

DOI : 10.33274/2079-4835-2024-28-1-35-42

UDC 821.112.2

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## **GERMAN AND UKRAINIAN IDIOMS, PROVERBS AND SAYINGS: TRANSLATION ASPECT**

УДК 821.112.2

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## **НІМЕЦЬКІ ТА УКРАЇНСЬКІ ІДІОМИ, ПРИСЛІВ'Я ТА ПРИКАЗКИ: ПЕРЕКЛАДАЦЬКИЙ АСПЕКТ**

**Objective.** *The objective of the article is to investigate how such language genres as "sententia", "catchphrases", "maxim", "aphorism", "epigram", "slogan", "anti-proverb" differ using examples from German and Ukrainian.*

**Methods.** *The main scientific results are obtained using a complex of general scientific and special research methods, namely: descriptive (to explain the concepts of phraseology and various phraseological units), linguistic-cultural and comparative methods (to identify and classify proverbs, sayings and idioms according to their semantic characteristics), comparative analysis (when working with proverbs, sayings and idioms in German and Ukrainian languages).*

**Results.** *Proverbs, sayings, as well as religion and mass media have a great influence on the formation of public opinions and, above all, stereotypes. In the process of translating a literary text with these phraseological units, the problem is to choose a proverb or a saying in another language that would most accurately convey not only the meaning, but also the emotional colouring, stylistic and national-ethnic components. Another problem that arises in the process of translating proverbs and sayings, various idioms is that it is not individual words that should be translated, but the whole meaning. In the work, an attempt is made to give definitions and conceptual explanations of various language genres, which are often confused, such as "sententia", "catchphrases", "maxim", "aphorism", "epigram", "slogan", "anti-proverb" using examples from the German and Ukrainian languages. In some cases, it is possible to find full or partial equivalents, but most often the authors apply descriptive translation with explanations. This is explained primarily by the fact that the difference between idioms, sayings and proverbs is especially noticeable in their structure. Proverbs refer to complete statements and constitute fixed mini-texts. And only thanks to this property they can be cited. In contrast, proverbs and idioms have an open structure. They must be used in context. Like proverbs, they cannot be directly quoted, but must be reproduced.*

**Key words:** *phraseology, proverb, saying, idiom, German language*

## Introduction

Interest in comparative linguistic studies has grown significantly in recent decades. A major role in this study was played by phraseology and paramiology, i.e. sub-disciplines that deal with fixed indivisible combinations of words, i.e. idioms, proverbs and sayings. **The relevance** of the research is determined by the constant search for ways to translate German idioms, sayings and proverbs into Ukrainian.

In Ukrainian linguistics, M. Alefirenko, V. Kalashnyk, O. Levchenko, F. Medvediev, V. Mokiienko, Yu. Pradid, O. Selivanova, L. Skrypnyk, V. Uzhchenko, etc. devoted their works to the study of phraseological units. I. Holubovska, O. Levchenko, O. Panchenko, D. Uzhchenko, A. Kipriianova, I. Salata, Ts. Ohdonova, V. Mokiienko, E. Gutman, etc. explored phraseologisms with zoonyms.

**The objective** of the article is to investigate how such language genres as "sententia", "catchphrases", "maxim", "aphorism", "epigram", "slogan", "anti-proverb" differ using examples from German and Ukrainian.

## Methods

The main scientific results are obtained using a complex of general scientific and special research methods, namely: descriptive (to explain the concepts of phraseology and various phraseological units), linguistic-cultural and comparative methods (to identify and classify proverbs, sayings and idioms according to their semantic characteristics), comparative analysis (when working with proverbs, sayings and idioms in German and Ukrainian languages).

## Results and Discussions

Proverbs and sayings are reflection of the culture and history of any nation. Therefore, ancient mythology, fairy tales, the Holy Scriptures, as well as everyday life are considered the main sources of their occurrence [5, p. 170–172]. According to the modern explanatory dictionary of the Ukrainian language, a **proverb** is "an apt figurative expression, often rhythmic in structure, which summarizes and typifies various life phenomena in a concise form" [2, p. 1131], a **saying** is "an apt, often rhyming expression common in the language, close to a proverb, but without the instructive meaning characteristic of a proverb" [2, p. 1117].

