Conceptualization of romantic love in proverbs from around the world

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Title: "Conceptualization of romantic love in proverbs from around the world."
Abstract: Romantic love and the ways in which it is viewed are recurrent themes in everyday life and are thus reflected in a multitude of proverbs that speak of love, lovelessness and its relationship to various body organs. Being aware of the importance of this topic, the present study examines proverbs and anti-proverbs that deal with love, as well as those related to marriage. In the first part of this article we will present a collection of proverbs dealing with love and the perception of the loved one through various bodily organs, and in the second part we will present proverbs dealing with the relationship between romantic love and marriage.
The corpus of proverbs has been primarily compiled from Wolfgang Mieder's collections published between 1986 and 1992. Furthermore, numerous other proverbs from collections of French, German, Russian, Hungarian, Italian and other proverbs have been added to this corpus. Thus, we will get an insight into the perception of love in different nationalities, as well as its development during the course of marriage, based on the wisdom contained in these proverbs.
Keywords: Paremiology. Proverb. Cognitive Linguistics. Metaphor.

Título: «Conceptualización del amor romántico en refranes y proverbios de todo el mundo».
Resumen: El amor romántico y las formas en las que se percibe son temas recurrentes en la vida diaria y, por ende, se ven reflejadas en una multitud de refranes que hablan de amor, desamor y de su relación con diversos órganos corporales. Siendo conscientes de la importancia de dicho tema, el presente estudio aborda los refranes y los antiproverbios que tratan del amor, así como aquellos relacionados con el matrimonio. En la primera parte de este artículo presentaremos una recopilación de refranes que tratan de amor y la percepción de la persona amada a través de diversos órganos corporales, y en la segunda refranes que tratan de la relación entre el amor romántico y el matrimonio.
El corpus se ha obtenido de los refranes recopilados por Wolfgang Mieder en sus colecciones de refranes entre los años 1986 y 1992. Además, se han añadido numerosos refranes de refraneros en lengua francesa, alemana, rusa, húngara, italiana, entre otros. De esta manera profundizaremos en la percepción del amor en las distintas nacionalidades, así como su evolución durante el transcurso del matrimonio, basado en la sabiduría recogida en dichos refranes.
Palabras clave: Paremiología. Refrán. Proverbio. Lingüística cognitiva. Metáfora.

Titre : « Conceptualisation de l'amour romantique dans les proverbes du monde entier ».
Résumé : L'amour romantique et la façon dont il est perçu sont des thèmes récurrents dans la vie quotidienne et se reflètent donc dans une multitude de proverbes qui parlent de l'amour, du désamour et de sa relation avec divers organes corporels. Consciente de l'importance de ce sujet, la présente étude porte sur les proverbes et antiproverbes qui traitent de l'amour, ainsi que sur ceux qui ont trait au mariage. Dans la première partie de cet article, nous présenterons une collection de proverbes traitant de l'amour et de la perception de l'être aimé à travers les différents organes du corps, et dans la seconde partie, nous présenterons des proverbes traitant de la relation entre l'amour romantique et le mariage.
Le corpus a été constitué à partir des proverbes compilés par Wolfgang Mieder dans ces recueils de provernes publiés entre 1986 et 1992. En outre, de nombreux proverbes français, allemands, russes, hongrois, italiens et autres ont été ajoutés à ce corpus. Nous aurons ainsi un aperçu de la perception de

l'amour dans différentes nationalités, ainsi que de son évolution au cours du mariage, sur la base de la sagesse contenue dans ces proverbes.
Mots-clé : Parémiologie. Proverbe. Linguistique cognitive. Métaphore.

INTRODUCTION

The study focuses on various aspects of romantic love and the ways it is viewed and associated with in proverbs from around the world. The study also addresses the relation between love and marriage in the proverbs. The study consists of two sections. While Section 1.1. focuses on love and the perception of the beloved person through various body organs, Section 1.2. treats the relation between romantic love and marriage.

