Sadova H. Yu.
V. O. Sukhomlynskyi Mykolaiv National University

GRADATIONAL CONSTRUCTIONS
IN THE WORLD FOLKLORE PICTURE

The article analyzes the world folklore picture as one of the incarnations of the world picture of traditional folk culture. One of the most vivid means of the world folklore picture representation is gradational proverbs with an adjective in the comparative degree. Gradation is a comparison, since the degree of intensity of an object quality is only a degree in comparison with the intensity of the other objects corresponding quality.

The purpose of the article is to identify the specifics of gradational constructions in the world folklore picture by analyzing proverbs with various comparatives: лучше / хуже, больше / меньше, выше / ниже, дороже / дешевле, умнее / глупее (better / worse, more / less, higher / lower, more expensive / cheaper, smarter / more stupid), etc. Characteristic types of gradational constructions in proverbs have been considered, representation of donor and recipient concept spheres has been revealed, principles of combining compared images have been analyzed, and comparison patterns in gradational constructions have been described.

A stable trend of representation in the gradational constructions of donor and recipient concept spheres of the world folklore picture "Man", "Object", "Animal", and "Abstraction" has been described in the article. The general characteristics of the entities compared are not decisive in gradational proverbs. Comparison in these constructions is carried out on the basis of focusing on the degree of certain qualities manifestation in the compared phenomena. The proposed interpretation of the semantic properties of gradational constructions makes it possible to compare phenomena not only from one concept sphere, but also from different ones. It has been revealed that the basis of such comparisons is the consequences that arise when one compares situations existing on the basis of the compared concepts, as well as popular stereotypes, with which the preference of a particular concept sphere is revealed in the course of situational consideration. Different extending elements and limitatives, giving the compared entities contrasting features, help not only to the paradox elimination, but also the concept sphere priority. The advantage may be due to the situation and socio-psychological conditions of the creation and use of proverbs. The study to gradational proverbs is promising not only for describing the category of comparison, but also for understanding the nature and features of the world folklore picture.

Key words: gradational construction, comparative, concept sphere, proverb, basis of comparison, world folklore picture.

Formulation of the problem. The world folklore picture is considered to be "one of the images, one of the incarnations of the world picture of traditional folk culture" [1, p. 11]. Along with the reflection of the folk experience the world folklore picture contains an ancient view of the world, which is embodied in numerous stereotypes that proverbs bristle with. The world folklore picture differs from the world linguistic picture both in the composition of components and in structure. Since prescientific, naive, mythological representations are recorded in the world folklore picture, the set of the most significant of them that have undergone conceptualization does not coincide with the one presented in the modern world linguistic picture as a whole. Folklore concepts, which coincide with general cultural concepts at the conceptual level, may differ from them at the figurative one.

One of the most vivid means of the world folklore picture representation is gradational proverbs with an adjective in the comparative degree. Gradation is an expression of the intensity degree of phenomena or relations and "in its deepest essence is a comparison, since the degree of intensity of an object quality is only a degree in comparison with the intensity of the other objects corresponding quality" [7, p. 94].

Recent researches and publications. The forms semantic features of degrees of comparison in gradational constructions have been considered in the works of S. Ya. Alexandrova, O. P. Barmenkova, V. P. Berkov, A. V. Bondarko, A. Vezhbitskaya, A. B. Letuchego, Kh. D. Leemets, V. P. Musienko,

E. Sapir, K. P. Herberman, M. I. Cheremisina and others. The analysis of gradational constructions in the world picture context has been carried out in the studies of V. N Teliya, N. P. Tropina, A. D. Shmelev, etc. However, the question of the mechanisms and specifics of gradational constructions in the world folklore picture still stands.

The purpose of the article is to identify the specifics of gradational constructions in the world folklore picture by analyzing proverbs with various comparatives: *лучше (не хуже) / хуже (не лучше), больше/ меньше, выше/ ниже, короче (ближе) / длинней (дальше), милее/тошнее, дороже/дешевле, умнее (умней, разумнее, мудренее, мудреней) / глупее, слаще/горче (не слаще), злее, опаснее, смирнее, страшней, привязчивее, привередливей, светлее, звонче (better (no worse) / worse (no better), more / less, higher / lower, shorter (closer) / longer (further), sweeter / more nauseous, more expensive / cheaper, smarter (smarter, more sensible, wiser) /more stupid, sweeter / bitter (not sweeter), angrier, more dangerous, meeker, scarier, more affectionate, more fastidious, lighter, louder)*, etc. [5; 6]. The purpose of the study determines the formulation of the following tasks: 1) to consider the characteristic types of gradational constructions in proverbs; 2) to reveal the representation of donor and recipient concept spheres; 3) to analyze the principles of combining compared images; 4) to describe the comparison patterns in gradational constructions.

