PETER GRZYBEK

FOUNDATIONS OF SEMIOTIC PROVERB STUDY[1]

> The investigation of proverbs in their semiotic aspect is one of the most grateful tasks for a folklorist.
>
> P.G. Bogatyrev
> (1937: 366)

1. "Simple Form" Proverb: Text, context, function

Although, after all, André Jolles' book Einfache Formen has been "more stimulating than clarifying" - as Mohr (1956: 321) put it in a survey of echoes to it - practically any modern investigation of so-called "simple forms"[2] refers to this most influential study.[3] When Jolles, in 1929, published his book, he attempted to investigate the various forms which are part of what had been summarized under the name of Naturpoesie by Jacob Grimm in the early 19th century. According to Grimm, Naturpoesie was characterized by the process of Sichvonselbstmachen as opposed to Kunstpoesie, of which the process of individual Zubereitung by a particular poet is characteristic. For Jolles, then, Formbestimmung and Gestaltdeutung are the central morphological tasks of literary scholarship, and in this way he wanted to define the various genres of Naturpoesie in a more detailed manner than had been done by his precursor, Jacob Grimm. But Jolles' notion of these terms is, at least from a modern point of view, misleading: although he was very well aware of his

innovative approach, Jolles remained caught in the Romantic concept of language. At the same period of time, when, in Russia, for example, the futurists' and formalists' concentration on The Word as Such had already passed, when formalism was already converting into structuralism (as, e.g., in the manifest by Jakobson /Tynyanov from 1928), language, for Jolles, was still an "anthropomorphic deity", "Goddess language", as Klemperer (1930: 405ff.) phrased it in his review of Jolles' book. It is exactly for this reason that Jolles himself, who tried to trace back the various simple forms to particular mental impulses or activities (Geistesbeschäftigungen), closed the way which might have led to a Formbestimmung in the strict sense of this word, in spite of the theoretical–methodological novelty of his question: "Leading back the concrete manifest simple forms to a Geistesbeschäftigung, the linguistic poetic code characteristic of these forms is transferred into the metaphysical sphere, and it is made inaccessible to an empirical–poetological investigation" (Kanyó 1981: 75).

Practically at the same time, a somewhat different line of thought was developed by the two Russian scholars, Roman Jakobson and Petr Bogatyrev. In a similar way to Jolles, they too, argue in favor of a predominantly synchronous analysis of folklore in order to determine both common and distinct traits of folklore and literature. As opposed to Jolles, however, they do this with an explicitly functional orientation, strictly rejecting genetic questions. Instead, the notion of the "preventive censorship of the community" is central to their approach: "In a word, in folklore only those forms remain which prove to be operative within the given community" (Jakobson/Tynyanov 1929: 143).

The approach advanced by Jakobson and Tynyanov opened the way for two important perspectives in analysing simple forms: first of all, we obtain the possibility of actually providing a Formbestimmung of a simple form's text on a synchronous level (which, of course, implies a notion of language as a basic means of interhuman communication), and secondly, it allows the investigation of its function. Unfortunately, however, Bogatyrev's call for the investigation of proverbs in their semiotic aspect, promoted as early as in 1937, remained practically unheard until the late 1960s.

Still, these two terms, text and function, should focus the semiotic study of proverbs, if a proverb is understood as being a particular text to which a particular function is ascribed or attributed within a given culture.

Proverb research, at the time of Jolles, was still in a relatively poor state. Quite typical is the statement of Archer Taylor, who introduced his seminal book The Proverb with the words: "The proverb and related forms have long been objects of general interest and the occasion for many books, but they have attracted little serious and thorough study" (Taylor 1931: vii).

Modern investigations like to refer to F. Seiler's Deutsche Sprichwörterkunde (1922) as the first serious philological investigation of the proverb. Interestingly enough, however, it was Jolles himself, who argued against Seiler's definition of the proverb as "self-contained sayings current among the people, which are of didactical tendency and of above–standard form", and who rejected this definition as being incorrect and unsatisfying. If a proverb actually has a "didactical tendency", Jolles argues, has one to understand this as being a necessary (obligatory) or possible (facultative) quality? If proverbs are current in the Volksmund, how can one then accept Seiler's confession that there may be proverbs which are common in the whole folk, and others, which are known only in a particular village, district, or group? Additionally, and mainly, for Jolles, a proverb is "the form, which concludes an experience", and therefore it is essentially oriented to the past,

whereas Seiler ascribed a moralistic-didactical (and therefore future-oriented) tendency to it.

Many years later, M. Hain, in her empirical "folkloristic-sociological" investigation of the proverb, tried to solve the discrepancy between these two viewpoints by pointing out the general irrelevance of such an absolute dichotomy. Showing that the strict either-or of experience or morale cannot grasp the essence of the proverb, Hain provided evidence for the essential poly-functionality of the proverb. She did not, however, refer to the theoretical concept of polyfunctionality, as it had been developed in Czech structuralism with regards to language, in general, and by P. Bogatyrev, with regards to folklore, in particular. Still, with her empirical orientation, Hain entered a new field at least within the German-speaking area; although R. Firth, who was later to become a leading representative of functional cultural anthropology, had referred to the importance of proverb context as early as in 1926, when he wrote: "The essential thing about a proverb is its meaning, - and by this is to be understood not merely a bald and literal translation into the accustomed tongue, nor even a free version of what the words are intended to convey. The meaning of a proverb is made clear only when side by side with the translation is given a full account of the accompanying social situation, - the reason for its use, its effect, and its significance in speech" (Firth 1926: 134).

Yet, the obviously close interrelationship of proverb context, proverb function, and proverb meaning, which seems to be implicit in investigations of this kind, has long been neglected, and it has been brought into discussion by Arewa/Dundes only in 1964. Their main interest is not as much the question of the function of the proverb in general, as the description of a concrete proverb's function in a specific context: "Notice that such as study of context is not the same as the more general study of functions of folklore. One

can say that proverbs sum up a situation, pass judgment, recommend a course of action, or serve as secular past precedents for present action; but to say this does not tell us what the particular function of a particular proverb used by a particular individual in a particular setting is" (Arewa/Dundes 1964: 71).

Of course, the logic behind this kind of argument is almost self-evident: proverbs, if regarded as particular linguistic units, must consequently be subject to certain rules of language in general. Language, however, is "always language in use" not only according to the psychologist H. Hörmann - "language in itself and by itself", as Saussure (1916: 297) understood it, has no meaning; it only means something for someone, with regard to someone. Meanings are generated in usage, and the same holds true for proverbs, too, then.

Thus, if it is impossible to describe a proverb's meaning without reference to the context of its use, it seems quite consistent, when B. Kirshenblatt-Gimblett (1973: 826) argues, "that 'proverb meaning' ultimately emerges from a proverb's use in a specific context and that it is not the meaning of the proverb per se that need be our central concern but the meaning of proverb performances". The difficulty to ascribe one definite meaning and one particular function to a given proverb has been excellently demonstrated by A. Krikmann in a series of articles on "The semantic indefiniteness of the proverb." Krikmann (1974a: 5) brilliantly summarizes the results of the whole discussion: "As mentioned, the meaning of a proverb as a single (virtual or written) text is, for a researcher or user, a mere semantic potential. The final and maximally definite meanings of a certain text manifest themselves only in concrete actualisations of this text."

It seems most obvious to state, now, that poly-functionality, heterosituativity,[4] and polysemanticity are three categories which cannot be isolated, and

which condition each other in one way or another. And it seems to be for this interrelationship that no consistent and satisfying definition of the proverb as genre has ever been achieved. Statements like those by Archer Taylor (1931: 3) or Bartlett Jere Whiting (1952: 331) which state that it is too difficult or even impossible to define what a proverb is, have become standard quotations for any proverb researcher, and they need not be repeated here. Yet, it is of interest how these two scholars continue in their argumentation: A. Taylor speaks of an "incommunicable quality" which tells us if a sentence is proverbial or not, and B.J. Whiting, too, admits that no definition is really necessary, "since all of us know what a proverb is."

Statements like these, which seem to be an evasion rather than a way out, clearly display a paradox; yet, they show a perspective, too.