The material for the investigation of American proverbs[1] comes primarily from the largest dictionary of American proverbs: "A Dictionary of American Proverbs" (1992) by Wolfgang Mieder *et al*., as well as the following proverb collections compiled and edited by Wolfgang Mieder: "Love: Proverbs of the Heart" (1989), and "The Prentice Hall Encyclopedia of World Proverbs: A Treasury of Wit and Wisdom Through the Ages" (1986). The examples cited from languages other than American English mainly come from the following proverb collections (Mieder, 1986, 1989), as well as from numerous collections and articles.

The vast majority of proverbs were located in collections that present them in English translations when I was in the USA and the United Kingdom, being supported by a Fulbright Research Grant and by a Hungarian State Eötvös Scholarship which enabled me to conduct research at the Department of Anthropology at the University of California at Berkeley (1998–1999) and at Oxford University Press (2003). Later numerous other proverbs were added to my corpus, primarily from collections of Russian and Hungarian proverbs published in the language of their origin.

Among the proverbs analysed in this article are some of ancient origin which appear in the English language, as well as in many other languages such as French, German, Russian, Hungarian and Italian, etc. The Latin proverb such as *Amor caecus est,* e.g., exists as a direct translation in many other European languages, including *Love is blind* (English), *A szerelem vak* (Hungarian), *Любовь слепа* (Russian), *L'amore è cieco* (Italian), *El amor es ciego* (Spanish), *L'amour est aveugle* (French), etc.

Before I start my discussion, I will focus on four of my writings treating romantic love in proverbs and (or) anti-proverbs (that is, proverb transformations, see T. Litovkina and Mieder 2006): three articles (Tóthné Litovkina and Csábi, 2002; T. Litovkina, 2024a; 2024b) and a book (T. Litovkina and Mieder, 2019)[2].

In order to start the examination of the metaphorical nature of proverbs – especially American proverbs – Szilvia Csábi and I examined proverbs about romantic love. The study "Metaphors We Love by: The Cognitive Models of Romantic Love in American Proverbs" (Tóthné Litovkina and Csábi, 2002) employs a cognitive approach to proverb metaphors[3], and

[1] A certain proverb is called 'English' if it is not listed in "A Dictionary of American Proverbs" (see Mieder *et al*., 1992) and is marked as English by Mieder in his collections "Love: Proverbs of the Heart" (1989) and "The Prentice Hall Encyclopedia of World Proverbs: A Treasury of Wit and Wisdom Through the Ages" (1986), or if it has been found in English proverb dictionaries. It must be pointed out that the best known and most widely recognized American proverbs are of English origin.

[2] Some parts of this study have been published in Tóthné Litovkina and Csábi, 2002; T. Litovkina and Mieder, 2019; see also T. Litovkina, 2024a, 2024b.

[3] The role of metaphor in proverbs and proverb understanding has been the focus of attention within the cognitive linguistic framework. There have also been cognitive linguistic studies on the relationship of

examines more than two hundred proverbs dealing with American attitudes towards romantic love. The study concentrates on conceptual metaphors and metonymies to discover the cognitive models of love which these metaphors and metonymies jointly constitute. Despite the fact that the emphasis is on American proverbs about love, we also wanted to illustrate that the phenomena present in American love proverbs are also present in proverbs of other languages. Thus, the issue of universality is undertaken from the perspective of American English proverbs as contrasted with proverbs in other languages. The different cognitive models proposed by Kövecses (1988)[4] fit our understanding of the world to varying degrees. What is important is that these models are present in language as well as in thinking – thus, the analysis of love proverbs reveals the conceptual metaphors and metonymies of love which, in turn, point to the existent ICMs of love. Our work demonstrated the potential of cognitive approaches to proverb metaphors, and generally supports Zoltán Kövecses's work in establishing cognitive models of love.

The main aim of the book "Marriage Seen Through Proverbs and Anti-Proverbs" (T. Litovkina and Mieder, 2019) is to explore various aspects of marriage and the ways it is viewed and conceptualized in the body of Anglo-American proverbs and anti-proverbs (that is, proverb transformations). The book also makes an attempt to depict those who contribute to the institution of marriage (that is, husbands and wives), and analyses their nature, qualities, attributes, and behaviours as revealed through Anglo-American proverbs and anti-proverbs. Furthermore, the book also briefly explores those who remain single and do not belong to the

conceptual metaphors, conceptual metonymies and specific emotion concepts, such as love, the topic the present study is concerned with.

