver, but silence is golden; a wise head hath a close mouth to it.*
15. Women and wives: *it is a good horse that never stumbles, and a good wife that never grumbles; the hand that rocks the cradle rules the world; a good wife and health are a man's best wealth; a good wife makes a good husband;*
16. Conscience: *a clear conscience makes a joyful countenance; a clear conscience knows no fear; a clean conscience is a good pillow.*
17. Misfortune: *a trouble shared is a trouble halved; misfortune is a good teacher; poverty is the mother of all arts; adversity often leads to prosperity.*

Furthermore, in English proverbs and sayings, we find the following virtues and character traits that are highly evaluated:

1. Kindness and softness: *a soft answer turneth away wrath; fair and softly goes far in a day; a drop of honey catches more flies than a hogshead of vinegar; a gentle hand may lead an elephant by a hair; a gift with a kind countenance is a double present; kindness is the noblest weapon to conquer with; soft words are hard arguments; kindness will always conquer.*
2. Mercy and charity: *charity covers a multitude of sins; one volunteer is worth two pressed men; he gives twice who gives quickly.*
3. Punctuality: *punctuality is the soul of business; punctuality is the politeness of princess; punctuality begets confidence.*

4. Intellect and wisdom: *great minds think alike; a clever hawk hides its claws; who knows most, speaks least; a still tongue makes a wise head; a wise man is a great wonder; a wise man turns chance into good fortune; a wise man will make more opportunities than he finds; a wise man will make tools of what comes to hand; consideration is the parent of wisdom; he that is a wise man by day is no fool by night; he's a wise man who can make a friend of a foe; none but a wise man can employ leisure well; the fool wonders, the wise man asks; wise men makes jests and fools repeat them; a wise man changes his mind, a fool never; it is a wise child that knows its own father.*
5. Courage and bravery: *brave men lived before Agamemnon; fortune favours the brave; a man of courage never wants weapons; courage leads to heaven, fear to death; brave actions never want a trumpet; It is a bold mouse that breeds in the cat's ear.*
6. Diligence and hard work: *diligence is the mother of good luck; the early bird catches the worm; constant occupation prevents temptation; diligence is the mother of good fortune; rest is the sweet sauce of labour; early birds pick up the crumbs; diligence is a good patrimony.*
7. Honesty: *a generous confession disarms slander; he is wise that is honest; honest men fear neither the light nor the dark; no honest man ever repented of his honesty; no legacy is so rich as honesty; the truth is always the strongest argument; honest millers have golden thumbs; a man never surfeits of too much honesty.*
8. Positivity: *laughter is the best medicine; every cloud has a silver lining; a dead end is just a good place to turn around.*

In conducting our analysis, we calculated the percentage distribution of 200 proverbs with positive evaluation (see Appendix 1). Notably, 27.5% of the proverbs in our sample resisted straightforward categorization, reflecting their multifaceted nature.

According to our analysis and calculations, the categories of friendship and wisdom are represented by the biggest number of proverbial units. This leads us to the conclusion that they occupy a central place in the English linguistic worldview. The

value of friendship, according to the material of our research, lies in the importance of mutual support, trust and loyalty in sustaining meaningful relationships. These proverbs emphasize that genuine friendship equals not only mere companionship, but a real commitment to each other's well-being and happiness. They metaphorically depict friends as a treasure and suggest that material wealth pales in comparison to the wealth of emotional support provided by true friends.

Proverbs connected to wisdom and intellect evaluate positively the virtue of contemplation, highlighting the significance of listening and observing before drawing conclusions. These proverbs underscore the transformative power of wisdom in shaping life and fortunes, suggesting that only wise people can transform challenges into opportunities.

Our research shows that English proverbs place a high emphasis on diligence and hard work, honesty and kindness as well. Regarding honesty, the proverbs emphasize its enduring value and transformative power. In the realm of kindness, the proverbs highlight its profound impact on human interactions and relationships. We can trace high evaluation of sincerity and genuine warmth in acts of kindness. When it comes to proverbs about diligence and hard work, they evoke an idea that consistent effort and proactive behaviour are key factors in reaping rewards and building a prosperous future.

The frequency analysis of the use of evaluative vocabulary has revealed a number of patterns in the linguistic realisation of positive evaluation in English proverbs and sayings. In general, the realisation of the axiological category of evaluation in the given proverbial discourse is carried out with the help of typical lexical means. At the lexico-semantic level, the most common positive evaluative components in the chosen proverbs are expressed with the help of:

1. Adjectives: *soft, blessed, happy, wise, great, good (including its comparative and superlative forms better/best), clean, brave, early, worth, fair, beautiful, clever, golden, more, gentle, kind, double, sacred, rich, honest, noble, bright, precious, strong, merry, sweet, joyful, long.*

2. Adverbs: *quickly, alike* (meaning in the similar way), *well, softly, mainly, ever, fast, above*.
3. Nouns: *soul, cleanliness, conscience, fortune, diligence, laughter, experience, paradise, strength, wonder, healer, treasure, wealth, opportunity, prosperity, success, wisdom, weapon, key, patience, physicians, blessing, argument, gold, silver, luck, medicine*.
4. Verbs: *favour, rule, disarm, harbour, strengthen, sharpen, lead, multiply, cure, love, make, give, remain, open, drive away, soothe, keep off, heal, help, know, protect*.

Not surprisingly, adjectives and nouns have proven to be the most effective means of expressing positive evaluation. All of these assessive adjectives and nouns indicate moral, physical or intellectual traits of the addressee of the evaluation.

Positive evaluation in proverbs is often emphasized with the superlative form of the adjective “good”: *second thoughts are best, March birds are best*. Other positive superlatives are common as well: *kindness is the noblest weapon to conquer with; masters are mostly the greatest servants in the house; he is richest who is contented with least; for content is the wealth of a nation*.

