

TILTM 2022**Topical Issues of Linguistics and Teaching Methods in Business and Professional Communication****USAGE OF ANGLO-AMERICAN ANTI-PROVERBS IN
ECONOMIC DISCOURSE**

Dzhamilya M. Khuchbarova (a)*, Alla G. Sokolova (b), Magomed I. Magomedov (c)

*Corresponding author

(a) Department of Foreign Languages, Moscow University for Industry and Finance “Synergy”, Moscow, Russia,
schastje2019@mail.ru(b) Department of Foreign Languages and Professional Communication, National Research Moscow State University
of Civil Engineering, Moscow, Russia, SokolovaAG@mgsu.ru(c) Institute of Language, Literature and Art, Dagestan Federal Research Center of the Russian Academy of Sciences,
Makhachkala, Russia, rafrus1@yandex.ru**Abstract**

The aim of this research work is to determine the conditions and mechanisms of actualization and methods of creating English anti-proverbs in economic discourse. In our research work we aimed to identify English antiproverbs that are more often caricatured and used for creation of anti-proverbs in economic discourse. The review of functioning of English paroemias has identified the possibility of usage of creative forms in economic discourse. Modifications of paroemias in a form of anti-proverbs actualise basic pragmatic functions such as attraction of attention and creation of a comic effect, thereby influencing readers. The results and discussion include a complex analysis of pragmatic, cognitive and systemic functional aspects of creative application of antiproverbs in economic discourse. The research work also reveals structural and semantic techniques used by publicists in economic discourse. The analysis of the modified proverbs in our factual material has revealed the fact that the key factors for creation of anti-proverbs are structure and semantics of paroemias.

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1. Introduction

Paroemias in parallel with a renewal process and modification of traditional paroemias are in active use in economic discourse according to the analysis of our factual material. “Transformation of conventions was always a natural phenomenon, a stylistic device of a creation of expression and additional semantic aspect used in journalism” (Mieder, 2004, p. 3). A famous scientist Mieder (2004) also comments on a long tradition of a creation of parodies. According to the researcher, proverbs were never considered a commonplace truth. This explains a phenomenon of parodying proverbs and humorous and ironical modifications.

The term “parody” is used for the description of a humorous quotation, an imitation and a transformation. Generally, a parody is considered as “the comic refunctioning of preformed linguistic or artistic material” (Walter & Mokienko, 2006, p. 9). As some researchers note, a creation of a humorous effect is not the only function of a parody (Malyuga, 2020). The anti-proverb “*Old proverbs cannot die, they just fade into parody*” (“*Old soldiers never die, they simply fade away*”) is the thesis title of Anna T. Litovkina, devoted to the analysis of English-American anti-proverbs. The thesis under consideration epitomizes the process of creation of anti-proverbs. Trivial, clichéd or well-known things play out in fresh colours and take new features. We can point out that it is an effective pragmatic attention getter and means of influence. It should be noted that creative effort of an author is effective only when prototypes of occasional proverbs are recognised by readers or listeners. Coincidence of cognitive basis of an addressant and an addressee is the necessary condition for functioning and actualisation of a communicative-pragmatic potential of anti-proverbs.

So, an anti-proverb is “any deliberate variation in a form of a wordplay, a substitution, an ellipsis or an addition” (Mieder & Litovkina, 1999, p. 128). Various transformations of usual forms of paroemias result in updating content: “Spoil the rod and spare the child” (compare with “*Spare the rod and spoil the child*”); “Home is where the money is” (compare with “*Home is where the heart is*”); “Charity begins abroad” (compare with “*Charity begins at home*”); “All that's gold does not glitter” (compare with “*All that glitters is not gold*”); “There is no such thing as a free trade” (compare with “*There is no such thing as a free lunch*”); “Every silver lining has a cloud” (compare with “*Every cloud has a silver lining*”); “Enough is not enough” (compare with “*Enough is enough*”).

Anti-proverbs as well as traditional paroemias include observations of day-to-day life, but sometimes unstandardized linguistic means are used for their creation. You can see that not only philosophical thoughts but also obscene words can be embodied in anti-proverbs: “*Success is 1 % inspiration and 99 % urination*” (compare with “*Success is two percent inspiration and ninety-eight percent perspiration*”); “*Clothes may make the man, but it is the label that really counts*” (compare with “*Clothes make the man*”).

