

DOI: <https://doi.org/10.46991/AFA/2023.19.2.062>

LINGUISTIC EXPRESSION OF GENDER DISTINCTIONS IN ENGLISH PROVERBS AND SAYINGS

Lili Karapetyan*<https://orcid.org/0000-0002-2899-6239>*Yerevan State University***Lusine Danukhyan****<https://orcid.org/0009-0003-9501-2767>*National Academy of Sciences, RA*

The present study aims at investigating the linguistic expression of gender distinctions in English proverbs and sayings through the lens of paremiology. The investigation focuses on the classification of English proverbs and sayings according to their respective gender component. Our research hypothesis posits that proverbs and sayings, as forms of verbal folklore, have traditionally ascribed specific human traits and activities to individuals based on their gender. To test this hypothesis, over four hundred English proverbs and sayings have been analyzed. The methodology employed in the paper is based on historical research methods, which involve collecting and analyzing information in order to explain past phenomena. The analysis has also employed the data grouping method to organize proverbs and sayings into relevant categories. The data collection has utilized both primary and secondary sources of information. Primary sources include reviews and scientific articles, while in secondary sources are include encyclopedias and dictionaries of proverbs and sayings. The results show that proverbs and sayings reflect gender stereotypes and societal divisions which are often difficult to break. However, the deeper understanding of the ways in which gender roles have been constructed and perpetuated throughout history, can identify areas in which progress towards gender equality is made.

Keywords: *paremiological unit, proverbs, sayings, folklore, gender component.*

* starlet@ysu.am

** danukhyan.lusine@gmail.com

Received: 19.09.2023

Revised: 10.10.2023

Accepted: 16.10.2023



This work is licensed under a Creative Commons Attribution-NonCommercial 4.0 International License.

© The Author(s) 2023

Introduction

Humans are unique individuals, each with their own distinct character, mindset, skills, abilities, choices, and views on life. However, despite our individuality, there are certain universal experiences and perspectives that connect us all. One way to understand these shared experiences is through the study of proverbs and sayings¹, which are forms of verbal folklore that originate from the collective wisdom and experiences of a culture or society. These linguistic expressions serve as a reminder that we are not alone in our struggles and successes, as others before us have had similar experiences and have shared their insights through these time-tested expressions.

Proverbs and sayings also reflect stereotypes and societal divisions, particularly in terms of gender. These deeply rooted cultural stereotypes, challenges to overcome, restricting individuals' outlooks and potential opportunities opportunities. However, through the analysis of proverbs and sayings, one can gain a deeper understanding of the ways in which gender roles have been constructed and perpetuated throughout history, and identify areas in which progress towards gender equality can be made.

The study of linguistic expression of gender is one of the most effective ways to understand gender division and its roots. Nowadays it has become a major issue to break the glass ceiling and guarantee gender equality in the society. Language as a major means for human mindset expression is one of the most productive ways to find out gender role division. What else if not proverbs and sayings are an appropriate medium to achieve a better understanding of the folklore notion of male and female.

Paremiology and paremiography: definition and origin

Paremiology is the branch of linguistics that studies proverbs. The word *paremiology* by origin is the Greek word *παροιμία* (*paroimía*), meaning *proverb, maxim, saw* (Liddell & Scott, 1843). Paremiology should not be confused with paremiography which is a sub-field of paremiology. Paremiography is the study of collecting and writing of proverbs. The study of proverbs goes back to Ancient Greece, to the times of Aristotle. While the word *proverb* carries a well-known meaning, there exists no unanimous agreement on its definition. According to Collins Dictionary (2016) “A proverb is a short sentence that people often quote, which gives advice or tells you something

about life.” Cambridge Dictionary (2022) defines a proverb as “a short sentence, etc., usually known by many people, stating something commonly experienced or giving advice”².

W. Mieder (1985, p. 119), the creator of the term *anti-proverb*, a professor of folklore at the University of Vermont, USA has defined proverb as “a short, generally known sentence of the folk which contains wisdom, truth, morals, and traditional views in a metaphorical, fixed and memorable form and which is handed down from generation to generation”. N. Norrick (1985, p. 78) has proposed the following definition for the proverb: “The proverb is a traditional, conversational, didactic genre with general meaning, a potential free conversational turn, preferably with figurative meaning”.