We can also indicate that the most common tropes and figures of speech within English proverbs that carry positive evaluation include:

1. Antithesis: *short reckonings make long friends; speech is silver, but silence is golden; he that is a wise man by day is no fool by night; silence is wisdom, when speaking is folly; who knows most, speaks least*. Here, we can see that antithesis is achieved with the help of antonyms used in one proverb.
2. Hyperbole: *one picture is worth ten thousand words; beauty draws with a single hair*.
3. Metaphor: *an Englishman’s word is his bond; a good tongue is a good weapon; kindness is the noblest weapon to conquer with; poverty is the mother of all arts; the best mirror is an old friend; rest is the sweet sauce of labour; a clean conscience is a good pillow*.

4. Metonymy: *a still tongue makes a wise head; the hand that rocks the cradle rules the world.*
5. Personification: *good language cures great sores; knowledge is a second light, and hath bright eyes; beauty opens locked doors; pleasant hours fly fast; misfortune is a good teacher; fortune favours the brave.*

Next step of our analysis was the expression of positive evaluation in proverbs on the syntactic level. By examining syntactical structures of the proverbs, we further gained some valuable insights into how positivity is reinforced. On the syntactical level, positive assessment is achieved with the help of:

1. Positive comparative structures: *a drop of honey catches more flies than a hogshead of vinegar; a friend in court is as good as a penny in pocket; conversation teaches more than meditation; a friend in the market is better than money in the chest.* The use of these comparisons highlights the superior qualities of certain actions or characteristics, effectively conveying positive evaluation.
2. Repetition and tautology: *good fences make good neighbours; good Jack makes a good Jill; any publicity is good publicity; a merry host makes merry guests; a friend in need is a friend indeed; a trouble shared is a trouble halved.* We can notice the use of the same noun or adjective in the place of predicate or subject.
3. Inversion: *great oaks from little acorns grow; blessed is he who expects nothing; happy is the country which has no history; happy is he who owes nothing.* By flipping the usual word order, these proverbs draw attention to the positive outcome or quality being highlighted.
4. Negation with the particle “no” and pronouns “none”, “nothing”: *a gallant man needs no drums to rouse him; a good man is no more to be feared than a sheep; no honest man ever repented of his honesty; no legacy is so rich as honesty; none but a wise man can employ leisure well; nothing is more precious than time, yet nothing less valued.*

The most common compound syntactic structures have proven to be subordinate nominal clauses, beginning with “he that”: *he that goes softly goes safely; he that is a wise man by day is no fool by night; he that plants trees loves others besides himself* as well as “it is sb/sth that...” construction: *it is a bold mouse that breeds in the cat’s ear; it is a good dog that can catch anything; it is a good horse that never stumbles, and a good wife that never grumbles; it is a good friend that is always giving, though it be ever so little*. About 11% of the analysed proverbs with positive assessment included subordinate adjective and nominal clauses.

A lot of proverbs with the positive evaluation have subject-verb-object pattern: *a soft answer turneth away wrath; a blind man’s wife needs no paint; a golden key can open any door; the early bird catches the worm*.

The analysis of English proverbs and sayings reveals a profound emphasis on values and virtues that are universally cherished. Friendship, wisdom, kindness, courage, and honesty are among the key themes highlighted. They offer practical life lessons, namely the value of hard work or the importance of keeping good company. Through the use of lexical, stylistic and syntactical patterns, positive evaluation is reinforced, emphasizing the enduring importance of these values in English-speaking cultures.

### **2.3 Negative evaluation in proverbs and sayings**

Negative evaluation expresses the subject's attitude or reaction to the object's non-compliance with certain norms, ideas or stereotypes. According to the traditions of the national mentality and linguistic peculiarities in the English language, negative evaluation is conveyed mainly implicitly (Nizhenets 2010: 21). Exploring the realm of negative evaluation allows us to understand the values and ideals that are discouraged within the English linguistic worldview.

English proverbial corpus offers a rich variety of proverbs within which negative evaluation is implied. In English proverbs and sayings, negative assessment is often articulated with the help of criticism, warning, or disapproval. These proverbs often

highlight undesirable qualities, actions, or consequences, offering cautionary advice or moral lessons.

We would like to comprehensively analyse how negative evaluation is achieved in proverbs and sayings on the lexico-semantic, syntactic and pragmatic language level, using the same principle we implemented in the chapter about positive evaluation in proverbs. For this analysis we collected and analysed 200 proverbs with negative evaluation.

Thematically, we were able to group the chosen proverbs into the following kinds of negative virtues:

1. Laziness: *as good be an addled egg as an idle bird; he who lives in hope dances to an ill tune; idle people have the least leisure; the devil finds work for idle hands; an idle brain is the devil's workshop; a lazy sheep thinks its wool heavy; he who doth not rise early never does a good day's work; procrastination is a thief of time; sloth is the mother of poverty; ill sowers make ill harvest; a young man idle, an old man needy; idleness is the key of beggary; of idleness comes no goodness; idleness is the root of all evil; lazy folk take the most pains.*
2. Lateness and absence: *delays are dangerous; long absent, soon forgotten; he who is absent is always in the wrong.*
3. Anger: *a little pot is soon hot; a hungry man is an angry man; hell hath no fury like a woman scorned; an angry man opens his mouth and shuts his eyes; the mad dog bites his master.*
4. Haste: *hasty climbers have sudden falls; a young man married is a young man marred; fool's haste is no speed; he that runs fast will not run long; over haste makes certain waste; hasty men never lack woe; hasty resolutions seldom speed well.*
5. Deceit and bad influence: *the rotten apple injures its neighbours; bloody and deceitful men dig their own graves; he that's ill to himself will be good to nobody; he that has no charity merits no mercy; it is an ill bird that betrays its own nest.*

