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ОТРАЖЕНИЕ СЕМЕЙНЫХ ЦЕННОСТЕЙ В АНГЛИЙСКИХ, РУССКИХ  
И КЫРГЫЗСКИХ ПОСЛОВИЦАХ И ПОГОВОРКАХ

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Рассматриваются сходства и различия семейных ценностей в разных лингвокультурах.

*Ключевые слова:* пословица; семейные ценности; отношения.

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THE REFLECTION OF FAMILY VALUES IN ENGLISH, RUSSIAN,  
AND KYRGYZ PROVERBS AND SAYINGS

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The article deals with similarities and differences of family values in the different linguocultures.

*Keywords:* proverb; family values; relationships.

Proverbs are one of the oldest folk genres handed down from generation to generation in different ways and taken from different sources. A proverb is an aphoristically concise, imaginative, logical and grammatically complete sentence with an instructive meaning in rhythmically organized form. A saying is a short figurative expression that aptly defines a phenomenon of life, devoid of instructive synthesis of meaning in contrast to proverbs.

The study of proverbs is not the domain of only linguistics but also the domain of other fields. For example, proverbs are widely applied in psychology and culture. Proverbs of the world's peoples have much in common but along with this, there are specific features that characterize the original culture of particular people and their long history.

Proverbs are widely represented in all modern languages, including Russian, Kyrgyz, and English. Their frequent use in speech and writing is primarily due to the fact that they give it a special touch and make it more imaginative and expressive. In addition, it must be emphasized that proverbs have the emotional and stylistic coloring; thus, they improve the communicative function of languages.

Proverbs contain a deep meaning and folk wisdom which is rooted in the distant past. We can see culture, traditions, and history of the people through proverbs; we can know what is good and bad; we can feel what a wonderful tool for educating human morality, culture, spirituality this wisdom can be. Everyone, regardless of where he lives and how well educated he is, uses

different proverbs in speech in his life [1]. All this happens, probably, because the value of proverbs lies in their brevity and capacity of the transmitted meaning.

The content of proverbs is specific. All together they reflect life more fully than any other genre of folklore. Subjects of works of other genres (fairy tales, epics, historical songs) to some extent are limited, and the themes of proverbs are nearly boundless. They respond to all the phenomena of reality, reflect the life and ideology of people in all their diversity; they convey common life, social, philosophical, religious, ethical, and aesthetic views of people. Moreover, the essence of proverbs lies in their advice-giving property. Proverbs do not only depict the phenomena or assess them but also give a piece of advice, solution, or direction for further actions.

Now let us consider how family values are reflected in English, Russian, and Kyrgyz proverbs and sayings.

Family is not only a historically established form of human life, but it is also a biological necessity. The famous German philosopher L. Feuerbach writes about the family: "A real human appears only when husband and wife come together; husband and wife are the kin-reality since their union is the source of other people" [2].

Family is a group of people based on collaborative family activities related to each other by marriage, parenthood, and relationship ties. Family is one of the greatest values created by mankind in all its history. Neither a nation nor a cultural community can exist without the institution of family. Both society and the

state are interested in its positive development and strengthening.

Family is a social unit that is very significant for a person in his life. In the English, Russian, and Kyrgyz linguistic cultures, family bonds are highly valued, i.e. family members or relatives are more important than outsiders, those who are not related by blood: *Blood is thicker than water. Кровь – не вода.*

Like many other nations, for Englishmen, Russians, and the Kyrgyz the main thing in keeping and preserving a close-knit family is harmony. They believe that family with strong bonds and traditions is more likely to maintain close relations in the future. The following proverbs reflect the value of harmony and mutual-understanding in the family:

*Дом согревает не печь, а любовь и согласие.  
The family that prays together – stays together.  
Ырыс алды – ынтымак.*

Every person, regardless of age, needs a happy and supportive family. The fact that the traditional family preserves mental peculiarities and a cultural potential source of nations raises no doubts. All these features are best reflected in the mirror of culture – language. And here proverbs clearly represent the culture, values, ideas of right or wrong, and the norms of behavior of people. However, are family values similar in Russian, Kyrgyz, and English linguistic cultures? Let us consider some examples.

