

SEMANTICS OF NUMERAL «МЕҢ» (THOUSAND) IN PROVERBS OF THE TATAR LANGUAGE

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ABSTRACT

Phraseological units and numerals, being a part of the linguistic world-image, are of great interest of the researchers of different scientific fields. The studies in the field of phraseological units with numerals are most meaningful in terms of revealing of the cultural and typological features of the concept of number that is reflected in them. In this paper, we consider the proverbs of the Tatar language with the numeral component «мең» (thousand) and have composed the conventional semantic groups, based on the meaning of the numerals used in the studied phraseological units. In the course of the analysis, we singled out the semantic groups such as: “Verbosity”, “Excessiveness”, “Hardly ... when” and “Diversity”. The analyzed numeral «мең» (тысяча) / (thousand) delivers the meanings such as: quantity, quantitative relation, scope and comparison, and also performs the function of emphasis of the delivered meaning in proverbs. Also, the functions and semantics of numerals such as «бер» (один) / (one), «ун» (десять) / (ten), «биш» (пять) / (five), «төмән» (десятьтысяч) / (ten thousand) (obsolete numeral), and the words such as «төрле» (разный) / (different), «хәер» (добро; подаяние) / (good, charity), «бәла» (бедствие) / (disaster), «газап» and «азап» (мучение; невзгоды) (torment, adversity), which are used in the given examples together with the numeral component «мең» (тысяча) (one thousand). The results of this work can be used for further studying the semantics of numerals in proverbial sayings; formulating a classification of phraseological units with a numeral component; for comparative-contrastive analysis of the translations of set expressions from one language to another.

Keywords: linguistics, the Tatar language, semantic group, proverbs, phraseological units, typology.

INTRODUCTION

The Tatar language, like many other languages of the world, has a rich phraseological fund which is a complex, versatile and diverse system with national characteristics. The constituent parts of this fund have their own structural and semantic features, as well as the features inherent only in these elements. Phraseological units play an important role in enriching and improving language and, in the works of fiction, they help the author accurately convey his thoughts to the readers.

Like phraseological units, numerals, being a part of the linguistic view of the world, are of great interest of the researchers of different scientific fields. The study and analysis of numerals affects not only the history and philosophy of mathematics, but also the sciences such as linguistics, ethnology, culturology and others. Keen interest in the study of numerals in different fields of science can be explained by the fact that “... numbers have additional symbolic meanings in the cultural system of symbols, and, therefore, are semiotic multifunctional signs. Thus, the study of phraseological units with numerals are most significant in terms of revealing of the cultural and typological features of the concept of numbers reflected in them” [1].

B.S. Avezova writes that “... research demonstrates that there is no such language that would be without phraseological units with numerals” [2]. H. Majidov explains the use and functioning of numerals in proverbial phrases by various ancient historical and mythological realia [3].

MATERIALS AND METHODS

The material for writing this work was works of Tatar linguists such as F.S. Safiullina «Татарча-русча фразеологик сүзлек», N.S. Isanbat «Татар теленең фразеологик сүзлеге. Ике томда», G.Kh. Akhatov «Татар теленең фразеологик әйтелмәләр сүзлеге»

The method of continuous sampling of the above works was used to select phraseological units with a numeral component «мең» (тысяча) / (thousand). When writing this article, a comparative-contrastive analysis of the translations of the Tatar proverbial sayings with their translations into the Russian language was also applied. We also used the methods of semantic and component analysis to reveal elementary senses in semantics of linguistic units and to compare the meanings of the lexical units of the source and the target.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

This paper concerns the proverbs of the Tatar language with the numeral component «мең» (тысяча) / (thousand) and, based on the meanings of the numerals used in the given phraseological units, the conventional semantic groups will be compiled. Let us consider each group in greater detail.

The phraseological units where the numeral «мең» (тысяча) / (thousand) conveys the meaning of “verbosity” constitute the first group of proverbs, so we called this group “Verbosity”. Let us investigate each example of this semantic group:

- 1) Бер сүзгә мең сүз [4]
- 2) Унсүзгә мең сүз [4]
- 3) Мең төрле [5]