6. Talkativeness: *empty vessels make the most sound; talk is cheap; a bleating sheep loses a bite; a barking dog was never a good hunter; a flow of words is no proof of wisdom; a man of words, and not of deeds, is like a garden full of weeds.*
7. Timidity and cowardice: *faint heart never won fair lady; cowards die many times before their death; he that's afraid of wounds must not come nigh a battle; he who fears death has already lost the life he covets; fear kills more than the physician; of all bad passions fear is the most accursed; cowards are always cruel; cowardice is afraid to be known or seen.*
8. Evil and cruelty: *evil doers are evil dreaders; the female of the species is more deadly than the male; a bad thing never dies; a man of cruelty is God's enemy; a small hurt in the eye is a great one; a wicked man is his own hell; he that has no heart ought to have heels; great book is a great evil; money is the root of all evil; cruelty is tyrant always attended by fear; cruelty is a devil's delight.*
9. Stupidity and foolishness: *little things please little minds; a man who is his own lawyer has a fool for a client; a fool at forty is a fool indeed; a fool and his money are soon parted; there's no fool like an old fool; a dumb man never gets land; a fool always comes short of his reckoning; a fool knows more in his own house than a wise man in another's; a fool can ask more questions than seven men can answer; a fool loseth his estate before he finds his folly; a fool may make money, but it requires a wise man to spend it; a fool will laugh when he is drowning; a fool shoots without taking aim; flattery is the flood of fools; fools laugh at their own sport; fool refuse favours; fools tie knots and wise men loose them; he that teaches himself has a fool for his master; it is a foolish sheep that makes the wolf his confessor; a fool's tongue is long enough to cut his own throat; a man may talk like a wise man, and yet act like a fool; it is a silly fish that is caught twice with the same bait; it is a silly horse that can neither whinny nor wag his tail; fools set stools for wise men to stumble at; an old fool is the worst of fools.*

10. *Obstinacy: little bird that can sing and won't sing; you can't teach an old dog new tricks; a wilful man must have his way; fools and obstinate men make lawyers rich.*
11. *Dishonesty: a postern door makes a thief; a fault once denied is twice committed; gain got by a lie will burn one's fingers; he lies as fast as a horse can trot; liars have short wings.*
12. *Inability to take risks and make sacrifices: a cat in gloves catches no mice/a mittened cat never was a good hunter; the cat would eat fish but would not wet her feet; the cat would eat fish but would not wet her feet; he begins to die that quits his desires.*
13. *Not keeping promises: a man apt to promise is apt to forget; a man that breaks his word, bids others be false to him; he that promises too much means nothing; purposing without performing is mere fooling; Satan promises the best and pays the worst.*
14. *Pride: a proud man has many crosses; a very proud man is very wilful; ingratitude is the daughter of pride; insolence puts an end to friendship.*

Moreover, we were able to gather and systemize proverbs with negative evaluation that paint a picture of various unpleasant scenarios and outcomes. They predominantly caution against negative behaviour and attitudes, highlighting the potential consequences that may arise from them. These proverbs touch upon the following themes:

1. *Bad intentions: he who plants thorns should not expect to gather roses; he that brings up his son to nothing breeds a thief; he that builds castles in the air will soon have no land.*
2. *Bad company: he who sups with the Devil should have a long spoon; he that touches pitch shall be defiled; evil communications corrupt good manners.*
3. *Unscrupulous or immoral behaviour: once a whore, always a whore; a bully is a coward; the greater the man, the greater the crime; he is most cheated who cheats himself.*

4. Lack of skills or experience: *a bad workman blames his tools; the frog in the well knows nothing of the sea; he who takes too great a leap falls into the ditch; Jack of all trades is of no trade; Jack of all trades and master of none.*
5. Wrong expectations: *clergyman's sons always turn out badly; the shoemaker's son always goes barefoot; the greatest clerks are not always the wisest men; a shoe maker's wife and a smith's mare are always the worst shod; the greatest crabs are not always the best meat.*
6. Bad leadership/authority: *he that cannot obey cannot command; God is high above, and the tsar is far away; the mountains are high and the emperor is far away; fire is a good servant but a bad master.*
7. Fake friendship: *a friend that you buy with presents will be bought from you; a friend to everybody is a friend to nobody.*
8. Lack of fortune and misery: *a fair wife without a fortune is a fine house without furniture; a gentleman without an estate is a pudding without suet; a great fortune in the hands of a fool is a great misfortune; misery loves company; a long life hath long miseries; a little neglect may breed great mischief; a lord without riches is a soldier without arms; a purse without money is but a piece of leather; he that wants hope is the poorest man alive; health without wealth is half a sickness; ill luck is worse than found money; advice after mischief is like a medicine after death; a man without money is like a ship without sails; an empty purse fills the face with wrinkles.*
9. Debts: *a little debt makes a debtor, but a great one an enemy; debt is the worst poverty; debt is the worst kind of poverty.*
10. Unwelcomed and bad guests: *it is an ill guest that never drinks to his host; a constant guest is never welcome; a house filled with guests is eaten up and ill spoken of.*
11. Fake appearances: *appearances are deceptive; he's not the best carpenter that makes the most chips; a fair face maybe a foul bargain; a fair face may hide a foul heart.*

For the further analysis, we calculated the percentage ratio of 200 proverbs with negative assessment (see Appendix 2). 21% of proverbs with negative evaluation don't fall into any category.

