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COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS OF BIBLICALISMS IN UKRAINIAN AND ENGLISH

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КОМПАРАТИВНИЙ АНАЛІЗ БІБЛЕЇЗМІВ В УКРАЇНСЬКІЙ ТА АНГЛІЙСЬКІЙ МОВАХ

Objective. *The objective of this article is to conduct a comparative analysis of biblical expressions in Ukrainian and English..*

Methods. *The main scientific results are obtained applying a set of general scientific and special research methods, namely: analysis and generalization of scientific literature on the problems of the functioning and translation of biblicalisms; theoretical generalization, analysis and synthesis; holistic approach to the study of linguistic phenomena; comparative, descriptive and analytical methods; and the method of continuous sampling..*

Results. *The authors analyze the ways in which phraseological units of biblical origin are formed, define groups of biblical units, ways of rendering biblical expressions in the process of translation and conduct a comparative analysis of biblical units in English and Ukrainian (pointing out their common features and semantic, grammatical, and stylistic differences).*

Functioning of biblicalisms in English and Ukrainian shows intriguing similarities and marked differences, reflecting their different cultural, historical and linguistic foundations. The Bible's profound influence on language, literature, and culture has provided a rich reservoir of idiomatic and figurative expressions that resonate with speakers of both languages.

The comparative analysis of biblical phraseology between English and Ukrainian emphasizes the rich cultural and linguistic ties that exist between the two languages. These expressions play a significant role in shaping the literary and cultural heritage of each language and remain relevant in the modern context.

The authors conclude that, while some biblical sayings are translated literally from English to Ukrainian and vice versa, others may undergo adaptation according to the linguistic and cultural nuances of each language and culture. Translators often strive to preserve the original meaning and cultural significance, ensuring that the expressions resonate with the target audience.

Key words: *biblicalism, comparative analysis, lexical equivalents, phraseology*

Introduction

The Bible is the best-selling book of all time. In the Western tradition, many phrases and terms from the Bible are used as allegories, metaphors, idioms, or simply to describe the characteristics of a famous person or event. They have become an integral element of literature and description of life situations. Numerous English translations and editions of the Bible made over the centuries have given us countless proverbs, sayings and expressions, many of which have become commonplace.

Nowadays, many researchers and philologists are interested in the study of the Bible, in particular in the study of biblicalisms, their origins and peculiarities, as the language of the Bible has not yet been fully explored.

The study of biblicalisms is a dynamic and evolving field, and research is still ongoing to shed light on the nuances and complexity of these linguistic treasures found in the sacred texts of various religious traditions.

Scholars from various disciplines, including linguistics, religious studies, translation studies, and literature, are engaged in the study of biblicalisms. Prominent Ukrainian and foreign linguists and researchers who have contributed to the field include: R. Zorivchak, A. Sitko, K. Barantsev, O. Naboka, O. Dzera, R. Vakariuk, James Barr, Eugene Nida, Takamitsu Muraoka, Eberhard Bons, Robert A. Harris and others. These linguists and researchers, among many others, have contributed to the growing body of knowledge about phraseology of biblical origin.

For example, A. Talalai and A. Sitko [11] explain the reasons for the emergence of biblicalisms in countries with Christian faith. O. Naboka [8] and R. Vakariuk [4] devoted their dissertation research to various aspects and dimensions of English and Ukrainian phraseological units. R. Zorivchak [7] and O. Dzera [6] studied biblicalisms in the translation aspect.

The objective of this article is to conduct a comparative analysis of biblical expressions in Ukrainian and English.

Methods

The main scientific results were obtained using a complex of general scientific and special research methods, namely: analysis and synthesis of scientific literature on the problems of formation, functioning and translation of biblicalisms; theoretical generalisation, analysis and synthesis; a holistic approach to the study of linguistic phenomena; comparative, descriptive and analytical methods, and the method of continuous sampling

Results and Discussions

A biblicalism is a phrase, quote, sentence or word of the established biblical origin that is part of the lexical composition of a language and is recorded in the texts of that language [5]. The concept of "biblical phraseologism" or "biblical idiom" is also common, as most biblicalisms are phraseological units [5]. The meaning and structure of biblicalisms are diverse and multifaceted by nature, they function both in written and oral forms [10]. Thus, a biblicalism is a phraseological unit that can be an idiom, a catchphrase, a phraseologism, or even just a single word of biblical origin [2].

The phraseological fund of many languages of the Christian world is enriched by knowledge from the Bible. Many writers, artists, and linguists draw inspiration from the Bible because of its vast lexical, syntactic, and metaphorical resources.

