QUANTITATIVE APPRAISAL IN RUSSIAN PROVERBS AND WEATHER-LORE
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1. Introduction

In paroemiological text structuring, the category of appraisal is of great significance. This is not surprising, as “appraisal utterance in itself expresses the Communicative goal of recommendation, encouragement to action, warning, praise, or reproach. It imparts rules of conduct” (Arutyunova, 1988: 6). Such fairly evident characteristic features of an appraisive utterance are closely connected with genre peculiarities of paroemia: didacticism, endeavors to communicate the accumulated national experience and record the generalized observations on the essence of the the outside world phenomena in the most concise, easily remembered form.

Understanding of appraisal in a broad sense, that is, as qualifying an object based on comparison with a selected sample, implies introduction of quantitative appraisal together with qualitative evaluation into this semantic and pragmatic category (A. Baranov, A. Ivin, A. Shmelyov, T. Bulygina, T. Bochina, N. Med and others). It is evaluation based on quantitative variables that makes one of the bench marks of axiological analysis of situation and its components, the initial level of appraisal ranking (Baranov, 1989: 77, 80).

Segmentation of reality from the point of quantitativeness presents a complicated cognitive process able to reflect mental peculiarities of quantitative appraisal, or quantification of objects / phenomena at the language level. The stock of linguistic means to express semantics of quantitative appraisal demonstrates a great variety and characterizes “natural language reflexes of the mental procedure of appraisement” (term introduced by A. Baranov) in each language separately.

The link between quantitative concepts and their reflection in linguistic thinking was already pointed out by J. Baudouin de Courtenay, when he conducted sequential analysis of content peculiarities of types of quantitativeness in “linguistic thinking” (dimensional, spatial quantitativeness; quantitativeness of time, numeric quantitativeness; quantitativeness of intensity, degree) (Baudouin de Courtenay, 1963: 313).

The process of transition of quantitative features into qualitative ones implies changeover in correlation between objective and subjective, descriptive and appraisive meanings in terms of substance of the key word, the prop word in the speech act of appraisal. Variation of appraisive and descriptive features while characterizing an object / phenomenon naturally leads to the situation where “axiological scales” shifts either to descriptive, “factual” informing or to appraisive view of the communicative situation.


The author also classifies the above-mentioned as “positive” scales, the initial level of appraisement ranking (Baranov, 1989: 77, 80).


The linguistic category of quantitativeness is divided into subcategories of discrete and nondiscrete quantity, indicated already by Aristotle in his famous work *Metaphysics* as “countable” and “measurable” (Aristotle, 1975: 164). The parameter of discreteness / nondiscreteness is connected with the fact that quantitative appraisal can be applied both to discrete sets by the number of components of a quantified set and nondiscrete objects from the point of possibility of measurement (weight, volume, etc.) (Shmelyov, 2005: 512-513).

On correlation between appraisive and descriptive meanings, see in detail (Hare, 1985).

\[ \text{В поле снег грядами – хороший урожай ржи} / \text{Snow in the field lies in ridges – there will be a good crops of rye}; \]

\[ \text{Снег тает быстро – к хорошему урожаю} / \text{Snow melts fast – there will be a good harvest}; \]

\[ \text{Если поздно весною в оврагах и лесах много лежит снега – к хорошему урожая хлебов} / \text{If in late spring there is much snow lying in ravines and forests – there will be good grains}; \]

\[ \text{Гром на юге – урожай хороший, на западе – средний, на востоке или севере – плохой / Thunder in the south – good harvest, in the west – average, in the east or north – poor}; \]

\[ \text{Много иней в ноябре – знак хорошего урожая / Much hoarfrost in November is sign of good harvest}; \]

\[ \text{Если у языка почек много, ячмень будет хорошо / Many buds on elms, barley will be good}; \]

\[ \text{Когда на осень цвет сильный – будет ячмень хороший / Aspen blossoms violently – barley will be good}; \]

\[ \text{Если рябины много – хороши будут яблоки / If ashberry is numerous – flax will be good}; \]

\[ \text{Белые (зимой) долго не сходят, льны не хороши будут / If linen does not dry out a long time in winter, flax will be no good}; \]

\[ \text{Когда осень мочить и в мае дождь – травы будут хороши / When autumn is rainy and showers in May – grass will be good}; \]

\[ \text{Снег сверху тает от солнца – хлеб будет плох / Snow melts on top – grains will be no good}; \]