Proverbs are, as a rule, short, their structure is characterized by symmetry, division into parts that rhyme with each other; their rhymes are rich and sometimes unexpected. Often proverbs are built using either syntactic parallelism ("*Хвали жито в стогу, а пана в гробу*") or juxtaposition ("*Рання пташка дзьобик чистить, а пізня очіці жмурить*"). Most often, proverbs use a metaphor, as well as hyperbole ("*Такий тупий ніж, що й киселю не ріже*"), irony ("*Поможє, як мертвому кадило*"), comparison ("*Живє, як у батька за пазухою*"), epithets ("*Живє, як у батька за пазухою*") and other tropes [8]. It is possible to identify such features of folk proverbs as a generalization of folk experience; didacticism; brevity and capacity of the expressed opinion; aptness and poetics; use of words in literal and figurative meanings; small volume.

The linguistic imagery of proverbs, sayings and idioms is the same. Figurativeness consists in the fact that figurative expressions contain a rhetorical figure. An ordinary word consists of a content and an expression, that is, a "signified" and an associated "signifier". There is nothing between them. But all the same, proverbs and sayings have what is meant. Sometimes it is identical to "signified", but usually they are different from each other. And if this is so, then we can talk about imagery. Therefore, it is possible to translate and study individual words of a foreign language that are found in a proverb or a saying, but in this case only the "meaning" can be understood. In order to be able to convey the content of a thought into the target language, it is necessary to find a complete equivalent in one's native language. However, there are perfectly (metaphorically, meaningfully, and literally) balanced equivalents, such as emphasizing that the decline of society begins with leadership:

*«Fische fangen am Haupte an zu stinken.»* [10] – *«Руба починає смердіти з голови»* [1]; to emphasize the importance of time, there is a proverb from ancient times: *«Zeit ist Geld.»* [12, p. 896] – *Час – гроші* (here and further, our translation is by A.P).

or to emphasize that in work only at the end is it determined whether it brings satisfaction:

«*Wer zuletzt lacht, lacht am besten.*» [10] – *Краще сміється той, хто сміється останнім.*

However, it is very difficult to translate proverbs and sayings that do not have a corresponding equivalent in the target language. In this case, various translation transformations are used. According to the classification of I. Korunets, there are such methods of translation as *full and partial equivalents, analog and descriptive translations, calquing*.

There are several ways of imagery, but the most popular are "metaphor," "anthropomorphism," and "animation." The last one is a form of personification, which represents "giving objects, natural phenomena or concepts the properties of a person or an animal" [2, p. 939]. A few examples are worth mentioning here:

«*Liebe erwirbt Liebe.*» [10] – «*Душа душу чує, а серце серцю вість подає.*» [3] (personification)

«*Morgenstund hat Gold im Mund.*» [12, p. 523] – Ранок ловить хробака (personification).

«*Lügen haben kurze Beine.*» [12, p. 493] – У брехні короткі ноги (personification).

«*Not lehrt beten.*» [10] – Необхідність вчить молитви (animation).

«*Wahrheit findet keine Herberge.*» [10] – Істина не знаходить притулку (animation)

«*Man muss das Eisen schmieden, solange es heiß ist.*» [12, p. 188] – Залізо треба кувати, поки воно гаряче (metaphor).

«*unter die Haut gehen*» [12, p. 338] – залізити під шкіру (metaphor).

The point illustrated by the last example certainly does not apply to animals or zoology. The veiled message is that like-minded people or even living with the same social views do not harm each other. This is how a metaphor is created, and from it also imagery.

The resources of metaphor are so great that it is impossible to count them. But another main means of metaphor is the transfer of human properties to animals. Due to their imagery, proverbs, sayings and idioms often serve to hide thoughts in the negative evaluation of other people and thus fulfill their social function.