It should be noted that there is no a straightforward decision how to define the term “anti-proverb”. The author of the term “paroemia” and a pioneer in paroemiological researches V. Mieder includes not only transformations of paroemias but also witticism, based on proverbs and wellerisms in his collections. There are various definitions of the term “anti-proverb”, such as “twisted wisdom”, “fractured proverb”, proposed by different English researchers. In the Russian language along with the narrower concept of

“anti-proverb” there are wide-ranging concepts such as “antiphrasis”, “anti-proverbial expression”, “anti-aphorism”.

Taking into consideration the complexity of differentiation of traditional and transformed paroemias scientists Walter X. and Mokienko V.M. included these linguistic units in their dictionary of Russian antiproverbs. As factual material implies, 90 per cent of paroemias used in an economic discourse become transformed. However, according to our research not all transforms can be considered anti-proverbs. Some modified paroemias are connected to the context and a transformation is attributable to a theme of an article or a problem. Another category of anti-proverbs can function as independent aphorisms. This fact suggests that anti-proverbs can be included in specialised dictionaries and collections. Consider two transformations of widespread proverbs “*Money talks*” and “*The pen is mightier than the sword*”.

- Money talks:

1) “*Cheap Money Talks*” (Krugman, 2016); 2) “*In Life, Money Talks*” (O’Brien, 2018). We can see an extension of composition by the means of adding a word or a phrase. In the first instance it is necessary to refer to the context to interpret the first transformation:

“*Cheap Money Talks*”

What with everything else going on, from Trump to Brexit to the horror in Dallas, it’s hard to focus on developments in financial markets — especially because we’re not facing any immediate crisis. But extraordinary things have been happening lately, especially in bond markets. And because money still makes the world go ’round, attention must be paid to what the markets are trying to tell us. Specifically, there has been an extraordinary plunge in long-term interest rates” (Krugman, 2016).

The second example (*In Life, Money Talks*) is an occasional variant of a proverb, i.e. an anti-proverb.

- The pen is mightier than the sword:

1) “*The Pen Is Mightier Than the G.D.P.*”; 2) “*Sometimes, the Collectible Is Mightier Than the Sword*”. 3) “*The pen is mightier than the sword; the gold pen-the best of all pens, Morton's gold pens, the best pens in the world*”.

These transformations were formed by means of various techniques: a substitution of components in the first examples and addition of an ironic comment about money power in the second example. In the first case you have to refer to the context for an understanding.

“*The pen is mightier than the G.D.P.*”

Montblanc plans to double number of stores in US within year and expand its line of writing instruments with merchandise for women.

Montblanc has been marketing its luxury line of writing instruments, a k a pens, for 95 years, mostly to men. Now it is reaching out to women, with a new Boheme line of pens, a handbag collection and plans to double the number of the United States stores to 48 in a year. If the timing of such an expansion sounds economically ill-advised, it doesn’t seem to worry Norbert A. Platt, the company’s president and chief executive. “The economy slowing down has nothing to do with luxury brands,” he said. “Luxury brands have to do with love and emotion” (Fass, 2001).

“*Sometimes, the collectible is mightier than the sword*”

Spending column on buying new or vintage fountain pens.

For Ron Lussier the obsession started innocuously enough – with a few gifts. More than a decade ago, his partner gave him two fountain pens – a Parker Centennial and a Mont Blanc Ernest Hemingway – and his father gave him a third. Over the years, as he moved into new homes, the pens were packed away. Out of reach. But he never forgot about them, and, one day, last year, his interest was rekindled. While surfing the Internet, he found what he called the most beautiful pen he had ever seen: the Bexley Kensaki, with its ivory barrel and a cap with a curved gold clip. “I have to have this”, he remembered saying to himself” (Berrett, 2004).

The third variant of a proverb is an independent aphorism or an anti-proverb, as you can see in the given example: “*The pen is mightier than the sword; the gold pen – the best of all pens*” (The pen is mightier than the sword, 1864).