Among the thematic groups found in English proverbs and sayings, those pertaining to stupidity and foolishness, laziness, lack of fortune and misery emerge as the most prevalent. English proverbs about stupidity and foolishness are very common because they reflect fundamental truths about human behaviour and decision-making processes. These proverbs usually highlight the limitations of ignorance and the importance of seeking knowledge and advice. Many proverbs from this group emphasize the idea that foolish decisions can lead to financial ruin, regardless of one's ability to acquire wealth, as well as the tendency of foolish individuals to make impulsive or reckless choices, often leading to negative outcomes.

The proverbs that collectively explore the theme of the lack of fortune and its associated misery highlight the significance of financial security in relationships and everyday life. They suggest that without wealth or resources, even desirable assets or qualities lose their value or utility. A lot of proverbs from this thematic group underscore the connection between social status and financial prosperity. They imply that without wealth or property, individuals may lack the means to maintain their desired lifestyle or fulfil their societal roles. Thus, we can trace the connection between these two thematic groups of English proverbs. Foolishness and lack of fortune appear to be interconnected in the English proverbial discourse and English linguistic world view, the first of which ultimately leads to another.

Proverbs giving negative evaluation to laziness suggest that idle individuals are more likely to encounter difficulties, poverty, and negative outcomes. Additionally, they emphasize the idea that procrastination leads to wasted time and missed opportunities, ultimately hindering success and prosperity.

According to our analysis, at the lexico-semantic level, the common pejorative lexical units that help achieve negative evaluation in the proverbs are:

1. Adjectives: *bad/worse/worst, idle, ill, lazy, wrong, absent, angry, dangerous, deceptive, evil, last, little, old, hungry, wilful, deadly, dumb,*

*jealous, false, proud, wicked, bloody, deceitful, careless, obstinate, blind, poor, afraid, foolish, discontented, foul, sad, silly, ugly, cruel, crooked.*

2. Nouns: *devil, thief, hell, mischief, evil, coward, cowardice, bully, death, fool, fury, misery, padlock, fault, waste, folly, drown, glutton, misfortune, horns, debt, debtor, enemy, neglect, cruelty, grave, poverty, hatred, lie, master, wounds, shame, risk, drowning, sickness, pride, ingratitude, Satan, crime, fear, gambling, sloth, liar, cruelty, tyrant.*
3. Verbs: *die, injure, shut, bite, kill, blame, break, forget, sink, come short, loseth, shoot, eat up, breed, refuse, burn, dishonour, fear, betray, cheat, quit, corrupt.*
4. Adverbs: *always, never, far away, bad/worst, least.*

We would like to point out the antonymic adverbs “always” and “never”, which have been discovered in a very big number of proverbs, where they reinforce negative behaviours or circumstances, which invariably lead to undesirable results: *he who is absent is always in the wrong; clergymen’s sons always turn out badly; a bully is always a coward; the shoemaker’s son always goes barefoot; a bad thing never dies; a barking dog was never a good hunter; a constant guest is never welcome, etc.*

Comparing the expression of positive and negative evaluation in proverbs, we again come to the conclusion that it is mostly emotionally charged nouns and adjectives that carry evaluative meanings. However, negative evaluation in proverbs, unlike the positive one, is represented by a larger number of vocabulary units with pejorative connotation. What is more, we find a lot of synonyms among nouns and adjectives to describe negative judgements, e.g., *mischief, misery, misfortune, padlock or deceitful, false, deceptive, foul.*

We would like to pay special attention to preposition “without” used to emphasize the negative consequences, incompleteness, or inadequacy of certain conditions or situations. It appears to be a separate means of conveying negative assessment and is quite often implemented in the proverbs, e.g., *beauty without virtue is a rose without fragrance; a fair wife without a fortune is a fine house without*

*furniture; a purse without money is but a piece of leather; health without wealth is half a sickness, etc.*

Our study shows that the adjective “great”, which at first sight, might be considered to have a positive connotation, very often carries in proverbs negative emphasis: *a great book is a great evil; a favour ill placed is a great waste; a small hurt in the eye is a great one; a little neglect may breed great mischief; the greater the man, the greater the crime, etc.*

Moving on to the next point, we find some new figures of speech and tropes that carry negative evaluation in English proverbs and sayings. Except metaphors, antithesis, hyperbole and personification, many proverbs with negative assessment include similes, rhyme and even oxymoron:

1. Personification: *curiosity killed the cat; the rotten apple injures its neighbours; misery loves company; fire is a good servant but a bad master; cowardice is afraid to be known or seen; an empty purse fills the face with wrinkles; fear kills more than the physician.*
2. Antithesis: *a fool may make money, but it requires a wise man to spend it; a great fortune in the hands of a fool is a great misfortune; an angry man opens his mouth and shuts his eyes; fools tie knots and wise men loose them; health without wealth is half a sickness; he who plants thorns should not expect to gather roses.*
3. Hyperbole: *it is the last straw that breaks the camel’s back; little leaks sink the ship.*
4. Metaphor: *flattery is the food of fools; procrastination is a thief of time; gambling is an express train to ruin; sloth is the mother of poverty; cruelty is a tyrant always attended by fear.*
5. Oxymoron: *cowards die many times before their death.*
6. Simile: *advice after mischief is like a medicine after death; counsel after action is like rain after harvest; a man without money is like a ship without sails.*

7. Rhyme: *wedlock is a padlock; a man of words, and not of deeds, is like a garden full of weeds; as a bear has no tail, for a lion he'll fail.*

Following our initial analysis, we proceed to examine how negative evaluation is conveyed in proverbs at the syntactic level. The negative evaluation is usually achieved with the help of the usual simple sentence structure with a nominal predicate: *a dry cough is the trumpeter of death; old men are twice children; innovations are dangerous.*

In the same way as positive evaluation, negative assessment is emphasized with the subordinate clauses, namely, relative and nominal ones, in which pronouns who, which or that are used: *he that buys ale buys nothing else; he that will not be counselled cannot be helped; he who gambles picks his own pocket; it is a sad house where the hen crows louder than the cock; it is a silly fish that is caught twice with the same bait; it is a silly goose that comes to a fox's sermon; a man who is his own lawyer has a fool for a client.* In 22.5% of the selected proverbs, negative assessment was expressed partly with the help of subordinate adjective and nominal clauses, which is twice as much as in proverbs with a positive assessment.