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Characterizing the paroemiological system of the Russian language from the point of quantitative appraisal, it is essential to note the heterogeneous character of quantitative categorization of denotative domain of proverbs (adverbial, adjectival, adverbial- and adjectival-nominal, numerical and numerative-nominal, as well as verb forms). Taking into account the existing research on quantitative appraisal ((Bochina, 2003a), (Bochina, 2003b), (Kul’kova, 2011a), (Kul’kova, 2011b), and others), in the present work we will attempt to focus our investigatory attention on juxtaposition of ways of reflecting the semantics of quantitative appraisal in proverbs and weather-lore of the Russian language with the consecutive exposure of nation-specific features of perception of quantitative continuum and language peculiarities of its reflection in the paroemiological system of the Russian language.

2. Discrete Quantified Sets

The analysis of discrete indicators of qualitative appraisal in proverbs of the Russian language showed high term frequency for numerals one, two, three, seven, ten, forty, and some others in combination both with concrete nouns naming forms of the animal world, inanimate objects, and with abstract notions:

 Одна голова и в печи не гаснет, а две и в поле курчится / One firebrand would not go out even in the furnace, and two smoke even in the field; Три года — не три века / Three years are not three centuries; Семь топоров вместе лежат, а две пряжи врозь / Seven axes lie together, but two spinning-wheels apart; Лучшие семь топоров, чем семь копыт / Better seven axes than seven poppets; Один хороший лекарь вылечит скорее, чем сорок плохих / One good doctor will cure you sooner than forty bad ones; Не имей сто рублей, а имей сто друзей / Rather have a hundred friends than a hundred rubles.

Spatial and time continuums also receive discrete quantitative appraisal in proverbs:

К мили семь верст не окошнина / Seven versets are no long way if you head for your sweetheart; Дураку семь верст не крюк / Seven versets are no detour for a fool; Где мило, семь верст не крик / If for pleasure, seven versets are no roundabout; Обещанного три года ждут / He who expects from a promise a lot must wait for three years or maybe not.

High term frequency of numerals divisible by ten (ten, hundred, thousand) is noted in Russian proverbs and sayings:

Ты ему слово, а он тебе десять / You say to him on word, he will say back ten; Кто украл, на том один грех; у кого украдено, на том десять / The robber has got one sin, the robbed ten; Сто двадцать дворов стадо коров / A herd of cattle from a hundred households; Сто голов — сто улов / A hundred heads — a hundred minds; На одного виноватого по смы судеи / A hundred judges for one accused; Не купи на сто, купи на столько (something necessary) / Don’t buy for a hundred, buy for the need; Служи сто лет, а не выслужишь и сто пени / Serve one hundred years, but you will not get even a hundred turnips; Господь одним хлебом тысячи напитает / The Lord fed thousands with one bread; Не стяннешь тысяч в итоге нет / A thousand not counted is never gained; Один жил тысячи водит (a Бог и воеводу и тысячи водит) / One warrior leads thousands (and God leads both the warrior and the thousands); and others.

Russian weather-lore texts register the use of numerals of a wider numeric range (1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 12, 40), for example:

Красноватый круг около луны, скоро пропадающий, – к ведру; два круга или один тусклый – к морозу / A reddish nimbus around the moon that soon fades – fair weather is coming, two nimbuses or a vague one – frost is coming; За три дня до рождения луны или после рождения ее всегда бывает переменна погода / Three days before or after the young moon, there always is change of weather; Лен две недели цветет, четыре недели цветет, а на седьмую семя плывет / Flax blossoms two weeks, ripens four weeks, and during the seventh week the seed is floating; Если на Ивана дождь заливают, то через пять дней снегами будет сметаться / If rain weeps on St. John, in five days the sun will laugh; У зайца жесткая шерсть – зима месячев ишеть / Hares are wire-haired – winter will last about six months; Цветы белой купинки при устойчивой погоде спокойно по волости рованы в семь часов утра открываются и рованы в восемь часов вечера закрываются / White water lily flowers in settled weather are out at seven a.m. and shut at eight p.m., as if by magic; После Егорья бывает еще двенадцать морозов / After St. George, twelve more frosts will come.

