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EVALUATION IN BIBLICAL PROVERBS: A LINGUOCULTURAL STUDY FROM A SYSTEMIC FUNCTIONAL PERSPECTIVE

Abstract: The aim of this study is to examine more closely the realizations of evaluation in Biblical proverbs and to explain the role of evaluation in the construction of communities of shared values. The research method used in analyzing the corpus of 425 Biblical proverbs identified by Wolfgang Mieder is the appraisal analysis of J.R. Martin and P.R.R.White in combination with the culturematic analysis of R. Petrova. On the basis of the results obtained conclusions are drawn concerning the indexical and evaluative characteristics of the proverb cultureme. It is argued that the axiological charge proverbs get in actual use as a result of the inherent act of evaluation is an indispensable part of their meaning.

Keywords: appraisal analysis, Biblical proverbs, cultureme, evaluation, linguocultural, sign, value

No utterance can be put together without value judgement. Every utterance is above all an *evaluative orientation*. Therefore, each element in a living utterance not only has a meaning but also has a value. Only the abstract element, perceived within the system of language and not within the structure of an utterance, appears devoid of value judgement. (Vološinov, 1973, p. 105)

1. Introduction

1.1 Proverb meaning, evaluation and shared values

Paremiologists have always been concerned with proverb meaning from the viewpoint of their specific theoretical affiliation thus illuminating different aspects of this meaning in their analyses. The problem of explaining how proverbs mean seems as difficult as the problem of identifying the defining characteris-

tics of the proverb as such. In fact, the two problems are very closely related, because the features that characterize proverbs (the proverbial markers), no doubt play a substantial role in the construal of proverb meaning. Evaluation has not always been assigned the status of a proverbial marker, but the fact that proverbs employ evaluative language and that their use involves acts of evaluation has caught the attention of researchers, especially among whom are those concerned with linguoculturology. So far, evaluation in proverbs has been studied in relation to various issues such as the structure of the proverb, the use of figurative language and the cultural matrix of values. As Krikmann points out, the evaluative aspect of proverb meaning has not been ignored in proverb studies but it has not been studied as a separate and universal semantic marker (2001, p. 68). The present study aims to examine evaluation in more detail by addressing the question of the role evaluation plays in the construal of meaning in Biblical proverbs. It seeks to find out how appraisal is realized in Biblical proverbs and what part it plays in the construction of communities of shared values. The study was motivated by Krikmann's comment mentioned above corroborated by Grzybek's assertion that "semantically relevant information be that of functional, pragmatic, situational, deontic, modal or of other kind – at least to date cannot adequately be mapped onto the paremiological model" (2014, p. 106).

The corpus of this study comprises 425 Biblical proverbs identified as such by Wolfgang Mieder (1990). They were examined as self-contained texts, i.e. the way they appear in proverb collections and dictionaries, bearing in mind the fact that their evaluative potential is realized in actual use. The analytical tool applied is a combination of two approaches – the appraisal model as presented by Martin and White (2005) and the culturematic analysis developed by Petrova (2006; 2010; 2012; 2016). The starting point of the enquiry is the assumption that proverbs have a recognizable meaning for the speakers of a language, a fact reflected in Norrick's (1985) term 'standard proverbial interpretation' and in Kirshenblatt-Gimblett's term 'base meaning' ([1981] 1994). The outcomes of the study are expected to contribute to the development of a theory of proverb meaning. By choosing to investigate the realizations of appraisal resources in Biblical proverbs we hope to shed light on the interpersonal

meaning of proverbs thus contributing to the overall understanding of proverb meaning. This is no doubt a rather complex task as it involves the examination of the intricate interplay of “figurative, logical, modal and syntactic” aspects as Krikmann (2009, p. 12) points out. In addition to contributing to the theoretical explanation of proverb meaning, the study is expected to make a contribution to the second analytical tool – the culturematic analysis, by adding new models to its analytical approach.

1.2 The study of evaluation and its relation to paremiology

In paremiology “[proverbs] have been collected and studied for centuries as informative and useful linguistic signs of cultural values and thoughts” (Mieder, 2004, p. xii). This fact shows that proverb scholars have been aware of the presence of evaluation in proverbs for a long time (see for example Milner ([1971] 2004); and Petrova (2012) among many others; for an overview of the treatment of evaluation in proverb studies see Krikmann (2001, pp. 62- 68). And while the interest in evaluation has never ceased in paremiology, in the broader field of linguistics the attitude towards evaluation has been ambiguous. As Martin and White have claimed, influential formalist linguistic schools have left it out of the scope of their interest because they viewed language as an ideal system and were not interested in its relationship with the social context. It was the schools that took interest in rhetoric, language in use and communicative effect that have explored it, as their proponents considered social interaction to be part of language (Martin & White, 2005). Systemic functional linguistics being one of the latter schools sees evaluation as part of the interpersonal meaning which alongside the ideational and the textual meaning contributes to the multi-layered content plane of utterances. Evaluation has been described as a complex phenomenon with many faces and phases by Alba-Juez and Thompson (2014). They define it as

a dynamical subsystem of language, permeating all linguistic levels and involving the expression of the speaker’s or the writer’s attitude or stance towards, viewpoint on, or feeling about the entities or propositions that s/he is talking about, which entails relational work including the (possible and prototypically expected and subse-

quent) response of the hearer or (potential) audience. This relational work is generally related to the speaker or hearer's personal, group, or cultural set of values. (Alba-Juez & Thompson, 2014, p. 13)

This definition clearly demonstrates some of the latest developments in the treatment of evaluation. Most importantly, it reflects the shift of perspective in viewing the act of evaluation from self-expression to interaction. Furthermore, the concept of evaluation in language has been enlarged to the extent that it encompasses not only the traditional view that the act of evaluation is an act of expressing the feelings and beliefs of speakers or writers but it also includes the act of negotiating a possible alignment of stances between sender and addressee. Another important development in the perception of evaluation is the insight that it is carried out by relating the content of a whole proposition or separate entities to a matrix of cultural values. And finally individual, group or community variation in sets of values is also acknowledged in line with some developments in the social sciences stressing variation and fluctuation in cultural values over a unified notion of a cultural matrix. In the complex phenomenon of evaluation, a set of notions can be distinguished – taking a stance, the evaluative act and the language resources for evaluation. Alba-Juez and Thompson describe stance as a broader concept that includes not only the ‘textualized phase’ or the evaluative act proper, but the preliminary cognitive phase of deciding whether to perform the evaluative act at all, what stance to take and which language resources to employ (2014, p. 7)¹. As regards evaluative language Hunston (2011) perceives its role as “index[ing] the act of evaluation or the act of stance-taking...[and] express[ing] an attitude towards a person, situation or other entity...[that] is both subjective and located within a societal value-system” (p. 1). The multifaceted phenomenon of evaluation has been studied from various perspectives including rhetoric, axiological semantics and discourse ethics to name but a few. For the purposes of the present study, the appraisal model offered by the Sydney branch of systemic functional linguistics was chosen as one of the analytic tools because of its interest in the way judgement relates to human behavior and its attention to

the intersubjective nature of evaluation, which we find relevant to studying evaluation in proverbs.

In the paragraph below we will outline the theoretical framework of appraisal analysis as presented in Martin and White's monograph *The Language of Evaluation* (2005). Appraisal analysis revolves round the three axes of attitude, engagement and graduation. Attitude refers to feelings and emotional reactions, judgements of human behavior and assessments of the aesthetic value of objects. Engagement is concerned with how speakers or writers position themselves with respect to the attitudes expressed. And graduation shows how strong or weak a feeling is or whether a thing is at the core or in the periphery of its category (Martin & White, 2005). The following constructed example illustrates the interplay of attitude, engagement and graduation in an exchange that contains a Biblical proverb:

John: There is yet another corruption scandal in the news. That's disgusting.

Tom: It is, indeed, but I am not surprised. There is nothing new under the sun.

In this example the second speaker, Tom, employs the Biblical proverb *There is nothing new under the sun* to express his attitude toward corruption in politics. Corruption practices are thus presented as something undesirable that tends to occur over and over again. The proverb itself implicitly states that negative behavior is often repeated, so it could be perceived as a realization of the category of attitude since it contains judgement of behavior. The speaker uses the proverb in a way which shows that he sides with its message, in other words, he aligns himself with the underlying evaluative proposition in the proverb and he also implicitly indicates that he expects his interlocutor to take the same stance. Thus as far as the category of engagement is concerned, by presenting the underlying evaluative proposition of the proverb as plausible and positioning himself in alignment with it, the speaker also positions himself in alignment with the expected attitude of his interlocutor. And finally as regards graduation, the hyperbole contained in the proverb intensifies both the judgement position and the author's investment in it. Compare the use of the proverb with an ordinary statement of the sort – *That hap-*

pens quite often. This statement does not imply any attitude, judgement or emotion; it is axiologically neutral.