Proverbs have different sources of formation. The history of the first written proverb goes back to 1800 BC. It is written in a Sumerian clay tablet: “The bitch by her acting too hastily brought forth the blind” (Moran, 1978, p. 17-19). Ancient philosophers like Plato, Aristotle, Confucius were the most famous proverb creators. Their generation was later followed by the great thinkers of the era: W. Shakespeare, O. Wilde. Their sayings are rather new and better saved. Most of their proverbs are engraved in novels, plays, poems they wrote.

To be or not to be. (Shakespeare)

Good night, good night! Parting is such sweet sorrow, that I shall say good night till it be morrow. (Shakespeare)

And though she be but little, she is fierce. (Shakespeare)

To reveal art and conceal the artist is art’s aim. (Wilde)

The origin of a great many proverbs is the Bible. A number of sayings Jesus Christ cited were written and are used as proverbs:

Come, eat my food and drink the wine I have mixed. Leave your simple ways and you will live; walk in the way of understanding.

We will all share equally in what we steal.

Wisdom is supreme.

Undoubtedly, the moral content and style of proverbs can vary based on their origin, era, and intended purpose. For instance, proverbs found in the Bible frequently center around fearing the Lord and avoiding evil. In contrast, as W. Mieder (1985) notes, the flexibility and adaptability of proverbs is also a characteristic of these types of expressions. The creation of proverbs is an ongoing process, and new proverbs continue to enrich languages and reflect the current mindset of a nation.

Despite the fact that it is often difficult to identify the authors of proverbs due to their folkloric origins and lack of reliable scholarly references, the name of the first paremiographer is well-known. Desiderius Erasmus of Rotterdam, a Dutch philosopher, Christian humanist, and great scholar of the Renaissance era, collaborated with P. Andrelini to form the first collection of Latin proverbs entitled *Adagia*. The collection included both antique Latin and Greek proverbs. The first manuscript of proverbs was first published in Paris in 1500, and initially included about 800 proverbs. However, later editions expanded the collection to include up to 4,000 old sayings, along with rich annotated commentaries. The proverbs covered a wide range of topics such as divinity, the liveliness of life, friendship, women, marriage, and the darker aspects of life, among others. The first proverb in *Adagia* is that of biblical origin: *Amicorum communia omnia*, which is translated into English as: *Among friends all things should be common*. Some other translated proverbs are *Where there's life, there's hope; Time reveals all things; Kill two birds with one stone; Many men, many minds, etc.* (Bland, 1814).

Gender roles through proverbs and sayings

Nature has given humanity two genders: male and female. The difference between these two is not only physical but also psychological, social, and cultural. In different parts of the world, men and women have developed their values and skills separately until globalization brought them closer (Rong, 2013). The proverb perspective mainly concerns itself with social and cultural roles that are also conditioned by history. In the majority of countries, men traditionally were the breadwinners of the family, responsible for providing for their families. The primary duty that lay on their shoulders was hunting and protecting their family and tribe while women were responsible for housekeeping, giving birth, and later rearing the children and taking care of the family. This distribution was not arbitrary, it was conditioned by male and

female physical abilities and skills. For example, science has already proved that female brain enables them to multi-task, whereas men are good at orienting in space and remembering directions (Gender and Biodiversity, n.d.).

Traditionally proverbs and sayings have associated men with strength, wisdom, decision-making abilities, and power, and women – with kindness, beauty, love, and desire, with mysterious and sometimes evil nature. These stereotypes have been present throughout history, with references to famous historical figures such as King Henry VII and Alexander the Great to support these claims. However, it is acknowledged that these stereotypes do not always hold true. Throughout history there have been numerous examples of powerful and resilient women, who have bravely fought against societal expectations, defying these stereotypes. Virginia Wolf in her *The Big Books of Fall* quoted: “For most of history, anonymous was a woman” which highlights how societal norms have restricted the recognition and representation of women across historical contexts. Overall, proverbs and sayings reflect the nation’s mindset revealing a lot about stereotypes and the era. They show society’s attitude towards everything including gender roles, typical gender features and qualities (Kirsanova, 2018).

