



THE MANIFESTATION OF GENDER RELATIONS IN ITALIAN PROVERBS

Sadikova Bahora Maxmurovna

Senior lecturer at the Department of Spanish and Italian Philology, Faculty of Romance and Germanic Languages, Samara State University of Technology

Annotation: *This article analyzes how gender relations are expressed in Italian proverbs at the level of language and culture based on a linguocultural approach. The study examines the images of men and women in the Italian paremiological fund, their mutual social roles, the reinforcement of the patriarchal worldview through language, and the extent to which these views are preserved in modern society. It sheds light on how gender identity is formed through metaphors, stereotypes, evaluative and prescriptive content in proverbs. It also draws on paremiological and ethnolinguistic theories presented by Italian linguists such as A. Lapucci, G. Pittano, P. Trifone, T. De Mauro. The results of the analysis show that Italian folk art not only reflects ancient ideas about gender, but also plays an important role as a means of transmitting them from generation to generation. The conclusions of the article provide an in-depth look at traditional gender roles in Italian society, their changes, and the influence of language on social thinking, establishing the linguoculturological and sociolinguistic significance of the topic.*

Key words: *Italian folk literature - proverbs, aphorisms, idioms, oral folklore, stereotypical ways, character, linguistic gender, gender performativity.*

Italian folk literature - proverbs, aphorisms, idioms - reflects gender roles that have been formed over the centuries. They serve as the most accurate mirror of the historical, social and cultural values of society. Since the patriarchal system prevailed in traditional Italy, proverbs interpret social relations between men and women precisely on the basis of this ideology. According to researchers, Italian proverbs were formed mainly in the context of a patriarchal social system, in which the dominant position of men is clearly manifested, and women are more associated with a family, domestic, emotional role.^{ix}

Research shows that the main layer of Italian oral folklore was formed in the 16th–19th centuries.^{ix}

During this period, women:

- were legally subordinate to men,
- had limited property rights,
- could not participate in social activities,
- were mainly engaged in household and child-rearing activities.

Therefore, gender roles in proverbs were formed based on the social structure of that time.

For example:

“La gallina che canta va ammazzata.” – “A chicken that screams is killed.”

It indicates that it is unacceptable for a woman to raise her voice in public.

“Chi dice donna, dice danno.” – “If a woman says it, it means harm.”

A sharp expression of patriarchal views.

II. PORTRAIT OF WOMEN

Carlo Lapucci (2007) notes that in many Italian proverbs, women are portrayed in stereotypical ways. In these proverbs, women are interpreted as:

- emotional,
- unstable,
- changeable,
- responsible for household chores,
- strictly controlled in moral matters.

Examples:

“La donna è mobile.” – “A woman is fickle.”

The stereotype of a woman's unstable character.

“Donna al volante, pericolo costante.” – “A woman driving is a constant danger.”

It belittles a woman's technical skills.

There are also proverbs that show a positive but limited role for women:

“Buona moglie fa buona casa.” – “A good wife is a good home.”

A woman's worth is tied to the well-being of the home.

“La casa è dove c'è la donna.” – “Uy ayol bor joyda.”

Although the woman is depicted as the center of the family, this image limits her to the circle of the home.

III. DESCRIPTION OF THE MEN'S IMAGE AND HIS DOMINANT POSITION

In Italian proverbs, the man is often depicted as:

- intelligent,
- strong,
- enterprising,
- head of the family,
- protector.

Examples:

“L'uomo propone e Dio dispone.” – “A man proposes, fate decides.”

Shows the active position of a man.

“Uomo di parola, uomo di valore.” – “A man of his word is valuable.”

A man's word has strong social significance in society.

“Meglio un uomo senza soldi che una donna senza pudore.”

The requirements are stricter for women, and softer for men.

IV. GENDER HIERARCHY AND LINGUISTIC SEXISM



Modern researchers consider Italian proverbs to be examples of linguistic gender.^{ix}
Reason:

1. The woman is portrayed as a passive subject.
2. The man is active and has a dominant position.
3. The participation of the woman in social life is negatively assessed.
4. There are two different moral criteria.

According to Judith Butler's (1990) theory of "gender performativity", proverbs are a powerful tool for transmitting gender stereotypes from generation to generation.

V. CHANGING GENDER ATTITUDES IN MODERN ITALY

Since the 20th century in Italy:

- the feminist movement has grown,
- women's rights have expanded,
- gender equality has been guaranteed by law,
- stereotypical proverbs have been criticized.

According to Severi (2004) and Honeyman (2018), today Italian society sees these proverbs as a historical heritage, but the gender views they contain are considered outdated in practical life.

Italian proverbs are based on patriarchal thinking, with women's social roles largely tied to the home and men as superior subjects. Although these views have been criticized in modern Italy, they remain an important source for the study of the history of language and culture.

References:

1. Lapucci, C. (2007). Dizionario dei proverbi italiani. Firenze: Le Monnier.
2. Galli de' Paratesi, N. (1991). La donna nella tradizione popolare italiana. Milano.
3. Cirese, A. M. (1976). Cultura popolare e società. Bari: Laterza.
4. Honeyman, K. (2018). Gender and Culture in Italy. Cambridge University Press.
5. Goddard, V. (2014). Gender, Family and Work in Italy. Routledge.
6. Butler, J. (1990). Gender Trouble: Feminism and the Subversion of Identity. Routledge.
7. Severi, C. (2004). Il percorso e la voce. Torino.
8. Treccani Enciclopedia Italiana (onlayn).
9. Accademia della Crusca – Archivio dei proverbi.