As can be seen from this example, the treatment of judgement of behavior which is not matched in earlier approaches to evaluation and the interest in the linguistic means of constructing communities of shared values make the appraisal theory a suitable tool for analyzing evaluation in proverbs. As a broad integrative theory designed to study evaluation in language, appraisal theory provides the background for a more fine-grained analysis of proverb meaning using the other tool – culturematic analysis. This second tool comes from a tradition in paremiology where the explanation of proverb meaning, the outlining of the distinctive features of proverbs and the study of axiologically charged elements in the meaning of proverbs has a long history. The brief overview of some of the ideas concerning proverbial meaning and their relation to the phenomenon of evaluation in paremiological studies, which will be given in the next section, will shed some light on the study of proverbs from an axiological perspective.

1.3 The proverb as a sign of a situation

In paremiology, two important insights concerning the nature of the proverb and its characteristics come from the fields of semiotics and folklore and literature studies. The semiotic perspective provides us with the view that proverbs are signs of situations (Permyakov, 1970, 1988; Grzybek, 1984, 1994, 2014). And the folkloristic perspective stresses the traditional character of proverbs both in terms of age and currency among the people (Trench, [1853] 2003; Taylor, 1965; Whiting, [1931/32/39] 1994; Mieder, 1985; 1993; 1998; 2004; 2005; 2007). Traditionality has long been considered by Wolfgang Mieder and others to be one of the most important defining characteristics of proverbs, the other characteristics being structural patterns, shortness, fixity, figurative language, intertextuality and stylistic features such as alliteration, parallelism, rhyme and ellipsis (Mieder, 2004, pp. 4-9). The strands of all these characteristic and meaning-making features (studied more recently by scholars such as Silverman-Weinreich [1978]² (1994), Arora (1984) and Mac Coinnigh, (2013) to name but a few) are interwoven to form the fabric of proverb meaning. Proverb meaning combines two aspects which

at first sight seem mutually exclusive. On the one hand, due to their traditional character, to use the term from folklore studies, or due to their relative fixedness, to use the term from the field of phraseology³, proverbs have a “stable” meaning with which most users of a language are familiar. On the other hand, various studies have shown that there exists great variation in proverb meaning which led some authors to speak of proverb performance meaning (see for example Kirshenblatt-Gimblett (1994) and Fontaine (2015)⁴ whose studies follow Arewa and Dundes’s appeal to include the context in the study of proverbs (1964)⁵. While acknowledging both the stability and the variability of proverb meaning, for the purposes of this study, we accept Krikmann’s assertion that to the researcher the meaning of a proverb outside context is a “mere semantic potential” (1984, p. 51) and in adopting Norrick’s term “standard proverb interpretation” (1985) as the starting point of our enquiry we remain aware of the fact that there is variation in this “standard” interpretation in language use which is determined by the social context. In this study we do not take into consideration all the aspects of the interrelationship between the Biblical proverb text and the social context because we chose to work with proverbs “as texts not in text” (to borrow Neal Norrick’s apt phrase, 1985). We focus on just one aspect of this interrelationship, namely the relation of the proverb text to the larger context of culture⁶ (Malinowsky, [1923] 1936). We will therefore be examining the linguistic means via which axiologically charged concepts reflecting human behavior interact with cultural norms in the construal of proverb meaning.

Because part of the present investigation is based on Permyakov’s idea that a proverb is a sign of a situation, this idea will be discussed in some detail. It was Permyakov’s observation that people would choose a proverb which corresponds to the situation they want to name that led him to the conclusion that proverbs are signs of situations. He further elaborated on the nature of the correspondence between proverbs and situations – the proverb reflects the same kind of relationship that exists between entities in the real-life situation (1970, p. 19; 1988, p. 21). If we follow Permyakov’s argument, the Biblical proverb *That which is crooked cannot be made straight* can be used with reference to a number of real-life situations in which a man’s path, figurative-

ly speaking, deviates from the straight road. In other words, the two entities in the proverb – something crooked and something straight and the relationship between them, i.e., the impossibility of the first entity to become the second, are analogous to similar entities and the relationship between them in a variety of real-life situations. In Permyakov's view, the proverb is not a sign of a single real-life situation, it is a sign and a model of a typical situation or the relationship between the entities in it. A model of a situation is thus a generalization of a great number of similar, common, concrete situations (1988, p. 84). In the example above the model of the situation will be the impossibility to make straight, or get right, what man has let get crooked, or wrong. And all the real-life situations, in which the proverb can be applied, share the common characteristics contained in the model of the situation.

About thirty years earlier than Permyakov, Kenneth Burke made a similar observation about proverbs and situations: "Proverbs are *strategies* for dealing with *situations*. In so far as situations are typical and recurrent in a given social structure, people develop names for them and strategies for handling them. Another name for strategies might be *attitudes*" (1941, p. 296 original emphasis). There is much in common between the views of Burke and Permyakov. Both Burke and Permyakov stress the fact that proverbs are associated with typical situations and both authors point out that proverbs identify and name such situations. A typical situation will have generic characteristics which are recurrent and specific characteristics which are peculiar to each separate case. The generic versus specific relationship in the characteristics of situations is commented on by Lakoff and Turner as well. In their book *More Than Cool Reason*, Chapter 4 is devoted to the Great Chain Metaphor – a model of proverb meaning where the generic-specific relationship between schemata associated with proverbs plays a major role (1989). In the framework of cognitive linguistics, Lakoff and Turner assert that for proverbs to achieve their meaning a cognitive process of mapping information from a schema associated with the literal meaning of the proverb to a schema associated with a reference situation from real life takes place provided that the two specific level schemata share information contained in a generic level schema (1989, pp. 162-168). The convergence of these three

views from different theoretical perspectives throws light on the referential aspects of proverb meaning.

An addition to the explanation of the relationship between the social situation to which a proverb refers and the proverb situation itself is found in several works by Peter Grzybek (1984, 1994, 2014) who dwells on the semiotic aspects of proverb meaning. Following Seitel, Grzybek distinguishes between interaction situation, proverb situation and reference⁷ situation. The interaction situation is the discourse situation in which the proverb is used. It may coincide with the reference situation, i.e., the situation from real life that it names but more often than not it does not coincide with it. And the proverb situation is the situation represented by the proverb. Grzybek argues that successful proverb usage involves “two different abstraction processes”. The first process according to him involves extracting the “general (paremic) meaning...from the denotative text of the *proverb situation*” which gives us the *model situation*⁸, while the second process is the assigning of the *reference situation* to “a general type (or class) of situations, which might be termed *situation model*”. He further points out that the model situation and the situation model “seemingly coincide” (Grzybek, 2014, pp. 97-103, original emphasis). His conclusions about the way proverbs achieve their meaning do not contradict previous views, rather they build on them providing more details. What is relevant to our argumentation are the two mental operations that are at work in proverb semiosis and use and that are explicitly or implicitly acknowledged by all the authors mentioned so far – the process of generalization that picks generic characteristics from literal proverb meaning and reference situations and the process of perceiving the analogy between proverb situation and reference situation.

The relation of proverbs to social situations and the parallel between the relations of entities in proverb situations and reference situations have attracted a great deal of attention among proverb scholars, the above mentioned authors being but a few among many. Some of these authors comment on the fact that proverbs not only refer to situations but also evaluate them. Archer Taylor points out that people use a proverb “as a guide to life’s problems, [since] the proverb summarizes a situation, passes a judgement, or offers a course of action” (1965, p. 7). Eval-

uation and judgement in proverbs are in close connection with their function as “a guide to life’s problems”, a function that is not peculiar to them but which they share with literature in general. In his essay “Literature as Equipment for Life”, for example, Kenneth Burke states that a work of art, like a proverb, “singles out a pattern of experience...and adopt[s] an attitude towards it” (1941, p. 300). Lakoff and Turner express a view that “poetry has the power to instruct us...how to conduct our lives. Proverbs are often viewed as the simplest form of such poetry” (1989, p. 160). It could be seen that Lakoff and Turner’s view is very similar to Burke’s view about the function of literature being similar to the function of proverbs since they both equip people with strategies for coping with situations. Two important observations emerge from this discussion – that proverbs contain attitudes and that they provide strategies for living. The connection between them lies in the fact that if a certain type of behavior is positively valued, it is affirmed, praised and recommended and vice versa – if some human trait or act of behavior is negatively valued, it is denounced and rejected.