When comparing idioms, proverbs and sayings, it must be done according to certain aspects, such as structure, function, origin, etc. The history of the emergence and development of idioms, proverbs and sayings is difficult to trace and explain. Only a few statements can be made. They do not mark a specific moment of time of occurrence, but perhaps only an era. This is possible due to individual components that are in a certain phraseological unit. The original form of a proverb or saying does not belong to one person. If this were the case, it would be impossible to see fully equivalent examples in different languages. Proverbs and sayings could appear in different places and at different times even within the same language society. And people may have chosen the best option. And, probably for this reason, there are regional differences in some proverbs and sayings even today.

The difference between idioms, sayings and proverbs is particularly noticeable in structure. Proverbs refer to complete statements and constitute fixed mini-texts. And only thanks to this property they can be quoted. In contrast, proverbs and idioms have an open structure. They must be used in context. Like proverbs, they cannot be directly quoted, but must be reproduced.

Another difference is their functionality. Generally, proverbs function as guides or judges in everyday situations because they contain universally accepted wisdom or an irrefutable rule of life. But the main function of an idiom is to make the conversation diverse and colorful.

Another difference is the content. Usually, idioms receive only a fixed meaning in a sentence, and proverbs, on the other hand, are already, so to speak, "ready to use."

From time to time a single component, some or even all components of an idiom undergo a change in meaning. They indicate a new action, situation, evaluation, person or concept with a completely new meaning or one that approaches the denotative meaning of the component. On the contrary, proverbs are unchanged in meaning. However, semantic acceptability may become debatable over time. Such a case can be illustrated by the following example: the use of the expression "*im Elfenbeinturm sitzen*" [12, p. 792] – to sit in an ivory tower. Anyone who sits in an ivory tower is admired and ridiculed at the same time. It is a place of wisdom, but it is far from reality.

*"Mein Professor lebt in seiner eigenen Welt. Er hat so verrückte und absurde Ideen, die mit der Realität überhaupt nichts zu tun haben. Er sitzt wahrlich in einem Elfenbeinturm."* [11].

Anyone who says that doesn't really have a professor sitting in an ivory tower, the stuff elephant tusks are made of. According to the Deutsche Welle website, this term comes from the Bible, where the "ivory tower" is mentioned as a symbol of a lonely place untouched by reality. However, this term has a mostly negative meaning. Because when someone sits in their ivory tower, they live only in their ideas - without any connection to the outside world. Accordingly, does it make sense in the long run because it begs the question: who wants to sit alone in a tower and not be understood by anyone?

General recognition takes less time for idioms than for proverbs and sayings. Expressions like *eine andere Platte auflegen*, *eiserne Vorhang* are not based on antiquity. On the other hand, proverbs reflect their wisdom, unchanged over many centuries.

There are a number of language genres that are also easily confused with idioms, proverbs or sayings. Such as "sententia", "catchphrases", "maxim", "aphorism", "epigram", "slogan", "anti-proverb", etc. So, let's analyze them in more detail.

A **sententia** is a "statement of an instructive nature" [2, p. 1307]. Like a proverb, this is a succinctly formulated sentence. But the main difference between them is that the source and the author of the maxim are known. Because the fact that they should appear in a literary work is a necessary condition for maxims. We can talk, for example, about Schiller's maxims. While a proverb takes its meaning from everyday life situations, a maxim contains a philosophical meaning. If the maxim is universally recognized and often used, it can be called a proverb with a change of genre. For example, G. E. Lessing's statement from his outstanding work "Einfach klassisch. Nathan der Weise" (1779) – *"Kein Mensch muss müssen!"* [10], which can be found in I. Franko's story «Не спитавши броду»: «Щоб Ви се зробили з якогось мусу, сьому не вірю. You know what Lessing says: "Kein Mensch muss müssen", therefore, you didn't have to either [9, p. 221].