Discussion. Although the gradational proverb structure corresponds to the comparison language model, it has certain peculiarities. When studying the semantic principles of gradational constructions formation (with the involvement of A. Vezhbitskaya's [4] and E. Sapir's [14] correspondence discussions on the semantic structure of the comparative), we have found out that in all gradational proverbs, regardless of the comparative origin, the general characteristic of the compared entities is indecisive. Comparison in these constructions is carried out on the basis of focusing on the degree of certain qualities manifestation in the compared phenomena. Therefore, the quality may not be assigned to the semantics of the arguments when they are compared [9].

The components of gradational constructions in the world folklore picture represent four donor and recipient concept spheres: "*Человек*" ("*Man*") (*Кормилица привередливей барыни* (A nurse is more fastidious than a lady)), "*Предмет*" ("*Object*") (*Чужой и хлеб слаще калача* (Someone else's bread is sweeter than a roll)), "*Животное*" ("*Animal*") (*Благословенный баран лучше неблагословенного*

быка (A blessed ram is better than an unblessed bull)), "*Абстракция*" ("*Abstraction*") (*Сладкая ложь лучше горькой правды (A sweet lie is better than a bitter truth))*. The proposed interpretation of the semantic features of gradational proverbs makes it possible to compare different concept spheres*: "Человек" – "Предмет"("Man" – "Object")* (*Добрый человек лучше каменных стен (A good man is better than stone walls))*, "*Человек*" – "*Животное*" ("*Man*" – "*Animal*") (*Жена без грозы хуже козы (A wife without a thunderstorm is worse than a goat))*, "*Абстракция*" – "*Человек*" ("*Abstraction*" – "*Man*") ((*Сон милее отца и матери (Sleep is dearer than father and mother))*, "*Предмет*" – "*Животное*" ("*Object*" – "*Animal*") (*Узда дороже лошади (The bridle is more expensive than a horse))*, "*Животное*" – "*Человек*" ("*Animal*" – "*Man*") (*Городское теля мудреней деревенского пономаря (An urban calf is more sophisticated than a village sexton)* and etc. As it can be seen from the examples, gradational proverbs can be extended and unextended.

The analysis of unextended proverbs, which from a logical point of view are statements, shows isolated cases of logical judgments like *Перо легче сохи (The pen is lighter than a plow)* against the background of numerous paradoxical proverbs that illustrate people's non-standard thinking. A linguistic paradox arises when different components in a statement contradict one another [3, p. 454], and it is based on "the functional peculiarities of the natural language and is not connected with the scientific picture of the world, but only with the experience of those speaking" [11, p. 186]. The proverb paradox, according to E. A. Selivanova, "is formed as a sign anomaly against the background of analogies of syntagmatics, paradigmatics, epigmatics, axiology (evaluativeness) and pragmatics of the language system" [11, p. 188].

Paradoxical feature in gradational proverbs can arise due to the comparison of the concept sphere "*Абстракция*" ("*Abstraction*") with others. Often, with such a comparison, an abstract concept is enclosed in the semantics of the object of comparison: *Слово лучше печати, Правда светлее солнца (A word is better than a print, Truth is brighter than the sun)*, etc. The comparison prototype is much less often presented in an abstract way: *Деньги лучше уговора (A bargain is a bargain)*. The basis of such comparisons is the consequences that arise when one compares situations existing on the basis of the compared concepts. So, for example, the proverb *Слово лучше печати (A word is better than a print)* runs that the consequences of a word for

a person can be more useful than the consequences associated with the actions of a print.

Comparison in unextended proverbs can be carried out on the basis of a pun – a joke "based on a semantic combination in one context either different meanings of one word or different words (phrases), identical or similar in sound" [10, p. 56]: *Пересев хуже недосева, Аринушка Маринушки не хуже (Overseeding is worse than underseeding, Arinushka is not worse than Marinushka)*.