1.4 Evaluation in proverbs

Positively and negatively valued concepts in the meaning of proverbs have been explored in paremiology many times, but the views of Milner ([1971] 2004) and Petrova (2006; 2010; 2012) seem most relevant to our argumentation. Both authors point out that there are axiologically charged concepts involved in the construal of proverb meaning, which they mark with a plus or a minus sign in their analyses. But while Milner links this fact to the quadripartite structure of proverbs which he sees as universal ([1971] 2004), Petrova relates these positively or negatively marked concepts to the overall paremic meaning whose representation she perceives as a proposition in which a culturally significant entity is either approved or disapproved of (2006; 2010; 2012). Milner’s approach, although labeled as innovative at the time it was introduced, was criticized for the subjectivity involved in assigning positive and negative values to concepts in the proverb meaning. Similarly, his claim that proverbs comprising less than four parts had undergone a change and had lost some of the originally possessed four parts was not accepted by other paremiologists (see for example Norrick’s critique (2014,

p. 15)). Petrova's view, on the other hand, that at the core of proverb meaning there lies a concept, which is either positively or negatively charged and is related to a cultural entity, is in agreement with the line of thought we outlined above, viewing proverbs as signs of situations that reflect relationships between entities. Petrova proposes the term *cultureme* (2006) to mark the central entity that is affirmed or rejected by the propositional content of the proverb and points out that it is a complex sign that can include several subordinate signs related to subordinate concepts, which build up the main concept (2006; 2010; 2014; 2016). She also proposes a method of analysis to identify the *cultureme(s)* in proverbs which she calls *culturematic analysis*. Because of its relation to a long standing paremiological tradition and its connection to the phenomenon of evaluation, *culturematic analysis* was chosen as the second analytic tool in this study.

2. Methods

2.1 Data and methods of collection

In making the decision about the type of data and methods of collection we have taken into consideration two factors: relevance to the research topic and availability. The literature review showed that a number of previous paremiological studies used as data sources proverb collections (e.g. Mac Coinnigh, 2013) and special dictionaries and encyclopedias in addition to proverb collections (e.g. Tóthné-Litovkina & Csábi, 2002). In corpus studies (such as Lau, 1996) special proverb dictionaries have been used in the preliminary stage for drawing up a list of proverbs to be searched for in the database. Studies that explored the use of proverbs in folk tales, the works of a given author, or in political discourse and the mass media have also employed the use of proverb collections and dictionaries either for identifying the proverbs to be examined or for clarification of their meaning. Bearing this in mind and because this study was planned as a continuation of a previous study by Petrova (2012), which was focused on one of the books of the Bible – *Proverbs*, it was decided to direct the present study to Biblical proverbs. Wolfgang Mieder's collection *Not by Bread Alone: Proverbs of the Bible* (1990), which contains 425 annotated proverbs of Biblical origin, was singled out as the basis of our corpus. To it we added

several proverb dictionaries (Speake, 2008; Simpson & Speake, 1994; Dent, 2012; Flavell & Flavell, 1992) as well as the text of the Bible for looking up meanings and consulting the context.

Three facts about Biblical proverbs were considered of special significance. It is universally known that because of the special role the Bible played in religion, literature and culture, proverbs associated with it gained popularity not only in specific national communities but also cross-culturally in the Christian world and beyond. Not only are they spread widely through space but they cut across widely separate stretches of time. Another feature of Biblical proverbs that we felt was relevant to the research topic is their origin and diversity. They comprise true folk sayings that were current among people at the time of writing and compiling the various ancient manuscripts which were later included in the Biblical canon. In addition, they feature specially written instructions for life in the tradition of wisdom literature as is the case of many of the proverbs we associate with *The Book of Job, Proverbs, or Ecclesiastes*. And finally, they include citations that have gained proverbial status whose wealth of allusions is still recognized by the majority of users⁹. Thirdly, in addition to their popularity and diversity, the fact that they are very well documented and researched also contributed to singling them out as relevant data for the present analysis. Apart from the plethora of exegetical and hermeneutical literature that provides commentaries on practically every verse of the Bible, there are also numerous references to the sources of Biblical proverbs found in many dictionaries and in Wolfgang Mieder's collection, which also provide ample material to support research. However, choosing to work with Biblical proverbs has its drawbacks because it limits the possibility of drawing conclusions about a greater population of proverbs. With this in mind, we set off examining evaluation in the 425 proverbs of Biblical origin that belong to Wolfgang Mieder's collection. At this point we are therefore prepared to draw conclusions concerning only this group of proverbs.

2.2 Approach to analyzing: appraisal analysis combined with culturematic analysis

The research strategy adopted in the present study involves the application of the two analytical tools, mentioned above,

which complement each other. Appraisal analysis as a more general theory that studies evaluation in language use on a macro level lays the groundwork. And culturematic analysis which was developed with the proverb in mind works on a micro level. As mentioned earlier, previous research on evaluation in proverbs lacked focus and involved subjectivity in assigning values to concepts that are part of the propositional content of proverbs (see Krikmann's comment (2001, p. 68) and Norrick's critique on Milner's approach (2014, p. 15). The present study aims at maintaining a clear focus on evaluation and reducing the extent of subjectivity by making use of the detailed taxonomy of language resources provided by appraisal theory. Besides the opportunity of making use of the categories and subcategories of evaluative linguistic devices which the appraisal model offers to the researcher due to its lexically oriented development, another point that adds to its suitability is the fact that it is the only theory as far as our knowledge goes which treats judgement of behavior separately, i.e., in addition to the traditional treatment of emotion in evaluation. And thirdly, the attention to constructing communities of shared values that the appraisal model includes is perceived to be highly relevant to a study of proverb meaning. As regards the second analytical tool, the culturematic analysis, which comes from a different theoretical framework, its choice is motivated by the fact that it focuses directly on proverb meaning. This makes it suitable for the present study because the problem of identifying what entity a certain proverb affirms or denies is at the center of attention. The tradition of linguocultural studies from which it comes is not incompatible with systemic functional linguistics, which is the framework of the appraisal model, since they both share an interest in the interrelationship of language and society. This mixed approach, we believe, will equip us with even more refined tools to discover the way appraisal is realized in proverbial language.

The appraisal model suitable as it is for the purposes of this study cannot be applied directly on proverbs taken out of context. This model was designed at the discourse semantic level with the original intention to be used in analyzing larger units of discourse. However, there are studies, for instance the one conducted by Monika Bednarek (2008) or Charlotte Hommersberg's PhD dissertation (2011) in which a modified version of the ap-

praisal model is applied. In line with these previous uses, it was decided to apply only those parts of the model which are relevant to the meaning of proverbs. Out of the three basic categories, only the category of attitude and its subcategory of judgement will be fully employed in the analysis. The second basic category, engagement, will be applied only partially. The analysis will only take into consideration the stance of the proverbial voice¹⁰. And the third basic category, graduation, as well as the remaining subcategories of attitude – affect and appreciation – will play second fiddle. Having clarified how appraisal theory is modified for the purposes of this study, we will discuss briefly proverbs as miniature texts. In proverb collections and various inscriptions proverbs stand as miniature texts. But proverbs can also be found in larger pieces of discourse which they “enter” with their meaning as miniature texts. In this study we examine them ‘as little texts complete in themselves, in their relation to other proverbs...and within their cultural matrix’, choosing several among the various possibilities for proverb study outlined by Neal Norrick (2007, p. 381).

2.3 Outline of appraisal theory

Before moving to the analysis of the empirical data, we need to present a more detailed account of what appraisal theory is about. In Figure 1, the three basic categories stand out and it can be seen that the focal category of attitude embraces three further subcategories: affect, judgement and appreciation.

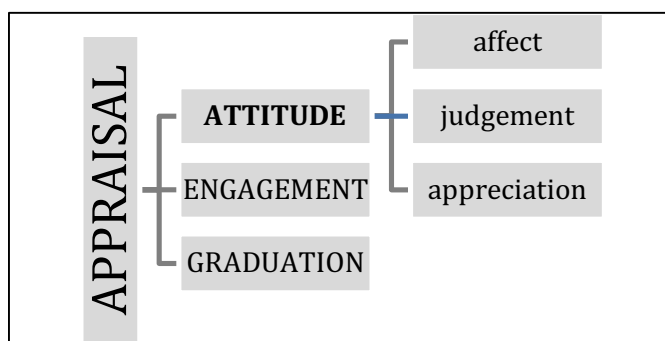


Figure 1 The place of attitude in the appraisal model (adapted from Martin & White 2005.)

The domain of attitude is highly relevant to the fundamental research problem in this study, as the prototypical proverb has generally been known to either affirm or deny certain types of human behavior. As regards the subcategories, judgement is of the greatest importance for the present investigation. According to the appraisal model, judgement is a subsystem of language involved in construing attitudes to people and their behavior. It is divided into social esteem and social sanction. Martin and White give the following explanation of the distinction between social sanction and social esteem:

Judgements of esteem have to do with ‘normality’ (how unusual someone is), ‘capacity’ (how capable they are) and ‘tenacity’ (how resolute they are); judgements of sanction have to do with ‘veracity’ (how truthful someone is) and ‘propriety’ (how ethical someone is). (2005, p. 52)

Social esteem is related to the way people’s characters are measured in social networks such as family, friends, colleagues, etc. while social sanction is related to the way people’s behavior is judged against civic or religious norms by the larger community. An instance of social sanction judgement can be found in the proverb *Don’t render evil for good* where human behavior is assessed in relation to propriety and ethics. And social esteem is associated with the proverb *The sluggard will not plough because of the cold* where the implicit judgement is related to tenacity.