Another genre is **catchphrases** or **aphorisms**. These are "apt and vivid figurative expressions originating from literary, historical, philosophical sources, folklore" [6, p. 81]. They can also come from old songs, movies or even TV spots. Phrases can be single words or groups of words and do not always need a predicate. Unlike maxims, they need not only to be known, but also to be used in general. Thanks to these properties, aphorisms occupy a place between maxims and proverbs. They do not work as proverbs or sayings because they do not convey a rule of life or a common experience. They are subjective and even mostly represent polemical and oppositional opinions. Another difference between them is that the aphorisms are written by a famous author. For example:

«Mitfreude, nicht Mitleiden macht den Freund.» (Friedrich Nietzsche) [15] – Співчуття, а не жалість, робить друга.

«Wer mit Dummköpfen kämpft, kann keine großen Siege erringen.» (Мікеланджело) [15] – Хто бореться з дурнями, той не може досягти великих перемог.

«Es ist schwieriger, eine vorgefaßte Meinung zu zertrümmern als ein Atom.» (Einstein) [15] – Важче зруйнувати упередження, ніж атом.

«Wer a sagt, der muss nicht b sagen. Er kann auch erkennen, daß a falsch war.» (Bertolt Brecht) [15] – Хто каже А, не має говорити Б. Він також може зрозуміти, що А було не вірно.

Language genres also include **maxims**. According to the large explanatory dictionary of the Ukrainian language, a maxim is a rule, a basic principle that guides a person in his actions and deeds [2, p. 639]. Often, maxims are a subjective life rule that expresses a moral principle of will and action. They are very closely related to aphorisms. The difference between them can be explained as follows: maxims are more subjective, and aphorisms, on the contrary, are usually a counterpoint to an already existing idea. Example:

«Das Beste vom Leben ist, daß man niemand zwingen kann zu leben. Wer durch eigene Niederträchtigkeit dazu gezwungen wird, ist sein eigener moralischer Büttel und Scharfrichter.» (Johann Gottfried Seume) [15] – Найкраще в житті те, що ви нікого не

можете змусити жити. Кожен, кого примушують до цього через власну ницість, сам собі моральний поплічник і кат.

«*Geduld ist die Kunst zu hoffen.*» (Luc de Clapiers) [15] – Терпіння – це мистецтво надії.

«*Das beste Mittel, den Tag zu beginnen, ist: beim Erwachen daran zu denken, ob man nicht wenigstens einen Menschen an diesem Tag eine Freude machen zu können.*» (Friedrich Nietzsche) [15] – Найкращий спосіб почати день – прокинутися і подумати, чи зможеш ти цього дня порадувати хоча б одну людину.

An **epigram** is "a short satirical or humorous poem directed against an individual or a social phenomenon" [2, p. 353]. The term comes from the Greek term and means "inscription". Thus, the translation already indicates what was mainly discussed in the epigram earlier: namely, the form of the inscription, from which an independent form of poetry later arose. However, this form of poetry does not have clear rules to which it always obeys. Importantly, however, an epigram is always a witty thought about a subject, honoring a person on a monument or grave, or providing a special interpretation of an event or condition. It is a concise, memorable, lyrical expression of feelings, moods or thoughts. Epigrams have a concise and clear form and often contain proverbs and aphorisms. Authors of epigrams are usually well-known. Example:

*"Dies ist Achilles Grab: dem fünfundten Troja zum Schrecken."*

*setzten die Griechen es hier an den Trojanischen Strand.*

*Sohn der Meeres-Göttin, du liegst am Ufer begraben,*

*daß dir die Welle des Meeres rausche dein ewiges Lob.* [14]

The above example is by Johann Gottfried Herder and illustrates the basic principle of epigrams. A feature of the funerary inscription has been preserved here, thus creating a four-line motto about Achilles, the invulnerable hero of Greek mythology. It is clear that the above epigram does not have a clear structure, but is selective and short to honor the person.