Biblicalisms are an essential aspect of phraseology, which studies stable phrases and expressions in a language.

Onomastic phraseology should be singled out separately. It is distinguished by its variety of expressive, emotional and evaluative nuances and richness of structural types [9].

The translation of biblical expressions is of great importance due to the lack of a detailed linguistic description in English, as well as the translation of phraseological units whose lexical structure includes an onomastic component of biblical origin [9].

Phraseologisms cannot be translated literally, they usually have some metaphorical connotation or a ethnic meaning. Phraseological units are independent units of language and have many different characteristics. They differ from words, phrases and sentences. Because of this, most phraseological units usually do not have exact analogues in the target language [11].

Phraseological units of biblical origin have the following ways of formation [9]:

1) using a combination of words that were taken from Bible quotations:

the apple of his eye – *зіниця ока* [1, p. 34], *by the sweat of your/one's brow* – *у плоти (свого) чола* [1, p. 185], *cast the first stone* – *кинути камінь у когось, обмовляти, обвинувачувати когось* [1, p. 198].

2) biblicalisms that have the same meaning in literary and colloquial language as in the Bible: *a leopard can't change its spots* – *вовк линяє, а натури не міняє* [1], *eye for an eye, tooth for a tooth* – *око за око, зуб за зуб* [1, p. 312].

3) phrases formed from biblical quotations as a result of their misinterpretation and through associative connections: *money is the root of all evil* – *гроші – корінь зла* [1], *God helps those who help themselves* – *на Бога складайся, розуму ж тримайся; на батька надійся, а сам не поганься* [1, p. 413].

The peculiarities of biblicalisms lie in their versatility. The Bible is important for all Christian nations, but the original version of the Bible is adapted when translated to a culture and nation, their peculiarities of life and living. Therefore, the Bible is unique and dear to each nation in its own way. Biblicalism in the author's interpretation reflects the personal concept of the interpreter and the actual allusions associated with the motif in a particular socio-historical era of a nation's development [2].

The borrowing of biblical phrases in different languages comes from a single source, the Bible. Nevertheless, each language has a certain number of peculiarities, characteristic features that are determined by the history of Bible translations and the culture of the nation. The following characteristic features of biblical expressions can be distinguished: the content structure (moral and didactic, moral and ethical components), as well as linguistic and stylistic features (connotative semantic structure) [5].

The following features are characteristic of the use of biblical expressions in English:

1) Interpretation/commentary by the author. Jesus' commentary on the Greatest Commandments: «*The most important one,*" answered Jesus, *"is this: 'Hear, O Israel: The Lord our God, the Lord is one. Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind and with all your strength.' The second is this: 'Love your neighbor as yourself.' There is no commandment greater than these*» (Mark 12:29-31) [12].

2) Citation: «*I have a dream that one day every valley shall be exalted, every hill and mountain shall be made low, the rough places will be made plain, and the crooked places will be made straight, and the glory of the Lord shall be revealed, and all flesh shall see it together*» (Martin Luther King Jr.) [12].

Biblicisms perform many different functions:

- spiritual guidance (moral and ethical guidance): *Trust in the LORD with all your heart and lean not on your own understanding; in all your ways submit to him, and he will make your paths straight* (Proverbs 3:5-6) [12];

- inspiration and encouragement: «*but those who hope in the LORD will renew their strength. They will soar on wings like eagles; they will run and not grow weary, they will walk and not be faint*» (Isaiah 40:31) [12];

- lesson and guidance: «*Jesus replied: 'Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind.' This is the first and greatest commandment. And the second is like it: 'Love your neighbor as yourself'*» (Matthew 22:37-39) [12];

- prayer and worship: «*Come, let us bow down in worship, let us kneel before the LORD our Maker*» (Psalm 95:6) [12];

- historical and cultural significance: *The Ten Commandments, which have had a profound impact on Western legal and ethical traditions* (Exodus 20:1-17) [12];

- a source of proverbs and sayings: «*A gentle answer turns away wrath, but a harsh word stirs up anger*» (Proverbs 15:1) [12];

- contextualisation and interpretation: «*I can do all this through him who gives me strength*» (Philippians 4:13) [12] and others.

Biblicisms can also be found in fiction («*Greater love has no one than this: to lay down one's life for one's friends*» (John 15:13; J.R.R. Tolkien's «*The Lord of the Rings*»)) [12], press and journalism («*David vs. Goliath*», «*Good Samaritan*», «*The Promised Land*») and songs («*Hallelujah*» by Leonard Cohen).