The other two subcategories of attitude – affect and appreciation have less relevance to proverbs, that is why their division into further subcategories in the theory of appraisal will not be dealt with here. Nevertheless, they have their role in proverbial evaluation as can be seen from the following two examples: *The heart knows its own bitterness* contains affect, and *A word fitly spoken is like apples of gold in pictures of silver* – appreciation. It should be noted that according to the appraisal model, the three subcategories of attitude – affect, judgement and appreciation are not separate independent entities. Affect is seen to be at the heart of judgement and appreciation, which are viewed as institutionalized feelings. For Martin and White judgement represents “feelings institutionalized as proposals” which relate to

rules and regulations from the sphere of ethics and morality, while appreciation represents “feelings institutionalized as propositions” that stipulate criteria for the assessment of the aesthetic value of semiotic and natural phenomena (see Figure 2.1 in Martin & White 2005, p. 45).

So far, the subcategory of judgement has been given more attention than the subcategories of affect and appreciation because of its high relevance to the research topic. As regards the remaining two categories alongside attitude – engagement and graduation, they will be briefly touched upon now. Engagement is described as taking a stance towards the speaker’s own value position or that of the addressee (Martin & White 2005, p. 92). This category in the appraisal model is also relevant to proverbs since utterances and written texts containing proverbs are attitudinal in most of the cases. Here is a constructed example, in which it is presumed that the speaker presents the proverbial proposition as plausible and generally agreed. Our example contains the Biblical proverb *Evil communications corrupt good manners* and illustrates engagement at play, showing how the two speakers get aligned in taking the same stance towards befriending bad people, simultaneously aligning themselves with the proverbial voice:

Paul: I hear Jack has slipped back into his bad habits now that he sees more of his old buddies again.

John: Pity, this has happened. I can only say evil communications corrupt good manners.

The proverb has a twofold function in the utterance of the second speaker. By choosing to use it, he accepts the first speaker’s invitation to share his value position, since the value position referenced by the proverb itself coincides with the value position expressed by the first speaker. And secondly, he sets their shared value position against the backdrop of the voices of previous users thus providing the support of traditional wisdom to the argument. It should be noted, though, that the present study will not cover the whole area of engagement as it is presented in the appraisal model on the discourse semantic level, it will only utilize that part of the engagement framework that concerns the positioning of the user’s voice with regard to the proverbial voice

and the addressee's voice in seeking to explain what role the stance taken by the proverbial voice plays in the construal of the proverb meaning in the standard average interpretation¹¹. That is why the taxonomy of all the heteroglossic resources of expansion and contraction and their subcategories - entertain and attribute, and disclaim and proclaim respectively, will not be dealt with here. Neither will the final major category in the appraisal model, graduation be dealt with in detail. We will note in passing that it is a sub-system of meanings related to up-scaling and down-scaling the values of affect, judgement and appreciation, and it is also related to scaling engagement values. Graduation is subdivided into force and focus. The first axis of scalability – force – is concerned with intensity or amount, and the second axis – focus – with prototypicality in categorization. A realization of the graduation subsystem can be seen in the Biblical proverb *A word fitly spoken is like apples of gold in pictures of silver* where figurative language is employed to scale up the aesthetic valuation. This concludes the outline of the appraisal theory which was chosen as the first analytic tool for this study.

2.4 Outline of culturematic theory

The second tool that we chose for the present study, the culturematic model, was developed by Petrova (2006; 2010; 2012; 2016) in the course of the past decade to study the axiological aspect of proverb meaning within the framework of linguoculturology, the linguistic school developed mainly in Russia that deals with the interrelationship between language and culture. The central concept in the culturematic model is the cultureme which Petrova defines as “the verbalized sign for the entity that is either positively or negatively evaluated in a text which is well-known in a given linguocultural community” (2006, p. 39). From this definition with a semiotic perspective, it could be seen that the cultureme is a content sign (to use Shapiro's term¹²) which could be verbalized but otherwise does not possess a material signifier. It could also be seen that this sign possesses evaluative or axiological characteristics. Most of the research conducted by Petrova in the course of the development of culturematic theory so far concerns culturemes in proverbs and culturematic analysis initially was developed with the proverb in mind. Culturematic analysis involves three stages: identifying

the culturemes of proverbs, ranking them in a hierarchical structure based on their frequency of distribution, and making inferences about the worldview of the community in which the proverbs carrying them are current (Petrova, 2012, p. 52). In this study, we are focusing on the process of identifying the proverb culturemes only, because the research questions we need to answer relate to the role of evaluation in the construal of proverb meaning and in the construction of communities of shared values. We aim at examining the possible link between the proverb culturemes and the acts of evaluation which we presume undergird¹³ most proverbs. Viewing the phenomenon of evaluation in proverbs from the two vantage points of systemic functional linguistics and paremiology could allow us to achieve triangulation of methods¹⁴ and corroborate our findings. We also expect that combining the methods of appraisal and culturematic analysis would reveal new characteristic features of the culturemes. We hypothesize that culturemes are special content signs within the complex proverb sign and that they possess indexical characteristics. Just as an arrow does, a proverb cultureme points to cultural models related to ethical norms. This hypothesis is based on observations made by Petrova (2006; 2010; 2012; 2016) that culturemes are associated with basic concepts in the worldview of the people in a certain linguocultural community. It is also based on Geoffrey White's (1987) observations on the role of cultural models in proverb interpretation within the framework of cognitive anthropology.

Identifying the proverb cultureme or the entity which is either positively or negatively evaluated in a proverb involves determining the functional message of the proverb (to use Hasan-Rokem's term, 1990, p. 112). The latter seems to be closely related to the functions of proverbs described by Krikmann as a "set of three degrees: statement – evaluation – prescription" (2009, p. 51). From a further statement of his, namely

[i]t also appears to be obvious that a proverb cannot order, interdict, advise anything without qualifying [it] previously as good or bad (or axiologically irrelevant)...and if the proverb puts forward appraisals, these appraisals are, in turn, likely to be founded on some

cognized truths, laws, regularities...(Krikmann, 2009, p. 52)

we infer that the functional message of a proverb combines evaluation and prescription. So we perceive the functional message of a proverb to be a proposition in which a culturally significant entity is either affirmed and recommended or evaluated as negative and condemned. In this study, we intend to identify the proverb cultureme using the structural model for analysis of proverbs developed by Hasan-Rokem (Hasan-Rokem, 1982; Alexander & Hasan-Rokem, 1988; Hasan-Rokem, 1990), which incorporates Seitel's conception of the relationship between the interaction situation, the context situation and the proverb situation, Crepeau's principle of analogy in connection with these situations, Silverman-Weinreich's concept of internal proverb metaphor and Grzybek's development of Seitel and Crepeau's ideas. Until now, within culturematic analysis, the researcher has relied mainly on her linguistic intuition to determine what entity the proverb endorses or condemns. By applying Hasan-Rokem's model we hope to reduce the subjectivity in the process of culturematic analysis. We also expect that it would be possible to incorporate the appraisal model into the culturematic analysis.

3. Description and discussion of results

3.1 Applying the appraisal model: coding – stages and problem areas

The analysis was carried out in two steps. First, we applied the appraisal model. And second, we carried out the culturematic analysis incorporating our findings from the first stage in it. This section describes the sequence of coding procedures in the first step and outlines the problem areas in assigning items to categories and sub-categories. We chose a "bottom-up" perspective and started with realizations and then worked towards the overall effect of evaluation as it unfolds in the proverb text. The coding started with highlighting all occurrences of values of attitude for each of the 425 proverb texts. Next, each identified value got a tag showing its subtype – affect, judgement or appreciation. We focused our attention on attitude because our pilot study showed that instances of affect and appreciation were few. The items

assigned to the subcategory of judgement were further subdivided into social esteem and social sanction. Those that were found to belong to the social esteem subcategory were further tagged for their subtype on the next level, namely, normality, tenacity and capacity. And the ones that were found to belong to the subcategory of social sanction were further tagged for veracity and propriety. Figure 2 shows the steps taken in assigning items to categories and subcategories, starting from the highest level category and going down to the lowest level subcategories and subtypes.