I. First, let us consider the value of the family itself and the relationship between spouses in different cultures.

The concept of “a family” was of great importance for Russians from the ancient times. The family is believed to give a person life full of happiness and joy. The basis of a family is harmony. The close-knit family is formed when all family members stand together against difficulties: *Согласную семью и горе не берет. На что клад, когда в семье лад. Не будет добра, коли в семье вражда. Семья сильна, когда над ней крыша одна.*

The English and Kyrgyz languages have no such proverbs. This does not mean that for British and the Kyrgyz people family is not important, but it becomes clear how important it is for the Russian linguistic culture.

If family for the Russian people stands foremost, Englishmen put family after career: *First thrive – then wife* and the Kyrgyz people, after health: *Биринчи байлык-ден-соолук, экинчи байлык – ак жоолук.*

In Russian and English, there are many proverbs that advise not to hurry with the choice of a spouse, since this choice is not for one day but for the whole life:

*Жениться – не напасть, да как бы, женившись, не пропасть.*

*Жениться на скорую руку, обречь себя на вечную муку.*

*Marry in haste, and repent at leisure.*

According to proverbs, Englishmen and the Kyrgyz people turned out to be more religious in this respect than Russians. They believe that marriages are arranged by God:

*Marriages are made in heaven. Кудай кошкон куда болот.*

Although the Kyrgyz people have many superstitions, they appeared to be less superstitious in the matter of marriage. Several superstitions were found in the English and Russian languages related to time and weather of the wedding day:

*Marry in March, repent always.*

*Рад бы жениться, да май не велит.*

*Снег и дождь на свадебный поезд – богато жить.*

All three nations are convinced that there is no an ideal family. Each family is happy or unhappy in a certain way:

*There is a black sheep in every flock. В семье не без урода.*

*Every family's cooking pot has one black spot.*

*Бир кумалак бир карын майды чиртет.*

In the Kyrgyz culture, the main way of getting married was an arranged marriage, i.e. parents of a bride and a bridegroom could arrange the wedding beforehand, even without the agreement of young people. They believed that good parents could bring up good children. This is revealed in the following proverbs: *Аял албай кайын ал. Энесин көрүп, кызын ал.*

Russian marriages were held with the help of matchmakers. So the important role was given to matchmakers: *Выбирай не невесту, а сваху.*

There were arranged marriages in the Russian culture as well. Probably, not always such marriages were happy; therefore, there appeared such proverbs that advise to marry only for love: *С любимым рай и в шалаше.*

Based on this, we can conclude that Russians are mainly motivated by emotions, and the British people appeal to common sense. The following proverb proves it: *When poverty comes in at the door, love flies out of the window.*

The status of a bride and a bridegroom is one of the defining factors of marriage. All three linguistic cultures wish the bride and bridegroom to be from one and the same stratum of society:

*Cut your coat according to your cloth.*

*Руби дерево по себе.*

*Тең теңи менен, тезек кабы менен.*

As for the relationship between spouses, the Russian and Kyrgyz people have proverbs saying that good wives make good husbands, thus, considering this process as one-sided:

*От плохой жены состаришься, от хорошей помолодеешь.*

*Жакшы аял жаман эркекти жакшы кылат, жакшыны хан кылат.*

*Эрди эр кылган дагы аял, эрди жер кылган дагы аял.*

*Аял жакшы – эр жакшы, вазир жакшы – хан жакшы.*

However, in the Kyrgyz language, there is a proverb showing this phenomenon as a two-sided process: *Алган эри жарашса, кара катын ак болот.*

Englishmen also have such proverbs, and their democratic nature is seen from proverbs considering the process of improvement of spouses as two-sided:

*A good Jack makes a good Jill. A good wife makes a good husband.*

**The position of men in the family is higher than women's in the Russian and Kyrgyz cultures, thus, informing that the trace of patriarchy is still preserved in family relationships:**

*Алтын баштуу катындан, бака баштуу эр артык.*

*Курица не птица, баба не человек.*

As for the English culture, they can trust their wives with the last decision:

*Women will have the last word.*

However, in spite of the principles of equality between male and female, the Englishmen prefer a husband as a head of the family to a wife:

*It's a sad house where the hen crows louder than the cock.*

The criterion for a good wife varies from culture to culture. If Englishmen value cheerful wife, the Russian would like to marry a kind woman, and the Kyrgyz are willing to have wives skilled at house holding:

*Добрую жену взять – ни скуки, ни горя не знать.*

*A cheerful wife is the joy of life.*

*Бардык жигит кыз тандайт, бактылуу жигит ууз тандайт.*

II. The next group of proverbs reflects the peculiarities of bringing up children.

Large families were common to a patriarchal family in Russia. It was believed that the more children the family had the better, and a number of Russian proverbs were dedicated to this topic: *Дети – благодать Божья.*