A paradox - which recently has been described by Z. Kanyó (1980: 149ff.) in detail - has to be seen, in so far as, on the one hand, the members of a given culture or society obviously have some intuitive notion of what a proverb is (and what it is not), and that it is exactly this intuitive knowledge which serves as the basis for defining the field of scholarly research. On the other hand, precisely these scholarly investigations bring about ambiguity where there seemed to be clarity before. And in the very same sense, in which A. Krikmann (1971) spoke about "The problem of metalanguage as an expression of the spreading of meaning of proverbs", Kanyó concludes that obviously, there are "as many answers to the question of what a proverb is as there are scientific languages."

A perspective can be seen in Taylor's and Whiting's remarks, however, inasmuch as they make clear that the intuitive knowledge about the essence of the proverb is part of human thought, part of cognitive structure, and that consequently, it should be possible to

investigate it as such. This kind of approach should be compatible with Anikin's "Theses on the international and national study of proverbs", in which he argues: "The study of the typological commonness and similarity of proverbs of different peoples aims at the elucidation of the logical formulae and figures which are contained in proverbial utterances: human thinking is unique with all peoples on earth" (Anikin 1965: 30).

Following this line of thought, we obtain the possibility of describing and, perhaps, of defining the proverb not only on the linguistic level, but, additionally, on a deeper, logical level. This kind of approach might be seen in accordance with A. Dundes' considerations, who postulates the existence of three distinct analytical levels of folklore by adding those of the "text" and "texture" to the specific social and interactional "context." By "texture", Dundes means the specific linguistic features, such as phonemes, morphemes, rhyme, alliteration. When speaking of "text", Dundes has in mind specific "folkloristic structures." These folkloristic structures, according to Dundes (1964a: 49), "can be analysed without reference to a particular language", and they remain in translations into other languages. It goes without saying, and Dundes himself makes this explicit, that such a division of levels is useful only for analytical purposes, and they do not, eo ipso, claim any ontological status.

The question which necessarily arises out of this debate is: Is it possible to describe the text of a proverb on this logical level and if so, what about the problem of the above-mentioned interrelationship of polyfunctionality, polysemanticity, and heterosituativity?

The description of proverb meaning is, as was stated above, not possible without reference to contextual factors. Yet, it seems most reasonable, as P. Seitel (1969, 1972) argues, to take into consideration

the importance of context only as potential, or virtual factor, and to abstract for heuristic purposes from all contextual elements (such as number, age, gender, social status of the involved persons, etc.), and to outline the "ethic frame" of proverb use. The heuristic model of proverb use developed by Seitel is based on the central assumption that the situation in which a proverb is actually used (the interaction situation) is not identical with the situation inherent in the proverb text itself (the proverb situation), and that both of them are not or need not be identical with the situation the proverb refers to, i.e., the situation to which it is intended to be applied (the context situation). Thus, when uttering a proverb, "the speaker asserts that the relationship between the things in the proverb situation is analogous to the relationship between the entities in the context situation" (Seitel 1972: 147). Therefore, proverb usage is related to two distinct, though closely related processes, namely "the process of relating proverb situation to context situation and the speech act of applying the proverb in an interaction situation" (ibid., 240). The distinction of the different types of situation involved in proverb use can be summarized in the following schema:

Figure 1:
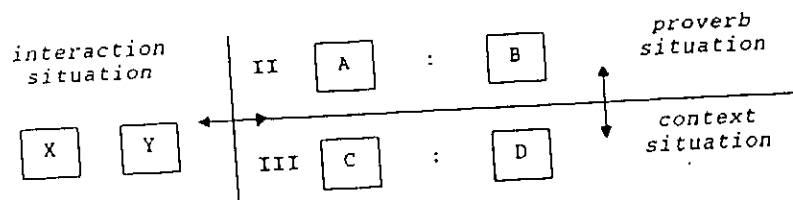
It seems possible, on the basis of this tri-partite schema, to differentiate the concept of proverb function, which, in fact, is used extremely heterogeneously in proverb research.

A first complex of functions might be attributed to the realm of interaction situations, when proverbs have the function to fulfill a particular effect, change of state of the hearer's consciousness, intended by the speaker. This kind of function is meant, e.g., when W. Mieder (1977: 81) summarizes: "Proverbs may also function as warning, persuasion, admonition, reprimand, statement, characterisation, explanation, description, justification, summarisation, etc., and it is well possible that one and the same proverb takes completely different functions in different contexts of usage. A simple proverb such as 'All's well that ends well', for instance, may be used as statement, justification, argument, etc." One might term this complex of function prag-matic functions with respect to the above-mentioned distinctions.

A second notion of function is related to the function(s) which the proverb stock of a given society on the whole fulfills within its system of norms and values. Such functions might be, for example, the entertaining or educating functions of proverbs, their being instruments for creating and stabilising certain social norms and behavior. This notion of function might be related to the semiotic concept of text and function, as it is defined in the work of Lotman/ Pyatigorsky (1968: 320), for example: "The function of a text is defined as its social role, as its ability to correspond to particular needs of the collective which it is produced by." One might term this notion of function, perhaps, the social functions; it is implicit in investigations like those of Herzog/Blooah (1936) or Messenger (1959), who refer to the concrete role proverbs fulfill within the juridicial system of particular African peoples. It is implicit, too, in the work of

G. Burk who, in a "folkloristic-sociological study" inspired by M. Hain, found out about proverb use in a German farmer's family: "They are asserted as norms which are valid for behavior [...]. Particularly, proverbs contain <u>social</u> norms. The postulate for justice as basis for social behavior is strongly expressed" (Burk 1953: 62f.).

One might, however, also distinguish a third complex of functions, which can be seen in relation not to the interaction situation and the context situation, but with regard to the proverb situation. In agreement with Burke's (1941: 256) statement that proverbs are "<u>strategies</u> for dealing with certain <u>situations</u>", it seems reasonable to ask, not only for what kind of (context) situations a proverb is apt to be a strategy, but too, how the proverb itself is construed to be able to serve as basis for creating and transmitting the analogy between proverb situation and context situation. With regard to Seitel's model, the central question here would be what kind of relationships actually are created, or modelled, between the two entities $\underline{A}$ and $\underline{B}$ which, in the end, only provide the possibility of creating the analogy to the entities $\underline{C}$ and $\underline{D}$ of the context situation. The use of this notion of function, which might be called <u>modelling function</u> according to Permyakov (1975: 254), makes it clear that in semiotics, two different types of function are often referred to, since this term, on the one hand, means "the relationship between elements within a given system, on the other hand the relationship of this system as a whole to facts outside of it" (Eimermacher 1986: 31). In our case, the modelling function is centered on the relationship between the two elements $\underline{A}$ and $\underline{B}$ (in Seitel's terms); one might also, therefore, term this function a <u>semiotic</u> function in the <u>narrow</u> sense, which distinguishes the proverb as genre from other signs and sign systems of a given culture. The essential question, then, is what kind of situations ultimately are modelled in proverbs. Seitel himself (1969: 148) names impli-

cation and equivalence as two possible types of relationship between the two entities $\underline{A}$ and $\underline{B}$; but because he does not, however, systematically pursue this line of thinking, D. Burkhart-Chatzeeliades (1981: 154) criticizes him: "If Seitel already speaks of 'logical structure' and 'logical relationships', why doesn't he use logical structural formulae?"

At this point, we clearly see how the detailed description of situations modelled in proverbs obviously leads back to Anikin's postulate to describe the "logical formulae and figures" of proverbs, and to the "incommunicable quality" of proverbs mentioned by Taylor. Thus, two major questions arise out of the foregoing discussion: one of them is centered on the manner of the relationship between the elements $\underline{A}$ and $\underline{B}$, i.e., what kind of situations are modelled in proverbs; the other one aims at the relationship between proverb situation and context situation and focuses on questions such as imagery, metaphoricalness, allegory, etc. Let us examine each of these questions in turn.