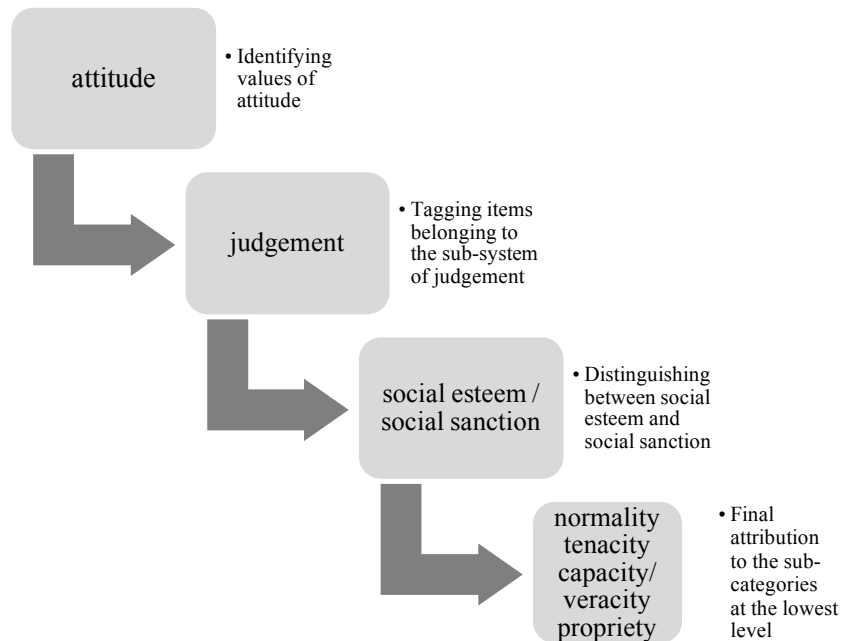


Figure 2 The step down process of tagging items for their type and sub-type.

We adopted the following notation and the table format shown in Table 1 to display the results following Martin and White (2005, p. 71):

+	‘positive attitude’
–	‘negative attitude’
hap	‘affect: happiness’
norm	‘judgement: normality’
cap	‘judgement: capacity’
ten	‘judgement: tenacity’
<i>ver</i>	‘judgement: veracity’
<i>prop</i>	‘judgement: propriety’
<u>comp</u>	‘appreciation: composition’

Table 1 Examples of notation and analysis.

Proverb text	Apprais- ing items	Af- fect	Judge- ment	Apprecia- tion	Appraised
Evil commu- nications corrupt good manners. (<i>1 Cor. 15:33</i>)	evil		– <i>prop</i>		evil commu- nications

During the coding process it was easier to deal with some of the cases and more difficult to deal with others. Appraisal theory distinguishes between two types of evaluation: directly inscribed and indirectly invoked. Tagging inscribed evaluation was more or less a straightforward process but dealing with implicit attitude proved to be more complicated. Invoked evaluation in proverbs turned out to be closely related to non-literal use of language. In other words metaphoric proverbs in almost all cases involved indirect evaluation and invoked attitude towards types of behavior, human relationships and social situations. Another area of difficulty were the borderline cases that emerged in the process of assigning appraisal items to categories and subcategories. We will begin by giving an account of how inscribed evaluation was coded. Since it is “realized through attitudinal lexis”, as Martin and White state (2005, p. 2), the examples of such lexis provided by them (p. 53) served as a frame of reference in identifying instances of its realization. However, as the examples are not meant to be an exhaustive and

definitive list, we did not expect to find matches for all the instances. In some cases there was no exact match, but we found synonyms in the examples and we also took into consideration the fact that the sub categories of normality, capacity and tenacity, and veracity and propriety are based on grammatical distinctions such as usuality, ability and inclination and probability and obligation according to the appraisal model. Table 2 summarizes the analysis of ten of the proverb texts to illustrate the process. All in all, inscribed evaluation did not pose serious problems in the coding process.

Table 2 Examples of inscribed evaluation

Proverb text	Apprais- ing items	Af- fect	Judge ment	Appre- ciation	Appraised
Evil communi- cations corrupt good manners. (1 Cor. 15:33)	evil		- <i>prop</i>		evil com- muni- cations
Overcome evil with good. (Rom. 12:21)	good		+ <i>prop</i>		good
Hell and de- struction are never full. (Prov. 27:20)	hell destruction		- <i>prop</i>		devouring power of evil
Wickedness proceeds from the wicked. (1 Sam. 24:13)	wickedness		- <i>prop</i>		wickedness
He who mocks another shall be mocked. (Job 13:9)	mock		- <i>prop</i>		mocking God or other peo- ple
Blessed are the pure at heart. (Matt. 5:8)	blessed pure		+ <i>prop</i>		purity of heart

Never be weary of well-doing. (Gal. 6:9; 2 Thess. 3-19)	well-doing	+ <i>prop</i>	well-doing
Abhor what is evil and cleave to what is good. (Rom. 12:9)	abhor evil	- <i>prop</i>	evil
Do good for evil. (Thess. 5:15)	good for evil	+ <i>prop</i>	not returning evil for evil
Sufficient into the day is the evil thereof. (Matt. 6:34)	sufficient evil	+ <i>prop</i>	taking no thought of tomorrow

Invoked evaluation, on the other hand, was much more difficult to code, because it results in “[indirect activation of] evaluative stances and [positioning of] readers/listeners to supply their own assessments” (Martin & White, 2005, p. 2). Evaluation can be invoked “through the selection of ideational meanings” (p. 62) and especially through the use of lexical metaphor (p. 64). Although the mechanism of invoking evaluation in the proverbial mini texts is not quite the same as that of larger units of discourse and has some peculiarities related to the genre characteristics of proverbs, on the whole, it works in the same way. For example, the Biblical proverb *With what measure you measure it shall be measured unto you* does not contain attitudinal lexis or an explicit evaluative proposition, nevertheless the listener or reader is positioned to adopt a stance towards the type of behavior implied in the proverb. The proverb implies that if you judge or criticize other people, you will be judged and criticized to the same extent. It could be inferred that judging and criticizing other people is perceived as bad and is not recommended. So the text of the proverb and its implications position the listener/reader to take a negative stance towards judging and criticizing other people.

In analyzing and coding invoked evaluation we have been guided by two important facts reflected in the appraisal model, namely, that as part of the interpersonal meaning evaluation has

prosodic nature, i.e. it “spills out” of its concrete realizations and “colors” the surrounding text and that the text naturalizes a certain reading and is fairly directive regarding its evaluative purport (Martin & White, 2005). Since Biblical proverbs carry the elusive and allusive aura of the Book of Books, we consulted the co-text of the respective verse and chapter for each of the proverbs as well as various exegetical commentaries and looked for instances of inscribed evaluation in the text of the Bible to support our interpretation. We also found useful Hunston and Thompson’s comment on inscribed and evoked evaluation in their introduction to Jim Martin’s chapter “Beyond Exchange: APPRAISAL Systems in English” in *Evaluation in Text: Authorial Stance and the Construction of Discourse*:

Inscribed appraisal is explicitly expressed in the text (a bright kid, a vicious kid), whereas with evoked appraisal an evaluative response is projected by reference to events or states that are conventionally prized (*a kid who reads a lot*) or frowned on (*a kid who tears the wings off butterflies*). (Hunston & Thompson, [2000] 2003, p. 142)

Thus we tried to reduce subjectivity in the analysis leaning on three objective props: instances of inscribed evaluation in the co-text of the original Biblical verse, the overall purport of the text of the respective Biblical verse or chapter, and references to conventionally evaluated entities. Bearing all this in mind we set off analyzing invoked attitude in relation to the use of figurative language in the proverbs of our corpus. Tokens of invoked evaluation were coded with *t*. Table 3 illustrates the analysis of invoked evaluation in ten other proverb text from our corpus that involve indirect appraisal.

Table 3 Examples of invoked evaluation

Proverb text	Tokens of evaluation	Affect	Judgment	Appreciation	Appraised
GOOD AND EVIL					
That which is crooked cannot be made straight. (<i>Eccles. 1:15</i>)	crooked <i>t</i>		– <i>prop</i>		deviating from the straight way
Let not the sun go down upon your wrath. (<i>Eph. 4:26</i>)	let not the sun go down		+ ten		control over anger
Resist the devil and he will flee from you. (<i>James 4:7</i>)	resist the devil <i>t</i>		+ <i>prop</i>		moral fortitude
He that does ill hates the light. (<i>John 3:2</i>)	does ill hates the light <i>t</i>	– hap	– <i>prop</i>		doing evil
You can see a mote in another's eye but cannot see a beam in your own. (<i>Matt. 7:3; Luke 6:41</i>)	can see a mote <i>t</i> cannot see a beam <i>t</i>		– <i>prop</i>		applying double standards to yourself and others
PROPHECY AND PREDICTION					
Watch for the handwriting on the wall. (<i>Dan. 5:5</i>)	watch for <i>t</i>		– ten		ignoring retribution
Let him that thinks he stands take heed lest he fall. (<i>1 Cor. 10:12</i>)	take heed <i>t</i>		– ten		inordinate self-confidence
A man that flatters his neighbor spreads a net for his feet. (<i>Prov. 29:5</i>)	spreads a net for his feet <i>t</i>		– <i>ver</i>		manipulating people by flattery
Unto everyone that has shall be given, but from him that has not shall be taken away. (<i>Matt.</i>	shall be given <i>t</i>		+ <i>prop</i>		rewarding virtue

13:12, 25:29; Mark 4:
25; Luke 8:18, 19: 26)

The meek shall inherit the earth. (Ps. 37:11; Matt. 5:5) inherit the earth *t* + *prop* meekness

3.2 Ambiguous cases, proverbs with multiple acts of evaluation and borderline cases

There were eight ambiguous cases, among them e.g. *Like tree, like fruit; By their fruits you shall know them; The tree is known by its fruit*, whose negative or positive valuation could only be interpreted in terms of a concrete context. As these cases were concerned with propriety, we decided to code them just so without giving them either positive or negative valuation. This did not influence the reporting of results as we do not draw any conclusions based on the positive or negative valuation of the particular inscriptions and tokens of judgement.