*Татьяна хромонога, народила детей много.*

As for the Kyrgyz families, they also used to have many children. However, there are no proverbs showing the number of children in the family. On the one hand, it informs that it was natural for the Kyrgyz people to have many children so that they did not even ponder on the topic. But they have proverbs about children bringing happiness like in Russian and Eng-

lish societies: *Балалуу үйдө бакыт бар. Балалуу үй-базар, баласыз үй-мазар.*

*Семья без детей – что цветок без запаха. Children are poor men's riches.*

In England, children are impeccably mannered. It is believed that parents should be too strict than to be too soft. "Spoiled children who constantly call attention to themselves by asking something or complaining about something are rarity in English families. A child is aware from an early age that the world around him is a kingdom of adults. He is used to be on his own and as less as possible to remind parents of his existence. While children grow up at home, they should not be heard. And during their school-age, ideally, they should not be visible. This is a characteristic feature of the English way of life" [3].

*Children should be seen and not heard. Spare the rod and spoil the child.*

Rigour and discipline that prevail in English families are also reflected in the following proverb: *Early to bed and early to rise makes a man healthy, wealthy, and wise.*

The Kyrgyz people give the following advice for raising a child:

- To start upbringing from the birth: *Баланы жашынан, аялды башынан.*
- To bring up children not with the help of physical punishment but with wit: *Баланы таяк менен эмес, акыл менен тарбияла.*
- To respect children and listen to their words, for there is possibility that children are sometimes more sagacious than parents: *Баладан да байгамбардык сөз чыгат.*
- To be a good example for them, since children tend to imitate people surrounding them: *Бала көргөнүн кылат. Уядан эмне көрсө, учканда ошону алат*

Russian proverbs and sayings reflect bitter consequences of poor parenting, too:

*На старости две радости: один сын – вор, другой – пьяница.*

The sex of children was important for the Kyrgyz and Russian societies since a son was treated as an heir and one who continues the family name. Daughters were to get married and continue the family name of their husbands: *Сестра при брате не вотчинница (не наследница).*

*Чыккан кыз чийден тышкары.*

Since the sex of children was of much importance for the Kyrgyz people, they tended to divide the upbringing of a child into mother's or a father's responsibility depending on the sex of the child. If it's a daughter, her upbringing was mother's duty, if it's a son, then father's duty:

*Бала жакшысы атанын даңкы, кыз жакшысы энинин даңкы.*

As for the western culture, they did not mind to have both sons and daughters, but if the chance was given, they were willing to have a daughter rather than a son:

*A son is a son till he gets him a wife, but a daughter's a daughter the rest of your life.*

All three linguistic societies believe that children always resemble their parents in physical appearance, character traits, attitude to life, and particular abilities:

*Уядан эмне көрсө, учканда ошону алат.*

*The apple never falls far from the tree.*

The following proverb does not only define parent-child relationship, but it is also employed to express family relations in general. This expression denotes that family members, who belong to certain fields or whose occupations are related to providing services for customers, often neglect their families in the spheres that they represent. In this case, the example is about shoemaking business, but the same phrase can be applied to doctors, teachers, etc.: *The shoemaker's son always goes barefoot. Сапожник без сапог.*

III. The third group of proverbs and sayings are related to relationships with family members and other people.

There are many Russian and Kyrgyz proverbs reflecting respectful attitude to the older:

*Родителей чти – не собьешься с истинного пути.*

*Сен сыйласаң карыңды, кудай сыйлайт барыңды.*

An important role in Russian and Kyrgyz families is given to grandparents. Children are seldom brought up by parents; they are usually raised by grandparents. In most cases, they look after children; thus, there is no need for the children to go to a kindergarten at the day time. This is reflected in the following proverbs and sayings:

*Была б моя бабуся, никого не боюся; бабушка – щиток, кулак – молоток.*

*Балаңдан бөлүп кутуласың, небереңден өлүп кутуласың.*

The Kyrgyz patriarchal system in the family influenced the “grandparents and grandchildren” relationship. Grandparents usually liked their sons’ children because they were descendants of the tribe and would keep their family name. There are two different concepts for denoting grandchildren on the son’s and daughter’s part. Thus, daughters’ children were treated negatively and even were not considered as relatives: *Жээн эл болбойт, желки тон болбойт.*

There is only one proverb in English reflecting the relationship between grandparents and grandchildren: *Children's children are a crown to the aged, and parents are the pride of their children.*

The absence of proverbs containing the concepts of “father-in-law”, “son-in-law”, “aunt”, “nephew”, “niece”, “grandmother”, “widower” suggests that distant relatives are not so important for Englishmen.