It ought to be noted that in weather-lore containing numerals, prevalent are three, seven, and forty:

Если месяц в три дня обледенятся, то весь будет вёдрым, а когда три дня пойдёт, то весь ненастный / If the month looks around in three days, the whole of it will be fair weather, and when it is three days of rain, the whole of it will be nasty; Спустя три недели после отлета журавлей непременно ударят первые ночные заморозки / Three weeks after the cranes fly-away, the first night frosts are sure to come; Покажутся «слезы» у основания черешков клена – через три дня ожидай дождя / “Tears” appear at maple leaf base – in three days rains will come; Если грачи селят на гнезда, через три недели надо выходить на посев / If
rooks settle in their nests, in three weeks it is time to go out for sowing; Семь отроков семь дождей несёт / Seven lads bring seven rains; На Самсоня дождь — семь недель дождь / Rain on Samson — seven more weeks of rain; Если осенью сёг семь раз падал и семь раз сходил и лишь на восьмой окончательно лес — лётом хлеб будет очень хороши / If snow in autumn falls seven times and melts down seven times and only on the eighth day finally lay down — grains will be good in summer; Первый снег выпадает сорок дней до зимы / Early snow falls forty days before winter; На сорок мучеников сорок птиц прилетает. / On the day of the holy forty martyrs, forty birds fly in; Сорок пачу в Русь пробирается / Forty little birds crawl to Rus.

As demonstrated by the analysis of the language material, in most cases discrete quantitative appraisal is given to temporal characteristics of celestial bodies, natural phenomena, as well as the intensity of those natural phenomena (for example, forty frosts; forty days of rain):

Гречу севь пропустя сорок морозов после сорока мучеников / Sow buckwheat after the forty frosts following the day of the holy forty martyrs; С Благовещением осталось сорок морозов / Forty frosts are left to follow the Annunciation day; Если на Методия дождь, то он с перерывами будет идти сорок дней / If it is rain on Methodius day, it will intermittently rain forty days (invariant: На Методия дождь — на сорок дней / If it is rain on Methodius day, it will continue forty days).

The singularity of numerals usage in the compared paroemiological genres is to a large extent determined by the difference in the main linguo-cognitive principles for proverbs and weather-lore. While the latter bases itself upon the relation of analogy between two facts, two phenomena, the universal principle of the proverbs and sayings genre is contrast, or opposition. A considerable number of researchers of proverbial domain acknowledge that opposition is one of the main features of a proverb. For example, G. Milner considers that a proverb is long since of a four-part pattern where four smallest segments are grouped by two, and those two halves are opposed to each other (Milner, 1969). Binarity of a proverb at rhythmic-phonological, syntactic-grammatical, and semantic levels established in the article by Greimas (Greimas, 1970). Matti Kuusi, on the basis of structural analysis, comes to the conclusion that in international classification of proverbs with the greatest sequence, the system of binary oppositions can be applied, and each proverb may be interpreted as a choice between two alternatives (Kuusi, 1978: 56). According to the expert opinion of G. Pernyakov, “the true theme of a certain proverb or saying is not a specific word, idea, or even area of human activity, but some invariant pair of contrasted entities to which the meaning of the images used in a certain proverb comes doen” (Pernyakov, 1988: 107).

The semantic invariant ‘many – few’ expressed by numerals shows three major variants in proverbs: many – few, many – one, two – one. The choice of numerals is both accidental and determined. On the one hand, the contrast of numbers is based upon elementary arithmetic views on their quantitative correlation (more – fewer), on which ground judgements are made about the relative quantitative appraisal. Together with that (and because of that), the semantic function ‘many’ can be expressed by numerals ranging among relatively small values, and one and the same number in different oppositions can represent opposing meanings of numerosness / fwness:

Три дня молох, а в полтора съел / Ground in three days, eaten up in one and a half; Тургу на три азьмына, а долгу на пять / A three-ruble deal and a five-ruble debt.

On the other hand, each of the opposition components can be substituted with another numeral (provided their comparative correlation is observed) without sacrificing the general meaning.