2.   Dual signification – paradigmatics, syntagmatics, logical transformations

In this context, we can immediately pick up thoughts by P. Crépeau (1975), expressed in his article "<u>La définition du proverbe</u>." Crépeau, too, considers analogy to be a crucial factor in the functioning of proverbs when he speaks of the "analogy of one situation with another" as the basis for a proverb entering into discourse. Based on this assumption, Crépeau makes an important distinction in the description of proverbs, postulating the existence of two different levels of signification, namely those of denotation and of connotation. This distinction is essentially based on the notion that a linguistic sign may be divided into its expression and content components, and, particularly, it refers to Hjelmslev's (1943: 114f.) concept of "conno-

tative semiotics" by which he means connotative semi-
otic systems, which are characterised by the fact that
they have a denotative semiotic system as their expres-
sion plane. This concept can be demonstrated in the
following figure:

Figure 2:

1. expression	2. content	
3. sign I. E X P R E S S I O N		II. C O N T E N T
III. S I G N		

Applying this concept to the analysis of proverbs,
Crépeau succeeds in demonstrating that it is reasonable
to regard a proverb as a "secondary semiological
system" (a term used by R. Barthes, who had applied
this concept to myth as early as in the 1950s). In a very
similar sense, M. Cherkassky, already in 1968 distin-
guished between the focus information and the fond
information of a proverb, and he maintains – like
Crépeau with direct reference to Hjelmslev – that the
whole of what the linguistic realization is for the lin-
guistic plane (i.e., expression plane and content plane
taken together), is only the substance of expression for
the supralinguistic semiotic (hence, in our case, parem-
ic) plane.

As the discussion above shows, the distinction
between the two levels of signification might be suit-
able for separating the analysis of linguistic structures

from the analysis of folkloristic structures in Dundes'
sense. Some scholars, such as W. Eismann (1984:
277ff.) do not actually favor this kind of approach
instead of an exclusively linguistic analysis of proverbs
– such a point of view, however, does not only demand a
very comprehensive notion of phraseology, but of lin-
guistics, in general, which, then, is considered to be
rather a discipline of language use (speech, parole). We
are dealing, however, with a heuristic distinction be-
tween linguistic structures and folkloristic structures
which mainly serves, as Dundes (1964) pointed out,
predominantly analytical purposes.

In any case, the analysis of folkloristic structures
suggests a semiotic-structuralist approach, even if it
does not demand it. Within this framework, the impor-
tant analysis of linguistic surface and deep structures,
and of all elements which play any role in this context,
must not be called into question. What becomes of
central concern, is the analysis of the logical deep
structure (cf. Kuusi, 1974), but only the final corre-
lation of all phenomena can ultimately explain the
proverb's essence and its functioning.

Semiotic, or structuralist investigations in the
realm of folklore, usually refer to the work of V. Propp
(1928) and his analysis of the Russian tale of magic as
the beginning of structuralist folkloristics. His work,
which, unfortunately, remained practically unknown for
about 30 years, received its deserved attention only
after C. Lévi-Strauss' review of its first translation
into English (which is marked by nearly as many mis-
takes and misinterpretations as Lévi-Strauss' review of
it). Nevertheless, Lévi-Strauss' own work, too, has
become one of the milestones of modern structuralist
folkloristics. In his seminal essay "The structural study
of myth" (Lévi-Strauss 1955), he considered myth to be
the mediation of initially distinct and seemingly incom-
patible premises. It is quite correct, when E. Meletin-
sky (1969: 253) later pointed out that Lévi-Strauss'

investigation of myth is "not a structural analysis of mythical narration, but of mythical thought." This view explains and coincides with Maranda's and Köngäs-Maranda's observation that the famous "Lévi-Strauss formula" (which logically expresses his above-mentioned result, and which need not be reproduced here) can be found in folklore genres other than myth too; characteristically enough, however, the authors were not able to define one of these genres on the basis of this formula. Obviously, this kind of approach is different from Propp's; A. Dundes (1968: xi) has interpreted Propp's approach as being a syntagmatic one, Lévi-Strauss', on the other hand, as paradigmatic. Of course, both types of analysis do not exclude each other; rather, they can be understood as complementary. It seems reasonable, however, to postulate a transformational level, in addition to the paradigmatic and syntagmatic ones. This tri-partite analysis would demand a partial re-classification of Propp's and Lévi-Strauss' approaches, and it would imply the following distributions:

(1) On the paradigmatic level we can see the hierarchy and correlation of semantic oppositions which represent what Dundes (1968: xi) has termed the a priori information, and which has been partially described by Lévi-Strauss with regards to myth (e.g., life vs. death; nature vs. culture; raw vs. cooked; etc.). These oppositions, however, correspond only to the second level of signification; they represent the connotative paradigm as opposed to the denotative paradigm, which contains the information of the primary semiotic system, and which may be analyzed in isolation from it.

(2) The transformational level comprises the logical deep structural rules, and the above-mentioned Lévi-Strauss formula would be only one of them. These transformational rules should be separated from the paradigmatic level because they are, in a way, a-thematic and represent only the rules according to which the paradigmatic entities are combined. Yet, the status of the transformational level is somehow ambivalent with regard to the paradigmatic and syntagmatic levels: on the one hand, it remains closely tied to the paradigmatic level since it can only work on the basis of the latter's inventory; on the other hand, it is the direct basis for their syntagmatic unfolding, and it can only be analytically deduced from the syntagmatic realization a posteriori.

(3) On the syntagmatic level, one can analyse the successive, linear unfolding of the logical transformations. Here, too, two planes (at least) can and should be distinguished, which might be termed "micro-structures" and "macro-structures." Micro-structures include all those structures which are characteristic of the given primary semiotic system (in the case of proverbs, usually, the linguistic realization, up to the level of sentences or sentence sequences). Macro-structures, on the other hand, are abstract schemas which are based on a set of hierarchically ordered categories; their possible combinations may be conventionalized within a given culture. These macro-structures can be realized in different semiotic systems, and in different types of texts.

The interrelationship between the paradigmatic, transformational and syntagmatic levels can be summarized in the following schema:

Figure 3:
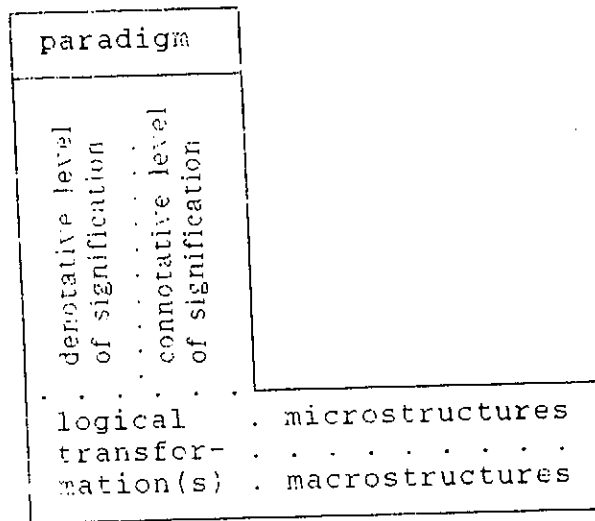
This system obviously carries traits which are characteristic of R. Jakobson's (1960) model of the two axes of language; yet, its implications clearly go beyond the latter's for various reasons. First of all, it is not restricted to the sign system of human (natural) language. Secondly, it pays due attention to the phenomenon of dual signification, which is typical of secondary modelling systems. Additionally, it introduces a separate level of logical operations, or transformations, which, in a way, can be regarded as some kind of "switchboard" between the paradigmatic and syntagmatic axes.

It goes without saying that the model described above is not confined to the field of proverb research, particularly since the proverb does not even "activate"

the level of macro-structures as opposed to, e.g., myth or fable, to name only two genres to which it may be applied to as well (cf. Grzybek 1986). Nevertheless, the model allows important observations relevant for proverb research, too. First of all, it is able to explain, in how far a proverb may be regarded to be "a minimal unit of the supra-linguistic plane" (Cherkassky 1968: 364). Apart from this, and even more importantly, it becomes apparent how a structural description of the proverb should look like: first of all, it would have to make transparent the whole paradigm of semantic oppositions typical of the proverb and inherent in it; secondly, it would have to work out the set of logical transformations which allow the process of modelling proverb situations.

