

THE XXVI ANNUAL INTERNATIONAL ACADEMIC CONFERENCE, LANGUAGE AND CULTURE, 27–30 October 2015

Dramatization in Proverbs

Vladimir I. Karasik^{a,*}

^a*Volgograd State Socio-Pedagogical University, 27, Lenin Ave., Volgograd, 400066, Russia*

Abstract

The article deals with a class of proverbs which express their instructive idea by means of a staged presentation. Such presentation is described in three aspects – structural, semantic and pragmatic. Structurally, dramatization in proverbs is shown in their dialogue form usually including someone’s direct speech. Semantically, it is manifested in contrast and paradoxical cause and consequence combination. Pragmatically, it looks like a micro-performance with actors who personify typical ways of behavior – usually negative ones – showing them in humorous or ironic keys.

© 2015 The Authors. Published by Elsevier Ltd. This is an open access article under the CC BY-NC-ND license (<http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc-nd/4.0/>).

Peer-review under responsibility of National Research Tomsk State University.

Keywords: dramaturgical communication; proverb; human vices; stage micro-performance; evaluation; norms; values

1. Introduction

Proverbs – folklore instructions of behavior usually formulated in short allegoric way – have always been a never ending attraction for a wide range of scholars who study norms and values. Such sentences are very diverse and include pieces of cautionary advice (*Once bitten, twice shy*), direct instructions to behave in a certain way (*Keep your friends close and your enemies closer*), folklore sayings (*Every Jack has his Jill*), superstitious beliefs (*See a pin and pick it up, all the day you’ll have good luck*), riddles (*What goes up and never comes down? – Your age*). Here belong specific utterances kept in the collective memory as examples of stage performances (*I’ve caught a bear! – Bring him here! – He won’t go! – Then come here yourself! – He won’t let me go!*).

Such dramatizations are not very numerous but they definitely make a special class of proverbs. They resemble a miniature theatre performance. Dictionary compilers include them into proverbs because such dialogues correspond

* Corresponding author. Tel.: +7-903-376-1789 ; fax: +7-844-260-2964 .
E-mail address: vkarasik@yandex.ru

to the requirements of proverbs – they are instructive, vivid, short and memorable. They express the collective experience in a concrete situational form. And as such they make a class of axiogenic situations (situations with marked values embedded in them showing reasons and outcomes of various actions - noble or mean, wise or stupid, tragic or funny, etc.) and are correlated with different genres of evaluative texts including myths, legends, parables, aphorisms, jokes and stories about things and events worth being spoken about (Karasik, 2014).

2. Methodology

Proverbs are thoroughly studied in the Russian Philology from various points of view. They have been examined in structural aspect (Permyakov, 2001), as folklore constituents (Klubkov, 2003), as phraseological units (Vinogradov, 1972; Kunin, 1972; Zhukov, 1993), as culture indicators (Ivanova, 2002; Krasnykh, 2002), as generative frames (Savitsky, 1993), as communicative elements (Sidorkova, 1999), as cognitive entities (Abakumova, 2012). As far as I know dramatization in proverbs has not been specially analyzed yet, though presentation as a type of a social action is given its due attention by E. Goffman (2000) and J. Habermas (1984). A.V. Olyanitch (2007) has undertaken a thorough investigation of presentational discourse.

Linguistically, a presentation is opposed to a narration, or in terms of Plato, mimesis is opposed to diegesis. V.I. Tyupa (2010) speaks about dramaturgical and theoretical types of discourse. The same idea may be expressed in the form of a sentence, or a parable, or a narrative, or a dialogue. In this respect a dialogue has some advantages: it influences the audience, mobilizes their intellectual and emotional reactions and directs them in the way chosen by its initiator (Kukhareno, 2002, p.92).

3. Findings and analysis

The material analyzed in this paper includes various proverbial dialogues translated from Russian into English. Structurally, dramatization in proverbs may be subdivided into several types.

- Certain dialogues consist of a few moves:

Doggie, why are you barking? – I try to scare wolves. – And why is your tail between your legs? – I am afraid of them.

- Certain narratives show the speech of a definite personage, and the culmination of the event is in his or her direct speech:

A mouse has crawled into a jug and cries: Let me out!

- Similar phrases are common in different languages:

A fly got drowned in a pool and said: Let the flood perish the world! (Assyr.).

- There exist jocular phrases used as commentaries to attitudes and actions:

Have I stolen a calf from the God to be avoided by everybody?

Such phrases are usually understood as incrustation in speech and require a special intonation or mimic expression or a parenthetical phrase “*as people say*” to show the listeners that a performance is being given. In Russian rural dialects people often use sound imitations to indicate someone’s manner of speech (cf. the way the English pronounce “*bla-bla-bla*” or “*la-di-da*”).

- This is true about imitating animal vocalizations:

Pigs oink and piglets oink.

- The proverbial sense of such sentences is often expressed in a standard way:

Where there’s a horse with its hoof, there’s also a crawfish with its claw.

We can see a parallel behavior of little personages who try to imitate big ones and it seems funny.

- Semantically such staged sentences are often paradoxical:

Yes, it’s a bad thing... Well, let’s take it.

An intentional breach of logic makes people smile. The former Russian Prime-Minister Victor Chernomyrdin is well remembered by such phrases:

It has never happened before and now we have it again.

- The sentences in question semantically imitate a dialogue with the first participant taking a high style register and the second participant downgrading it:

Download English Version:

<https://daneshyari.com/en/article/1110525>

Download Persian Version:

<https://daneshyari.com/article/1110525>

[Daneshyari.com](https://daneshyari.com)