*"Querkopf! schriert ergrimmt in unsere Wälder Herr Nickel.*

*Leerkopf! schallt es darauf lustig zum Walde heraus."* [14]

This example should be understood as a mocking poem about the German writer Friedrich Nicolai, the main representative of the Berlin Enlightenment. And in this case, the malicious, often caustic character of the epigram, which looks laconic and piercing, is revealed.

It becomes clear that the epigram can basically be of two types. Either it can be understood as a sharp, perhaps wise epigram that addresses the subject intelligently or humorously, or it appears as an angry, mocking poem that critically attacks an era, a guild, or a person and presents and demonstrates it satirically.

**Slogan** is also a genre that is easy to confuse with others. According to the explanatory dictionary, a slogan is "an idea expressed in a concise form, a political demand; call" [2, p. 224]. However, its main characteristic is that it is used to convey certain facts in a concise and convincing manner. This is how the slogan differs from proverbs and sayings, which usually express wisdom or life experience. A slogan is a word or phrase whose intended use is the basis of a persuasion. That is why they simplify the facts conveyed by using stylistic devices such as alliteration, rhyme or rhythm. For the same purpose, as well as to increase the level of trust on the part of the listener, proverbs are often used as slogans. In addition, they are often used as an advertising slogan. Example:

*Ich mag, Maggi.* – I love you, Maggie. Here we are talking about Maggi chicken broth, the world-famous slogan of the advertising company "Maggi bouillon cube".

The Kinder Surprise brand has had 9 slogans throughout its history from 1988 to 2012 (the last known slogan):

«*Immer wieder anders.*» (1988) – Завжди різні.

«*In jedem 7. Ei.*» (2000) – У кожному 7-му яйці.

«*Spiel, Spaß, Spannung, Schokolade.*» (2003) – Ігри, веселощі, азарт, шоколад.

«*Ein bisschen Spaß ist immer drin.*» (2005) – Там завжди є трохи веселощів.

«*Lass Dich überraschen.*» (2007) – Дозволь себе здивувати.

«*Gemacht, um die Welt zu überraschen.*» (2009) – Створено, щоб дивувати світ.

«*Ich. Du. Überraschung.*» (2011) – Я. Ти. Сюрприз.

«*Für mehr Spaß als jemals zuvor.*» (2011) – Щоб отримати більше задоволення, ніж будь-коли раніше.

«*Na, neugierig?*» (2012) [13] – Ну, цікаво?

The genres mentioned up to this point are commonly confused with each other in German.

**Anti-proverbs** are another group of phraseological units. This is a relatively new term in linguistics, which B. Norman interprets as: "various reworkings of already ready (known) paremias: spoonerisms, velerisms, contaminated proverbs and other transformations" [7, p. 8]. Or, in other words, anti-proverbs can be called mini-parodies, the main purpose of which is a humorous, ironic consideration of certain situations. Perceptions of conventional values and norms are questioned over time. Proverbs are also affected by this process. Some proverbs are no longer necessarily considered "true sayings". Rather, they provoke "anti-proverbs" that are created from a given traditional proverb.

Anti-proverbs can be formed by various methods, for example:

- denying the statement of the proverb;
- by changing a letter or word in a proverb or saying;
- combining two proverbs;
- adding suffixes to proverbs, parodying the proverb itself.

It is difficult, if not impossible, for a foreigner to distinguish an anti-proverb from a proverb if he does not know the original version. Example: «*Die Liebe geht durch den Wagen.*

*Das schlägt dem Faß die Krone ins Gesicht.*

*Mehr Glück als Ferdinand.*

*Wie man sich bettet, so schallt man heraus.*

*Wer schläft, sündigt nicht; wer sündigt, schläft besser.*

*Reden ist Silber, Ausreden ist Gold.*

*Wer die Arbeit kennt und sich danach drängt, der ist beschränkt.*

*Wenn zwei das Gleiche tun, fallen sie selbst hinein.*

*Liebe macht blind und nicht selten ein Kind.*

*Wer die Arbeit kennt und sich nicht drückt, der ist verrückt.*» [10]