In addition, it turned out that nineteen cases contain more than one act of evaluation. Among these nineteen cases were proverbs such as *Better is a little with righteousness than great revenues with injustice* or *Better a dry morsel and quietness with it, than a house full of feasting with strife* in which two opposite types of behavior or human traits are evaluated. To simplify the coding, only one of the acts of evaluation was acknowledged, since the other one was perceived as having the same effect. Thus instead of coding harmony, discord and being content with little separately in *Better a dry morsel and quietness with it, than a house full of feasting with strife* we chose only one of the acts of evaluation as the following example shows.

Table 4 Streamlining the coding of multiple acts of evaluation

Better a dry morsel and quietness with it, than a house full of feasting with strife. (Prov. 17:1)	harmony	+ <i>prop</i>	harmony
	strife	- <i>prop</i>	discord
	a dry morsel is better	+ <i>prop</i>	being content with little

Better a dry morsel and quietness with it, than a house full of feasting with strife. (<i>Prov. 17:1</i>)	better a dry morsel than a house full of feasting	+ <i>prop</i>	being content with little and living in harmony
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The realizations of affect and appreciation when emotional states and natural phenomena were evaluated turned out to be few. When they occurred on their own they were coded and reported as separate evaluation acts. And for the proverb texts containing mixed realizations of attitude and affect or appreciation, we decided to code them as both attitude and affect and attitude and appreciation respectively. Further in the analysis only attitude was taken into consideration and the mixed cases were reported under attitude only.

3.3 Results – acts of evaluation underlie most of the Biblical proverbs

After applying the appraisal model, we found that the evaluative inscriptions and tokens of invoked evaluation indexed acts of evaluation in 360 proverb texts in our corpus which comprises 425 biblical proverbs (see Table 5). The source of this evaluation is perceived to be the proverbial voice which we see as the voice of the first user and the merged voices of the subsequent users. Archer Taylor has pointed out that a proverb ‘belongs to many people...but it was invented by an individual and applied to a particular situation’ (Taylor, [1981] 1994, p. 3) . Therefore it could be argued that in the first proverb speech act, the individual who is the possible inventor of the proverb takes a stance towards some human trait or type of behavior. In the subsequent proverb speech acts, users of the proverb take a stance in relation to the stance taken in the initial proverb speech act thus establishing the stance of the proverbial voice. As regards the target of evaluation in proverbs, our analysis showed that character traits and types of behavior were the most common target of the underlying evaluative acts. So it could be argued that the cul- turemes of proverbs which are entities either commended or dis- claimed by the proverb text are in fact the targets of evaluation. Not all proverb texts in our corpus were associated with acts of evaluation. In sixty-five cases we did not find any evidence of appraisal at work. This fact coincides with observations made by

previous authors that some proverbs are axiologically neutral (see Krikmann (2009, p. 52) for example). Life is a span is an example of such a proverb. Table 5 summarizes our findings concerning the frequency of distribution of the acts of evaluation in the proverb texts we worked with.

Table 5 Frequency distribution of the acts of evaluation.

	<i>Distribution</i>					
	<i>present</i>		<i>absent</i>		<i>sum</i>	
	<i>n</i>	<i>%</i>	<i>n</i>	<i>%</i>	<i>n</i>	<i>%</i>
<i>Acts of evaluation</i>	360	84	65	16	425	100

3.4 Frequency distribution of the types of evaluative resources

Of all evaluative resources, proverbs employ attitude most often. In 81% of the texts in our corpus the acts of evaluation concern attitude with affect accounting for 3% and appreciation for 0.4%. It should be noted that affect and appreciation did not always occur on their own in this study. As stated earlier, when affect and appreciation occurred in combination with attitude they were reported under attitude. The frequency distribution of the main categories of appraisal can be seen in Table 6.

Table 6 Frequency distribution of the main categories of appraisal.

<i>Realizations of the main appraisal categories</i>	<i>Distribution</i>					
	<i>present</i>		<i>absent</i>		<i>sum</i>	
	<i>n</i>	<i>%</i>	<i>n</i>	<i>%</i>	<i>n</i>	<i>%</i>
Attitude	345	81	80	19	425	100
Affect	13	3	412	97	425	100
Appreciation	2	0.4	423	99.6	425	100

Our analysis showed that within the category of attitude social sanction and social esteem are employed more or less to the same extent with 187 proverb texts containing social sanction and 158 proverb texts containing social esteem. As regards the sub-categories, propriety is the most often occurring sub-category with every second proverb text in our corpus that contains attitude being devoted to ethical norms. Capacity and tenacity occur twice less often and almost on a par with each other with every one in five proverb texts dealing with either of them. Veracity and normality occur considerably less often. The exact breakdown of the frequency distribution of the sub-categories of ve-

capacity and propriety within social sanction and normality, capacity and tenacity within social esteem respectively is shown in Table 7.

Table 7 Breakdown of the frequency distribution of the sub-categories of social sanction and social esteem.

<i>Sub-categories of attitude</i>	<i>Distribution</i>					
	<i>present</i>		<i>absent</i>		<i>sum</i>	
	<i>n</i>	<i>%</i>	<i>n</i>	<i>%</i>	<i>n</i>	<i>%</i>
Social sanction	187	54	158	46	345	100
Propriety	173	50	172	50	345	100
<i>Positive propriety</i>	95	36	250	64	345	100
<i>Negative propriety</i>	70	20	265	80	345	100
<i>Ambiguous cases</i>	8					
Veracity	14	4	331	96	345	100
<i>Positive veracity</i>	5	1.4	340	98.6	345	100
<i>Negative veracity</i>	9	2.6	336	97.4	345	100
Social esteem	158	45	187	55	345	100
Normality	3	0.8	342	99.2	345	100
<i>Positive normality</i>	1	0.2	344	99.8	345	100
<i>Negative normality</i>	2	0.5	343	99.5	345	100
Capacity	81	23	264	77	345	100
<i>Positive capacity</i>	50	14	295	86	345	100
<i>Negative capacity</i>	31	8.9	314	91.1	345	100
Tenacity	74	21	271	79	345	100
<i>Positive tenacity</i>	45	13	300	87	345	100
<i>Negative tenacity</i>	29	8.4	316	91.6	345	100

3.5 Engagement and proverb use – the stance of the proverbial voice

The approach taken to engagement by appraisal analysts is informed by Bakhtin's and Vološinov's notions of dialogism and heteroglossia, according to Martin and White (2005). A parallel can be drawn between these notions and Winick's notion of intertextuality in proverb use. In line with what Vološinov (1973) states about dialogue characterizing verbal communication in a broad sense and Bakhtin's claim (1984) that previous utterances provide a backdrop to any utterance, Winick points out that proverbs "derive a sense of wisdom...from explicit intertextual reference to a tradition of previous wisdom utterances" (2003, p. 595). Seen from this perspective, proverb use provides an instance of the proverb user positioning themselves towards the stance taken by the proverbial voice and with regard to the expected value position of the addressee against the backdrop of a

tradition of previous proverb uses. The stance taken by the proverbial voice which is established in the tradition of previous proverb uses is at the center of our attention in this study. Our analysis showed that in the proverb texts, in which an act of evaluation is indexed either directly by inscriptions or indirectly by tokens, the stance of the proverbial voice can be perceived as the expression of positive or negative attitude towards a human trait, a type of behavior, or other culturally significant entity, in other words it could be described as the view of the “other speakers who have previously taken a stand with respect to the issue under consideration, especially when, in so speaking, they have established some socially significant community of shared belief or value” (Martin & White, 2005, p. 93)15.

3.6 Applying culturematic theory

After completing the appraisal analysis of the proverb texts in our corpus, we moved on to the culturematic analysis. As stated earlier, we adopted Hasan-Rokem’s model for proverb analysis to identify the proverb culturemes. But some modifications to this model had to be made, since we did not work with the proverbs in a context of interaction. So we analyzed only the structure of the proverb situation (leaving out the interaction and the context situation from Hasan-Rokem’s model). We adopted her notation using the following symbols: (S) subject, (P) predicate, (O) object and R+ positive result. We added another symbol: R– because some relationships between the “proverb terms” (Seitel’s term (1994 [1981])) were perceived to entail a negative result. After analyzing the relationship between the proverb terms in the proverb situation following Seitel’s procedure (Seitel, 1994 [1981], pp. 128-136), we were able to determine the valuation of the result and formulate the hidden premises which in turn enabled us to reach the functional message of the proverb. The functional message then led us to the proverb cultureme. In uncovering the hidden premises and the functional message we were also guided by the observation made by Alan Dundes that “[t]he proverb appears to be a propositional statement consisting of at least one descriptive element, a descriptive element consisting of a topic and comment” (Dundes, 1994, p. 60). We hold the view that the hidden premises and the functional message of the proverb can be inferred on the basis of decoding the comment

made about the topic in the proverb text. The comment we observed was related to the relationship between the entities or the proverb terms that comprised the proverb situation in accordance with Permyakov's observation (1970, p. 19).