This kind of relativity is fully conforms with the folklore world model where, for instance, numeric characteristics of time and space "practically do not have absolute meanings, neither do they correspond to actual mathematical values, but they are relative in their essence and get their meaning only depending on the choice of reference point" (Tsiyvan, 1990: 10). Such point of reference, the minimum limit of the semantic function ‘few’ for whole numbers is one. The representation of indefinitely large quantity shows lexical variety:

Горя много, а смерть одна / Sortrows are many, but death is one; Один волк гоняет овец полк / One wolf drives a fold of sheep; Бедному одна дорога, а погонщикам сто / One way for a runaway, but a hundred for packers; Село Воронье днем семидесяти гостеприимно, а ночью одного / The village of Ravens belongs to seventy masters during the day and to one at night; И один глаз, да зорок, не надо и сорок / Even one eye, but sharp, no need to have forty; Один умн десять безумных водит / One smart fellow leads ten stupid ones.

It is absolutely obvious that a hundred ways, seventy masters of one village, and forty eyes are hyperbolic exaggerations, and that in all above-mentioned proverbs, the exact quantitative definiteness of appraisal is fictional, its concreteness is of formal character. There is no doubt that here the numerals convey not the counting result, but just subjective interpretation of objective parameters. In this way, numerals play the role of concrete-vivid representation of the relative quantitative appraisal. Hence synonymy of numerals and the indefinite pronoun many:

2 On correlation between many-few see also Sprichwort (Röhrich, Mieder, 1977: 62).
Many сватается, да одному достанется – Сватался к девушке тридцать с одним, а быть ей за одним / Many propose to her, but she will be given only to one – Thirty and one have asked the girl in marriage, but she will marry only one,

and also interchangeability and equivalence of numerals in proverbs:

Десять раз прыśmyрь, один раз отрешьь! / Measure thy cloth ten times and cut one – Семь раз прымырь, один раз отрешьь! / You must measure seven times before you start cutting – Пять раз отрешьь / Measure thrice and cut one; Семь капитанов под одним рюкзаком / Seven Corporals over one private – На одного исполнителя три повелителя / Three chiefs for one doer; Семьеро одного не ждут / Seven don’t wait for one – Двое одного не ждут / Two don’t wait for one.

Thus, quantitative quantifiers in proverbs bear relative character. The conventionality of meanings for quantification indicators in proverbs is achieved due to metonymic shifts, besides, the discrete meaning of quantity can be transformed into nondiscrete, as a rule, conveying the meaning of indefinite large quantity. For example:

семь верст / seven versts (= far): Семь верст до небес и все лесом / Seven versts to the sky, and all through wood (Zhukov); семь недугов / seven ailments (= lots of diseases): Чесночное семь недугов изводит / Garlic keeps away seven ailments; семь бед / seven misfortunes (= much trouble): Всякая беда семь бед рожает / Any misfortune breeds seven more; семь дел / seven deeds (= a lot of responsibility): Семь дел в одно руки не берут / Don’t take seven deeds in one pair of hands; семь пастухов / seven shepherds (= many supervisors): У одной овцы да семь пастухов / One sheep has seven shepherds.

Quantifiers three, ten, hundred, thousand in proverbs can convey the meaning of intensity in order to build up additional expressiveness, participating in the formation of fixed collocations (with three quills, with three axes, with three cudgels, one hundred years, a hundred judges, a thousand times):

Пишет в три пера (рубит в три топора), а денегка не спора / Write with three quills (cut with three axes), but get little money; На шести Мины не пройдешь в три дубины / Our Minas would not be gotten to even with three cudgels; Слуши сто лет, а не выслушал ни стар пень / Serve one hundred years, but you will not get even a hundred trunks; На одного виноватого по сту судей / A hundred judges for one accused; Трус умирает тысячу раз, <а храбрый один раз> / A coward dies a thousand times <and a brave fellow one time>;

The list of numerals of emotionally indefinite large quantity varies in different languages depending on which of them are “central” in a certain culture.