Proverbs without predicate appear as well: *once a whore, always a whore; long absent, soon forgotten; the greater the man, the greater the crime.*

Negative evaluation in proverbs is achieved with the same syntactical structures as the positive one:

1. Repetition and tautology: *little things please little minds; a great book is a great evil; evil doers are evil dreaders; big fish eat little fish; a friend to everybody is a friend to nobody; a long life hath long miseries; a man apt to promise is apt to forget; a crooked tree will have a crooked shadow.*
2. Negative comparative structures: *the female of the species is more deadly than the male; hatred is blind as well as love; ill luck is worse than found money; the narrower the edge, the deeper the cut; fear kills more than the physician; he lies as fast as a horse can trot; it is a sad house where the hen crows louder than the cock.*

3. Negation: *a cat in gloves catches no mice; a flow of words is no proof of wisdom; a friend to everybody is a friend to nobody; fool's haste is no speed; he that builds castles in the air will soon have no land; he that has no heart ought to have heels; he that promises too much means nothing*. What is more, we have discovered that the negative forms of modal verbs are common for the expression of negative evaluation as well: *he that cannot obey cannot command; little birds that can sing and won't sing; the cat would eat fish but would not wet her feet; it is a silly horse that can neither whinny nor wag his tail*.

Furthermore, our research shows that on the pragmatic level negative evaluation in the proverbs manifests through warnings, advice, and implicit assumptions about human behaviour, guiding individuals on how to navigate various aspects of life and relationships. Warning can be traced in the following proverbs with negative evaluative meanings: *innovations are dangerous; curiosity killed the cat; the rotten apple injures its neighbours; delays are dangerous; a friend that you buy with presents will be bought from you*, etc. These proverbs serve as cautionary statements, advising individuals about potential risks or negative consequences associated with certain actions or behaviours.

Examples of proverbs which serve as pieces of advice are: *he who sups with the Devil should have a long spoon; he that's afraid of wounds must not come nigh a battle; he who plants thorns should not expect to gather roses*, etc. The directive force of advice is achieved with the help of modal verb "should".

The proverbs with implicit assumptions or prediction include: *a little neglect may breed great mischief; a fair face may hide a foul heart*. Here, assumption is expressed with the help of modal verb "may".

Overall, our analysis of negative evaluation in English proverbs and sayings highlights the prevalence of themes related to stupidity, foolishness and lack of fortune, which are conveyed through pejorative lexical units, predominantly though nouns and adjectives, and various linguistic structures, namely repetition, negation, and

comparison. Pragmatically, negative evaluation is expressed through warnings, advice, and implicit assumptions about human behaviour.

## **Conclusion to Chapter 2**

The examination of evaluation within proverbs reveals a profound connection between linguistic expression and societal values. Proverbs serve as linguistic artifacts that not only describe the real world but also reflect human attitudes and societal norms. By analysing the means of expressing evaluation in proverbs on the lexical, syntactic, and pragmatic level, we uncover the intricate ways in which language conveys evaluative meanings. At the lexical level, evaluation is manifested through words with positive or negative semantics, as well as through the use of numerals and literary devices such as metaphor, hyperbole, simile, oxymoron, irony, and personification. Verbs play a crucial role in conveying evaluation, with indicative, linking, and modal verbs expressing various forms of evaluation within proverbs. Syntactically, proverbs employ a variety of structures to convey evaluation, including emphatic compound sentences, non-emphatic sentences with attributive clauses, parallel constructions, and elliptical sentences. Pragmatically, proverbs represent indirect speech acts, with specific speech acts associated with approval, disapproval, prediction, and warning. These speech acts reflect evaluative meanings, with proverbs conveying attitudes and judgments towards entities or propositions.

We analysed how positive and negative evaluation is expressed in proverbs and sayings, since these two types of evaluation are the most crucial in our opinion. Firstly, we analysed 200 proverbs with positive assessment and categorized them into the thematic groups of universal concepts and virtues, such as friendship, inner beauty, love, bravery, diligence, and more, showcasing the diverse ways positive evaluation is expressed. The thematic analysis reveals that friendship and wisdom stand as pillars within the English linguistic worldview. Proverbs celebrating friendship underscore the intrinsic values of mutual support, trust, and loyalty, portraying friends as

invaluable assets in life's journey. Similarly, proverbs emphasizing wisdom emphasize the transformative power of contemplation, offering guidance on navigating challenges and seizing opportunities. Linguistically, positive evaluation in proverbs relies on a great diversity of lexical and syntactic devices. Adjectives and nouns emerge as the most productive tools for conveying assessment as well as superlatives and tropes like antithesis, hyperbole, metaphor, metonymy, and personification. Syntactic structures, including positive comparative structures, repetition, negation, inversion, and subordinate nominal clauses, further reinforce positive assessments.