Thus, we intend to delve into English proverbs and sayings that specifically address gender distinctions, aiming to unearth universal insights into human nature as shaped by gender. These cultural creations, originating in the nation’s early formation, are shaped by a traditional perspective, ultimately constraining the concept of gender within that framework. From a gender-division standpoint, proverbs and sayings can be broadly categorized into two main types: those with a man component and those with a woman component. These linguistic expressions provide valuable insights into societal perceptions and expectations associated with gender roles, shedding light on the dynamics of human interaction and culture.

Proverbs and sayings with the man component

We have classified English proverbs with the man component into two primary groups, guided by the dual definition of the term. According to the Cambridge Dictionary (2022), the word *man* is defined as “an adult male human being”, that might initially appear to exclusively pertain to males. In addition, the Collins Dictionary (2023) defines *man* as a variable noun that can encompass all human beings, regardless of gender, stating that “Man and men are

sometimes used to refer to all human beings, including both males and females”. It is noteworthy that during the translation of these proverbs one may encounter equivalents like *people* or *humans*.

Further categorization of English proverbs with the man component is rooted in the evolution of men’s role in society and the predominant characteristics associated with males. This classification aims to elucidate the evolution of societal views regarding gender roles, revealing the prevailing traits historically associated with men:

- a) Man as a human in general;
- b) Man as a male person
 - Man: traits;
 - Man: friends and enemies;
 - Man: marriage;
 - Man: husband;
 - Man: love towards woman;
 - Man: love towards others;
 - Man: gentleman;
 - Man: life and death;
 - Man: wealth;
 - Man: old man.

a) Man as a human in general: The research reveals that numerous English proverbs with the man component address people in general, irrespective of gender. These proverbs offer wisdom applicable to both men and women, with various grammatical and lexical cues signifying their gender-neutral nature. In certain instances, these proverbs include nouns that explicitly denote gender distinctions (king, workman, bachelor, husband, etc.):

*Adversity makes **men** wise.*

***Men** may meet but mountains never.*

*A **Jack** of trades is master of none.*

*Among the blind the one-eyed is a **king**.*

*As is the **workman** so is the work.*

The term *man* was often employed to refer not exclusively to male individuals but rather to people in general. The attributes and qualities mentioned in the above proverbs are applicable to both men and women, encompassing traits such as blindness, foolishness, poverty, wisdom, mortality, and more. The rationale behind using males as representatives in proverbs appears to have a straightforward explanation: for centuries, men have symbolically represented their tribes and clans. Their individual qualities and characteristics were seen as reflective of their entire community. In essence, a single personal trait was regarded as a collective attribute, thus giving rise to the linguistic roots found in proverbs.

b) Man as a male person: This category is readily identifiable, often featuring the term *man* as the subject. However, in some instances, gender distinctions become more apparent through the presence of prompting words, such as third-person personal or possessive pronouns:

*A fool and **his** money are soon parted.*

*All water runs to **him**.*

*Every man has a fool in **his** sleeve.*

***He** cries wine and sells vinegar.*

***He** freezes who doesn't burn.*

Man: traits

Proverbs and sayings provide a detailed characterization of a man, outlining how he should behave, act, and look. Among the foremost and crucial qualities a man is expected to possess, **wit** and **wisdom** stand out prominently:

A wise man knows his own.

Man is but his mind.

The second widely embraced trait is **honesty** and **self-respect**. While it might appear that these two traits are in opposition, folklore has skillfully interwoven them to create the profile of an honorable and virtuous individual:

An honest man's word is as good as his bond.

A man never surfeits of too much honesty.

A man's gift makes room for him.

Respect a man, he will do the more.