In Russian proverbs, the most widespread numeric opposition is seven – one, whose semantics is defined not by the factual numeric values, but by their interrelationship with quantitative appraisal ‘many – few’:

Рубить семьерым, а топор один / Felling for seven, but there is only one axe; Одн с союкой (that is, the worker), a семеро с ложкой / One with a plough, seven with a spoon; Один рубит, семеро в кухлях трубят / One does the felling, seven trumpet with their palms; Нужда (беда, горе) семерых задвижка, а радость одному досталась / The need (misfortune, calamity) pressed for seven, but joy visited only one; Делай дело за семьерым, а слушайся одного / Do the work of seven, but obey only one; and others.

As for the choice of numerals in proverbs, the frequency of the numeric constant seven as an indicator of plurality is perhaps connected with its common cultural significance, its special “magic” role in archaic traditions, the way this number is linked to the concept of the universe (Mify, 1991: 2, 630).

Linguists time after time noticed a strong preference on the part of language thinking for the numeral two, which is reflected in the existence of the special grammatical form of the dual number. In the proverbial domain, cognitive and cultural significance of the numeral two and its prominence on the background of all others manifests in the independent position of the invariant topical pair two – one in proverbs, only in part overlapping the invariant many – few. The general issue embraced by the opposition ‘many – few’, is the comparison of two entities (in the meaning of ‘many’) with only one entity, that is, a purely quantitative contrast:

Аршин на каftан, да два на заплаты / Arshin for a kaftan and two for patches; Убого одно нужда снегет, скругого deze (wretchedness and meanness) / The needy suffers from one need, the stingy from two; Ласково тыятое две матки сосет, а лихое и одну запустит / A friendly calf sucks two mothers, and a boisterous one will lose even one.

Yet, the opposition two – one is more often oriented at qualitative and quantitative appraisal connected with the archetype of the corresponding numbers. It is commonly known that in archaic cultures, including Russian, one meant sustainability, unity, and the number two laid the basis for binary contrapositions and served as a sign of contrast and
separation (Mify, 1991: 2, 630). The irreconcilable conflict between complete wholeness and clash of two opposing elements is reflected in proverbs on different topics:

Одному началу не два конца / One beginning will not have two ends; В один день по две радости не живет / There cannot be two joys for one day,

especially about the harm of dual power:

Два головам на одних плечах тесно / No room for two heads on one neck; Два медведя в одной берлоге не уживаются / Two bears would not get on in one and the same lair; Две бараньи головы в один котел не лезут / Two ram’s heads would not fit into one cauldron,

and also about quarrelsome disposition of two strange women in one family (daughter-in-law and mother-in-law, daughter-in-law and sister-in-law):

Две собаки в одной конуре не уживаются / Two dogs would not get on in one and the same kennel; Две собаки из одной миски лакать не станут / Two dogs will not lap up from the same bowl; Двах гусынь в одно гнездо не усадишь / You would not place two geese onto one nest.

On the other hand, two signified complementarity, homology of the opposed members, referred to the idea of twoness (op. cit.). Hence the preference of two to one:

Ум хорошо, а два лучше того / Two heads are better than one;

together with that, transformation of a quantitative advantage into a qualitative one is recognized:

Две маленькие собаки большую едят / Two small dogs eat up a big one,

which grow at an exponential rate (and not arithmetic progression):

Два одному рать / Two are an army for one; Един гонит сто, а два тьму / One puts to flight a hundred, and two, ten thousand.

That is why human weakness was determined by loneliness and asociality, and strength by twoness and sociality (two is as good as a group):

Один Фома горюет, а два в поле воюют / One Thomas grieves at home, and two fight in the field; Двое в поле воюют, а один и дома горюет / Two fight in the field, and one grieves even at home.

The idea of twoness and complementary components of the male – female monad with number two served a figurative foundation of proverbs about loneliness and marriage:

Две головы и в поле дымятся (курятся), а одна и в печи гаснет / Two firebrands smoke (reek) even in the furnace, and one goes out even in the furnace.

In such cases quantitative contrast fades to less significance and the opposition ‘single – family’ comes to the fore: compare the proverb Семья воюет, а одинокий горюет / A family fights, and a lonelyheart grieves, and also the specific semantization of numerals in the proverb about a spouses quarrel: Семерым просторно, а двоим тесно / Spacious for seven, tight for two, where the numeral two points to a married couple, and seven to a large family with children.