In the next step, we analysed 200 proverbs with negative assessment. Thematically, the proverbs encompass a wide spectrum of negative virtues, cautioning against cowardice, anger, haste, deceit, and more. Stupidity, laziness, and lack of fortune emerge as the most recurring motifs, offering poignant reflections on human behaviour and societal expectations. On the lexical level, adjectives, verbs, and numerals, serve as potent tools for conveying pejorative connotations, with antonymic adverbs like “always” and “never”, reinforcing negative behaviours and circumstances. However, negative evaluation in proverbs, unlike positive evaluation, is conveyed through a greater number of lexical units with pejorative connotations. Furthermore, except for the usual figures of speech that we find in positive proverbs (personification, antithesis, hyperbole, metaphor), oxymoron, simile, and rhyme also help enrich the expression of negative sentiments. Syntactically, negative assessment is reinforced through various structures, including simple sentences without predicates, subordinate clauses, repetitions and tautology, negative comparatives, and negations. Pragmatically, proverbs with negative evaluation serve as warnings, advice, and implicit assumptions about human behaviour, offering cautionary tales and moral lessons. Through the directive force of warnings and advice, individuals are advised on potential risks and negative consequences associated with certain actions or behaviours.

## CONCLUSION

The concept of evaluation as a linguistic category is a multidimensional and multifaceted phenomenon that plays a fundamental role in language and communication. Linguists generally agree that evaluation involves the positive or negative characterization of an object of thought and the expression of the speaker's or writer's attitude, stance, or feelings about the entities or propositions that they are talking about. Evaluation spans various linguistic levels, from phonological to pragmatic, meaning that it is a universal and dynamic subsystem of language.

Evaluation encompasses both subjective and intersubjective dimensions, reflecting personal opinions and fostering interpersonal connections. It relies on context for its meaning, with evaluative connotations often changing based on the surrounding discourse. Additionally, evaluation can be expressed through a wide range of lexical, stylistic, and figurative means, including various phrases and grammatical constructions. Evaluation's dependence on context means that the same lexical items can have different evaluative polarities based on their usage. This highlights the importance of considering the surrounding text or discourse to accurately interpret evaluative meanings. Moreover, evaluation tends to accumulate within a discourse, creating a cumulative effect that shapes the overall evaluative stance. Furthermore, evaluation consists of constituent parts such as a subject, object, motives, evaluative predicates, and operators. It involves both a target, representing what is being evaluated, and a source, typically the person speaking or writing.

The linguistic concept of evaluation is highly complex and is characterized by a multitude of classifications and interpretations. There is no universally accepted classification of evaluative meanings across disciplines such as sociology, anthropology, or linguistic axiology. Notable classifications include Patrick Nowell-Smith's typology of evaluative predicates and Georg Henrik von Wright's detailed categories of evaluation based on the word "good" and its synonyms. Other scholars have proposed different typologies of evaluative meanings. They include: general and special evaluation; emotional, rational, and rational-emotional evaluation; positive, negative, and neutral evaluation; absolute and comparative evaluation; subjective and

objective evaluation; sensory, sublimated, and rationalistic evaluation; contextual and proper evaluation; motivated and empirical evaluation; implicit and explicit evaluation, etc.

Evaluation is shaped by societal preferences. This aspect of the evaluative category is closely linked to proverbs and sayings, which are inherently descriptive. Proverbs are enduring linguistic units that encapsulate wisdom, morals, and cultural values in concise and memorable form. Despite their historical roots, they remain relevant in modern society, serving as powerful rhetorical tools in diverse communicative contexts, including casual conversations, political speeches, religious teachings, literature, and media. Defined by their conciseness and self-contained structure, proverbs are distinct from proverbial phrases and idioms. Their semantic richness allows for multiple interpretations, as they often incorporate polysemy, puns, irony, tautology, and paradox, which reinforce their didactic content. Proverbs frequently employ figurative language, including metaphors, personification, and synecdoche, enhancing their expressive power. They reflect cultural and social contexts in which they are used, carrying connotations of rural, pre-industrial, biblical, or religious settings. Syntactically, proverbs often defy conventional grammatical norms, incorporating archaic or dialectal elements and a range of structures from simple to complex sentences with coordination and subordination.

Scholars have long recognized evaluative nature of proverbs and sayings, reflecting human value systems and societal norms. By analysing the means of expressing evaluation in proverbs on the lexical, syntactic, and pragmatic level, we uncover the intricate ways in which language conveys evaluative meanings. Lexically, words with positive or negative semantics, as well as numerals and literary devices like metaphors, hyperboles, and similes, imbue proverbs with evaluative weight. Syntactically, proverbs often employ emphatic compound sentences, parallel constructions, ellipsis, and rhetorical questions to emphasize evaluation. Pragmatically, proverbs represent indirect speech acts, often associated with approval, disapproval, prediction, and warning. These speech acts reflect evaluative meanings, with proverbs conveying attitudes and judgments towards entities or propositions.

The most common classification according to the evaluation scale is the distinction among positive, neutral and negative evaluation. For this reason, during our research, we identified semantic groups of proverbs with positive and negative evaluative meanings. All in all, the sample for our research included 400 proverbs and sayings. The examination of 200 proverbs with positive evaluation reveals that friendship (8% in the sample) and intellect with wisdom (8% in the sample) stand out as the most prominent thematic categories. This observation underscores their central role in the English linguistic worldview. Friendship, as depicted in these proverbs, is characterized by mutual support, trust, and loyalty, emphasizing the significance of sustaining meaningful relationships. Similarly, proverbs associated with wisdom and intellect positively evaluate the virtue of contemplation, emphasizing the importance of listening and observing before making conclusions. Diligence, hard work, honesty, and kindness also emerge as highly valued traits in English proverbs.

On the lexical level, adjectives and nouns emerge as the most effective linguistic tools for expressing positive evaluation, with the superlative form of the adjective “good” often used to emphasize positivity. Various literary devices such as antithesis, hyperbole, metaphor, metonymy, and personification enrich the expression of positive evaluation in English proverbs. Syntactically, positive assessment is achieved with the help of such structures as positive comparatives, repetition, tautology, inversion, and negation. Approximately 11% of proverbs with positive assessment incorporate subordinate adjective and nominal clauses.