*A man of words and not of deeds is like a garden full of weeds.
A man may have a just esteem for himself without being proud.*

Men who experience losses are often subjected to ridicule and mockery, but those who face failure with **determination** and recover their losses become objects of admiration and praise:

*He plays well that wins.
He that never climbed never fell.
He that fall today may be up again tomorrow.
He that knows nothing doubts nothing.*

Another quality that, as indicated by paremiological expressions, is commonly associated with men, is **foolishness**:

*A fool may make money but it requires a wise man to spend it.
A fool knows more in his own house than a wise man is another.
A dumb man never gets land.
Every man is either a fool or a physician to himself.
The fool doth think he is wise, but the wise man knows himself to be a fool.*

Man: friends and enemies

The proverbs suggest that men are not inherently supportive friends to each other; instead, they often function as competitors and rivals. Some sayings go as far as to assert that even friends can become enemies and rather dangerous ones:

*Man is a wolf to man.
Man's life is filed by his foes.
A man is known by the company he keeps.
Save a man from his friends and leave him to struggle with his enemies.*

Man: marriage

The traditional mindset often contends that marriage is not the wisest choice for a man as it is believed to bring about troubles and problems. However, despite these perceived challenges, it remains one of the most commonly pursued life decisions for many men:

Between promising and performing a man may marry his daughter.

He who marrieth well but he who marrieth not, better.

He that marries for love has good nights but sorry days.

Honest men marry soon, wise men not at all.

Marry beauty, marry trouble.

The bachelors crave to get married, and the married ones regret they got married.

Man: husband

When the words *husband* and *wife* are used in the same sentence, traditional wisdom suggests that wives often assume leadership roles. They are seen as the clever and shrewd decision-makers who exert authority and steer their families towards success and prosperity:

A good wife maketh a good husband.

A husband should use his wife's shoulder to cry in.

Hold your tongue, husband; let me talk that have all the wit.

For centuries, men have held the role of being the public face and representatives of their families. Traditionally, they were considered to be the astute decision-makers. However, proverbs and sayings reveal a different facet of this perception:

An obedient wife commands her husband.

A virtuous woman is a crown to her husband.

Husbands are in heaven whose wives scold not.

As a good man saith, so say we; but as the wife saith, so it must be.

Man: love towards a woman

Love between individuals of the opposite sex has perpetually remained a central theme, not only in art, gossip, and news but also in folklore. It often sparks discussions regarding the authenticity of love and its duration. However, according to proverbs and sayings, men are indeed capable of genuine love, and when they do love sincerely, it is with wholehearted devotion and unwavering loyalty:

He that loves the tree, loves the branch.

He that loves glass without a G/ take away L, and that is he.

He that gives his heart will not deny his money.

Where a man's heart is there is his God.

A man has choice to begin love, but not to end it.

No man can guess in cold blood what he may do in a passion.

Man: love towards others

There is a distinct thread running through the proverbs, highlighting a new dimension of male love: love for humanity and nature. These proverbs suggest that men are inclined to extend their love to their surroundings and fellow beings without any expectations of reciprocation. This form of love is marked by its selflessness and unconditional nature:

He that plants trees loves others besides himself.

He that follows nature is never out of his way.

He that pities another remembers himself.

He that is surety for another is never sure himself.

He is not good himself who speaks well of everybody alike.

Man: gentleman

Throughout history, societies have assigned special qualities to men and have coined a distinct term for well-mannered men – *gentlemen*. Proverbs and sayings offer various perspectives on the life and attributes of a gentleman. According to them, gentlemen are not always characterized by honesty, wisdom, or politeness; sometimes, it is clothes that make the man:

More goes to the making of a fine gentleman than fine clothes.

A gentleman ought to travel abroad but dwell at home.

A thief passes for a gentleman when stealing has made him rich.

A gentleman should have more in his pocket than on his back.

Knowledge begins a gentleman, but it's conversation that completes him.

Man: life and death

Death is the final light in our lives and it is inevitable, but the proverbs demonstrate the importance of life as well. Life and death are intimately connected, with the two existing just a step away from each other:

As a man lives, so shall he die.

He lives longest that is awake most hours.

He that speaks without care, shall remember with sorrow.

He that lives most, dies most.

Man: wealth

The following proverbs suggest that wealth embellishes men, yet it should not be merely seen as an adornment: it is a necessity that shapes them. Time-honored wisdom teaches us that men may not be born into affluence, but striving for improved life circumstances should be their aspiration. In instances where financial resources are insufficient, wit and eloquence can compensate for it. Occasionally, wealth and cleverness are intertwined. However, it is equally true that an excessive accumulation of wealth is often regarded as the source of evil:

He that has no silver in his purse should have silver on his tongue.