Often, the principles of the unextended proverbs components combining turn into the analysis of popular stereotypes, in the light of which the dominance of a particular entity is revealed in the course of situational consideration. For example, in the proverb *Борода дороже головы (A beard is more expensive than a head)*, preference is given to the *бороде (beard)*, contrary to its logical interpretation of as a part of the whole (head) (*beard* is " hair on the lower part of the face" [13, I, p. 108]), due to the fact that *a beard* is "a sign of masculinity, the embodiment of vitality, growth, fertility" in people's ideas [12, p. 229].

Preference may be given to the essence over its framing, since in the people's minds there is an idea of the secondary nature of accessories (*Compare: Встречают по одежке, а провожают по уму: Clothes don't make the man*). For example, in the proverb *Шпага дороже ножен (The sword is more valuable that the scabbard)*, *шпага (the sword)* is "a cold thrusting weapon with a straight, narrow and long blade of a triangular, tetrahedral or hexagonal shape" [13, IV, p. 726] is more preferable than *ножны (the scabbard)* which is "a case for a cutlass, a sword, or a dagger" [13, II, p. 507].

Extending elements like other secondary parts are optional because, according to syntactic theories, their removal does not destroy the syntactic unity of a sentence. The extraction of the extending elements does not affect the structure of the proverb either: *Скупой богач беднее нищего – *Богач беднее нищего (The covetous rich man is poorer than the beggar – * The rich man is poorer than the beggar)*. However, from a semantic point of view, the extraction of extending elements from the proverb leads to the appearance of illogical formations. This is the peculiarity of proverbs.

The extending element of the object of comparison plays an essential role in determining the preference by comparison. So, when comparing an abstract concept with a concrete one in proverbs: *Добрая слава дороже богатства, Ласковое слово пуще дубины (Good glory is more valuable than wealth,*

An affectionate word is better than a club), extending elements contain "pleasant" seme, which determines priority: *добрый (kind)* is "favorable, bringing good, success, joy; very good, great, not tainted by anything, flawless, irreproachable" [13, I, p. 410–411]; *ласковый (affectionate)* is "giving a pleasant sensation; lolling, soothing "[13, II, p. 165]. At the same time, as it can be seen from the above-given examples, the extending element, in combination with the object of comparison, is metaphorized: *добрая слава, ласковое слово (good glory, an affectionate word)*.

The extending element also contributes to paradox removal. So, when comparing the concept spheres *"Человек" ("Man")* (*Плохой товарищ пуще одиночки (A bad comrade is worse than a single man)*, "Предмет" ("Object") (*Чужой и хлеб слаще калача (Someone else's bread is sweeter than a roll)*) and *"Абстракция" ("Abstraction")* (*Иная хвала хуже поношения (Another praise is worse than reproach)*), the paradoxical feature of judgments *Товарищ пуще одиночки, *Хлеб слаще калача, *Хвала хуже поношения is overcome at the expense of extending elements *плохой, чужой, иная (bad, someone else's, another)*. For example, paradoxical feature in comparison *Товарищ пуще одиночки (A comrade is worse than a single man)* is overcome by pointing out to the negative qualities of a comrade by introducing an adjective extending element *плохой (bad)* "possessing negative qualities or properties" [13, III, p. 145].

Sometimes extending elements have a rhythmic-intonation function, being semantically empty. As a result, the elimination of paradoxical feature can be carried out by introducing a limiting syntaxeme into the proverb. So, the proverb *Петуху ячменное зерно жемчужины дороже (For a rooster, a grain of barley is more valuable than a pearl)* contains the extending element of the object of comparison, which, however, does not help to eliminate the paradox. Compare the paradoxical features of judgments: *Зерно жемчужины дороже (A grain is more valuable than a pearl)* and *Ячменное зерно жемчужины дороже (A barley grain is more valuable than a pearl)*. In this situation, the elimination of paradoxical feature is facilitated by its clarification by introducing the subject of perception: *петух (a rooster)*.

With the help of the limitative, an emphasis is also placed on the priority of choosing one or another entity. For example, in the proverbs *Скупому душа дешевле гроша, Умному слово пуще дубины, Казаку конь себя дороже (A soul is cheaper than a penny for a stingy man, A word is better than a club for a clever person, A horse is dearer for a Cossack*

than he himself) there is a limitation of the national idea of *скупости, уме, казаке (stinginess, intelligence, a Cossack)*: **Если человек скупой, то ему душа дешевле гроша (If a person is stingy, then his soul is less important(dear) than a penny for him)*.