Non-importance of family bonds in Western mentality is emphasized by many authors. Thus, V.V. Ovchinnikov writes that “Independence boarding with estrangement is the basis of human relationship in Britain. Not only friends or relatives but even parents and children do not feel responsibility or affection to each other. English family is closed inside – each family member keeps his privacy” [3].

As for the Kyrgyz culture, there are many proverbs reflecting relationships among even distant relatives. For example, there is a constant and invisible ‘battle’ between a mother-in-law and a daughter-in-law. It was probably caused by living together in one house:

*Кайнене айбаттуу болсо, келини уяттуу болот.*

There are two concepts denoting a mother-in-law in Russian: “теща” – wife’s mother and “свекровь” – husband’s mother. Nevertheless, most of the Russian proverbs are about “свекровь”. It was probably caused by the fact that sons lived together with parents: *Свекровь на печи, что собака на цепи.*

Sisters-in-law and brothers-in-law were reasons of family conflicts for Russian people:

*Золовка – змеиная головка.*

*Золочки-колотовки, побей головки.*

*Золовка хитра на уловки.*

As for the brothers and sisters-in-law relationship in the Kyrgyz culture, good relationships are noticed between a sister and a brother-in-law, a brother and a sister-in-law. The worst relationship is among wives of brothers. This is caused by the fact that brothers used to live together in one house even after marriage: *Абысын – аңдышкан жоо.*

The loveliest relationship was between the youngest sister and a sister-in-law. The youngest sister was usually a friend of her sister-in-law. They had common interests; therefore, the younger sister shared all her secrets with her sister-in-law: *Кыздын сыры жеңесине маалым.*

In ancient Russia, a considerable role was given to godmothers. Godmothers were chosen carefully, for they were the models for children: *Добрая кума прибавит ума.*

Thus, having analyzed the proverbs reflecting family values in all three languages, we can draw the following conclusions.

Firstly, regarding marriage, the Russian people prefer marrying for love guided only by feelings in choosing a partner. Englishmen marry with a common sense and at a later age. As for the Kyrgyz people, alongside with love and harmony, the process of marriage was greatly influenced by parents’ opinion

and the purpose of strengthening relationship between people. From this we can conclude that the Kyrgyz are more dependent on public opinion and social affairs. Russian and English linguistic cultures have proverbs advising not to rush with the choice of a life partner, while there is no one in the Kyrgyz language. This fact informs us of a high level of patience of the Kyrgyz people, who are ready to do their best to keep their family even if there are problems. In all three cultures, in the marital relationship, love, harmony, and understanding are valued, but in the English phraseology, proverbs on this subject are fewer than in the Russian and Kyrgyz languages. This is due, perhaps, to the fact that the British do not tend to make their personal affairs known to the public and do not publicly express their feelings as to their spouses and children.

Secondly, in the Russian and Kyrgyz collectivistic culture where, in most cases, several generations live together, showing respect to the elders is important. Grandparents often play the role of nurses, so there are many proverbs and sayings on this topic. As for the English individualistic culture, children leave home early and start living on their own independent from their parents. Elderly people in England also value their independence preferring to spend time for themselves, their hobbies, traveling, and not to take care of children and grandchildren. Therefore, it is natural for the English language to have no sayings on this subject.

Thirdly, there is a difference in attitudes and approaches to children and to their upbringing in three

cultures. British are strict in raising children, physical punishments were popular. Children are aware that they live in the realm of adults; they are not pampered, and from an early age are taught to be independent. In the Russian culture, on the contrary, "all the best is for kids." Russian children are spoiled with attention and care. For parents, their children remain children forever, and they consider it as their duty to take care of them as long as possible. The Kyrgyz people turned out to be more philosophical and modern in bringing up children. Their methods fit almost all the requirements of the modern pedagogy: to bring up not with the help of physical punishment, but with wit; not to tell a lie in the presence of a child; to speak to them thoughtfully and carefully; to show a good example; to pay attention to their opinion and thoughts.

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