Mider V. began linguistic research of anti-proverbs based on material of the German and English languages in the 1980s. The professor published a number of collections of Anglo-American and German anti-proverbs co-authored with Hungarian researcher Anna T. Litovkina, such as “Twisted Wisdom” and “Anti-proverbs” (3000 linguistic units), “Old proverbs never die”.

Nowadays paramiographers take interest in this genre not only in the English language but also in other languages. Exemplarily, an authoritative researcher Anna T. Litovkina also studies Russian and Hungarian anti-proverbs in tandem with R. Vargha (Katalin Vargha) and D. Boronkai (Dora Boronkai). The researcher P. Barta (Peter Barta) pursues research of French texts and S. Predota (Stanislaw Predota) takes a survey of Polish and Dutch anti-proverbs. Shindler F. and Bittnerova D. published a number of research papers devoted to Czech antiproverbs. H. Hrisztova-Gotthardt (Hrisztalina Hrisztova-Gotthardt) is examining into Bulgarian anti-proverbial units. Modern Russian paramiology has not been neglected. However, according to Walter and Mokienko (2006), a pioneer research of Russian anti-proverbs is just getting started.

It should be pointed out that scientific observations of Walter and Mokienko (2006) about Russian anti-proverbs are true for our factual material. According to the authors, “Linguistic profiling of all paroemiological transformations reveals the fact that they are subjected to the same laws of transformations as proverbs.

In a preface of the collection of Anglo-American anti-proverbs V. Mider and Anna T. Litovkina outline the following methods of creating anti-proverbial units:

1) *Traditional method.*

Traditional method includes adding an ironic comment to a proverb with usual meaning. Specifically, “Like many articles of faith, central-bank independence requires some ... operational independence, that **faith seemed to move mountains**” (compare with: “to move mountains”) (The desperation of independents, 2016); “**The early bird catches the worm. Does this not also imply that the early worm gets eaten by the bird?**” (compare with: “*the early bird catches the worm*”); “**In Life, Money Talks.** This weekend, some thoughts on the stuff that makes the world go 'round” (Konstantinova, 2007); “**You have to make hay while the sun shines, but remember you can't turn it off**” (compare with: “*Make hay while the sun shines*”) (Konstantinova, 2007).

2) *Preservation of one part and substitution of another part of the proverb:*

“**With friends like these Plots and sackings in Ukraine.** With friends like this, Ukraine needs no enemies” (compare with: “*With friends like this who needs enemies*”) (Plots and sackings in Ukraine, 2018); “**Never put off till tomorrow what you can put off till the week after next** (compare with: “Never put off till tomorrow what you can do today”); “**Politics in Japan stranger than fiction.** Political satire is no match for the truth. Japan The prime minister who needs things to get worse. Deflation” (compare with: “*truth is stranger than fiction*”) (Stranger than fiction, 2001).