The classification of biblicalisms differs from one another depending on the linguist's approach to this issue. According to their origin, biblicalisms are classified as [5]:

1) expressions from the Bible that already have a holistic meaning («*A drop in the bucket*» (Isaiah 40:15) [25] – «*як крапля в морі*» [13]).

2) phraseologisms expressions that have received a new phraseological interpretation, but are based on free word combinations from the Bible («*The writing is on the wall*» (Daniel 5:1-31) [12] – «*(зловісне) ознака; письмена на стіні*» [13]).

3) phraseological units not represented by this lexical composition in the Bible, but semantically corresponding to its texts («*Spare the rod, spoil the child*» (Proverbs 13:24) [12] – «*різку пошкодуєш - дитини зіпсуєш*» [13]).

4) phraseology that is found only in the Bible. They can be divided into the following groups:

1. pre-biblical («*The blind leading the blind*» (Matthew 15:14); «*A leopard can't change its spots*» (Jeremiah 13:23) [12]);

2. post-biblical:

- biblicalisms which have been modified through the metaphorisation of biblical phrases; internationalisms («*Suffer fools gladly*» (2 Corinthians 11:19) [12]);

- biblicalisms that are not found in the Bible («*The salt of the earth*», «*The apple of one's eye*»).

In her work "Biblicalisms from the Gospel of Matthew and the Nature of Their Representation in Modern Reference Literature", O. Naboka distinguishes three groups of biblicalisms [8; 10]:

1. Biblicalisms that acquire a figurative meaning but have a direct meaning in the Bible: «*Let there be light*» (Genesis 1:3) – «*Хай станеться світло!*» (Буття 1:3), «*Turn the other cheek*» (Matthew 5:39) – «*нідстав йому й другу (щоку)*» (Від Матвія 5:39).

2. Phraseologisms of biblical origin that has figurative and metaphorical meanings in the Bible: «*Pearls before swine*» (Matthew 7:6) – «*перел своїх перед свиньми*» (Від Матвія 7:6)/*метати бісер перед свинями*, «*A drop in the bucket*» (Isaiah 40:15) – «*крапля з відра*» (Ісаї 40:15) [12; 14].

3. Biblical expressions that allude to a particular biblical parable or episode: «*The Good Samaritan*» (Luke 10:25-37) – *добрий самарянин*, «*Prodigal Son*» (Luke 15:11-32) – *блудний син* [12].

It is also necessary to distinguish the classification of biblicalisms according to their meaning:

1. sayings that have to do with God: «*In the beginning, God created the heavens and the earth*» (Genesis 1:1) – «*На початку Бог створив Небо та землю*» (Буття 1:1).

2. phrases containing animal names: «*Lamb of God*» (John 1:29) – «*Агнець Божий*» (Іван 1:29), *as meek as a lamb* – *слухняний, лагідний як ягня*.

3. statements related to religious holidays and weekends: «*Sabbath day*» (Exodus 20:8-11) – «*день суботний*» (Вихід 20:8), «*Passover*» (Exodus 12:1-28) – *пасхальний агнець, пасха єврейська, Easter – Великдень* [12; 14].

4. names of holy texts and commandments: *Genesis* – *Буття*, *Exodus* – *Вихід*, *The Ten Commandments* – *Десять заповідей*.

5. names of places, possessions, land: *Jerusalem* – *Єрусалим*, *Bethlehem* – *Віфлеєм*, *Garden of Eden* – *Едемський сад*.

Thus, the Bible is an inexhaustible source of knowledge: quotations, idioms, catchphrases and phrases, without which it is difficult to imagine the existence of literature, history and culture. Biblicalisms play a very important role in both English and Ukrainian and have their own peculiarities, functions and classifications. They refresh the text and make it more interesting.

Both English and Ukrainian cultures share a common biblical heritage through their historical links to Christianity. As a result, many biblical expressions are present in both languages, often with similar or identical meanings.

While some biblical expressions are translated by its equivalent from English into Ukrainian and vice versa, others may be adapted to suit the linguistic and cultural nuances of each language and culture. Translators often strive to preserve the original meaning and cultural significance, ensuring that the expressions resonate with the target audience. Certain phraseologisms of biblical origin in Ukrainian is probably more influenced by the Eastern Orthodox Christian tradition, while English expressions may reflect the influences of different Christian denominations. This can lead to subtle differences in the use and interpretation of biblical expressions.