The cognitive approach to metaphors in proverbs is fruitful and effective, as the studies "Metaphors We Love by: The Cognitive Models of Romantic Love in American Proverbs" (see Tóthné Litovkina and Csábi, 2002), "Cognitive Aspects of Proverbs" (Lewandowska and Antos, 2015), "Metaphors of Love Before and After Marriage in Proverbs and Anti-Proverbs" (T. Litovkina, 2024a), "Metaphors of love in proverbs from around the world" (T. Litovkina, 2024b), "Cognitive Linguistics and Proverbs" (see Belkhir, 2021), "Metaphoric Proverbs in EFL [English as a Foreign Language] Learners' Translation" (see Belkhir ,2022), "There Is No Time Like the Pleasant.' Time Seen Through Proverbs and Anti-Proverbs" (T. Litovkina and Belkhir, 2024), as well as several other articles included in "Proverbs within Cognitive Linguistics: State of the Art" edited by Belkhir (2024) show.

[4] A detailed study of the metaphors and metonymies of love was conducted by Zoltán Kövecses in his book entitled "The Language of Love. The Semantics of Passion in Conversational English" (1988). In his work, Kövecses examines the attitude to romantic love in conversational English. Since language reflects our conceptual system it is possible to draw conclusions about our conceptual network from language. Kövecses discusses the major conceptual metaphors of love that are manifest in language, and also groups them. He analyses the cognitive models of love that the various metaphors and metonymies jointly converge on. Idealized cognitive models, or ICMs, are structures with the help of which we organize our knowledge (Lakoff, 1987). ICMs may be of various types, such as ideal, typical, stereotypical, as well as many others (see Lakoff, 1987). A concept can be characterized by a cluster of converging models. Thus, the concept of love, as Kövecses (1988) notes, can be characterized by the ideal, the typical, and other alternative cognitive models. The ideal model of love (see Kövecses, 1988) is constituted by a number of conceptual metaphors, like LOVE IS UNITY, LOVE IS AN OBJECT, LOVE IS FIRE, LOVE IS A NUTRIENT, LOVE IS INSANITY, LOVE IS A FORCE. Metaphors of the typical model of love are as follows: LOVE IS A HIDDEN OBJECT, LOVE IS AN OPPONENT, AFFECTION IS WARMTH. Besides the ideal and the typical model mentioned above, there are other, "alternative" models of love. The alternative models are based on metaphors that are different from the ones mentioned above: LOVE IS WAR, LOVE IS A LIVING ORGANISM, LOVE IS A DISEASE.

institution of marriage (that is, spinsters and bachelors), as well as brides and bridegrooms, parents and children, mothers-in-law and children-in-law, widows and widowers, and divorced women and men), but contribute to the institution of marriage. Although the book focuses on anti-proverbs, American proverbs or proverbs from around the world are also cited throughout the book. Sometimes we might start or finish a chapter or a section with reference to them, or use proverbs in order to prove or disprove the messages carried in anti-proverbs. Three chapters of the book (2, 3, 4) embrace various aspects of love, and even have the word "love" in their headings, for example, Chapter 2. "Love is blind, and marriage is an eye-opener". Multifaceted features of holy matrimony; Chapter 3. "Variety is the spice of love", the role of sexuality in marriage; Chapter 4. "Make love, not war – get married and do both". Human relations as part of married life.