The first saying can be translated into the Russian language as «Скажешь слово, а ответ скажет тысячу (слов)» / “You say a word, and a thousand (of words) you will be said back”. Proceeding from the given translation, we can say that the numerals «бер» (один) (one) and «мең» (тысяча) / (thousand) used in the phraseology show the quantitative relation, and consequently the numerals under study are used in their first meanings, that is, they show the quantity. The quantitative relation is expressed as the smaller (delivered by the numeral «бер» (один) / (one)) to the larger (delivered by the numeral «мең» (тысяча) / (thousand)). In this example, the meaning of “verbosity” is conveyed by the numeral «мең» (тысяча) / (thousand). In the work «Татарча-русча фразеологик сүзлек» by F.S. Safiullina, one can find such variants of the analyzed saying: «Берсүзгә биш сүз» [4], which is rendered into Russian as «Скажешь слово, а ответ скажет десять (слов)» / “You say a word, and five (words) you will be said back” and «Берсүзгә ун сүз» [4] will be translated into Russian as «На десять твоих (слов) – тысяча своих говорит». This phraseology is an analogue of the first proverbial saying that we have considered. Numerals «ун» (десять) / (ten) and «мең» (тысяча) / (thousand) are also used in the first meanings and show the number and the quantitative correlation. Both the first and second proverbs have a negative connotative meaning. They are used when talking about people who are always arguing and answering back. In the work «Татар теленең фразеологик сүзлеге. Итомда» by N. Isanbat, one can also find a variant such as: «Берсүзгә мең җавап» [5], which is rendered into the Russian language as «На одно слово – тысяча ответов» / “One word - a thousand answers”. It is interesting that this phraseological unit can have both positive and negative connotations. In the meaning of “wrangling, arguing” like the above-mentioned proverbs, this saying has a negative connotation, but in the meaning of “artist in words, loquacious” - positive. The latter proverbial saying in Russian can be translated as «Разный или разнообразный (о произносимом собеседником слове)» / “Different or diverse (about the word spoken by the interlocutor)”. In the analyzed example, the semantics we are considering is also conveyed the numeral «мең» (тысяча) / (one thousand), and the word «төрле» (разный) / (different) [6]. The numeral component «мең» (тысяча) / (thousand) in this example, too, as in the above-mentioned

proverbs, is used in the first meaning and shows a large quantity. This phraseology is used when it comes to people who do not have any result in work, but only stand up to.

The following group is composed of the proverbs where the numerals we are considering have the meanings «слишком, излишне, чересчур» / “too, too much, too much”, so we have combined the examples of this group in the semantic group “Excessiveness”. Let us consider examples in greater detail:

1) Мең артык [4]

2) Мең дә бер [5]

3) Мең хәер [5]

The first proverb can be translated into Russian as «Втысячуразлучше» / “Far better”, this phraseological unit is used when one wants to emphasize or note that one object is much better than the other among the two compared ones. Here, the numerals used also serve to exaggerate the meaning of the proverb, namely, to highlight and accentuate the interlocutor’s attention to the fact that one of the compared objects or items is not only better, but “thousand times” better. In the Tatar language this saying is also found in the form «Меңөлешартык» [5], which is translated into Russian as the first example, that is, «Втысячуразлучше» / “A thousand times better”. The second proverb in translation into Russian sounds as «Тысяча и одна» / “Thousand and one”. The numerals «мең» (тысяча) / (thousand) and «бер» (один) / (one) used in the saying demonstrate not just the quantity, but an excessive abundance of something. As we can see from the translation, the use of the numeral «бер» (один) / (one) at the end of the proverb serves to exaggerate the meaning of excessiveness. The latter example can be translated into Russian as «Втысячуразлучше» / “A thousand times better”. The numeral «мең» (тысяча) / (thousand) is used to convey the meaning «лучше» / “better”. If one looks at the words used in the proverb and translates them into Russian, then we will get the double exaggeration of the meaning «лучше» / “better”. The numerical «мең» (тысяча) / (thousand) is used in its first meaning and shows quantity, a huge quantity in our example. And the word «хәер» can be rendered into the Russian language by the words such as: 1) добро, польза /good, advantage; 2) милостыня, подаяние/ alms, charity [7]. If we translate this saying word for word, we will get «Втысячураздобро (польза)» / “Good (useful) a thousand times”. The phraseological unit has a positive connotative meaning and is used when it is said that something is much better than the rest; considerably exceeds the others.