3.   Dual analogy and the logical deep structure of the proverb

As can be readily seen, we are more and more concretely approaching the possibility of actually being able to describe the logical formulae postulated by Anikin in order to explicate the "incommunicable quality" of the proverb. It seems reasonable, therefore, to provide a very cursory overview of attempts to describe the proverb formally or structurally.

Apart from the structural-semiotic work on proverb research promoted in the USSR since the mid-sixties, which has been largely neglected in the Western hemisphere (cf. Grzybek 1987), a series of articles by G. Milner (1969a, b) stands practically at the beginning of structural proverb research. Milner's starting point is his dissatisfaction with Taylor's and Whiting's remarks about the difficulty to define a proverb in spite of our intuitive ability to recognize proverbs as such. Milner (1969b: 199) states: "With this I disagree completely. I think that on the contrary if there is something that 'tells us' what is, and what is

not proverbial, then we must continue to grapple with the problem until we are in a position to communicate what Archer Taylor considers to be 'incommunicable'." Consequently, Milner's (1969a: 380) interest focuses on the explicit description of the "hidden structure which must be perceived by the unconscious levels of our minds."

In Milner's opinion, the essential thing about a proverb (in its typical form) is the symmetrical structure of both <u>form and content</u>, which, according to Milner, has to be seen in the fact that a proverb consists of two halves, each of which, in turn, is composed of two quarters. These structures are called 'quadripartite structures': "By this I mean that a traditional saying consists of four <u>quarters</u> (minor segments), standing in a balanced and structured relationship to one another both in their form and content, and that it is the exact nature of the relationship between the separate parts which determines the force and meaning of the saying as a whole" (Milner 1969a: 200).

According to Milner's theory, each quarter contains one word (or several words) to which one can attribute values in form of semantic oppositions such as "good – bad", "safe – dangerous", "friendly – hostile", "useful – useless", and others. This word (these words) then give(s) the quarter in which it occurs its value and function within the saying in question. Although, perhaps, other words within the same quarter may modify the value within each half, the two quarters have independent values which modify each other, but they do not modify the quarters of the other half.

Milner's approach has been very innovative in the field of proverb research; nevertheless, there are a number of weighty arguments against his conception.

A first objection must be raised against the danger of subjectivity when distributing positive and negative values – a danger Milner was well aware of himself (cf. Milner 1969b: 200). Why are, for example, in Milner's analysis, all quarters except for the word 'rotten' positive in the saying "Soon ripe – soon rotten"? In other words: Which value would have to be attributed, theoretically speaking, to the opposite of 'soon', in the third quarter? Crépeau (1975: 290f.) explains this objection in context with another example, "No fire without smoke." In Crépeau's opinion, the word 'fire' may be evaluated positively in one case (when dealing with a fire which gives pleasant warmth against coldness); negatively in a different case (e.g., when dealing with a destructive fire). These two examples show in an elucidating way that Milner, on the whole, makes the same methodological mistake which Propp had overcome already 40 years before him: Milner's approach is in Dundes' (1962) terminology–– etic, not emic!

This is not to say that the attribution of values does not play any role in proverb use. On the contrary, Cherkassky (1968: 365) is completely right in stating "that every paremia contains, in addition to the 'factical', also evaluative–moralistic information", and that from the standpoint of ideology obviously "good" and "bad" is the most essential feature expressed in paremiology. These evaluations, however, are being made not on the denotative level of language, and they can only be analyzed on the connotative level when taking into consideration extra–linguistic factors, too.

This point directly leads to another, even more important objection to Milner's approach, which has to be seen in the fact that his analysis is centered exclusively on the denotative level of signification, neglecting the phenomenon of dual signification, and of connotative signification, in particular. Crépeau (1975: 292) is correct when he states that, in some cases, the symmetrical structure of form can reproduce the

symmetrical structure of content, but that fundamentally, and more essentially, the content of a proverb can only be derived from a structural integration of both levels of signification, and that it cannot be derived from the denotative level alone: "Rather, it is the structural integration of the two leves of signification which constitutes the analogical structure of the proverb and which gives it this symmetrical armature of content and form."

Crépeau demonstrates the necessity of distinguishing between the two levels of signification using the following example: If one tried to express a proverb such as "Dog of the Kings – King of the dogs" in analogical form, the result would be

Dog : King :: King : Dog.

if one took only the denotative level of signification into consideration. Actually, however, a completely different analogy is inherent to the proverb, which might be expressed like

Dog of Kings : other dogs ::
servant of a powerful man : other servants.

Consequently, the essence of a proverb has to be seen not in the relationship between its isolated components, but in an analogy which is the result of the structural integration of the denotative and connotative levels of signification: "The proverb is essentially a statement of analogical strucure: it is an analogy which constitutes the mechanism by which the content of the first level of signification becomes the expression of the second level of signification" (Crépeau 1975: 295). Strictly speaking, it is not the content of the first (denotative) level of signification alone, but the whole of content and expression, which becomes the expression of the second (connotative) level of signification – Crépeau's conclusion, however, remains unaffected by

this alteration: From the structural integration of the first and second levels of signification, and from the analogy which is derived from it, results a particular 'proverb idea', "une idée générale," as Crépeau terms it.

This abstract idea, then, must also be the underlying (or assumed) basis of the context situation, if the proverb is supposed to fit. Therefore, if one consistently pursues Crépeau's considerations, and takes into account both proverb situation and context situation, one may conclude that the functioning of the proverb is essentially based on a double analogy. The first analogy can be seen on the level of the proverb situation, in so far, as an analogy is the result of the structural integration of the first and second levels of signification; the second analogy can be seen with regards to the relation of certain objects or notions inherent in the context situation. If we denominate this abstract idea "p : q", an integration of Seitel's and Crépeau's ideas leads to the following formula, which expresses the double analogy of proverb use:

$$A : B :: p{:}q :: C : D.$$

This can be illuminated in the following schema:

Figure 4:
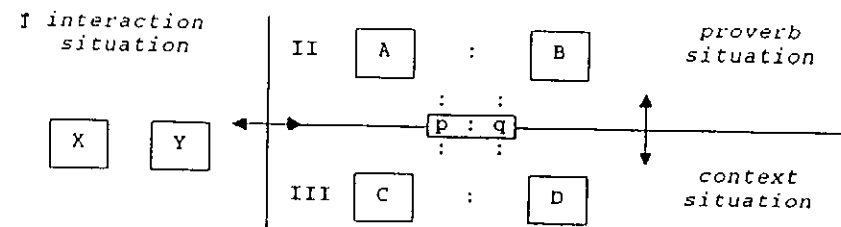
The principle of analogy remains generally unaffected by the question of metaphoricalness in proverbs – these two categories are independent of each other, and they have to be kept clearly separated. This is to say that at the basis of each proverb, or proverb use, there is a particular analogical structure, but that a proverb does not necessarily have to be metaphorical. Crépeau, too, has in mind this fact that one may well regard every metaphor as analogy, but that one must not draw the reverse conclusion: not each analogy (and, consequently, not every proverb) has to be of metaphorical nature. The essential analogical structure remains identical, regardless of the fact that we may deal with a metaphorical proverb, such as "People in glass houses should not throw stones" or a seemingly non-metaphorical proverb such as "Look before you leap."

Perhaps it is useful, in this context, to discuss, at least very briefly, the phenomenon of metaphor, which has a long tradition, and which has been interpreted in many different ways. A valuable contribution to this question has been made by W. Köller (1975) in his recent book Semiotik und Metapher, in which his general assumption is "that in natural conversational speech, in a concrete speech act, the actual meaning of a word is functionally defined on the basis of the corresponding verbal and situative context" (ibid., 67). As far as metaphor is concerned, Köller's logical conclusion is: "Under these circumstances, the definition of metaphor as figurative speech could not be justified ontologically, but with reference to hackneyed speech conventions" (ibid., 92).