A man is not born with a silver spoon in his mouth.

He is rich enough that wants nothing.

He that gets money before he gets wit, will be but a short while master of it.

He that wants money is accounted among those that want wit.

A man's wealth is his enemy.

No man lives so poor as he was born.

Man: old man

Proverbs and sayings often depict old men as kind but *useless* members within a family. In many societies, there is a prevailing condemnation of relationships between older men and younger women, particularly in the context of marriage. Such relationships are commonly labeled as inconsiderate, reflecting concerns from both perspectives about the age gap and potential disparities in life experiences and expectations:

An old man is a bed full of bones.

An old man in a house is a good sign.

An old man marrying a young girl is like buying a book for someone else to read.

A young woman married to an old man must behave like an old woman.

Proverbs and sayings with the woman component

We have categorized English proverbs based on their origins (from the USA, UK, Hawaii, Jamaica, etc.) and their associations with female roles within society. This classification allows for a nuanced exploration of the roles and expectations placed on women in different cultural contexts:

- Woman: daughter;
- Woman: girl/maid;
- Woman: newlywed or a bride-to-be;
- Woman: female traits;
- Woman: wife;
- Woman: mother;
- Woman: daughter-in-law and mother-in-law;
- Woman: widow;
- Woman: old unmarried lady.

Woman: daughter

The following examples show that in the American culture daughters were treated quite well: as the treasure of the house that is fragile and special.

Daughters are brittle ware.

First a daughter then a son and the family's well begun.

Woman: girls/maids

In many traditional societies, young unmarried women were often held in high regard and admired. They were expected to embody qualities of modesty and charm. A girl with good manners was often encouraged to decline men's offers of courtship or marriage, even if she might secretly desire to accept. This was a reflection of the societal norms and values that emphasized the importance of restraint and virtue in young women:

She's a good maid but for thought, word and deed.

Maids say nay and take.

If the young ladies only know what old wives know they would never marry.

The more the girl runs the harder the boy chases.

A girl worth kissing is not easily kissed.

A maid that laughs is half taken.

Maidens should be seen not heard.

Maidens should laugh softly that men hear them not.

Woman: newlywed or bride-to-be

Proverbs and sayings provide insight into the complex dynamics surrounding marriage for women. On one hand, these sayings suggest that women often aspire to get married. However, they also convey the idea that this life-altering decision is viewed as a potential mistake, one that could potentially bring more troubles than happiness. This dichotomy reflects the societal pressures and uncertainties that women historically faced when it came to marriage:

A sad bride makes a glad wife.

Marriage is the supreme blunder that all women make.

*If you wish to be blamed, marry. If you wish to be praised,
die.*

*A dishonest woman cannot be kept in and an honest one will
not.*

Woman: female traits

One of the primary traits that exemplify female strength, is the flexibility of a woman's speech. Such sayings suggest that **talkativeness** can be an effective means to achieve goals:

Woman's hair is long but her tongue is even longer.

A woman's strength is in her tongue.

One tongue is enough for two women.

Woman's tongue is sharper than a double edged sword.

Women's tongues are longer than their arms.

The second trait often emphasized in proverbs regarding women is their **beauty**. These sayings often acknowledge and celebrate the aesthetic qualities of women:

Nature meant woman to be her masterpiece.

Give a woman luck and cast her into the sea.

A beautiful woman stands on the palm tree.

Beautiful woman, beautiful trouble.

Beauty wears the dowry in the face.

The woman who dresses in yellow trusts her beauty.

She who is born handsome, is born married.

In certain cultural and historical contexts, women are sometimes associated with notions of temptation and evil due to their attractive appearances and occasionally unconventional ideas. Paradoxically, these very qualities could also make a woman more alluring and desirable.

*Tell a woman she's a beauty and the devil will tell her so ten
times.*

When woman reigns the Devil rules.