The chapter "Metaphors of love before and after marriage in proverbs and anti-proverbs" (T. Litovkina, 2024a) discusses the ways in which love after marriage is viewed and conceptualized in the body of Anglo-American proverbs and anti-proverbs. Although the chapter focuses on Anglo-American proverbs and anti-proverbs, proverbs from around the world are also sometimes quoted and analyzed as well. While the first part of the chapter treats the paremiological issue of the metaphorical nature of proverbs (addressing such issues as metaphor as one of the most powerful markers of proverbiality, as well as the paremiological issue of the metaphorical nature of proverbs from a cognitive linguistic view), the second part of the chapter focuses on the relationship between love and marriage in proverbs from around the world and Anglo-American anti-proverbs from a cognitive linguistic view, and it treats various metaphors of love which lead one to getting married, such as, LOVE IS FOLLY, LOVE IS MADNESS, LOVE IS LOSS OF EYESIGHT and BLINDNESS, as well as some metaphors of love after marriage (like LOVE IS WAR) proposed by Kövecses (1988).

The study "Metaphors of love in proverbs from around the world" (T. Litovkina, 2024b) focuses on various aspects of romantic love and the ways it is viewed and associated with in proverbs from around the world. My discussion is organized in two parts. While in the first part of the study I discuss the paremiological issue of the metaphorical nature of proverbs and refer to three publications of mine treating love in proverbs and (or) proverb transformations such as Tóthné Litovkina and Csábi, 2002; T. Litovkina, 2024a; T. Litovkina and Mieder, 2019), in the second part I address how romantic love is conceptualized in proverbs from around the world. I treat various metaphors of love proposed by Kövecses (1988) such as love as a living organism, love as an inanimate object, love as a nutrient, love as heat and fire, love as a disease or sickness, love as a lack of control, love as foolishness, insanity and lack of wisdom, love as a force, love as war, warrior and opponent and, last but not least, love as unity.

1. CONCEPTUALIZATION OF LOVE IN PROVERBS FROM AROUND THE WORLD[5]

After a short introduction of the four publications of mine, let us explore below how romantic love is conceptualized in the body of proverbs from around the world. While Section 1.1., divided into five sub-sections, focuses on love and the perception of the beloved person through various body organs, Section 1.2., divided into six sub-sections, treats the relation

[5] The examples below are not given in their original language, since they have been found in numerous collections (including W. Mieder's work) in which they have appeared already translated into English and without their original version.

between romantic love and marriage. While certain themes occur pervasively in proverbs about love, others appear in only a few. For this reason, my treatment of certain thematic categories might sometimes seem uneven, and might be either narrower or broader. It must be also mentioned here that some proverbs address several thematic categories simultaneously.

1.1. Love and perception of the beloved

In Section 1.1. I will address the perception of the beloved through various body organs. Since love has certain physiological effects, it is closely connected to the human body where all these effects occur. This is why love is often associated with particular bodily parts, such as the *eyes*, the *heart*, and the *face* (see Kövecses, 1988; Tóthné Litovkina and Csábi, 2002). There are also other bodily organs that are closely related to love such as *feet, mouth, nose, stomach, hands, ears, head, lips*, *shoulders*, *joints, arms,* etc. Let us explore all these body organs below.

1.1.1. Love and eyes

The importance of visual perception is shown in scores of proverbs from various cultures in which the word *eyes* is used. In fact, the *eyes* are the most frequently mentioned organ of perception in proverbs about romantic love from around the world: *Love starts from the eyes* (Russian); *The eyes are the doors through which love enters* (Spanish); *Lovers think that others have no eyes* (Spanish); *A rich man is never ugly in the eyes of a girl* (French). Therefore, if you cannot see beloved one, you shortly forget him (her): *Love enters through the eyes, and absence makes a person forget* (Spanish); *Out of eyes, out of mind* (English, Danish); *The eye sees not, the soul hurts not* (Russian).

The word *eyes* might not even be mentioned in our proverbs. Instead of it such nouns as *look(s), looking, spectacles, sight*, etc. might be employed: *Love at first sight is cured by a second look* (American); *Loving comes by looking* (English); *Looks breed love* (English); *Out of sight, out of mind* (English). Or such verbs as *see, look at*, or *watch* can be used: *In love and in games, those who watch see better than those who play* (Spanish); *Love can see from afar* (Spanish); *Love can't see, it has no reason* (Hungarian); *The more seldom you see, the more you love* (Russian); *I wouldn't drink, I wouldn't eat, I'd only look at my sweetheart* (Russian); *Other men can see her beauty, but only her husband knows her faults* (African /Mali/).