3) *Substitution of one component of a proverb:*

“**Home is where the bark is.** Most houses could be spruced up with a bit of greenery but some architects have begun to embed living trees within the structure of their buildings (Glancey, 2016); “**Home is where the money is.** High house prices make life difficult for Londoners and threaten the city’s prosperity. A door beside a solicitor’s office on Plashet Road in West Ham, east of the Olympic Park, leads down a narrow alley into a back garden that has three roughly constructed brick sheds in it. One seems empty; each of the other two is perhaps 15 feet square, divided into two tiny bedrooms and a small living and cooking space, with a toilet and shower in a cupboard” (Home is where the money is, 2012) (compare with: “*Home is where the heart is*”); “**No such thing as a free trade.** The SEC wants greater transparency in the prices of share trading. A new study shows how far “cheap” online dealing is from being a free-trade area. The online brokers and electronic share-trading systems (ECNs) that have shaken up America’s stockmarkets over the past few years have one big selling point: they claim to make trading cheaper than Wall Street’s old firms and exchanges ever did” (compare with: “*No such thing as a free lunch*”) (No such thing as a free trade, 2010); “**Charity begins abroad.** Big developing countries are shaking up the world of aid. between 1951 and 1992 India received about \$55 billion in foreign aid, making it the largest recipient in history. Now it seems on the verge of setting up its own aid-giving body. A spokesman for the foreign ministry says the government is in “active discussions” to create an India Agency for Partnership in Development (IAPD), an equivalent of America’s Agency for International Development (USAID) or Britain’s Department for International Development (DFID). Bureaucrats in other ministries are dragging their feet but Gurpreet Singh of RIS, a Delhi think-tank, says the government will announce the body within months, and give it \$11.3 billion to spend over the next five to seven years. India’s switch from the world’s biggest recipient to donor is part of a wider change shaking up foreign aid” (compare with: “*Charity begins at home*”) (Charity begins abroad, 2011); “**Fighting freedom with fire.** After publishing cartoons depicting Muhammad and satirical stories about Islam, the offices of the French weekly Charlie Hebdo were ...” (compare with: “*fighting fire with fire*”) (Fighting freedom with fire, 2011); “**Clothes make the mandate** – in Sri Lanka and elsewhere. Rajapaksa’s trademark red-brown scarf is the colour of kurrakan, the rough finger millet grain eaten as the staple diet of poor farmers, and typical of the southern Hambantota district that he comes from. Worn with the sarong and spotless white robe, Rajapaksa’s look also implies a devout Buddhist faith. He came to power in 2005 on a vote from rural communities and with key backing from hardline Buddhist groups” (compare with: “*Clothes make the man*”) (Burke, 2010).

4) *A play on words*

No more growth miracles? Are we at the end of the era of rapid catch-up growth or the beginning? Dani Rodrik has written an interesting column arguing that rapid emerging market catch-up growth "**will prove the exception rather than the rule in the decades ahead**". Interesting, in that it draws quite different conclusions from a Free exchange column in last week's print edition (compare with: "the exception proves the rule"); "**Every silver lining has a cloud**. The sealing of a Pacific trade deal is welcome. But spare the cheers Until this week, the world had not seen a big multilateral trade pact for over 20 years. The deal that has broken the drought—the Trans-Pacific Partnership (TPP), which comprises 12 countries in Asia and the Americas, including the United States and Japan—is welcome. But those who believe in free trade, and the benefits it brings, ought not to miss the bigger picture. The backdrop to this week's deal is a bleak one" (compare with: "*Every cloud has a silver lining*") (Every silver lining has a cloud, 2015); "In his green budget, Gordon Brown said that he wants to break with Britain's economic past, ... **With enemies like these, who needs friends?**" (compare with: "With friends like this who needs enemies") (Gordon Brown's progress, 1997); "**All that's gold does not glitter**. Last year should have been a great year for gold-mining companies. And for some it was: in dollars, gold was fetching about \$410 an ounce a year ago, way above the \$250-or-so low of February 2001. It soared briefly above \$450 as November ended, and even now, after a rapid slide, is still about \$425. Fine if your costs are in dollars. But what if they are in rand? At today's prices, South Africa's mines barely make money." (compare with: "All that glitters is not gold") (All that's gold does not glitter, 2005).

5) *Negation*

"In democracies, **the end does not justify the means**. This article appeared in the Leaders section of the print edition under the headline..." (compare with: "*The end justifies the means*") (All wrong in Iraq, 2009); "**Like father, not like son**. Measuring social mobility (heading). These days' economists use more sophisticated gauges. They measure mobility over a lifetime (rags to riches, or the reverse), between generations (how children do relative to their parents), in absolute terms (whether children are richer or poorer than their parents) or in relative ones (whether children are higher or lower on the income ladder than their parents) (compare with: "*Like father like son*")"; "Are you being served? Environmental entries are starting to appear on the balance sheet. Perhaps soon, **the best things in life will not be free** (Are you being served, 2021). At the Miraflores lock on the Panama Canal it is possible to watch the heartbeat of international trade in action. One by one, giant ships piled high with multi-coloured containers creep through the lock's narrow confines and are disgorged neatly on the other side (compare with: "*The best things in life are free*")"; "**Enough is not enough** ... about the same as a conventional plastic bag, and though a subsidy will be needed at first, the operation is meant ..." (compare with: "*Enough is enough*") (Enough is not enough, 2010).