*It takes a woman to outwin the devil.
 She will scold the devil out of a haunted house.
 Venom is the doing of woman.
 Women are the root of all evil.
 A woman and a cherry are painted for their own harm.
 A woman's counsel is sometimes good.
 There was never a conflict without a woman.*

The next female trait is connected with woman's **wit**. This topic, as revealed by paremiology, indeed presents a multifaceted and sometimes controversial perspective. On the one hand, some proverbs seem to perpetuate stereotypes portraying women as beautiful, yet lacking intelligence, focusing on gossip rather than substantial decision-making or clever ideas. On the other hand, other proverbs depict women as artful and witty individuals who possess a keen sense of timing and action. This duality underscores the complexity of societal perceptions regarding women's intelligence and abilities, highlighting the coexistence of contrasting views within cultural expressions like proverbs and sayings:

*A woman's counsel is not worth much, but he that despises it
 is no wiser than he should be.
 A wise woman is twice a fool.
 A foolish woman is known by her petticoats, showing her
 wealth by the number she possesses.
 The wisdom of a woman is wonderful to hear (ironic).*

Women's age has historically been a focal point of female attention, as it is often seen as a critical factor influencing their physical beauty, which has traditionally been regarded as their primary source of attraction. This emphasis on age and appearance underscores the societal pressures and expectations placed on women to maintain their beauty as they grow older:

*Every woman keeps a corner in her heart where she is
 always twenty-one.
 The longest five years in a woman's life is between 29 and 30.*

A woman is an angel at 10, a saint at 15, a devil at 40 and witch at fourscore.

Woman: wife

Many men acknowledge that having a good wife can be a source of luck, as she becomes a valuable part of their life and a loyal friend with an enduring bond. However, they also concede that a wife may possess greater wit and at times exert excessive control, which can lead some to conclude that it might be better not to marry at all:

There are three faithful friends: an old wife, an old dog and ready money.

A good wife and health are a man's best wealth.

He who leads his wife to dance or his horse to the bullfight has no complaint to make.

The wife who loves the looking glass hates the saucepan.

A wife brings but two good days: her wedding day and her death day.

The cunning wife makes her husband her apron.

He who takes a wife finds a master.

The only one thing in the world that is better than a good wife is no wife.

It is cheaper to find a wife than to feed a wife.

He that has a good wife has an angel at his side; he that has a bad wife has a devil at his elbow.

Who has a bad wife has purgatory for a neighbor.

Woman: mother

Folklore often portrays mothers as the epitome of care and love. It appears that when it comes to their children, women transform into gentle yet fiercely protective lionesses, guarding their offspring with unwavering devotion, even as their children grow into adulthood.

God could not be everywhere, therefore he decided to make mother.

If you take the child by the hand, you take the mother by the heart.

*No pap like mother's to nourish.
 Every mother thinks it is her own child the sun rises for.
 There is only one pretty child in the world and every mother
 has it.
 All brides are child brides in their mother's eyes.
 When the boy's foot is broken he finds his mother's hand.*

Woman: daughter-in-law and mother-in-law

Proverbs highlight a common source of tension between mothers-in-law and daughters-in-law – their shared role within the family structure. These sayings suggest that they are two sides of the same coin, with similar positions or responsibilities. However, despite having once occupied the same position, these proverbs often depict mothers-in-law as treating their daughters-in-law with a degree of cruelty or hostility:

*Daughters-in-law become mothers-in-law.
 The mother-in-law remembers not that she was a daughter-
 in-law.
 Mother-in-law and daughter-in-law are tempest and
 hailstorm.
 Always sweep where your mother-in-law looks.*

Woman: widow

The role of women in society often underwent a significant and abrupt transformation after their husbands' deaths. Widows were sometimes stigmatized and viewed with suspicion, being considered cunning individuals who were the prime suspects in their husbands' demise. There was a prevailing belief that widows were insincere in their grief, pretending to mourn while secretly rejoicing in the loss of their husbands:

*Never marry a widow unless her husband was hanged.
 You cannot marry a widow for the widow marries you.
 She that is a widow is a lady.
 Onions can make even heirs and widows weep.
 The rich widow weeps with one eye and laughs with the
 other.*

Woman: old unmarried lady

In some historical contexts, old, unmarried women were sometimes characterized as arrogant individuals who thought very highly of themselves:

*If the girl thinks no man is good enough for her, she is right,
but she is left.*

Old houses and old ladies always need repairing.