In contrast, our research proves that English proverbs and sayings with negative evaluation often revolve around the themes of stupidity and foolishness (12.5 % in the sample), laziness (7.5 % in the sample), and lack of fortune or misery (7 % in the sample). There's a notable connection between foolishness and lack of fortune in the English proverbial discourse, where one leads to the other. The antonymic adverbs “always” and “never” and preposition “without”, which have been discovered in a very big number of proverbs, reinforce negative behaviours or circumstances.

Comparing positive and negative evaluation in proverbs, it becomes apparent again that emotionally charged nouns and adjectives predominantly carry evaluative

meanings. However, negative evaluation relies on a larger number of vocabulary units with pejorative connotation. What is more, we find a lot of synonyms among nouns and adjectives to describe negative judgements, e.g., mischief, misery, misfortune, padlock or deceitful, false, deceptive, foul. Syntactically, negative assessment in proverbs is underscored by subordinate clauses, including relative and nominal ones, similarly to positive evaluation. In 22.5% of the selected proverbs, negative assessment was expressed partly with the help of subordinate adjective and nominal clauses, which is twice as much as in proverbs with a positive assessment. Negative evaluation in proverbs is achieved with the same syntactical structures as the positive one. However, inversion is notably absent among proverbs with negative evaluation. On the pragmatic level, negative evaluation in proverbs often manifests through warnings, advice, and implicit assumptions about human behaviour, contrasting with the analysis of positive proverbs, which lacks such results.

One of the most important insights from the research is that on the lexical level, we can trace the antonymic connection between the most popular semantic groups of proverbs and sayings with positive and negative evaluation. Stupidity or foolishness and wisdom with intellect appear to be the virtues that are most often mentioned and evaluated within the English proverbial discourse. Furthermore, opposite groups of proverbs about laziness and hard work and diligence have proven to be correspondently popular as well. Laziness and foolishness are seen as obstacles to progress and prosperity. The proverbs and sayings emphasize the societal belief that success and respect are earned through effort and intelligence, while failure and hardship are often the results of laziness and foolishness. We come to the conclusion that the popularity of proverbs that evaluate wisdom and hard work positively and stupidity and laziness negatively in the English language can be attributed to historical developments, cultural influences, and social values that have shaped English-speaking societies.

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## SUMMARY

Бакалаврська робота присвячена дослідженню категорії оцінки в англійських прислів'ях та приказках. У сучасній лінгвістиці одним із найактуальніших питань є проблема оцінних значень і засобів їх вираження в мові та мовленні. Пізнаючи різні явища та об'єкти духовного і матеріального світу, людська свідомість прагне не тільки об'єктивно відображати навколишню дійсність, але й оцінювати її.

У нашій мові ми оцінюємо те, що є необхідним (фізично і духовно) для людини і людства. Кожна особистість усвідомлює важливість того чи іншого об'єкта, тобто оцінює його, класифікуючи його властивості на позитивні чи негативні. Саме приказки та прислів'я дають можливість людині висловити своє ставлення до того, що відбувається у світі. Асоціативно-образний зміст прислів'я є основою для формування оцінки, що визначає оцінне значення прислів'їв та приказок.

Мета дослідження полягає у систематизації теоретичних положень щодо вираження оцінки в англійських прислів'ях та приказках, а також у визначенні особливостей формування позитивної та негативної оцінки та її прояву в цих мовних одиницях. Аналіз дослідження зосереджений на структурно-семантичних, стилістичних та прагматичних особливостях вираження позитивних та негативних оцінних значень в англійських прислів'ях та приказках.

Робота складається з двох розділів, кожен з яких охоплює важливі засади нашого дослідження. Перший розділ присвячений теоретичним положенням категорії оцінки та англійських прислів'їв. В ньому розкрито головні особливості вираження оцінки в мовленні, її основні функції та складові частини, а також у розділі висвітлено типології оцінок та розглянуто класифікації оцінних значень визначних мовознавців. Третій підпункт першого розділу містить детальну характеристику структурних, стилістичних та семантичних особливостей англійських прислів'їв.

Оцінка, як мовна категорія, є суб'єктивною, залежить від контексту і може виражатися за допомогою великої кількості лексичних, стилістичних і художніх засобів, включаючи різноманітні словосполучення та граматичні конструкції. Вона залежить від контексту і має тенденцію накопичуватися в межах дискурсу.

Другий розділ роботи складається з детального аналізу прояву та способів вираження оцінки в англійських прислів'ях на синтаксичному, лексико-семантичному, стилістичному та прагматичному рівнях мови. Матеріалом дослідження слугували англійські прислів'я та приказки з негативною та позитивною оцінкою, відібрані з авторитетних словників, оскільки така типологія оцінки є найбільш поширеною. Для аналізу було відібрано 200 прислів'їв, які виражали позитивні оцінні значення, та 200 прислів'їв з негативними оцінними значеннями. Відібравши всі прислів'я, ми класифікували їх у тематично-семантичні групи.

Аналіз 200 прислів'їв з позитивною оцінкою показав, що категорія дружби та інтелекту й мудрості постають найбільш значущими чеснотами. Це спостереження наголошує на їх центральній ролі в англійській мовній картині світу. Такі чесноти, як працьовитість, чесність і доброта, також високо цінуються в англійських прислів'ях.