Sometimes, however, none of the words mentioned above and alluding to visual perception are needed to be used in a proverb. Just mere indication of the colour of one's complexion or hair, or any other body organ (such as *feet, mouth, nose,* etc.) might refer to one's visual perception, as in the following examples: *Let a woman have small feet, small mouth and fine nose, and forget whether she is blonde or brunette* (Spanish); *Paleness is the sign of lovers* (Persian); *A wife with a brown complexion is all but troubles* (African /Kenya: Gĩkũyũ/).

Love transforms everything, i.e. those who are in love see their beloved one as the most beautiful or handsome person in the world: *Beauty is in the eye of the beholder* (American, English); *A wolf is handsome in the eyes of a lovesick girl* (American); *Love looks through spectacles that make copper look like gold, poverty like riches, and tears like pearls* (Peruvian).

If we are in love, we are often unable to function normally and might have an inaccurate perception of reality. This means that we may be "blinded" by love and perceive the world in a way which does not correspond to the facts. Possibly the most important proverb that captures this aspect of love is *Love is blind* (originated from Latin: *Amor (est) caecus)*, which is also found in many other languages.

It is beauty that is the object of our "abnormal functioning", according to the American proverbs below: *Beauty is loved without knowing anything, ugliness hated without being to blame; Where beauty is, there will be love; She who is a beauty is half married.* We often see the object of love as being wonderful. However, the object of love does not have to be beautiful at all in reality. He or she may even be the ugliest person in the world; still, he or she will

always be considered beautiful, as the proverbs below show: *Love is all beautiful; Blind love mistakes a harelip for a dimple; There are no ugly loves nor handsome prisons; Hatred is blind, as well as love.* The following proverbs from around the world show that the same attitude is true in many other societies: *To the partial eyes of a love, pockmarks seem like dimples* (Japanese); *That which is loved is always beautiful* (Norwegian); *She who loves an ugly man thinks him handsome* (Spanish); *Love blinds* (Danish, African-Swahili); *If Jack's in love, he's no judge of Jill's beauty* (English); *Nobody's sweetheart is ugly* (Dutch); *Love and blindness are twin sisters* (Russian); *Love conceals ugliness, and hate sees a lot of faults* (Irish).

Furthermore, since love causes interference with our accurate perception, we don't see the faults of the beloved when we are in love, according to the following proverbs: *Love covers many faults* (American); *Love sees no faults* (American); *Love is blind to blemish and faults* (Irish); *He who loves you won't see your faults* (African-Hausa); *Love overlooks defects and hatred magnifies shortcomings* (Lebanese); *Whomever we love is clean even when unwashed* (Russian); *Love blinds itself to all shortcomings* (Lebanese); *In the eye of the lover, pockmarks are dimples* (American); *Love a dunghill and you'll see no motes in it* (Irish). And vice versa is true as well, when love is gone, all faults and no virtues are seen: *The jealous eye brings out every fault, but the loving eye sees none* (Arab); *Love blinds the eyes to faults, and hatred blinds the eyes to virtues* (Hebrew) (for more examples on how spouses start seeing even the smallest faults in a partner, see the section below about love and marriage).

1.1.2. Love and heart

The *heart* is the second frequently mentioned bodily organ in proverbs about romantic love from around the world. The *heart* stands for love metonymically; that is, we can infer that certain proverbs refer to love because the word *heart* is used in them (Interestingly, Wolfgang Mieder also incorporates this word into the title of his collection *Love: Proverbs of the Heart*, see 1989). In numerous proverbs the word *heart* stands for love and loving, e.g.: *Love is a tickling sensation around the heart* (American)*; A heart without love is a violin without strings* (American)*; When the heart is in love, beauty is of no account* (Pashto); *When we love, it is the heart that judges* (French); *You cannot command to the heart* (Russian); *When the heart clings to a lover, who cares what caste he be?* (Indian). As we see from the proverbs above and below, love is born in the heart, and it is spread around it. When your heart is in love, nothing can be done to stop this "tickling sensation". It is the heart that judges. You cannot force your heart to love, and vice versa is true as well. No one can force your heart to love someone.