Folklore often draws **comparisons between men and women** as individuals and as life partners. Some proverbs highlight the shared qualities and commonalities between men and women, pointing to the fundamental aspects of humanity that unite both genders. These sayings reflect the recognition of universal traits and experiences that transcend gender distinctions:

*One good husband is worth two good wives; for the scarcer
things are the more they're valued.*

*The man and dogs for the barn, the women and cats for the
kitchen.*

A father to his desk, a mother to her dishes.

In many traditional societies, husbands were often viewed as the heads of the family and primary breadwinners. Their role was typically associated with working outside the home to provide for the family's financial needs. Meanwhile, wives were often assigned the role of managing domestic affairs, including working in the kitchen and taking care of the household:

Man, woman and devil are the three degrees of comparison.

A man doesn't want a woman smarter than he is.

Several paremiological expressions highlight that despite the differences between men and women, they share fundamental similarities, perhaps not in their ways of thinking but in their inherent nature:

*A woman, a dog and a walnut tree, the harder you beat them
the better they be.*

Women, like gongs, should be beaten regularly.

The abovementioned proverbs state that the tendency of beating a woman was accepted as a common behavior.

A good Jack makes a good Jill.

A good wife maketh a good husband.

There is one good wife in the country, and every man thinks he hath wed her.

Men make houses, women make homes.

Though evil, different and sometimes uncombinable, a peaceful and friendly unity between men and women creates the good.

Conclusion

The study led to several conclusions regarding the representation of gender in proverbs and sayings. It has been found that proverbs and sayings, based on cultural and metaphorical meaning, contain wisdom, truth and morals, and aim to facilitate the disclosure of life philosophy and serve as time-tested advice. However, despite different cultural, linguistic and household backgrounds, certain accidents, phenomena, and circumstances have the same impact on people with different backgrounds. The research also highlighted the extensive use of the word *man* in its secondary dictionary meaning in a great number of English proverbs and sayings, ascribing several pieces of advice and wisdom not only to men but to the whole humanity. According to several proverbs, men cannot always win and prosper, but they should have the ability to regain strength and will. Additionally, men are often associated with wealth and the way they spend it, but they can be fools at times. Men are also found to be strong and show little emotion towards what they love and value, but it doesn't hinder them to love and serve nature for its own sake. Money and wealth are mainly associated with men, and young unmarried girls are usually viewed in a favorable position. However, paremiology divides wives into two main groups: good wives and bad wives. Proverbs and sayings also state that beating women was a very accepted act that the society did not disapprove of. Widows are seen *as potential gold-diggers, and only the role of a mother presents women as perfectly spotless creatures with loving hearts*. Several proverbs and sayings state that though sometimes contradicting, man and woman complement each other and only their unity can make things complete.

Notes

1. All the examples of the proverbs and sayings used in this study were taken from various books, dictionaries, encyclopedias and reference books (Bland, 1814; Hazlitt, 1996; Litovkina, 2017; Mieder and Litovkina, 2002; Oxford Dictionary of Proverbs, 2015; The Bible, 2016; Schipper, 2006; English Proverbs on Woman, 2020; Common Proverbs in English: Meanings and Examples, 2022; 2500 English Idioms and Phrases and Proverbs that We Use Every Day, n.d.).
2. Throughout their evolution nations discovered some pieces of wisdom which were transmitted from generation to generation changing their creator from a single person into a whole nation. The pieces of wisdom, i.e. proverbs and sayings, made human life easier. The use of collective nouns as the subject made them seem universal and multi-national. They helped and still help people realize that they are not the only ones in certain situations, that the temptations we go through are very similar and we all have similar goals in life which usually lead to practical results.