На лексичному рівні прикметники та іменники постають найефективнішими частинами мови для вираження позитивної оцінки, а форма вищого ступеня порівняння прикметника "good" особливо часто використовується для підкреслення позитивності. Художні засоби, такі як антитеза, гіпербола, метафора, епітет та персоніфікація, збагачують способи вираження позитивної оцінки в англійських прислів'ях. Синтаксично позитивна оцінка досягається за допомогою таких конструкцій, як позитивні порівняння, повторення, тавтологія, інверсія та заперечення. Приблизно в 11% прислів'їв з позитивною оцінкою використовуються підрядні означальні та з'ясувальні речення.

На противагу прислів'ям з позитивною конотацією, англійські прислів'я та приказки з негативною оцінкою часто засуджують розумову обмеженість, лінь,

невдачу і нещастя. В англійському паремійному дискурсі простежується помітний зв'язок між категоріями дурості та невдачі, де одне є причиною іншого. Антонімічні прислівники “always” і “never”, а також прийменник “without”, які зустрічаються у великій кількості прислів'їв, посилюють негативну поведінку або обставини.

Порівнюючи позитивну і негативну оцінку в прислів'ях, можна стверджувати, що в основному саме емоційно забарвлені іменники та прикметники несуть оцінні значення. Однак, негативна оцінка базується на більшому різновиді лексичних одиниць із пейоративною конотацією. Крім того, серед негативно забарвлених іменників і прикметників ми знаходимо багато синонімів, які описують судження, наприклад: *mischief, misery, misfortune, padlock*, або *deceitful, false, deceptive, foul*. Синтаксично негативна оцінка в прислів'ях, так само як і позитивна, посилюється підрядними з'ясувальними та означальними реченнями. У 22.5% відібраних прислів'їв негативна оцінка частково виражена за допомогою підрядних означальних та з'ясувальних речень, що вдвічі більше, ніж у прислів'ях із позитивною оцінкою. Негативна оцінка в прислів'ях виражається за допомогою тих самих синтаксичних конструкцій, що і позитивна. Але важливо зазначити, що серед прислів'їв із негативною оцінкою інверсія відсутня. На прагматичному рівні негативна оцінка в прислів'ях часто проявляється у вигляді застережень, порад та припущень про людську поведінку, на відміну від позитивних прислів'їв, аналіз яких не дає таких результатів.

На лексичному рівні ми можемо простежити антонімічний зв'язок між найпопулярнішими семантичними групами прислів'їв та приказок з позитивною та негативною оцінкою. Дурість і мудрість з інтелектом, є чеснотами, які найчастіше згадуються і оцінюються в англійському паремійному дискурсі. Більше того, протилежні тематичні групи прислів'їв про лінощі та працьовитість також виявилися відповідно популярними. Лінь та нерозумність сприймаються, як перешкоди на шляху до прогресу та процвітання. Прислів'я та приказки підкреслюють суспільну віру в те, що успіх і повага досягаються за допомогою зусиль та розумного підходу до життя, тоді як невдача та труднощі часто є

результатом ліні і розумової обмеженості. Ми дійшли висновку, що популярність англійських прислів'їв, які позитивно оцінюють мудрість і наполегливу працю та негативно оцінюють дурість і лінощі, можна пояснити історичними подіями, культурними впливами та соціальними цінностями, які сформували англомовне суспільство.

Робота містить вступ, два розділи з висновками, загальні висновки, список літератури, список лексикографічних джерел, додатки та анотації.

## APPENDIX 1

## The percentage distribution of 200 proverbs with positive evaluation

<b>№</b>	<b>Name of the thematic group of proverbs</b>	<b>Number of proverbs in the thematic group</b>	<b>Percentage in the sample</b>
1	Friendship	16	8%
2	Intellect and wisdom	16	8%
3	Honesty	8	4%
4	Kindness and softness	8	4%
5	Looks and beauty	8	4%
6	Patience and time	7	3.5%
7	Diligence and hard work	7	3.5%
8	Experience	6	3%
9	Godliness and religion	6	3%
10	Language and conversation	6	3%
11	Value of small things	6	3%
12	Courage and bravery	6	3%
13	Knowledge	5	2.5%
14	Love	5	2.5%
15	Authority	4	2%
16	Misfortune	4	2%
17	Silence	4	2%
18	Women and wives	4	2%
19	Conscience	3	1.5%
20	Home	3	1.5%
21	Mercy and charity	3	1.5%
22	Punctuality	3	1.5%
23	Positivity	3	1.5%
24	Inner beauty	2	1%
25	Unity	2	1%
26	Other	55	27.5%

## APPENDIX 2

## The percentage distribution of 200 proverbs with negative evaluation

<b>№</b>	<b>Name of the thematic group of proverbs</b>	<b>Number of proverbs in the thematic group</b>	<b>Percentage in the sample</b>
1	Stupidity and foolishness	25	12.5%
2	Laziness	15	7.5%
3	Lack of fortune and misery	14	7%
4	Evil and cruelty	11	5.5%
5	Timidity and cowardice	8	4%
6	Haste	7	3.5%
7	Talkativeness	6	3%
8	Deceit and bad influence	5	2.5%
9	Dishonesty	5	2.5%
10	Inability to take risks and make sacrifices	5	2.5%
11	Not keeping promises	5	2.5%
12	Lack of skills or experience	5	2.5%
13	Wrong expectations	5	2.5%
14	Anger	5	2.5%
15	Obstinacy	4	2%
16	Unscrupulous or immoral behaviour	4	2%
17	Bad leadership/authority	4	2%
18	Fake appearances	4	2%
19	Pride	4	2%
20	Lateness and absence	3	1.5%
21	Bad intentions	3	1.5%
22	Bad company	3	1.5%
23	Debts	3	1.5%

24	Unwelcomed and bad guests	3	1.5%
25	Fake friendship	2	1%
26	Other	42	21%