

Paremiological Units Representing “Man” And “Woman” In English And Karakalpak Languages

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Abstract: This article presents a comparative linguocultural analysis of paremiological units representing the concepts “man” and “woman” in English and Karakalpak languages. Proverbs, as culturally marked and evaluative linguistic units, function as repositories of collective memory and social norms; therefore, they provide valuable material for reconstructing gender conceptualization within national worldviews. The study is grounded in classical paremiology, cognitive linguistics, and gender theory, integrating the approaches of Mieder, Permyakov, Lakoff, Wierzbicka, and contemporary gender linguists. The findings demonstrate that while universal archetypes such as bravery, honor, care, and loyalty are present in both paremiological systems, their evaluative framing differs significantly. English proverbs tend to foreground individual autonomy and ambivalence in female representation, whereas Karakalpak proverbs emphasize communal responsibility, heroic endurance, and reverence for motherhood. Consequently, paremiological discourse reflects and perpetuates culturally specific gender models, revealing deep interconnections between language, culture, and social ideology.

Keywords: Paremiology; proverb; gender representation; masculinity; femininity; linguocultural analysis; conceptual metaphor; English language; Karakalpak language.

Introduction: Paremiological units, as fixed and culturally marked expressions, constitute one of the most stable and ideologically saturated layers of language. Indeed, proverbs function not merely as communicative devices but as condensed repositories of collective memory, moral prescriptions, and social hierarchies. Therefore, the study of gender representation in proverbs enables scholars to reconstruct culturally embedded conceptual systems that regulate male and female behavior. In this respect, the comparative analysis of English and Karakalpak paremiological units representing the concepts “man” and “woman” reveals both universal archetypes and nationally specific value orientations.

From the perspective of classical paremiology, Wolfgang Mieder defines a proverb as a “short, generally known sentence of the folk that contains wisdom, truth, morals, and traditional views in a

metaphorical and fixed form.” Consequently, proverbs serve as linguistic vehicles for transmitting cultural ideology across generations [3]. Similarly, Permyakov emphasizes that proverbs function as structural-semantic models of “typical life situations,” thereby encoding normative patterns of behavior. Thus, masculinity and femininity reflected in paremiological discourse should be interpreted as culturally stabilized conceptual constructs rather than spontaneous lexical references [4].

Furthermore, cognitive linguistics provides important methodological tools for interpreting gender conceptualization. According to George Lakoff and Mark Johnson’s theory of conceptual metaphor, abstract categories such as gender are structured through metaphorical mappings grounded in embodied experience [1]. For instance, masculinity may be conceptualized through metaphors of strength, warfare, or leadership, while femininity may be framed

as nurture, emotionality, or domestic stability. Likewise, Anna Wierzbicka's cultural-semantic approach highlights that lexical concepts such as "mother," "honor," and "bravery" are culturally loaded and cannot be fully understood outside their national worldview. Therefore, comparative paremiological analysis must address not only linguistic structure but also conceptual and axiological layers [7].

In addition, gender linguistics, particularly the works of Robin Lakoff and Deborah Tannen, demonstrates that language reflects and reinforces social power relations. Although their primary focus concerns conversational discourse, their theoretical insights are equally relevant to proverb analysis, since proverbs codify normative gender roles at the collective level [2;6]. Within Turkic folkloristic tradition, the archetype of the "er jigit" symbolizes bravery, honor, and communal responsibility, whereas maternal imagery embodies purity and moral authority. Consequently, Karakalpak paremiology, preserved in collections such as Qaraqalpaq folklori reflects socio-cultural structures shaped by pastoral economy and clan solidarity [5].

Thus, integrating paremiology, cognitive linguistics, and gender theory establishes a multidimensional framework for analyzing masculine and feminine representation in English and Karakalpak proverb systems.