The next semantic group consists of the phraseological units, where the numeral component delivers the meaning «елекак; страдая; испытывая трудности и лишения» / “hardly; suffering; experiencing difficulties and deprivations”. Therefore, we attributed this group of the proverbs to a semantic group, having called it as “Hardly when”. Let’s consider the examples in more details:

1) Мең бәла белән [4]

2) Мең азап белән [5]

3) Мең терелде – мең үлеп [5]

The first example in translation into Russian will be «Черезтысячубед» / “Through a thousand troubles”. The numerical «мең» (тысяча) / (one thousand) is used to deliver and display the quantity, in our given example, to emphasize the “scale” of the trouble. The work by Professor F.A. Ganiev «Татарча-русчасүзлек» gives such translations of the word «бәла»: 1) беда, злоключение, несчастье; /trouble, misadventure, misfortune; 2) бич, бедствие /scourge, disaster [8]. The use of this word in the proverb serves to show what difficulties and ordeals the experienced person had to undergo. The given proverb is used when it is said about what increased efforts or tests it cost to fulfill a particular work, and also the use of this phraseology in oral and written language serves to underscore what “huge”

misadventures had to be gone through in order to do something. The second example in this semantic group can be translated as «Согромными (большими) трудностями» / “With huge (big) difficulties”. Also as in the first example above, the numeral «мең» (тысяча) / (thousand) is used to convey the meaning of “large number” of something. The Great Tatar-Russian dictionary offers the variants of translation of the word «азап» as: 1) мука, муки, мучение; / suffering, torment, pangs; 2) мытарство, страдание, невзгоды/ ordeal, anguish, miseries [9]. There occur a variant of the proverb such as «Мең газапбелән» [4]. It can be translated into the Russian language as «Через все перепрады» / “To overcome all obstacles”, the literal translation is «Через тысячу мучений» / “Through thousand torments”. If you look at the translation of the word «азап» into Russian, then we get the same meaning (1) мука, муки, мучение; 2) мытарство, страдание, невзгоды [10]), which the word «азап» had. Consequently, the word «азап» is a perfect synonym or doublet [11] of the word «азап», and the proverbs in which these words are used also fully coincide in both semantics and stylistic coloring. The latter example in this group is translated into Russian as «Тысячаразумирая, поправил ся тысячараз» / “After having died thousand times, one have recovered a thousand times”, this proverb is used when it comes to people who are suffering from doing some kind of work. In this phraseological unit, the numeral «мең» (тысяча) / (one thousand) indicates the frequency of the action that is taking place, it is used twice to exaggerate the conveyed meaning. If we look up the meanings of the words «терелгрә» and «үлергрә» in the work by F.S. Safiullina “Pocket Tatar-Russian and Russian-Tatar Dictionary”, then we will have the translations such as «терелгрә» (поправляться) (recover) [12] and «үлергрә» (умирать) / (die) [12]. The use in the phraseological recurrence of repeated numerals («мең» (тысяча) / (thousand) and the antonyms («терелгрә» (поправляться) / (recover) and «үлергрә» (умирать)) / (die) serves to stress and place the emphasize that fulfilling some work troubles someone.

Next comes the semantic group, which we called “Diversity”. The used numeral component «мең» (тысяча) / (thousand) in similar examples conveys the meaning of “variety”. Let us scrutinize the example thoroughly more:

Мең төрле [13]

This example can be translated into Russian as «Разный или разнообразный» / “Different or diverse”, and the literal translation into Russian is «Тысячаразновидностей» / “A thousand of varieties”. The number «мең» (тысяча) / (thousand) shows the quantity, that is, it is used in its first meaning. And the word «төрле» (1) is разный, разнообразный/ different, diverse; 2) всякий/ every [6]) shows diversity and heterogeneity. Based on the analysis and translation of the components of the proverb, one can say that this phraseological unit is used when it comes to abundance and diversity (different kinds). The considered proverb is also found in the variant such as «Төмән төрле» [4], it is translated into Russian as «Самые разнообразные» / “of all kinds” or «Самые разные» / “of many different kinds”. The dictionary by Professor F.A. Ganiev word «төмән» contains the following variants of translation: 1) (obsolete numeral) десять тысяч/ ten thousand; 2) тьма/ darkness [8]. The used obsolete numeral «төмән» (десять тысяч) / (ten thousand) as in the above example shows the quantity. And the example above in a literal translation will be «Десять тысяч разновидностей» / “Ten thousand varieties”. The considered proverbial saying completely coincides in stylistic color and meaning with the first example.

CONCLUSION

We analyzed the proverbial utterances of the Tatar language with the numeral component «мең» (тысяча) / (thousand) and compiled the semantic classification of proverbs, that was based on the meanings of the numerals used. In the course of the analysis, we singled out such semantic groups as: “Verbosity”, “Excessiveness”, “Hardly when” and “Diversity”. The analyzed numeral «мең» (тысяча) / (thousand) delivered the following meanings such as: quantity, quantitative relation, scale and comparison, and also performed the function of exaggeration of the conveyed meaning in the proverbs.

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