In the Ukrainian language, you can also find examples of anti-proverbs, which in most cases represent one-day sayings and are designed for the effect of a witty language game:

*Баба з возу – далі будеи;*

*Баба з возу – на душі легше;*

*Баба з возу – і вовки ситі;*

*Баба з возу – вилетить, не спіймаєи;*

*Бабу з возу – могила виправить;*

*Любиш кататися – люби і катайся;*

*Любиш кататися – люби й платити;*

*Любиш кататися – люби проходити техогляд;*

*Любиш кататися – люби й відповідати;*

*Любиш кататися – люби і грошики сплачувати;*

*Любиш кататися – люби і дорогу лагодити; Любиш кататися – люби й правила їзди.*

[4, p. 42–43].

### Conclusions

Phraseologisms in any language are an important component of the national-linguistic picture of the world. It is an undeniable fact that proverbs and sayings, various idioms are the wealth of language. And it is also obvious that some views in the cultural memory of society are based on this wealth. In addition to proverbs and sayings, religion and mass media also have a great influence on the formation of public opinions and, above all, stereotypes. In recent decades, the interest of scientists in the issues of gender linguistics, in particular in phraseology, has increased significantly. Idioms, proverbs and sayings are linguistic genres and represent subdisciplines of linguistics, but do

not have a generally accepted conceptual definition. In order to be able to draw correct conclusions, a methodical approach was followed.

This study has attempted to provide definitions and conceptual explanations of various often confused language genres. These are "sententia", "catchphrases", "maxim", "aphorism", "epigram", "slogan", "anti-proverb", etc. Therefore, whenever possible, we tried to explain these genres using examples from the German and Ukrainian languages.

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**Мета** дослідження полягає у спробі дослідити, як відрізняються такі мовні жанри, як «сентенція», «крилаті вислови», «максима», «афоризм», «епіграма», «гасло», «антиприслів'я» на прикладах з німецької та української мов.

**Методи.** Основні наукові результати отримано за допомогою комплексу загальнонаукових і спеціальних методів дослідження, а саме: описового методу (для пояснення понять фразеології та різних фразеологічних одиниць), лінгвокультурологічного та порівняльно-зіставного (для ідентифікації та класифікації прислів'їв, приказок та ідіом за їхніми семантичними характеристиками), порівняльного аналізу (при роботі з прислів'ями, приказками та ідіомами в німецькій та українській мовах).

**Результати.** На формування суспільних думок і, насамперед, стереотипів, великий вплив мають прислів'я, приказки, а також релігія та ЗМІ. В процесі перекладу художнього тексту з цими фразеологічними одиницями проблема полягає у тому, щоб підібрати таке прислів'я чи приказку в іншій мові, які б найбільш точно передавали би не тільки значення, а й ще емоційне забарвлення, стилістичний та національно-етнічний компоненти. Інша проблема, яка виникає в процесі перекладу прислів'їв та приказок, різних ідіом полягає у тому, що слід перекладати не окремі слова, а саме цілісне значення. В роботі було зроблено спробу дати визначення та концептуальні пояснення різних мовних жанрів, які часто плутають, таких як «сентенція», «крилаті вислови», «максима», «афоризм», «епіграма», «гасло», «антиприслів'я» на прикладах з німецької та української мов. В деяких випадках вдалося знайти повні або часткові еквіваленти, проте найчастіше автори вдавалися до описового перекладу з роз'ясненнями. Це пояснюється в першу чергу тим, що різниця між ідіомами, приказками та прислів'ями особливо помітна в структурі. Прислів'я стосуються завершених тверджень і становлять фіксовані міні-тексти. І тільки завдяки цій властивості їх можна цитувати. Навпаки, приказки та ідіоми мають відкриту структуру. Їх потрібно використовувати в контексті. Як і прислів'я, їх не можна прямо цитувати, а необхідно відтворювати.

**Ключові слова:** фразеологізм, прислів'я, приказка, ідіома, німецька мова