One's heart might be loving and light, and if so, it becomes strong and finds peace and harmony: *A loving heart is better and stronger than wisdom* (American); *Loving hearts find peace, clever heads find profit in it* (American); *A loving heart is more precious than gold* (Philippine); *A lover does not have a heavy heart* (African /Kenya: Gĩkũyũ/). Furthermore, a loving heart always stays young: *The heart that loves is always young* (American). Or one's heart can be broken, or wounded, causing a lot of suffering and even torture to his owner: *A broken heart has never been cured by medicine* (Chinese); *One heart suffers, the other one does not know* (Russian); *Too much love causes heartbreak* (Philippine). The only remedy that can help a heartbroken person is mutual love: *A wounded heart can only be healed by the person who made the wound* (Spanish).

1.1.3. Love, eyes and heart

In scores of proverbs from around the world both the words *heart* and *eyes* are applied: *Better blind of eye than blind of heart* (Hebrew); *Heart and eyes are always young* (Spanish); *To whom the heart leads, there the eye runs* (Russian); *What is held in the heart seems good to the eyes* (Persian); *What the heart cannot notice, the eye cannot see* (Russian). Proverbs from different cultures emphasize again and again that absent lovers are soon forgotten. Indeed, far

from one's eyes, far from one's heart: *Absence is love's foe: far from the eyes, far from the heart* (American); *What the eyes do not see, the heart does not desire* (Russian); *When the sight leaves the eye, love leaves the heart* (Irish); *That which is far from the eye is far from the heart* (Turkish).

1.1.4. Love, heart and face

When people are in love, it is impossible to hide their feelings, and they can easily be seen on their *faces*, the word which also shows up in our love proverbs from around the world (frequently together with the word *heart*: *A letter from the heart can be read on the face* (African-Swahili); *What is cooked in the heart, is not hidden in the face* (Russian); *You can tell lovers from their faces* (African-Ovambo).

1.1.5. Love and other body parts

Above we have explored the occurrence of such bodily organs as the *heart*, *eyes*, and *face* in proverbs about romantic love from around the world. However, there are other bodily organs that also allude to the existence of love. Let us briefly focus on them.

In scores of international proverbs one's *hair* (especially that of females) is mentioned. Both blondes and brunettes are brought to discussion in: *Blondes are boring; brunettes witty* (Spanish); *Brunettes are affectionate; fair-skinned are disdainful* (Spanish); *In darkness it makes no difference whether a woman is blonde or brunette* (Spanish). However, blondes are considered to be prettier than women with any other color of hair: *Gentlemen prefer blondes*[6] (American). According to the two proverbs below, men should definitely beware of red-headed woman: *He who marries a woman with reddish hair will lose his prosperity and also the cow* (Moroccan); *Keep away from a cold draft and from a red-headed woman* (Spanish).

In the following proverb besides employing female's *hair*, some additional body parts are added as well (such as *feet, mouth, nose*): *Let a woman have small feet, small mouth and fine nose, and forget whether she is blonde or brunette* (Spanish).

In some additional proverbs other body parts are employed (such as *stomach, hands, ears, head, lips, shoulders, joints, arms,* etc.): *Love does not fill the stomach* (Czech); *Cold hands, warm love* (Hungarian); *Love enters man through his eyes, woman through her ears* (American, Polish); *Lover's oaths enter not the ears of the gods* (Greek); *Love has wings on its shoulders; matrimony has crutches under its arms* (Russian); *Love paralyzes the joints* (Sechuana); *What is nearest the heart is nearest the lips* (Irish).

1.2. Love and Marriage

Many proverbs from around the world emphasize that love passes (Tóthné Litovkina and Csábi, 2002[7]; T. Litovkina and Mieder, 2019). It goes without saying that matrimony is one of the most important reasons for the constant decrease or entire disappearance of love. This section addresses the relation between love and marriage in proverbs from around the world and explores the changes that take place in couples' love during the course of their relationship.