6) *Omission of a word*

"I am here, to put it bluntly, to **look a gift horse in the mouth**. If you didn't read a newspaper during the month of May last year, ..." (compare with: "*don't look a gift horse in the mouth*") (Willis, 2015).

7) Addition of a component

“Tim Hortons and the saga of Ontario’s minimum wage. A popular chain of coffee shops makes itself less appealing. There is no such thing as a free lunch, or even a free doughnut. Tim Hortons' owner belatedly allowed franchisees to raise prices, ...” (compare with: “There is no such thing as a free lunch”) (Tim Hortons and the saga of Ontario’s minimum wage, 2018); **Cheap Money Talks**. And what it says is to invest in the future (heading). What with everything else going on, from Trump to Brexit to the horror in Dallas, it’s hard to focus on developments in financial markets — especially because we’re not facing any immediate crisis. But extraordinary things have been happening lately, especially in bond markets. And because money still makes the world go ’round, attention must be paid to what the markets are trying to tell us. Specifically, there has been an extraordinary plunge in long-term interest rates” (compare with: “*Money talks*”) (Krugman, 2016); “Brexit would bring the “further marginalisation of Britain as a power with ... What you do is not **put all of your eggs in the China basket**” (compare with: “*put all your eggs in one basket*”) (An interview with Ian Bremmer, 2016).

In the research paper “Old proverbs never die, they just fade into parody: Anglo-American anti-proverbs” Anna T. Litovkina studies the main forms of transformations, such as a substitution of one or two components, a substitution of the second part of a proverb, an addition of extra components, a liberalization of the meaning of a proverb, a repetition of components, a play on words, a convergence of various techniques.

A recent analysis of anti-proverb units in economic discourse reveals the fact that publicists are efficient in different structural-semantic techniques.

It’s worth mentioning that a range of a play on English proverbs at the operational level is wide. Truth described in usual forms of proverbs is satirized, ridiculed or refuted in anti-proverbs. Authors can also sound off about didacticism included in proverbs: “The best things in life are free for some people (compare with: “*The best things in life are free*”); Better to give and receive (compare with: “*Better to give than to receive*”). It is worthy of note a word-play in some traditional paroemias which is created for fun: “Can a leopard change his spots or a Welshman lose his accent?” (compare with: “*Can a leopard change his spots?*”); “Love me, love my dog, cat, canary, tarantula...” (compare with: “*Love me, love my dog*”) (Allison, 2003).

So authors take up different subjects in Anglo-American anti-proverbs. It’s notorious that a language changes in parallel with societal changes. In our opinion, usage of anti-proverbs is the most unconventional approach and efficient way of conveying new information and its perspectives about something traditional; the way of actualisation of modern ideas.

Exemplarily, variations on habitual topics are the following anti-proverbial units, based on paroemia “**A woman’s place is in the home**”: “A woman's place is to wait and listen, says the Vatican” (Hooper, 2004); “a woman's place is in the kitchen”; “A woman's place ... is not at Harvard” (McKie & Harris, 2005).

The following anti-proverbs have the same structure but are rather controversial. An idea of a role of a modern woman in the society is quite different. We can note the idea of gender equality in business and career. From this perspective, the idea expresses a new cognitive knowledge: “A Woman’s place is in the House. . . and in the Senate”; “A Woman's place is in the Pentagon”; “Woman's place is every place”

(Woman's Place Is Every Place, 1983); “A woman's place is in elected office” (Pippa Crerar & Jessica Elgot, 2018).

It should be noted that sometimes anti-proverbs don't correspond with usual forms of proverbs they are based on: “Two's Company, Three's a Possibility”, “Two's Company, Three's a Comedy” (compare with: “*Two is a company three is a crowd*”) (Catsoulis, 2019); “There is no such thing as western civilisation” (Mavrona, 2016), “There is no such thing as racism” (compare with: *There is no such thing as a free lunch*”) (Lil Wayne explains why he said there's no such thing as racism, 2016).