Similarly, the clear-cut distinction between metaphorical and non-metaphorical proverbs has recently been called into question. Barley (1974), for example, who regards metaphoricalness as an indispensable trait of the proverb and who distinguishes proverbs from maxims (which, in his opinion, have to be interpreted literally), ultimately argues in favor of a fluent tran-sition between both forms, maintaining "that the distinction between proverb and maxim is not an absolute difference of type but rather one of level" (Barley 1972: 739). This does not mean that "traditional" distinctions such as proverb vs. maxim (Barley), proverbe vs. dicton (Greimas), proverb vs. folk aphorism (Permyakov), metaphorical proverb vs. proverbial apothegm (Taylor), and many others, become superfluous. Rather, this is a more or less significant shift of perspective, in so far as a distinction between metaphorical and non-metaphorical sayings is assumed to exist not as such, but only in language use. Norrick (1981: 3) therefore, argues quite convincingly: "In many cases we can meaningfully speak only of literal and figurative usages, not of literal and figurative sayings as such." Hasan-Rokem (1982: 15), too, argues in favor of this view, demanding "that the metaphorical-literal character of proverbs be analyzed in context. This is a distinction not referring to text, but to use. Thus, proverb x may be in a metaphorical relationship to context a, but in a literal relationship to context b, and so forth."

The question of the metaphoricalness of proverbs is thus ultimately transferred to the realm of context, just as is the question of proverb meaning in general, as stated above. Summarizing, one can say that metaphoricalness is a possible, but not necessary criterium of the proverbial genre. More essential, because fundamental, is the phenomenon of analogy, on which metaphorical proverbs may be founded as well as non-metaphorical ones.

If we now turn to the second complex of questions which arises out of Seitel's investigations, we have to ask ourselves if there is a particular inventory of proverb situations (i.e., of relationships which we termed "p : q" above), and which might be analytically described.

For Crépeau (1975: 294), the basis for analogy formation is a given opposition: "It is an opposition which founds the analogy. No analogy is possible where the terms which are brought into relationship are not opposed to each other in a particular way." In Crépeau's opinion, there is an implicit "common term" between the two oppositional terms, which represents the "key of the analogy." In the proverb A child without father is like a house without roof, for example, the key of the analogy, according to Crépeau, would be the relationship of "protection" (and, we might add, the terms opposed would be "protector – protected", and it would be exactly this pair of semantic oppositions, which is represented on the connotative level of signification). We can thus see close parallels between the logical relationships mentioned by Seitel and the "general idea" mentioned by Crépeau. In addition to the possible existence of logical relationships, Crépeau points out the importance of semantic oppositions. In his opinion, there are as many keys of analogy as there are semantic oppositions (Crépeau 1975: 292). Therefore, for him the establishment of an inventory of logical operations is identical with the enumeration of possible or actual semantic oppositions, and, consequently, endless.

This is not the case with Dundes' (1975) approach, who, on the one hand, tries to deduce semantic oppositions from concrete proverbs in a similar way as M. Kuusi (1972) with regards to his international classification system; both of them obtain semantic oppositions such as "One – Two", "Some – Many", "Old – Young", etc.; on the other hand, Dundes names a set of logical rules which he understands to be complementary to the oppositions. His basic distinction is between oppositional and non–oppositional (or equational) proverbs. The level of abstraction in Dundes' classification, however, is, at least partially, inaccurate; this can clearly be seen, for example, when he regards the relation of implication ($\underline{A} \rightarrow \underline{B}$) as a transformation of equation ($\underline{A} = \underline{B}$), and thus

classifies a proverb such as Seeing is believing in one and the same group as Where there is fire, there is smoke. Admitting that this should rather be the task of an expert in symbolic or formal logic (Dundes 1975: 971), he does not achieve a systematic inventory. Nevertheless, his work leads exactly in the direction which was sketched out above: firstly, he refers to the importance of semantic oppositions in proverbs, secondly, he points out the significance of logical formulae.

Summarizing the results thus far, one might conclude that Dundes as well as Crépeau have touched important points on the way to solving the question raised basically by Seitel, although neither of them arrived at a systematic answer to it. The only one to succeed in doing this was the Russian scholar G.L. Permyakov whose studies – this should be mentioned here – were partially written significantly earlier than all the above-mentioned Western investigations.

4.   Permyakov's GRAMMAR OF PROVERB WISDOM

Permaykov's Grammar of Proverb Wisdom, which was developed over a period of more than ten years,[5] was published in 1979, as an "introduction" to his proverb collection Proverbs and Proverbial Sayings from Oriental Peoples.

Permyakov's theoretical starting-point is the basic assumption that proverbs are signs of situations, a notion, which leads us back to considerations advanced by Seitel, Burke, and others mentioned above. Unfortunately, however, Permyakov does not really clarify his notion of 'situation' when he postulates that "a classification of the situations themselves" (Permyakov 1979: 306) has to be worked out, if one wants to categorize proverbs on the basis of their meanings. This lack of explicit theoretical classification has led to

some misunderstandings, or misinterpretations, which might easily have been avoided. The Russian scholar Shvydkaya (1977: 163), for example, interprets Permyakov's attempt as being a classification of extra-linguistic context-situations (in Seitel's terminology, to whose works she does not refer, however): "He calls proverbs signs of situations, i.e., of extra-linguistic reality, and by the content of proverbs we have to understand the extra-linguistic reality."

It seems more reasonable, however, that Permyakov had in mind a classification not of context situations, but of proverb situations. This becomes rather clear when he maintains that proverbs "not only serve as signs of the depicted situation, but they also model them" (ibid., 318). With this distinction, Permyakov is using basic semiotic terms, in general, and terms of Soviet semiotics, in particular. In Russia, the notion of "modelling" and of "modelling systems" has been particularly promoted in the writings of Yu.M. Lotman. Basically, the modelling of extra-linguistic reality is regarded to be one of the basic functions of signs and signs systems, in addition to their predominant communicative, or informative, functions. This holds true for artistic signs or sign systems as well; and what is considered to be characteristic of models in general, is relevant for artistic models, too, namely that the modelled object cannot be identical with the modelling object: "We are dealing with analogy, with similarity, but never with identity" (Lotman 1964: 34).

If one applies this concept (and Permyakov's initial remarks) to the problem of proverbs and proverb usage, one obtains the following picture: A proverb is used as a sign in a particular (extra-linguistic) interaction situation to refer to a particular (extra-linguistic) context situation, of and for which it is a sign. Additionally, the proverb models this situation in a particular way. The theoretical distinction between sign and model in semiotics, in general, and in Permyakov's analysis of

proverbs, in particular, might seem artificial, at first sight. In fact, Schveiger (1981: 127), for example, has objected to Permyakov: "Permyakov [...] distinguishes between the paremiological stock's being (sets of) SIGNS and MODELS: the first 'belong to language', while the second to 'folklore'; it seems necessary to make the following point – everything that belongs to folklore must (implicitly) belong also to language. The distinction operated by the author [...] between proverbial sayings being signs, but not models is not convincing."

The problem here is two-fold, at least: First of all, proverbial sayings, in Permyakov's theory, "are signs and at the same time models of various typical situations" (Permyakov 1979: 317); therefore, Schveiger's quotation is essentially incorrect, since he neglects the dual status Permyakov attributes to proverbs: proverbs are both signs and models, but, according to Permyakov, as signs they belong to language, and as models, to folklore.

Secondly, Permyakov's concept that proverbs belong to language in their quality of being signs, and to folklore in their quality of being models, is extremely unfortunate per se, since language itself can be regarded to be a modelling system. What Permyakov actually means might most reasonably be understood on the basis of the distinction between the denotative and connotative levels of signification demonstrated above. When Permyakov speaks of proverbs as signs he means by 'sign' a linguistic sign, which, by common usage, has become a verbal stereotype (cliché) which is part of the language system; when he speaks of proverbs as 'models', he has in mind proverbs as "secondary modelling systems" (in Lotman's terminology) which are superimposed and dependent upon natural language. Only in this way can one explain why, according to Permyakov, there may be proverbial phrases which serve as signs of particular situations, but which do not model these

situations,[6] as well as utterances, which model particular situations, but which do not serve as signs of them (i.e., which are not verbal clichés of them).