By way of illustration we provide the detailed analysis of the proverb *Evil communications corrupt good manners*. First we analyzed the structure of the proverb situation applying Hasan-Rokem's model:

(S) Evil communications (P) corrupt (O) good manners. (R-)

In Seitel's terms (1994 [1981]), the analysis of the proverb situation would look like this: The proverb terms that comprise the proverb situation are *evil communications* and *good manners* and the relationship between them is *corrupt*. We found Hasan-Rokem's elaboration of Seitel's analysis clearer and more precise. By applying the dictum of Habermas: "Hermeneutics is both a form of experience and grammatical analysis at the same time" (Habermas cited in Hasan-Rokem, 1990, p. 111), Hasan-Rokem links the syntactic relationships within the proverb sentence with the relationship between the entities in the proverb situation which in turn reflect the relationship between entities in the reference situation. The relationship between the entities in the proverb situation is expressed by the predicate. This is also seen in Dundes' observation about descriptive elements in proverbs consisting of a topic and a comment, that we cited earlier. By analyzing the relationship between the subject (S) and the object (O) expressed by the predicate (P) in the example above, we arrived at the negative valuation for the result (R-). Next, we formulated the hidden premise *Associating with evil people has a bad influence over good manners* and the functional message *The company of evil people should be avoided*. The functional message lead us to the cultureme *evil communications* (-). The negative valuation of the cultureme was justified by the negative result (R-) we tagged in the proverb situation. We also incorporated appraisal analysis in culturematic analysis and analyzed the proverb in terms of the underlying act of evaluation. At the end, the target of evaluation proved to coincide with the cultureme that we identified after applying the modified version of Hasan-Rokem's model for analysis. In Table 8 we provide ex-

amples of the identification of the cultureme in ten proverb texts in our corpus.

Table 8 Examples of cultureme identification.

Structure of proverb situation	Hidden premises	Functional message	Cultureme
(S) Evil communications (P) corrupt (O) good manners. (R-) (<i>1 Cor. 15:33</i>)	Associating with evil people has a bad influence over good manners.	The company of evil people should be avoided.	evil communications (-)
(P) Overcome evil with good. (R+) (<i>Rom. 12:21</i>)	Doing good helps overcome evil.	One should overcome evil with good.	good (+)
(S) Hell and destruction (P) are never full. (R-) (<i>Prov. 27:20</i>)	Evil has no end.	One should not forget the devouring power of evil.	devouring power of evil (-)
Wickedness proceeds from the wicked. (R-) (<i>1 Sam. 24:13</i>)	Wicked people tend to do wicked things.	One should not forget that wicked people tend to do wicked things.	wickedness (-)
(S) He who mocks another (P) shall be mocked. (R-) (<i>Job 13:9</i>)	Mocking others brings the reciprocal action upon oneself.	Mocking God or other people is bad.	mocking God or other people (-)
Blessed (P) are (S) the pure at heart. (R+) (<i>Matt. 5:8</i>)	Purity of heart is a precious virtue.	Purity of heart will be rewarded.	purity of heart (+)
Never (P) be weary of well-doing. (R+) (<i>Gal. 6:9; 2 Thess. 3-19</i>)	Well-doing is worthwhile	One should persevere in well-doing.	well-doing (+)
(P) Abhor (O) what is evil and (P) cleave to (O) what is good. (R+) (<i>Rom. 12:9</i>)	Doing evil is bad.	One should avoid evil and strive to do good.	evil (-) good (+)

(P) Do (O) good for evil. (R+) (<i>Thess. 5:15</i>)	good for evil	One should return good for evil.	returning good for evil (+)
(S) The wicked flee when no man pursues. (R-) (<i>Prov. 28:1</i>)	A guilty conscience torments the person.	One should not live so that he makes his conscience guilty.	guilty conscience (-)

During the culturematic analysis while uncovering the hidden premises and the functional message of the proverbs we reached more or less the same entities that we defined as the target of evaluation in the first stage of the analysis. As was already mentioned, the cultureme proved to be the target of the evaluation act inherent in every eight out of ten proverb texts in our corpus. It could be argued that the cultureme plays a role in the relational work in acts of evaluation which Alba-Juez and Thompson (2014) describe. Its role in this relational work is seen to be that of an arrow that points to cultural models related to social esteem and social sanction. But it also carries an axiological charge, something on which Petrova has already commented on extensively (2006, 2010, 2012, 2016). What can now be added in this respect is the new findings about the nature of the cultureme's axiological charge. This study showed that the culturemes of the proverb texts which we examined can be divided into two roughly equal groups associated with social esteem and social sanction respectively. We observed only a slight prevalence in the number of culturemes associated with social sanction over the number of culturemes associated with social esteem. One hundred and eighty five of the culturemes which account for 54% of all the culturemes that were identified in this study were associated with ethical norms underpinning civic duty and religious observance, which we relate to social sanction. And one hundred and fifty eight of them accounting for 45% dealt with the less rigid norms of social interaction, which we relate to shaping the reputation that people hold among such groups as family, colleagues and friends, i.e., with social esteem. These findings match Wolfgang Mieder's observation that the Biblical texts from which most of the Biblical proverbs are derived are "filled with short statements of authoritative

instruction, behavioral advice, social and ethical imperatives and other types of paradigmatic truths” (1990, p. 7).

3.7 Discussion of results - the role of the cultureme

The contribution of this study to culturematic theory comprises observations about the indexical and axiological characteristics of the proverb cultureme. It was mentioned earlier that Geoffrey White’s comments (1987) on the cognitive processes lying behind the interpretation of proverbs made us explore the indexical nature of the cultureme. We examined the three stages in proverb use and interpretation that he describes:

The interpretation of proverbs may be viewed as an interactive construction in which the speaker (1) perceives and evaluates a social situation in terms of an abstract cultural model, (2) articulates this point of view in a proverb expressing one or more interlinked propositions, which is then (3) interpreted by the listener, who expands on those propositions by locating them in the relevant cultural model and drawing appropriate inferences. (White, 1987, p. 155)

Furthermore, during the analysis of the linguistic data we noticed that the cultureme acts as a link between proverbs and cultural models. The relation of proverbs and phrasemes in general to cultural models has been widely commented on in phraseology (see for example Dobrovol'skij & Piirainen, 2005; Baranov & Dobrovol'skij, 2008; Piirainen, 2007; Piirainen, 2012) and in cognitive anthropology (White, 1987; Quinn & Holland, 1987; Strauss & Quinn, 1997). Quinn and Holland describe cultural models as “presupposed, taken-for-granted models of the world that are widely shared...by the members of society”. They state further that cultural models “play an enormous role in...[people’s] understanding of...[the] world and their behavior in it” (Quinn & Holland, 1987, p. 4). Geoffrey White stresses the relational work in the process of proverb use and proverb interpretation that involves projecting social situations onto cultural models. Similar relational work is mentioned in Alba-Juez and Thompson’s (2014, p. 15) definition of evaluation. Our analysis showed that the cultureme plays an important role in this relational work. It serves as a link or a “semiotic arrow” (to

borrow Michael Silverstein's phrase, 1992, p. 55). pointing from the evaluative propositions associated with the hidden premises and the functional message of the proverb to cultural models, which gives us grounds to conclude that as a sign it has indexical characteristics.

As is well known, linguistic anthropology is one of the fields that has explored the notion of indexicality. From this perspective, Duranti states that "language is full of examples of linguistic expressions that are connected to or point in the direction of aspects of the sociocultural context" (1997, p. 18). We see the cultureme to be such an example with the caveat that it is not a proper linguistic expression but a special sign in the content plane of the proverb sign. The notion of indexicality has been explored in connection with proverbs by Bhuvaneshwar (2003) who distinguishes between general proverbial indexes and specific indexes. He conceives of general proverbial indexical meaning as being associated with the regional or social dialect of the user, thus pointing to or betraying his regional connections and social status. And he links specific proverbial indexical meaning to personal characteristics such as the level of education and the ability to use proverbs as well as to types of situations in terms of formal and informal and to concepts such as propriety and impropriety in language use (Bhuvaneshwar, 2003, pp. 4-12). The treatment of indexicality in proverb meaning in this study is narrower than Chilukuri Bhuvaneshwar's treatment and probably comes closest to his view in one aspect – that of proverbs indicating attitude or political opinion. But while he asserts that a proverb points to the stance a speaker takes towards a particular social issue (2003, p. 10), focussing on the indexical characteristics of the complex proverb sign as a whole, we explore the indexical features of the proverb cultureme which is a sign within the proverb sign. Our findings on the micro level of proverb meaning are in consonance with the above mentioned observations made by Bhuvaneshwar which refer to a more general level. It could be argued that the indexical features of the proverb cultureme contribute to the indexical proverb meaning in general.