In the domain of quantitative appraisal, the mentioned opposite pairs are joined by the topical pair one – all and semantically equivalent opposites representing the invariant ‘part – whole’:

Один за всех, все за одного / One for all, all for one (invariant: Стойте всем за одного и одному за всех / Stand all for one and one for all); Одна парышая овца все стадо портит / One scabby sheep will mar a whole flock; Ложка дегтя портит бочку меда / One rotten apple spoils the whole barrel.

Thus, contrast as a universal principle for proverbs and sayings manifests in the opposition character of quantitative appraisal, including contraposition of numerals. Weather-lore, on the contrary, is characterized by parallelism of the observed and expected, manifesting in the same quantification of two or several events / phenomena / objects, often supported lexically in the conditional and consecutive clauses:

На сорок мучеников сорок птиц прилетает / On the day of the holy forty martyrs, forty birds fly in; Первый Спас — первый сев / First Savior Feast Day — first sowing; Ласточки оплетают в три раза, в
Nondiscrete Quantified Sets

Nondiscrete appraisal is often reflected in Russian proverbs, as a rule, in opposing pairs expressing quantitative-qualitative and quantitative proper evaluations.

Quantitative and qualitative relationships in the functional semantic field of quantitative appraisal characterize, as a rule, the value of the quantified object from the point of size, length, weight, density, cost, quantitative and qualitative condition of the crops, as well as duration and intensity of the phenomenon (high, long, big, rich, weighty, etc.). For example:

Если вобода высокие, то и цен высокий будет / If beans stand high, Flax will be high also; Зимою высокие дороги – высокие будут хлеба / Roads are high for snow in winter – grains will stand high; Длинные кальмаки (сосузы) – долгие львы / Long icicles – long flax; Снег плотный, мокроватый – к мокрому, сухой и легкий – к сухому лемку / If snow is packed and moist – summer will be wet, if snow is dry and light – summer will be dry; Если корова во время сна держит в рту соломинку или клок сена – поскорее будет плохо и сено дорого / If a cow during sleep holds a straw or hay – mowing will be poor and hay expensive; Если снега нагребут хлеб (печеный) сверху, дорог будет, снизу – дешев, а сбоку – средняя цена / If mice knockle bread on top, it will be expensive, on the bottom – cheap, on the side – average price; Вьюга в Васильев вечер обещает большой урожай орехов / Blizzard on Vasily night forecasts high yield of nuts; Большой иней – к хлебородию / Much hoarfrost – for grainery year; Сильные грозы с градом предвещают обильный урожай зерновых / Heavy thunderstorms and hail forecast high yield of pepper-mushrooms; Долгий гром – к нечасти, отрывыстой – к просветлению / Long thunder – for storm, quick thunder – for clearing; Весной снеготаяние ило с тухлыми – хлеба вырастут неполовесными / If melting season was foggy – grains will grow underweight.

Imagery makes an important feature of the genre of proverbs and sayings, which is also manifested with quantitative axiologization of the world. Paramiographers more than once noted that of great importance in the language of proverbs and sayings is specific vocabulary: it serves as the main “construction material” (Permyakov, 1970: 19) for proverbs and determines the artistic merit and aesthetic value and national originality of both proverb stock on the whole and its single samples. Undoubtedly, a significant part of quantitative oppositions in proverbs consists of various metrological terms, both indefinite, approximate “folk measure units” and exact, official measure units, validated by the state or tradition, including:

**Linear measures:** Нос с лохтем, а ума с пером / Nose as long as cubit, but sense is as short as finger; **Volume measures:** Худое охапками, хорошее щепотью / Evil by sheaves, good by a pinch; **Measures of weight:** Здоровье выводит пудами, а входит золотниками / Health squandered in pounds, builds up in zolotniki; **Measures of value:** На грошу амбициозны, а на рубль амбици / Equipment for a hopec, ambition for a ruble; **Time units:** Год кормилца, а век кормилец славит / Nursed for a year, reputed as a nurse for a lifetime.