According to Permyakov, then, we are dealing with proverbs only when they are both verbally stereotyped signs and models of the situations they are intended to be applied to, when they, in other words, are linguistic clichés (on the denotative level of signification), on the one hand, and, on the other hand, display all the characteristics of secondary modelling systems (on the connotative level of signification). Therefore, Kanyó's objection to Permyakov may easily be shown to be invalid too; Kanyó (1981: 89) writes: "Permyakov's ontological starting-point seems doubtful to us: In effect, not how the situations are logically modelled, but their linguistic expressions, i.e., the unity is not so much based on the similarity of the situations, but on the similarity of the linguistic formulations of the situations." Kanyó's premises, thus, are as wrong as Shvydkaya's are: Permyakov does not strive for a classification of the extra-linguistic situations they are to refer to, but of the modelled proverb situations; these models, however, are generated by help of human natural language, and therefore, they can only be analyzed with recourse to it.

Ultimately, we see Permyakov's differentiation is fully compatible with Dundes' distinction between linguistic and folkloristic structures. Permyakov, however, already in his early writings (Permyakov 1967, 1968), distinguishes three different planes, and, consequently, he postulates three angles from which proverbial sayings should be analyzed: a) the linguistic plane; b) the realia plane; and c) the logico-semiotic plane. The analysis on the linguistic plane serves two purposes for Permyakov. Most importantly, he separates proverbs from related (linguistic and folkloristic) phenomena. Thus, for example, proverbs are separated from proverbial sayings. Regardless of the fact that, in

practice, there rather seems to be a fluent zone of transition between proverbs and proverbial sayings (cf., e.g., Krikmann 1984, Pilorz 1964, Röhrich 1973), he considers proverbs to be fully clichéized, i.e., syntactically complete utterances, whereas proverbial sayings have to be completed out of the context of their usage. Additionally, proverbs are separated both "upwards" from supraphrasal entities (such as anecdotes, fables, etc.) and "downwards" from idioms, phraseological entities, etc. Especially the latter distinction is a rather innovative one, because, in Permyakov's theory, idioms are not models of situations, but only represent a single notion, or concept as opposed to proverbs, which put into relation two (or more) concepts or notions. Yet, Savvina (1984: 204) is correct in stating that this distinction seems to be intuitively logical, but in practical analysis, rather difficult to make.

When Permyakov confines his analyses on the linguistic level to phenomena like the above-mentioned, this does not, of course, exclude further questions as to the specific syntactic structure of proverbs, as to rhyme, rhythm, metrics, stylistics, etc., i.e., as to the linguistic and poetic structure of proverbs. Questions like these may easily be added to Permyakov's investigations. Without doubt, Kanyó (1981: 90) is correct when he objects that the poetical-rhetorical characteristics of the proverb remain neglected in Permyakov's work, and that they cannot, as Permyakov (1970: 29) assumes, be solved on the realia plane alone. The concrete realia (and their selection and use within a given culture, which finally makes a large part of the cultural specifics of a culture's proverbial stock) are also, but not exclusively, responsible for the poetical-rhetorical characteristics of the proverb. All these issues, however, can be understood as additional questions, and it is interesting that both Kanyó (1981) and Zholkovsky (1978) regard their corresponding analyses as elaborated investigations compatible with Permyakov's work. Still, many questions remain

unsolved in particular as far as the realia plane is concerned: The denotative level of signification cannot, of course, be reduced to the act of denoting specific objects. A proverb such as The early bird catches the worm, for instance, does not only consist of the realia 'bird' and 'worm', and a proverb such as Soon ripe, soon rotten clearly shows that the denotation of realia must not be confined to concrete objects. Many questions remain unsolved in this context and they are definitely beyond the scope of this paper.

If we now turn to the third level of analysis postulated by Permyakov, the logico-semiotic plane, we observe that Permyakov's ultimate aim is to find out and describe particular invariant types of situations which are modelled in proverbs. This interest leads us directly back to the above-mentioned considerations, namely whether it might be possible to provide some inventory of proverb situations.

From his early writings on, Permyakov distinguishes four different situational types; he calls them "higher logico-semiotic invariants", because concrete proverbs are related to these situation types just as variants are related to invariants. In other words: all proverbs which express one and the same idea (which have the same meaning) have to be regarded as variants of one and the same invariable (proverb) situation. Understood this way, we see once again, that Permyakov is definitely not concerned with the extra-linguistic context situations, which turn out to be variable, too, of course. This explanation not only disvalues Shvydkaya's or Kanyó's objections: it also makes clear that Permyakov ultimately describes a proverb's semantic potential (in Krikmann's words), and that his approach cannot solve all the problems of semantic indefiniteness (cf. Krikmann, 1974a, b).

The four situation types described by Permyakov may be divided into two major groups:

(a)   The first group (invariants IIA and IIB) models the relationships between things or between things and their qualities.

The second group models proverbs in a somewhat more complex way:

(b)   The sayings in it (invariants IIA and IIB) model the dependency between the relationship of things and the relationship of their qualities.

These four situational types may be found – in an only slightly modified form – in the final version of Permyakov's Grammar of Proverb Wisdom from 1979. The further subdivision into various constructional types and subtypes, which is inherent in Permyakov's early writings, has survived in the final version, too, and it can be found again in partially altered form in the so-called "form-building groups."

There is, however, one major change in Permyakov's conception as compared to his early position: In his former work, so-called "logico-semiotic groups" represent the lowest level of his logico-semiotic classification; in that approach, Permyakov tried to attribute particular thematic groups such as "One's Own – Foreign", "Part – Whole", etc., to the particular "higher logico-semiotic invariants" IA through IIB. Later, however, Permyakov saw himself forced to modify this conception (according to which his 1968 proverb collection is organized). Permyakov explains the need to change his concept, and to distinguish a separate "thematic classification" using the following example. Acording to his former concept, the following three proverbs would have fallen into one and the same class (IA): a) No fire without smoke, b) No rose without thorns, and c) No river without bank. In all three of them, it is maintained, that the first part of a pair cannot exist without the second part. Still, the meaning of all three proverbs is not the same: the first proverb

maintains that there can be no consequence without reason; the second, that there are no good things without faults; the last, that no whole can exist without one of its obligatory parts.

In his article "On the Structure of the Paremiological Stock", Permyakov (1975: 157) for the first time points out the necessity of consistently separating the logical classification from the thematical classification: "In fact, it is the inherent invariant pair of oppositions that should be properly considered the theme of a synthetic paremia irrespective of the realia by which it is represented and of the relations between these realia." This clear separation was finally made by Permyakov in the inventory of sematic oppositions (called "invariant thematic pairs" by him), which he provided in 1978. Thus Permyakov, in the final version of his approach, not only consistently distinguishes logical and thematic structures, but thematic plane and realia plane, too. These two had not been clearly differentiated in Permyakov's From Proverb to Folk-Tale, when Permyakov had only spoken of the realia plane. Yet it seems possible that Permykov had in mind not only concrete realia, speaking of an "alphabet" of necessary individual features, mentioning oppositional pairs such as "Near – Far", "Good – Bad", and others, and when writing: "All, including the most complex of objects, can be divided into elementary components, i.e., individual features whose number is relatively small and which combine in various ways to produce the whole infinite variety of the world of realia" (Permyakov 1970: 30).