The preference for a particular entity is revealed in the course of situational consideration. So, when interpreting the proverb *Старик, да лучше семерых молодых (the Old Man is better than seven young people)* the popular idea of *старике (the old man)* is noted, usually in physiological data an old man is inferior to *молодым (the young one)* (the old man is "a man who has reached his old age" [13, IV, p. 249]), but in this case, he is capable of competing. The choice of the extending element *семерых (seven)* clarifies the meaning of the object of comparison and creates a rhyme.

The gradual features can be represented in form of a scale, at the poles of which there are opposite meanings of the feature; in the middle of this scale there is a point that separates the positive and negative meanings of the feature [15, p. 54]. For example, for the feature "height" the axis will separate the meanings "*high*" as positive and "*low*" as negative. As lexical units - adjectives or adverbs that express the meanings of a feature - the poles of the scale can be antonyms (both *high* and *low*) [2, p. 231–232]. It should be noted that not all features that can be represented as scales have antonymic pairs in a particular language as a means of expressing the meanings of the scale poles.

In numerous extended proverbs, the priority of one concept sphere over another appears due to the fact that the comparison takes place in accordance with some ideas. The extending elements are often in antonymic relationships, endowing the compared entities with contrasting features. According to ideas (ethical, aesthetic, moral, etc.), there are the following comparisons of entities in proverbs with extending elements: ***свой – чужой***: *Свой дурак дороже чужого умника (**national** – **foreign**: Our fool is dearer than someone else's clever man)*; ***маленький – большой***: *Маленькое дело лучше большого безделья (**small** – **big**: Small business is better than big idleness)*; ***добрый – худой (лихой)***: *Доброе молчанье лучше худого ворчанья, Лихое гляденье пуще доброго прошенья (**good** – **bad (dashing)**: Good silence is better than a bad grunt, A dashing look is more than a kind request)*; ***умная – глупая***: *Умная ложь лучше глупой правды (**clever** – **stupid**: A clever lie is better than a stupid truth)*; ***старый – молодой***: *Старый полковник старше молодого генерала (**old - young**: The old colonel is older than the young general)*; ***живой – мертвый***: *Живой пес лучше мертвого льва (**alive - dead**: A living dog is better than a dead lion)*; ***сладкий – горький***: *Сладкая ложь лучше горькой правды (**sweet** – **bitter**: A sweet lie is better than a bitter truth)*; ***близкий – дальний***: *Близкий сосед лучше дальней родни (**close** – **distant**: A close neighbor is better than distant relatives)*; ***первая – последняя***: *Первая брань лучше последней (**first** – **last**: The first fight is better than the last)*; ***благословенный – неблагословенный***: *Благословенный баран лучше неблагословенного быка (**blessed** – **unblessed**: A blessed ram is better than an unblessed bull)*, etc.

Entities in proverbs with extending elements are compared situationally: ***умный – дурак***: *Лучше с умным потерять, чем с дураком найти (**clever – fool**: Better to lose with a clever man than to find with a fool)*; ***убыток – барыш***: *Лучше с убытком торговать, чем с барышом воровать (**loss – profit**: It is better to trade at a loss than to steal with a profit)*; ***ад – рай***: *Лучше с умным в аду чем с глупым в раю (**hell – paradise**: It is better to be with a clever man in hell than with a stupid one in paradise)*; ***друг – неприятель***: *У друга пить воду лучше неприятельского меду (**friend – enemy**: To drink water from a friend is better than to eat honey from the enemy)*, etc.

Occasional antonyms are also abound in proverbs: *Лучше нищий **праведный**, чем богач **ябедный** (A righteous beggar is better than a rich sneaky man)*, ***Сытый** волк смирнее **завистливого** человека (A well-fed wolf is more humble than an envious person)*, *Лучше хлеб с **водой**, чем пирог с **бедой** (Bread and water is better than a pie with trouble)*, *Домашний **теленок** лучше заморской **коровы** (A domestic calf is better than an overseas cow)*, *Цыганская **правда** хуже православной **кривды** (Gypsy truth is worse than Orthodox falsehood)*, *Коза на **горе** выше коровы в **поле** (A goat on a mountain is higher than a cow in a field)* and others. A preference relation is established between these combinations. For example, **Свой, хотя и глупый, предпочтительнее, чем чужой, хотя и умный (Your own, although stupid, is preferable to someone else's, albeit smart)*, **Праведный, хотя и бедный, предпочтительнее, чем грешный, хотя и богатый (Righteous, although poor, is preferable to a sinner, although rich)*, etc.