When examining English proverbs, masculinity is frequently associated with autonomy, authority, and rational agency. For example, the expression "A man's home is his castle" conceptualizes the male as sovereign within the domestic sphere. Similarly, "Man proposes, God disposes" emphasizes initiative and decision-making capacity, thereby reinforcing the image of active masculine subjectivity. Furthermore, sayings such as "Boys will be boys" naturalize certain behaviors as inherent attributes of male identity. Therefore, English paremiology tends to foreground individualism and personal responsibility as core components of masculinity [4].

In contrast, Karakalpak proverbs embed masculinity within communal and ethical frameworks. Consider the proverb: "Azamat erdiñ qádirin, aǵayın bilmes, jat biler." Here, masculine worth is measured through public recognition rather than private authority. Likewise, "At jaqsısı bir otız, adam jaqsısı eki otız. This

proverb metaphorically equates the physical prime of a man with the optimal age of a noble horse, thereby highlighting vitality and social usefulness. Moreover, metaphorical mapping plays a crucial role in shaping masculine identity. The proverb: "Arǵımaq attıń balası, kúnde-kúnde shabılar. Er jigittiń balası, dáwletli jerden tabılar-draws a parallel between noble lineage in horses and honorable descent in men. Consequently, masculinity is linguistically framed through zoomorphic imagery rooted in nomadic cultural experience. Thus, the male concept in Karakalpak worldview is inseparable from resilience, mobility, and collective honor. Additionally, moral dimension is frequently emphasized: "Jaqsı attıń jasin sorama." Although structurally referring to a horse, the deeper implication concerns dignity and respect — values strongly associated with mature men. Therefore, indirect metaphor becomes a mechanism for encoding ethical expectations.

Turning to female representation, English proverbs often display ambivalence. On the one hand, "Behind every successful man there is a woman" acknowledges female influence and support. On the other hand, expressions such as "Hell hath no fury like a woman scorned" associate femininity with emotional excess. Furthermore, "A woman's work is never done" emphasizes domestic labor while reinforcing traditional division of roles. Thus, English paremiology simultaneously recognizes and stereotypes female identity.

In Karakalpak tradition, femininity is primarily framed through family-centered values. For instance: "Qız patsha boladı atasınıń úyinde." This proverb elevates the daughter's status within the paternal household, symbolizing affection and honor. Similarly, "Baydıń malı ardaqlı, jarlınıń balası ardaqlı." Here, emotional attachment to children — often mediated through maternal care — is valued above material wealth. Nevertheless, patriarchal norms are also evident: "Jaman qatınnan boydaǵım jaqsı." This saying evaluates marital behavior and emphasizes moral standards for wives. Therefore, while motherhood and daughterhood receive symbolic reverence, wifery remains subject to behavioral scrutiny [5].

Structurally, both English and Karakalpak proverbs employ parallel constructions, binary oppositions, and metaphorical imagery. However, English proverbs tend

to directly nominate “man” and “woman,” whereas Karakalpak proverbs frequently use symbolic substitutions such as horse, falcon, or kinship terms.

Semantically, masculinity in both cultures aligns with strength, endurance, and leadership. Yet, English masculinity prioritizes autonomy, while Karakalpak masculinity emphasizes communal responsibility. Likewise, femininity in English proverbs appears ambivalent, whereas in Karakalpak paremiology it is predominantly associated with family honor and emotional warmth.

The differences observed between English and Karakalpak paremiological systems can be explained through socio-historical context. English society, shaped by feudal hierarchy and later liberal individualism, produced proverbs reflecting autonomy and personal agency. Conversely, Karakalpak culture, historically grounded in pastoral economy and clan solidarity, embedded gender roles within collective survival structures. Consequently, linguistic representation mirrors socio-economic foundations.

CONCLUSION

In conclusion, paremiological units in English and Karakalpak languages encode culturally specific models of masculinity and femininity. While universal archetypes such as bravery, loyalty, and care are present in both traditions, their evaluative orientation differs significantly. English proverbs foreground individual authority and ambivalence, whereas Karakalpak proverbs emphasize communal honor and familial respect. Therefore, comparative paremiological analysis deepens our understanding of how language structures gender ideology within distinct cultural frameworks.

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