Thus, in his final version, Permyakov adds a thematical classification (which must not be confounded with the realia plane) to the linguistic and logico-semiotic classifications. Ultimately, therefore, he postulates the existence of four, not three, analytical planes.
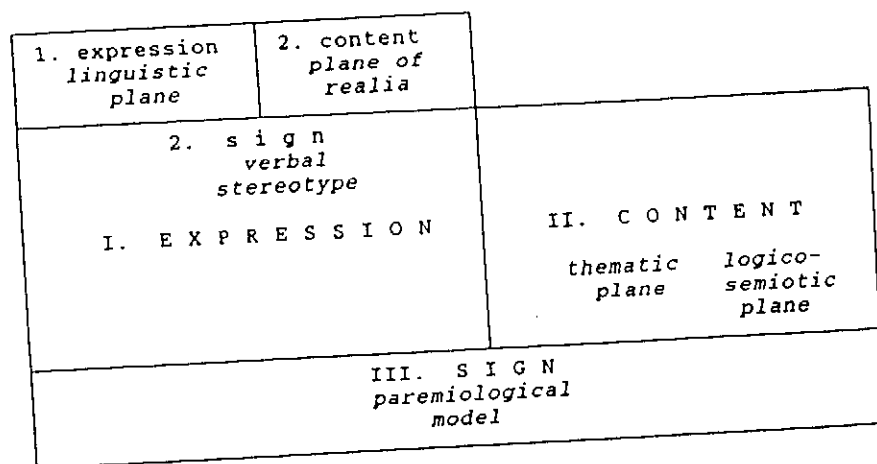
Thematical and logico-semiotic classifications relate to each other, in Permyakov's words, as do grammar and lexicon. Their mutual relationship can be interpreted differently, however, on the basis of the above-mentioned model distinguishing between paradigmatic and syntagmatic axes, and a transformational plane between them. According to this model, Permyakov's semantic (thematic) oppositions can be understood as paradigmatic entities, his logico-semiotic invariants as logical transformations. Understood this way, Permyakov has actually succeeded in working out a complete system for proverb description and a coherent theoretical basis for proverb definition, for the first time.

This interpretation leads directly to an appreciation and evaluation of the methodology of Permyakov's multi-level approach. Yu.V. Rozhdestvensky, in the afterword to Permyakov's monograph From Proverb to Folk-Tale, has pointed out a seeming contradiction between the tri-partite analysis intended by Permyakov and the conventional duality of the linguistic sign (into expression and content planes). Rozhdestvensky tried to explain this contradiction by regarding both the logio-semiotic plane and the realia plane in Permyakov's sense as belonging to the content plane, and Permyakov's linguistic plane to the expression plane. He concluded that, in Permyakov's approach, two content planes are opposed to one expression plane: "The content plane [...] is divided into the plane of concrete objects, i.e., the realia being named, and the logico-semiotic plane, i.e., the plane of mental operations" (Rozhdestvensky 1970: 272). On the basis of the considerations above, however, it seems most reasonable to significantly modify these relations; this seems particularly necessary, since Permyakov, on the one hand, has never really elaborated on the realia plane, and on the other hand, has additionally introduced and worked out a thematic plane.

Taking into consideration the model of dual signification, one might sketch out the following relations: the analysis of the linguistic plane focuses on the expression on the first (denotative) level of signification, on which the realia plane represents the object of tion, on which the realia plane represents the object of analysis with regard to the content. Both expression and content planes on the first (denotative) level of signification taken together represent a verbal cliché, which, on the second (connotative) level of signification, serves as expression plane.

In a different way than Crépeau (in whose analysis the logical transformations, i.e., the "abstract ideas" which we have termed "p : q" above, result from the structural integration of both first and second levels of signification), Permyakov attributes the logico-semiotic plane directly to the content plane. With regard to this model, the duality of the content plane postulated by Rozhdestvensky manifests itself on the second level of signification, in so far as both thematic and logico-semiotic planes function as content plane. This interpretation leads to the following schema:

Figure 5:


```
┌─────────────────┬──────────────┐
│ 1. expression   │ 2. content   │
│   linguistic    │  plane of    │
│     plane       │    realia    │
├─────────────────┴──────────────┼────────────────────┐
│       2.  s i g n              │                    │
│          verbal                │                    │
│        stereotype              │                    │
│                                │ II.  C O N T E N T │
│   I.  E X P R E S S I O N      │                    │
│                                │ thematic   logico- │
│                                │  plane    semiotic │
│                                │             plane  │
├────────────────────────────────┴────────────────────┤
│          III.  S I G N                               │
│           paremiological                             │
│              model                                   │
└──────────────────────────────────────────────────────┘
```

As far as the thematic plane is concerned, it seems fully compatible with Crépeau's considerations, who ascribes the universal features of proverbs precisely to the second level of signification: "Furthermore, it is on this second level of signification where the universal character of the proverb is displayed [...]. The content of the second level of signification can be reduced to categories which are accessible to other cultures, which does not mean that the content of all the collections is identical" (Crépeau 1979: 13).

The interpretation of Permyakov's multi-level approach within the framework of the model of dual signification might also explain why the Grammar of Proverb Wisdom should not be understood as being a generative grammar in Chomsky's sense (i.e., implying that an unlimited number of proverbial sayings might be generated on the basis of a limited number of thematic entries and logical transformations). Thus, one might easily conceive of a newly generated proverb such as An old car is better than a new bicycle – without any problem as we would understand what is meant; still, we would not necessarily classify this utterance as a proverb. What is lacking is the frequency of usage and the general acceptance of such newly generated "proverbial utterances", i.e., an extra-linguistic component, which is an indispensible condition for a usual utterance to become a linguistic cliché (and then, perhaps, a proverb).

Partially, such newly created proverbs can be technically generated with the help of a computer. Bayevsky (1970) made such an attempt; as his starting-point he chose the logical class $\underline{K} \Rightarrow \underline{P} \rightarrow \underline{Q}$ on a "semantic" level, syntactic kernel formulae such as 'He ...who', 'Where ...there', and others, on a "morpohological" level, and integrated exclusively "traditional Russian" lexical items in form of antonymic verbs with particular metrical characteristics, on a "lexical" level. Thus he indeed got proverbs such as, e.g., As you

sow, so shall you reap, and the like. Such a model can only work, however, as long as the semantic oppositions implicit in the second level of signification are realized in an equivalent form on the first level of signification, in an equivalent form on the first level of signification. In order to generate proverbs such as A watched pot never boils, and many, many others, one further utopic precondition would have to be fulfilled: The whole stock of all possible and conceivable realia, including all the associations and connotations tied to them, additionally structured in their hierarchy, would have to be included in a thesaurus. Thus one need not agree with Permyakov's assumption that one can easily understand a proverb of any culture without ever having heard it before – this presupposes (in addition to language knowledge, of course) at least the knowledge of all relevant associations and connotations, perhaps some knowledge about usage adequate to the relevant situations, too.

All these considerations, however, go far beyond the question of how proverbs, or proverb situations, are modelled. These considerations are very similar to those which were discussed in the beginning of this article. It turns out to be true that the ultimate meaning of a proverb cannot be predicted from the meaning of the modelled proverb situation, or, in other words, that the description of a modelled proverb situation cannot adequately grasp all concrete (or possible) meanings of a proverb in a given context situation.[7] Yet, one can, retrospectively, subsume all actually realized meanings of a proverb under the model advanced by Permyakov. And this is one of his fundamental achievements, namely to have provided a framework able to describe these possible proverb situations in a consistent system. Further questions may be added.

Permyakov's system has suitably been called a "Mendeleevian proverb table" (Kharitonov 1969) – a formulation which adequately points out both the

general character of this model and the scientific exactness which it aims at. On the other hand, Permyakov's conception has been called a "hocus pocus system" (Krikmann, 1971; Kuusi 1972), and it has been contrasted to Kuusi's classificational schema which has been termed a "God's truth system." Such an evaluation has been derived from Permyakov's claim to describe all actually existing and all possible (conceivable) proverbs within the framework of his model (Permyakov 1968: 42), and from the existence of so-called "free cells" within this system. Such "free cells", however, are well-known in linguistics, in particular in the field of phonology (cf. Martinet 1955; Revzin 1978: 109ff.). The juxtaposition of "God's truth systems" and "hocus pocus systems" originally has been promoted in linguistics, too. Householder (1952: 260) characterised this juxtaposition as follows:

"On the metaphysics of linguistics there are two extreme positions, which may be termed (and have been) the 'God's truth' position and the 'hocus pocus' position. The theory of the God's truth linguists [...] is that language has a structure and the job of the linguist is (a) to find out what the structure is, and (b) to describe it [...]. The hocus pocus linguist believes that a language (better, a corpus, since we describe only the corpus we know) is a mass of incoherent formless data, and the job of the linguist is somehow to arrange and organize this mass, imposing on it some structure [...]."