In both languages some biblical expressions have acquired figurative or idiomatic meanings beyond their literal interpretation. These expressions are often used in a variety of contexts, including literature, politics, and everyday conversation, to convey specific messages or add depth to communication.

Let's do the comparative analysis of biblical expressions in English and Ukrainian and how they are reproduced:

1. It should be noted that the concepts and areas of use of biblicalisms in English and Ukrainian have much in common. When translating these group of biblicalisms Ukrainian equivalents are used, for example:

Good Samaritan – добрий самаритянин; *forbidden fruit* – заборонений плід; *apple of one's eye* – зіниця ока; *flesh and blood* – плоть і кров; *lost sheep* – заблукала вівця [1; 3].

2. Biblicalisms that have acquired phraseological significance only in one language of the two.

There are many phraseologisms of biblical origin that are used and more common only in English. Therefore, this is a problem for the translator. It is necessary to find a lexical equivalent in the target language, i.e. in Ukrainian, to convey the same meaning and content. A linguist can resort to various ways of translating such biblical expressions: descriptive translation, explanation, phraseologism, etc:

cloud no bigger than a man's hand – знак, що попереджає про зміни; *finger on the wall* – провісник прийдешнього нещастя, почуття приреченості; *to make bricks without straw* – працювати без потрібного матеріалу, битися над нездійсненною справою; *to see how the land lies* – зрозуміти стан речей [3].

Similarly, in the Ukrainian language one can find biblical expressions that are used very rarely or not at all in English:

всякій тварині по нпi – all sorts of people/animals; *знайшов чим здивувати* – the ark rested on mount Ararat; *не виправдати надії* – find wanting; *після дощукі в четверг/коли рак на горі свисне* – when the Ethiopian changes his skin [3].

3. Biblicalisms that have acquired phraseological meaning in both languages, but some differences can be noticed:

1) Semantic differences.

There is variation in the meaning or interpretation of words, phrases or expressions in different contexts or between different languages. The basic meaning of the biblical phrases is the same, but there are differences in the sphere of use:

God/Lord – the creator and ruler of the universe and the source of all moral authority; the supreme being. This word is a very meaningful and universal term that is used in various contexts and areas of human life. Let's look at a few meanings:

- god, deity:

to worship God – поклонятися богові; *to praise God* – прославляти бога; *our Lord* – Христос; *the Lord's Prayer* – молитва господня, «Отче наш» [1];

- idol:

God (або Heaven) forbid – крий, боже; не доведи, Господу!; *God's people* – духівництво;

- lord, master, overlord, ruler, benefactor:

our sovereign Lord the King – *король, наш верховний повелитель* [1].

Adam – the first person created by God (Book of Genesis):

- caddis: *Adam's apple* – *адамове яблуко*;
- water: *Adam's ale, wine* – *в українській мові немає відповідника*;
- very old: *as old as Adam* – *стара, як світ*;
- faithful servant: *the faithful Adam* – *також немає відповідника* [1].

2) Grammatical differences.

In both languages there are different patterns (morphological, tactical) of using biblical equivalents, for example:

folds one's hands/arms – *сидіти склавши руки*; *to fix a millstone about/around one's neck* – *взяти на себе тяжку відповідальність*; *in Abraham's bosom* – *на лоні Авраама (в стані блаженної насолоди)*; *in all one's glory/majesty* – *у всій славі своїй* [3].

3) Stylistic differences.

Ukrainian and English equivalents may function in different language styles and may also have some additional explanation. For example: the biblical phrase **a drop in the bucket** has a Ukrainian equivalent **крапля в морі**. While both biblicalisms convey the same metaphorical meaning of something small or insignificant in comparison to the larger whole, they differ in terms of style. The English idiom *a drop in the bucket* has deep roots in the Bible, as it comes from the Book of Isaiah in the Old Testament. On the other hand, the Ukrainian equivalent *крапля в морі* has no direct biblical origin and is not tied to a specific religious reference. Both idioms use different stylistic images to convey the same metaphorical idea. The English idiom uses "bucket" to represent a larger whole, while the Ukrainian idiom uses "sea" as a broader context.

4. Biblical expressions that are reproduced in English translation not with the help of a Ukrainian lexical equivalent, but with another biblical expression or phraseologism. For example:

the Act of God – *стихийне лихо*; *all in all* – *предмет любові*; *to come to light* – *з'явитися на світ божий*; *the eleventh hour* – *останній момент*; *by the skin of your teeth* – *ледве-ледве, з зривом навтіл* [5].