References

- [Gender and biodiversity. \(n.d.\). In *Convention on Biological Diversity*.](#) Retrieved February 16, 2022.
- Kirsanova, M. (2018). Androcentrism of English proverbs and anti-proverbs with gender components. *Journal of Language and Education*, 4(2), 68-77. <https://doi.org/10.17323/2411-7390-2018-4-2-68-77>
- Liddell, H.G., & Scott, R. (1843). *A Greek English lexicon*. Oxford: Clarendon Press.
- Mieder, W. (1985) Popular view on proverbs. *Proverbium*, vol 2. University of Vermont Press.
- Moran, W.L. (1978). An assyriological gloss on the new archilochus fragmen. *Harvard Studies in Classical Philology* 82, 17-82.
- Norrick, N.R. (1985). *How proverbs mean: semantic studies in English proverbs*, Amsterdam: Mouton.
- Rong, H. (2013). Proverbs reveal cultural diversity. *Cross Cultural Communication*, 9 (2), 31-55.
- [Virginia Wolf's quote. \(n.d.\). In *The Big Books of Fall*.](#) Retrieved March 7, 2022.

Sources of Data

- [Cambridge Dictionary. \(2022\)](#). Retrieved January 15, 2022.
- [Collins English Dictionary.\(2023\)](#). Retrieved January 14, 2022.
- Bland, R.. (1814). *Adagia of Erasmus with explanations and further illustrated by corresponding examples from the Spanish, Italian, French and English languages*; M. D. F. S. A. vol. I. Printed for T. Egeton, Military Library, WHITEHALL, London.
- [English proverbs on woman. \(2020\)](#). In *Inspirational Stories: The Power of Words*. Retrieved January 14, 2022.
- Hazlitt, W.C. (1996). *English proverbs and proverbial phrases*. London: Reeves and Turner Publishers.
- Litovkina, A.T. (2017). *Teaching proverbs and anti-proverbs*. Komaron.
- Mieder, W., & Litovkina, A. (2002). *Twisted wisdom: modern anti-proverbs*. University of Vermont Press.
- [Oxford Dictionary of Proverbs. \(2015\)](#). In *Oxford Reference*. Sixth edition. J. Speake (Ed.). Retrieved January 14, 2022.
- [Proverbs. \(2016\)](#). In *The Bible*. Retrieved March 7, 2022.
- [Common proverbs in English: meanings and examples. \(2022\)](#) In *BIJU'S*. Retrieved February 16, 2022.
- Schipper, M. (2006). *Never marry a woman with big feet, women in proverbs from all around the world*. Amsterdam University Press.
- [2,500 English idioms, phrases and proverbs that we use every day, with their meanings and origins explained. \(n.d.\)](#). In *Phrase Finder*. Retrieved November 30, 2021.

ԳԵՆԴԵՐԱՅԻՆ ՏԱՐԱԶԱՆՄԱՆ ԼԵԶՎԱԿԱՆ ԱՐՏԱՀԱՅՏՈՒԹՅՈՒՆԸ
ԱՆԳԼԵՐԵՆ ԱՌԱՇՆԵՐՈՒՄ ԵՎ ԱՍԱՑՎԱԾՔՆԵՐՈՒՄ

Լիլի Կարապետյան
Լուսինե Դանուխյան

Առաձներն ու ասացվածքները, որպես բանահյուսության ձևեր, մարդուն ավանդաբար վերագրում են հատկություններ և գործողություններ՝ ելնելով նրանց սեռից: Սույն հոդվածում ուսումնասիրվում է գենդերային տարազանման լեզվական արտահայտությունը անգլերեն առաձներում և ասացվածքներում պարեմիոլոգիայի դիտանկյունից:

Աշխատանքի ընթացքում վերլուծված ավելի քան չորս հարյուր անգլերեն առածներն և ասացվածքները դասակարգվել են ըստ համապատասխան գենդերային բաղադրիչի: Ուսումնասիրությունն ընդգծում է տղամարդու և կնոջ՝ առածներում և ասացվածքներում ներկայացված բարդ և երբեմն հակասական հատկանիշներն ու փոխհարաբերությունները: Այնուամենայնիվ, սրանով հանդերձ, տղամարդիկ և կանայք լրացնում են միմյանց, և միայն նրանց միասնության շնորհիվ է, որ կարելի է հասնել ամբողջականության:

Բանալի բառեր՝ *առածարանական միավոր, առածներ, ասացվածքներ, բանահյուսություն, գենդերային բաղադրիչ:*