As regards the axiological charge of the cultureme, which had already been researched in great detail, the contribution of this study lies in observations concerning the type of attitude we

associate with culturemes. It was shown in the previous section that by making use of the detailed taxonomy of lexical evaluative resources provided by the appraisal model, a fine-grained analysis of the types of culturemes can be achieved.

All things considered, it could be stated that from a semiotic perspective, the proverb cultureme can be described as a content sign within the complex sign of the proverb. The cultureme may not always possess a separate material signifier, but it can always be verbalized. The signified of a proverb cultureme is an entity most often related to human values and human behavior. Its most important features are indexical and axiological. In the proverb semiosis it indexes cultural models and adds an evaluative layer to the content plane (in Hjelmslev's terms) of the proverb. Its core axiological features connected to social sanction and social esteem contribute to the overall persuasive rhetorical force of the proverb text.

From a functional perspective the cultureme is the target of the proverbial act of evaluation, the source being the proverbial voice. In the proverbial act of evaluation it is involved in the relational work that links human traits, types of behavior and other entities with the speaker or hearer's personal, group or cultural set of values. The cultureme plays a major role in the linguistic mechanism of sharing normative assessments by pointing to cultural models related to ethical norms. It also takes part in establishing solidarity between interlocutors and writers and readers thus constructing communities of shared values.

4. Conclusion

4.1 Research outcomes

This study showed that acts of evaluation can be found in the majority of the Biblical proverbs in our corpus. It also showed that various evaluative language resources are employed in the proverbial texts in this corpus. By far, the greatest number of the proverbs in our study contain attitude. Social sanction and social esteem are equally employed. And as regards the subcategories at the lowest level of the classification of the language resources for evaluation, propriety prevails followed by capacity and tenacity. As regards the results of the second stage in our analysis, most of the appraised items in the first stage of the analysis matched the culturemes resulting from the second stage. This

gives us grounds to conclude that the culturemes of Biblical proverbs are the target of the proverbial act of evaluation. By virtue of their indexicality, the culturemes play a role in relating the proverb propositions to normative assessments shared in the linguocultural community. Moreover, with their axiological charge they intensify the persuasive rhetorical effect of the whole proverb. It could be added that by pointing to the shared normative assessments they reinforce them. And with every act of evaluation when they enter discourse, they create solidarity between interlocutors and writers and readers and thus contribute to shaping and reshaping communities of shared values and norms. In conclusion, the proverb texts in our corpus could be described in a way similar to the way Martin and White (2005, p. 211) describe texts in general: as both ideological and axiological in Bakhtinian terms, pointing out that “ideologically speaking...[texts] unfold as rationality – a quest for ‘truth’; [and that] axiologically speaking...[they unfold] rhetorically – an invitation to community”.

In addition to exploring the indexical nature of culturemes and explaining the nature of their axiological charge, this study also contributed to the development of culturematic theory. In this study, Hasan-Rokem’s model for proverb analysis is applied for the first time in culturematic analysis to ensure a more systematic approach to identifying the proverb cultureme. And it is also the first time the appraisal model is incorporated in culturematic analysis with the purpose of enabling the researcher to view the phenomenon of evaluation in proverbs through the prism of the broader theory of appraisal in language.

4.2 Problems and limitations of the study and questions that arise

The limitations of this study follow from the choice of the empirical data. Not only does this choice limit the scope of our conclusions but it also makes us tentative in hypothesizing about the directions of further research. Still, we feel that the findings concerning the high frequency of occurrence of evaluation in the proverbs in this study could be taken as an indication of the possibility to construct a hypothesis that evaluation is a marker of proverbiality. Such a hypothesis can be tested in another study involving a randomly chosen sample of proverbs and employing

some of the research techniques used in the studies on proverbiality markers by Mac Coinnigh (2013) and Arora (1984). A study on a randomly chosen sample of proverbs is also needed to check the observation that social sanction and social esteem are on a par as far as the distribution of the types of judgement is concerned in a greater population of proverbs. The results of the present study can be further verified by a corpus study¹⁶ involving the use of Biblical proverbs in speech and writing, where the category of engagement could be more fully explored. And last but not least, the present study poses the question about the role of the proverb cultureme in choosing the proverb in the proverbial speech act. Does it stay in memory and serve as a “handle”, which the speaker or writer “grips” before “pulling” the proverb from memory when perceiving the analogy between the reference and proverb situation? As regards the opposite process of interpretation, this study tried to show that the cultureme resembles an anchor linking the proverb to a set of norms and providing weight for the rhetorical effect.

As a final note, we would like to point out that proverb texts are not devoid of value judgement even when they are examined on their own, i.e. devoid of context, as we tried to prove. They enter discourse with a recognizable evaluative charge.

Notes:

¹ In this study we use the term ‘take a stance’ with the same meaning as ‘hold a view’.

² Silverman-Weinreich’s article was reprinted from *Yivo Annual of Jewish Social Science*, 17 (1978), 1-20.

³ We share the view that proverbs are part of the phraseological system of language expressed in (Burger, Dobrovolskij, Kuhn, & Norrick, 2007) and accept that proverbs share with other phrasemes the three most widely agreed upon constitutive characteristics (i) stability, (or fixedness), (ii) idiomaticity and (iii) polylexicality (Cowie, 1998), (Pirainen, 2012).

⁴ Kirschenblatt-Gimblett’s study first appeared in 1973 and Fontaine’s study – in 1985.

⁵ The term ‘proverb performance meaning’ makes us think of the distinction between competence and performance that transformational generative grammar makes, or if we use the terms that were adopted approximately two decades later, the distinction between I-language and E-language. If we connect this distinction with our discussion of the stability and variability in proverb meaning it seems sensible to assume that the relative stability of proverb meaning could be associated

with the internal(ized) language and the variability – with the external(zed) language.

⁶ By 'context of culture' we mean the widened interpretation of the context of situation which Malinowski advocated ([1923] 1936, p. 306).

⁷ Grzybek replaces Seitel's term 'context situation' with 'reference situation'.

⁸ In fact, Grzybek describes one more process leading to a model situation. In addition to arriving at a more general meaning of a single proverb, starting from the denotative meaning and reaching the connotative meaning, he also describes a second process – starting from different variants of proverbs or different proverbs with the same connotative meaning and reaching a proverb invariant, i.e. a situation with general characteristics. Basically the two processes are similar but they are not identical.

⁹ Wolfgang Mieder (1998) gives numerous examples of how distinguished members of American society have used the Biblical proverb *A house divided against itself cannot stand* among which Lincoln's use of the proverb in a famous speech stands out echoed by Willy Brandt's use of the same proverb during Germany's reunification. Mieder also shows that the whole proverb or a shorter "truncated" version is also widely used in titles of books, articles or plays where the awareness of the authors of the proverb's Biblical origin and subsequent notable uses varies. He also stresses the fact that this particular proverb of Biblical origin had not gained popularity in German before Willy Brandt introduced it and the respective metaphor in political discourse. For many German users its relation to the Bible is lost and its allusional aura comprises only Lincoln's famous use (Mieder, 2005, p. 117).

¹⁰ By 'proverbial voice' we mean the merged voices of the originator of the proverb and the voices of the subsequent users.

¹¹ In adopting Norrick's term 'standard proverbial interpretation' or 'standard proverb meaning' as he later uses it defining it as being 'accessible to normal adult members of the language community' (2014, p. 17) we remain aware of the fact that the "participants' understanding of the proverb base meaning" contributes to the overall "proverb performance meaning" as Kirshenblatt-Gimblett (1994, p. 119) points out. In other words, we acknowledge the fact that ideolectal variation of the standard proverbial interpretation can lead to differences in the perception of the meaning of one and the same proverb.

¹² Shapiro notes that "content signs have, for the most part, no material signans [signifiers]" (Shapiro, 2008, p. 14).

¹³ We find Fontaine's ([1994] 2015) use of this word particularly fitting when discussing proverb meaning and its elements.

¹⁴ As regards triangulation, there seems to be analogy between our aim to clarify the evaluative characteristics of culturemes from two different perspectives and the process of determining the yet unknown position of a certain spatial point from two known points in naval navigation and land surveying as Dornyei (2011, p. 43) citing Erzberger and Keller explains in commenting on the use of the concept of triangulation in mixed methods research.

¹⁵ Martin and White describe this stand in connection with the relationship between the speaker's or writer's relationship to it. The other relationships that are of

interest to appraisal analysts are between the speaker or writer and the stance they take, and between the speaker or writer and the stance of the addressee.

¹⁶ With reference to corpus studies involving proverbs and the broader category of phrasemes two limitations have been commented on – the fact that phraseological units have a very low frequency of occurrence (see for example Norrick (1985) and Moon (1998) and the need for combining corpus approaches with manual coding and discourse analysis techniques (see Hunston and Thompson ([2000] 2003) , Hunston (2011) or Bednarek (2008) among others).

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