[6] This proverb – reflecting a stereotypical male view of women –, is very popular for transformation. Just a few examples (for more, see T. Litovkina and Mieder, 2006):

> According to the tobacco ads, gentlemen prefer blends. (Esar, 1968: 137)
>
> Gentlemen prefer blondes because where there's light there's heat. (Esar, 1968: 83)
>
> Gentlemen prefer blondes, especially those who are married to brunettes. (Esar, 1968: 83)

[7] As Tóthné Litovkina and Csábi have already mentioned in 2002: 384, a related concept that often links coldness to love is marriage. Eleven proverbs from Tóthné Litovkina and Csábi's corpus (more than two hundred proverbs) are related to marriage.

1.2.1. Love is fulfilled in marriage

The proverbs *Marry first and love will follow* (American); *Wedlock is not "love me*" (African /Cameroon: Kundu/) and *After the dowry comes the love* (Irish) reflect the old belief that an emotion such as love is not a need which should lead somebody to marriage, and that love will develop after marriage. In Icelandic they say: *Love comes after marriage*. There are, however, very few positive proverbs about the relation of love and marriage. The following proverbs in which love is associated with fruit spread the message that love is fulfilled in marriage: *Love is often the fruit of the marriage* (French); *Love is a flower that turns into fruit at marriage* (Finnish).

1.2.2. Love as beating

In scores of proverbs from around the world a husband's love towards his wife is associated with beating her: *If you really love your wife, you have to beat her* (African /Ethiopia: Tigrinya/); *My husband does not love me, because he has not beaten me* (Greek); *The more a husband loves his wife, the more he increases his whims* (Chinese).

1.2.3. Love as cooking

Women's love towards her husband is associated with cooking: *If a husband is not provided with dinner for one day his love vanishes; but a woman must suffer three days before love grows cold* (Chinese); *The torch of love is lit in the kitchen*. (French); *The way to a man's heart is through his stomach* (Hungarian, American).

1.2.4. Marriage, sex, love and money

It is more important for a woman to marry a man she loves than a rich man: *A woman who knows how to marry well will marry one she loves; a woman who does not know how to marry well will marry for a big house* (Chinese). The proverb below states that if you marry without love, you will find a lover outside your marriage: *Where there is marriage without love, there will be love without marriage* (American). However, mere love is not enough for a good marriage, i.e., if you marry a poor person, your love might disappear due to your financial problems: *When want comes in at the door, love flies out of the window* (American). Whereas love is intrinsic for couples' sexual activities, money is essential for their everyday life: *Always marry for love – but it's as easy to fall in love with a rich person as a poor one* (Jewish); *One who marries for love alone will have bad days but good nights* (Egyptian); *Who marries for love has good nights and sorry days* (English; French).

1.2.5. Sobering effect of married life

Since marriage – according to proverbs – is associated with the constant decrease of love, a fault in a spouse will be discovered very quickly. The lack of love immediately leads to seeing even the smallest faults in a partner: *Where there is no love, all faults are seen* (American); *Faults are thick when love is thin* (American); *One who does not like his wife, finds pebbles in his butter-milk* (Indian /Konkani/); *Other men can see her beauty, but only her husband knows her faults* (African /Mali/). Indeed, after the honeymoon is over, both spouses regain their sight at once: *Love intoxicates a man*; *marriage sobers him* (American); *Love takes away the sight, and matrimony restores it* (American); *Marriage will sober love* (Irish).

Not surprisingly, a lot of people enjoy only one phase of their matrimonial union, "the honeymoon phase". After the "honeymoon phase" is over the real marriage begins, with all its problems, in the same vein with the proverb *The honeymoon is over; now the marriage begins* (American). As scores of proverbs claim, both love and lust disappear in marriage.

Love cools very quickly in marriage. The cooling of love with time is likened to the cooling of hot water or dish: *Marriage is like a tub of water: after a while, it is not so hot* (American); *A*

dish of married love soon grows cold (Scottish); *There is no such fiery love that would not be cooled down by marriage* (Russian).