5. Biblicalisms used in the Latin version in English and translated into Ukrainian:

Ecce Homo (*Behold the man*) (John 19:5) – *Оце Чоловік!* (Іван 19:5);

Agnus Dei (*Lamb of God*) (John 1:29) – *«Агнецъ Божий»* (Іван 1:29);

Kyrie eleison (*Lord, have mercy*) – *Господи, помилуй*;

Et verbum caro factum est (*And the Word was made flesh*) (John 1:14) – *І Слово сталося тілом* (Іван 1:14) [12; 14].

Therefore, in order to find the most appropriate and accurate equivalent in the target language, the translator needs to clearly identify the type/species of biblicalisms usage. English has more phraseologisms of biblical origin due to its historical and cultural heritage, and it is more commonly used than Ukrainian, which can cause linguists some difficulties when translating it.

Overall, the comparative analysis of biblical phraseologisms between English and Ukrainian highlights the rich cultural and linguistic links that exist between the two languages. These expressions play a significant role in shaping the literary and cultural heritage of each language and remain relevant in the modern context.

Conclusions

It can be concluded that the functioning of biblicalisms in English and Ukrainian shows intriguing similarities and marked differences, reflecting their different cultural, historical and linguistic backgrounds. The profound influence of the Bible on language, literature and culture has provided a rich reservoir of idiomatic and figurative expressions that resonate with speakers of both languages.

Biblicalisms have a significant cultural resonance in both English and Ukrainian, often serving as cross-cultural references that convey universal concepts and moral teachings. The translation of biblical expressions requires linguistic adaptations to match the idiomatic, syntactic and stylistic features of each language, while preserving the essence and theological depth of the original texts. Many biblical expressions have theological implications, requiring careful consideration of religious connotations and cultural sensitivities in translation and interpretation.

Both languages are rich in idiomatic and figurative phraseologisms of biblical origin, and understanding their figurative meaning is crucial for accurate interpretation and effective communication. Their translation and use have had a significant impact on the development and enrichment of English and Ukrainian vocabulary and literary styles. However, translators face difficulties in translating biblical expressions accurately, which leads to creative strategies for conveying intended messages while respecting cultural and linguistic nuances.

Biblicalisms have become an integral part of literature, media and everyday speech, shaping the literary identity and cultural heritage of both languages. Their study in both languages embraces an interdisciplinary approach that intertwines theology, linguistics, translation studies, and cultural analysis.

Ultimately, the functioning of biblicalisms in English and Ukrainian embodies the timeless power of language to bridge cultures, convey profound truths, and inspire meaningful communication. Exploring these features enhances our appreciation of the Bible's enduring legacy and its transformative impact on language and culture in two distinct linguistic domains.

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Метою статті є компаративний аналіз біблеїзмів в англійській та українській мовах.

Методи. Основні наукові результати отримані із застосуванням комплексу загальнонаукових і спеціальних методів дослідження, а саме: аналізу та узагальнення наукової літератури з проблем функціонування та перекладу біблеїзмів; теоретичного узагальнення, аналізу і синтезу; цілісного підходу до вивчення мовних явищ; порівняльного, описового та аналітичного методів, методу суцільної вибірки.

Результати. Автори аналізують способи утворення фразеологізмів біблійного походження, визначають групи біблеїзмів, способи відтворення біблеїзмів в перекладі, проводять компаративний аналіз біблеїзмів англійської та української мов (вказують на їх спільні риси та семантичні, граматичні і стилістичні відмінності).

Функціонування біблеїзмів в англійській та українській мовах демонструє інтригуючі подібності та помітні відмінності, що відображає їхні різні культурні, історичні та мовні основи. Глибокий вплив Біблії на мову, літературу та культуру подарував багатий резервуар ідіоматичних і образних виразів, які переживаються з носіями обох мов.

Компаративний аналіз фразеологізмів біблійного походження між англійською та українською підкреслює багаті культурні та мовні зв'язки, які існують між двома мовами. Ці вислови відіграють значну роль у формуванні літературної та культурної спадщини кожної мови та залишаються актуальними в сучасному контексті.

Автори доходять висновку, що, у той час як деякі біблійні вислови перекладаються дослівно з англійської мови на українську та навпаки, інші можуть зазнавати адаптації відповідно до мовних і культурних нюансів кожної мови та культури. Перекладачі часто прагнуть зберегти оригінальний зміст і культурне значення, забезпечуючи резонанс виразів у цільовій аудиторії.

Ключові слова: біблеїзм, компаративний аналіз, лексичний відповідник, фразеологічний фонд