2. Problem statement

The objectives of the research are to establish the relevance of the cognitive characteristics of English antiproverbs for the study of their communicative and pragmatic potentials and set up basic principles of a communicative and pragmatic approach to the study of the functioning of antiproverbs in economic discourse.

3. Research questions

In our research work we aimed to identify English antiproverbs that are more often caricatured and used for creation of anti-proverbs in economic discourse.

4. Purpose of the study

The purpose of this work is to define the conditions and mechanisms for the implementation of the communicative and pragmatic potential of English antiproverbs in economic discourse.

5. Research methods

The following linguistic *research methods* have been used: *contextual analysis; a method of communicative and pragmatic analysis*, involving a comprehensive interpretation of the meaning and pragmatic functions of paroemias and their transformations, based on a broad context of a communicative and pragmatic situation (Kharkovskaya et al., 2017); a *linguistic description method* that includes techniques of observation, interpretation, comparison, generalization and classification of proverbs; *cognitive approach* as well as elements of the *statistical processing and compilation*.

6. Findings

In our research work we can identify the following thematic groups:

1) Appearance

Clothes may make the man, but it is the label that really counts.

You are what you wear.

Beauty is in the hands of the scalpel holder.

2) Society

There's no such thing as community.

Charity begins and ends at home.

Charity begins abroad.

Charity begins at work.

The best things in life will not be free.

There is no such thing as a common law.

The best things in life are free for some people.

3) *Health*

An Apple Pie a Day Keeps the Doctor Happy.

Apple a day keeps lungs working.

A glass of red wine a day keeps 'bad' cholesterol away.

Eat, drink, and be merry, for tomorrow we diet.

4) *Money*

No such thing as a free trade.

Home is where the money is.

Money can buy happiness.

Cheap Money Talks.

In Life, Money Talks.

5) *Women*

A Woman's place is in the House. . . and in the Senate".

A Woman's place is in the Pentagon.

Woman's place is every Place.

A woman's place is not at Harvard.

A woman's place is in the IT department.

A woman's place should be in the workforce.

6) *Parenting*

There is no such thing as a perfect parent.

Spoil the rod and spare the child.

7. Conclusion

Observational results of paroemias in economic discourse have revealed the fact of usage not only usual forms of paroemias but their creative modifications in a form of anti-proverbs too. So an author was considered as a creative person in our studies. Moreover, it was necessary to give consideration not only to an author, but also to readership as the second participant of a communication process.

Success of printed press and objective fulfilment depend on the right choice of linguistic means. Our research revealed the fact that usage of anti-proverbs predetermines a specific task to implement the main pragmatic functions, they are: attraction of attention, formation of evaluativity and informativeness and formation of an individual style.

It is undeniable that paroemias have pragmatic meaning. Characteristics of paroemias as precedent phenomena are the main features of their pragmatic character. In conclusion, we can say that percentage

of usage of usual (traditional) forms of paroemias within our factual material is rather low (254 paroemias out of 900). So creative modifications of usual forms of paroemias (anti-proverbs) are more widely used by publicists in economic discourse (646 anti-proverbs out of 900).

In our research work we aimed to identify English proverbs that were more often caricatured or parodied and thereby are used for creation of anti-proverbs in economic discourse. So the “record holders” are the following anti-proverbs:

- “There is no such thing as a free lunch” (22);
- “A woman's place is in the house” (21);
- “Beauty is in the eye of the beholder” (18);
- “The pen is mightier than the sword” (16);
- “If at first you don't succeed, try, try, try again” (9);
- “An apple a day keeps the doctor away” (9);
- “Necessity is the mother of invention” (8).

The authors have also described the techniques of transformations of English paroemias resulting in anti-proverbs. The research has shown that creation of anti-proverbs based on paroemias brings out the best in publicists. The process of creation of anti-proverbs results in cooperation of linguistic and nonlinguistic factors.

Authors consider that anti-proverbs differ from other proverbial forms due to their autonomy, self-sufficiency. Consequently, they can function as separate linguistic units in economic discourse.

The research work also reveals structural and semantic techniques used by publicists in economic discourse. The analysis of the modified proverbs in our factual material has revealed the fact that the key factors for creation of anti-proverbs are structure and semantics of paroemias.

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