Conclusions and offers. Thus, gradational constructions in the world folklore picture represent four donor and recipient concept spheres: "Man", "Object", "Animal", and "Abstraction". In gradational proverbs, the general characteristic of the compared entities is not decisive. Comparison in these

constructions is carried out on the basis of focusing on the degree of manifestation of certain qualities in the compared phenomena. The proposed interpretation of the semantic properties of gradational constructions makes it possible to compare phenomena not only from one concept sphere, but also from different ones.

The basis for comparison in such formations is the consequences that arise when comparing situations arising on the basis of the compared concepts, as well as popular stereotypes, with which the preference of a particular concept sphere is revealed in the course of situational consideration. Various extending elements and limitatives, endowing the compared entities with contrasting features, contribute not only to the elimination of paradox, overcoming triviality, but also to the accents placement with the priority of a particular concept sphere. This preference may be determined by the situation and socio-psychological conditions for the creation and use of a proverb. This explains the existence of directly opposite gradational proverbs: *Уговор дороже денег* и *Деньги лучше уговора* (*An agreement is more valuable than money and Money is better than an agreement*); *Доброе молчанье лучше худого ворчанья* и *Худое молчанье лучше доброго ворчанья* (*A good silence is better than a bad grumbling, and An ill silence is better than a good grumbling*).

Since all proverbs and sayings are based on the correlation of the external semantic form with the internal one, the comparison always runs through the proverb. Therefore, turning to gradational proverbs, which are based on comparison as a kind of correlation, is promising not only for describing the category of comparison, but also for understanding the semantic nature, features, and also the mechanisms of all proverbs and sayings formation. The analysis of linguistic material in gradational constructions allows looking deeper inside national consciousness, which is represented in the world folklore picture.

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Садова Г. Ю. ГРАДАЦІЙНІ КОНСТРУКЦІЇ У ФОЛЬКЛОРНІЙ КАРТИНІ СВІТУ

У статті проаналізовано фольклорну картину світу як одне з втілень картини світу традиційної народної культури, яскравим засобом репрезентації якої є градаційні паремії з прикметником у порівняльному ступені. Градація є порівнянням, оскільки ступінь інтенсивності якості будь-якого об'єкта лише ступінь порівняно з інтенсивністю відповідної якості інших об'єктів.

Метою статті є виявлення специфіки градаційних конструкцій у фольклорній картині світу шляхом аналізу паремій із різними компаративами лучше/хуже, больше/меньше, выше/ниже, дороже/дешевле, умнее/глупее тощо. Розглянуто характерні типи градаційних утворень у пареміях, виявлено експлікацію донорської та реципієнтної концептосфер, проаналізовано принципи об'єднання порівнюваних образів, потрактовано закономірності зіставлення у градаційних конструкціях.

У статті описано стабільну тенденцію репрезентації у градаційних конструкціях донорських та реципієнтних концептосфер фольклорної картини світу «Людина», «Предмет», «Тварина», «Абстракція». У градаційних пареміях загальна характеристика сутностей, що зіставляються, є несуттєвою. Порівняння в цих конструкціях здійснюється на підставі фокусування на ступінь прояву в порівнюваних явищах певних якостей. Запропонована інтерпретація семантичних властивостей градаційних конструкцій зумовлює можливість порівняння явищ не тільки з однієї концептосфери, але також із різних концептосфер. Виявлено, що підставою порівняння в таких утвореннях є наслідки в зіставленні ситуацій, що виникають на базі порівнюваних понять, а також народні стереотипи, з урахуванням яких перевага концептосфери виявляється в ситуативному розгляді. Різні розповсюджувачі та лімітативи, наділяючи порівнювані сутності контрастними властивостями, сприяють не тільки зняттю парадоксальності, але й наголошенню на пріоритетності концептосфери. Перевага може зумовлюватися ситуацією та соціально-психологічними умовами створення та використання паремії. Звернення до градаційних паремій є перспективним не лише для опису категорії порівняння, але й для розуміння природи і властивостей фольклорної картини світу.

Ключові слова: *градаційна конструкція, компаратив, концептосфера, паремія, підстава порівняння, фольклорна картина світу.*