Relative quantitative appraisal expressed by oppositions of measurement units, is characterized by semantic diffuzziness, its dependence on absolute quantitative meaning of measurement substantives is optional: one and the same term as part of different oppositions can express semantic functions of both ‘large’ and ‘small’. Diffuzziness of the relative quantitative appraisal, concretized only in opposition, manifests more strikingly with components of the

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middle part of the gradual sequence. Thus, the time terms day, week, year are capable of pointing both at a long and short span of time, which depends on the meaning of the cohyponyms compared to them:

*day ‘small’*: День долг, а век короток / Day is long, life is short – *day ‘large’*: Каки час, а ладки день / An hour to forge, a day to fix; *week ‘small’*: Терпи горе неделею, а царствуй год / Suffer a week, reign a year – *week ‘large’*: День пирует, а неделю голова с похмелья болит / After a day’s feast, headache for a week; *year ‘small’*: Последуемого год ёжит, а суженного до векя / Wait for a year what you were promised, wait for the betrothed for a lifetime – *year ‘large’*: Был жена девечек, сам злакал годочек / He beat his wife a day, grieved a year.

Besides, contrast can be effected by contrapositioning of any members of the gradual scale, including consecutive ones, whose absolute quantitative differences are minimal:

Не было ни гроша, да вдруг альтын / No penny left, but suddenly hit a jackpot; Не стоит гроша Пахом, а смотрит пятакам / Pakhom is no worth a kopeck, but looks as if he is a fiver.

Apart from that, the stylistic effect and the typical relation ‘large – small’ denoted by the proverb do not depend on the distance between the cohyponyms in the lexical paradigm, which is exposed by the significative synonymy of oppositions in invariant proverbs:

Плотнику (работнику) копейку, подрядчику (нарядчику) рубль / A kopeck to the carpenter (worker), a ruble to the master; Работнику альтын, а нарядчику рубль / An altyн to the worker, a ruble to the master; Работнику дают альтыны, а их нарядчикам полтины / Three kopecks to the workers, fifty to the masters; Швецу гривна, закройщику рубль / Grivna to the sewer, ruble to the tailor; Делальщику полтина, а нарядчику рубль / Fifty kopecks to the doer, a ruble to the master.

Thus, contextual polarity of measurement units justifying the significative contrast of ‘large – small’, is based on the ratio of ‘more – fewer’ common to the members of the gradual scale in paradigms, which agrees with common philosophical and language congruence of categories of quantity and comparison.

Dimensions objectively inherent to all objects of reality, are in some way represented in the lexical meaning of many words naming objects of significance for a certain ethnic culture. In proverbs, the contrast of large and small is often effected by oppositions of names of

water basins: Ругает реку, а хвалит лужу / He scorns a river, but boasts of a pool; insects, birds, wild and domestic animals: Не сунул журавля в голод, а хотел синицу, да в рот / Don’t promise a crane a year, even a tittie is good enough for the mouth; settlements: Голоден переходит грады, а наг ни двора / The hungry would cross cities, the naked would not cross even a yard; structures: Женина родня ходит в ворота, мужиши в прикалътък / In-laws go through the gates, the man through the wicket; instruments of violence and punishment: Не бей в жиме ворота племя, не ударяй бы в твою дубину / Don’t beat your neighbor’s gates with a whip, lest they smash yours with a cudgel; wood and woodwork: В лесу – дуб рубь, в столице – по рублю сипи / In the forest, an oak is worth a ruble, in the city, a spike is worth a ruble; abnormal, morbid neoformations on the body: Свя болячка больных чужой язвы / Your own sore is bigger than a neighbor’s blister, and others.

In those cases, the quantitative sense can be the component of the nucleus of lexical meaning (whip, sore, city), including marked diminutive suffix [in Russian] (slash, whip), or the potential sense manifesting in the comparison context (yard). On the whole, the significative mechanism of a proverb consists of actualization of the distinctive sense of quantitative appraisal and its transition into the nucleus zone of lexical meaning. This mechanism is effected by the syntagmatic juxtaposition of two certain words.

Unlike oppositions of the above cohyponyms, a number of quantitative oppositions in proverbs can be classified as thematically non-homogeneous. Thus, the invariant meaning of ‘big head – lightweight intellect’ (up to complete witlessness): Голова велика, а мозгу мало / Big head, but little brain is realized with the help of contrasting different kinds of containers: Голова с пищей котел, а ума ни лошоки / Head as big as a pot, but no spoonful of sense.