Spouses lose their attraction in the eyes of each other: *A man is attractive when he is not your husband* (African /Shona/); *A woman is attractive when she is somebody else's wife* (African /Shona/); *Marriage is a romance novel in which the hero dies in the first chapter* (American); *The lover is often lost in the husband* (American). One of the reasons for the disappearance of love, lust, and infatuation after the honeymoon is over might be explained by the fact that, after the novelty of a new passionate relationship is gone, its place is taken over by everyday routine, habit, and boredom.

Therefore, numerous proverbs from around the world comment on the sobering effect of married life which gives rise to the decrease of intensity and even disappearance of young love: *Marriage is the tomb of love* (Russian); *Marriage is the sunset of love* (French); *Love is a fair garden, and marriage a field of nettles* (Finnish); *There is no cure for love but marriage* (Irish); *Love has wings on its shoulders; matrimony has crutches under its arms* (Russian); *Love provides wings, but wings of wax melt with the torch of marriage* (Russian).

1.2.6. Marriage is unhappiness and repentance

The decrease of love in the course of marriage leads to unhappiness, suffering and repentance: *Marriage leaps up upon the saddle, and repentance upon the crupper* (English); *Married today, marred tomorrow* (French). Marriage is particularly bad for a man: *The woman cries before the wedding and the man after* (Polish); *Young lovers wish, and married men regret* (Indian-Hindustani), especially if he has married a jealous woman: *He who married a jealous woman went through purgatory in this life* (Spanish).

CONCLUSIONS

The present study, continuing my research touched upon in Tóthné Litovkina and Csábi, 2002; T. Litovkina and Mieder, 2019; T. Litovkina, 2017, 2018, 2024a, 2024b, etc., has addressed various aspects of romantic love and the ways it is viewed and associated with in proverbs from around the world.

By getting acquainted with the proverbs about romantic love of peoples of various nations, we have discovered what the Brits, Africans, Chinese, French, Spaniards, Hungarians, Russians, Italians, Americans and people from other world cultures think about romantic love, what they associate it with. We have also had a deeper understanding of the perception of the beloved through various organs of perception, etc. Furthermore, we have also explored what happens with romantic love in the course of one's marriage, according to the worldwide proverbs.

At the very beginning of the study I have touched upon four of my publications treating romantic love in proverbs and (or) anti-proverbs.

In Section 1.1. I have focused on the perception of the beloved person through various body organs, and I have also examined the body parts love is most often associated with, such as the *eyes*, the *heart*, and the *face*. I have also addressed some other body parts, such as *hair*, *ears*, *lips*, *feet*, *shoulders*, *head*, etc.

Section 1.2. has treated the relation between love and marriage. As we have clearly seen, numerous proverbs from around the world give a very negative, doomy picture of marriage, and warn one of tying oneself down with matrimonial bonds. We have explored changes that take place in couples' love during the course of their relationship. With time matrimony starts having a sobering and eye-opening effect. Furthermore, marriage is associated with the diminished intensity of young love and lust. It is also seen as the tomb of love. Last but not least, matrimony is also conceptualized with unhappiness and repentance.

There are a number of other topics (such as love and friendship, beauty and marriage, courtship and various factors in mate selection, love and other emotions such as anger, boredom, sadness, happiness, etc.), as well as numerous additional proverbs I could have discussed in the study as well. Furthermore, I could have also treated here lovers, brides and bridegrooms, wives and husbands, and I could have analysed their nature, qualities, attributes, and behaviors, as revealed through proverbs from around the globe.

We have seen the evidence of cross-cultural similarity in the conceptualization of love manifested in proverbs from numerous languages. In this way, I have shown that there are possible universal phenomena and conceptual metaphors of love which are shared among, and used in a similar way by various cultures. Thus, there are universal or near-universal experiences which are very similar in various cultures, and this causes the striking similarity of the conceptualization of emotions, such as love, in various, often unrelated, languages (for more, see Kövecses 1986, 1988, 2000, 2005). This is why there are a remarkably large number of proverbs that work in a similar way in unrelated languages as instances of similar conceptual metaphors.

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