In other variants the same idea is expressed by words of different thesaurus theme zones and different categorial grammatical characteristics: fair-sized reservoirs are measured against agricultural products: Голова, что чан, а ума ни капустный кочан / Head as big as a tun, but not even cabbage-head of sense; Мозговина с короб, а ума е опек / A basketful of skull, but mind is a size of a nut; а container for gathering and storing fruits is contrasted to the smallest bread hit: Голова с луковича, а мозгу ни крошки / A basket of head, but no crumb of sense or a numeral: Голова с вкул, а ума ни вкул / Head as a sack, but zero sense; the collocation pointing to the concrete object is contrasted to the negative pronoun: Голова с печное чело, а мозгу со всим ничего / Head as the face of the oven, but no brain.
Yet, thematic non-homogeneity of such oppositions is not a hindrance to classify them as semantically homogenous oppositions, as they are characterized by similarity of the standard contents, such as quantitative appraisal, likeness of syntactic constructions and functional purpose.

Quantitative appraisal realizing with syntagmatic juxtaposition of words denoting objects different in size, serves as a specific switch between denotative and significative levels of a proverb. It represents the general part of the so-called literal meaning and morals of the proverb, the surface level and underlying content levels of a proverbs, the former being incentive for the latter, substantiated meaning. For example, the idea that ‘a small woman easily puts up with a tall man’ is wrapped in the images of a little rodent and a large sheaf:

Мышь копны не боится / A mouse is not afraid of a hay stack.

As for quantitative proper relations of nondiscrete objects of quantification in Russian proverbs, they are predominantly manifested in adverbial-nominal collocations comprising quantifying indicators many / much, few, more, fewer. Weather-lore is characterized by analogy relations between events, phenomena in the conditional and consecutive clauses, often lexically supported. Cf. lexical parallels concerning nondiscrete quantification in Russian weather-lore:

As much snow – a lot of grain, much water – a lot of grass.

At the same time, in proverbs, as mentioned above, contrast oppositions are predominant, including those in quantitative appraisal of large – small, many – few:

Сколько голосов, столько и < умов > / So many men, so many minds; Сколько в мае дождей, столько лет быть урожаю / As many rains are in May, as many years will be good crops; Сколько выпало снега на первый день Пасхи – столько будет крови на день праздника «Троицы» / As much snow fell on Easter – as much blood there will be on Whitsuntide; 9 марта. Вторая встреча весны. / March 9. Second meeting of spring; Сколько пролажинок, столько жаворонков / As many thaw holes, as many larks.

4. Conclusions

The performed analysis of quantitative appraisal allows to confirm the diffusive, non-homogenous character of apprassive relationships which reflect quantitativeness in the mentality of Russian people mediated by paroemiological units. Different proportions of descriptive and attitudinal meanings in words expressing quantitative appraisal in proverbs leads to a broad understanding of appraisal as a multidimensional process of quantification of an object based on comparison with the existing pattern, sample, stereotype, etc., by reference to the set system of regulations and values adopted in a particular community.

The non-homogeneity of quantitative appraisement is reflected in heterogeneous linguistic means represented in paroemiological units by numerals, quantitative-nominal collocations, adjectival and adverbial markers of quantitative appraisal.

The analysis of quantitative semantics reflection methods in paroemiological units of various types – weather-lore and proverbs – allows to determine both similarities and some differences in predictive and proverbial domains of the Russian language. In particular, lexical selectiveness has been detected on the part of numeric-nominal co-occurrence
in weather-lore and proverbs. Proverbs mostly prefer numerals in a small numerical range, as well as those divided by ten (ten, hundred, thousand). Weather-lore texts generally use numerals of a wider numerical range (1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 12, 14, 18, 40, 100, and others) with the prevalence of the numerals three, seven and forty as part of quantitative noun phrases. Numerals in weather-lore are used, as a rule, in exact arithmetical values, while in proverbs and sayings the exact quantitative definiteness of numerals is fictional and of formal character, quantification is characterized by semantic diffuzziness.

With quantitative axiologization of the world, proverbs tend to make contrast oppositions, while weather-lore builds on relations of analogy.

List of references