Roman Jakobson has pointed out several times that such a controversy is ultimately useless, and that the reason for its discussion has to be seen in the fact that phenomena of language have to be described with its own means, i.e., metalinguistically (Jakobson 1962: 276). Householder (1952: 260), too, admits that ultimately it seems to be rather a question of ideological-philosophical differences in approaching one and the

same question, partially arriving at identical results, and he confessed, "it may be that these two metaphysical viewpoints are in some sense equivalent." That this observation directly concerns Permyakov's and Kuusi's models, too, has been pointed out by Voigt (1977: 167): "Kuusi directly departs from the given material, and he tries to arrive at the same results as Permyakov has, with the help of the deductive method."

One may discuss how far Permyakov's approach actually is a deductive one: firstly, it has been developed out of the merely practical need to work out a consistent system of organizing a proverb collection, and it has been constantly verified, modified, developed; secondly, his system is based on the analysis of more than 50,000 proverbial sayings of more than 200 cultures. In his approach, as in any scientific approach, deductive and inductive ways of developing scientific models cannot be strictly separated, and they have to complement each other. Scientific models, however, are secondary modelling systems, too, being superimposed on natural language, and the question of which model finally turns out to be the "more correct" one, is ultimately a question of adequacy and consistency, which can only be proved in application to the phenomena being modelled.

The adequacy of Permyakov's theory then, being a model of (proverb) models, will have to be verified in investigations to come. In any case, due to the consistently semiotic approach in Permyakov's works (or in the works inspired by him), Permyakov has, on the one hand, succeeded in solving many questions in an innovative way, and, on the other hand, he has brought up another set of questions, the answer to which (hopefully) we will get only in the course of the years to come, but, probably, not without reference to Permyakov's work.

NOTES

[1] I am sincerely grateful for David Beal's friendly help in "anglicizing" the present paper, which is an updated version of the introduction to Semiotische Studien zum Sprichwort – Simple Forms Reconsidered I (Grzybek, ed. 1984).

[2] Due to convention, the German term "Einfache Formen" has been translated as "simple forms" throughout this paper, although A. Taylor's (1962) proposal "primary form", ultimately, seems to be more suitable.

[3] Cf., for example, Sprichwörter – Analyse einer einfachen Form (Kanyó 1981), Simple Forms – Einfache Formen (Kanyó, ed. 1982), Semiotische Studien zum Sprichwort – Simple Forms Reconsidered I (Grzybek, ed. 1984), Semiotische Studien zum Rätsel – Simple Forms Reconsidered II (Eismann/Grzybek, eds. 1987), Simple Forms. An Encyclopaedia of Simple Text-Types in Lore and Literature (Koch, ed. 1987).

[4] Levin (1984) uses this term in order to explain the fact, that a proverb, in different situations, can "actualize" different meanings.

[5] For a detailed bibliography of Permyakov's works see: Grzybek, ed. 1984 (203–214).

[6] Permyakov has in mind, for example, single lines or quotations from longer stories, which contain the corresponding model and thus, ultimately, provide it; he terms them, dependent on the character of their motivation, either indivisible sententias or indivisible phrases.

[7] On the basis of this standpoint, it is easily possible to explain, why a proverb such as Rolling stones gather no moss can "actualize" rather

heterogeneous connotations in different cultures (cf. Milner 1969 a, b; Kirshenblatt-Gimblett 1973; Ruef 1983).

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Anikin, V.P. (1965): "Ob internatsional'nom i nat-sional'nom izuchenii poslovits (tezisy)." Proverbium (2) 1965; 27–30.

Arewa, E.O./A. Dundes (1964): "Proverbs and the Ethnography of Speaking Folklore." American Anthropologist, (66) 1964; 70–85.

Barley, N. (1972): "A Structural Approach to the Proverb and Maxim with Special Reference to the Anglo-Saxon Corpus." Proverbium, (20) 1972; 737–750.

Barley, N. (1974): "'The proverb' and related problems of genre-definition." Proverbium, (23) 1974; 880–884.

Bayevsky, V.S. (1970): "'Porozhdayushchaya model' poeticheskoy sistemy poslovits." In: Strukturno–matematicheskie metody modelirovaniya yazyka. Kiev, 1970; 14–15.

Bogatyrev, P.G. (1937): "Funktsii natsional'nogo kostyuma v Moravskoy Slovakii." In: P.G. Bogatyrev, Voprosy teorii narodnogo iskusstva. Moskva, 1971; 297–366.

Burk, G. (1953): Das Sprichwort in einer oberhessischen Bauernfamilie. Eine volkskundlich-soziologische Untersuchung. Diss., Frankfurt, 1953.

Burke, K. (1941): The Philosophy of Literary Form. Studies in Symbolic Action. New York, 1957.

Burkhart-Chatzeeliades, D. (1981): "Das Sprichwort als Faktum der Kommunikationswissenschaft und der Semiotik." Proverbium Paratum, (2) 1981; 141–172.

Cherkassky, M.A. (1968): "Versuch der Konstruktion eines funktionalen Modells eines speziellen semiotischen Systems (Sprichwörter und Aphorismen). In: Grzybek (ed.) 1984; 363–377.

Crépeau, P. (1975): "La définition du proverbe." Fabula, (16) 1975; 285–304.

Crépeau, P. (1979): "Introduction." In: P. Crépeau /S. Bizimana (eds.), Proverbes du Rwanda. Tervuren, 1979; 3–25.

Dundes, A. (1962): "From emic to etic units in the structural study of folktales." Journal of American Folklore, (75) 1962; 95–105.

Dundes, A. (1964): "Texture, text, and context." Southern Folklore Quarterly, (28) 1964; 251–265.

Dundes, A. (1968): "Introduction to the second edition." In: Propp, V., Morphology of the Folktale. Austin/London, [2]1968; xi–xvii.

Dundes, A. (1975): "On the structure of the proverb." Proverbium, (25) 1975; 961–973.

Eismann, W./P. Grzybek (eds.) 1987: Semiotische Studien zum Rätsel – Simple Forms Reconsidered II. Bochum, 1987.

Eismann, W. (1984): "Bemerkungen zur Bedeutung von G.L. Permjakovs Theorie des Klischees für die Linguistik." In: Grzybek (ed.) 1984; 277–293.

Firth, R. (1926): "Proverbs in native life, with special reference to those of the Maori." Folk-Lore, (37) 1926; 134–153 & 245–270.

Grzybek, P. (ed.) (1984): Semiotische Studien zum Sprichwort – Simple Forms Reconsidered I. Herausgegeben von Peter Grzybek unter Mitarbeit von Wolfgang Eismann. [Special issue of: Kodikas Code – Ars Semeiotica. An International Journal of Semiotics, (3/4) 1984.]

Grzybek, P. (1986): "Ein Modell zur Beschreibung von Sinnstrukturen in Texten (Sprichwort und Fabel)." (forthcoming)

Grzybek, P. (1987): "Zur Entwicklung semiotischer Sprichwortforschung in der UdSSR." In: K.D. Dutz,/P. Schmitter (eds.), Geschichte und Geschichtsschreibung der Semiotik. Fallstudien. Münster, 1987; 383–409.

Hasan–Rokem, G. (1982): Proverbs in Israeli folk narratives: A structural semantic analysis. Helsinki, 1982. (= FFC No. 232)

Herzog, G./C.G. Blooah (1936): ("Introduction") Jabo Proverbs from Liberia. London, 1936.

Hjelmslev, L. (1943): Prolegomena to a Theory of Language. Madison, 1969.

Hörmann, H. (1976): Meinen und Verstehen. Grundzüge einer psychologischen Semantik. Frankfurt, 1978.

Householder, F.W. (1952): [Rev.: Z.S. Harries, Methods in structural linguistics. Chicago, 1951.] International Journal of American Linguistics, (18) 1952; 260–268.

Jakobson, R. (1960): "Linguistics and poetics." In: T.A. Sebeok (ed.), Style in Language. Cambridge, 1960; 350–377.

Jakobson, R. (1962): "Zeichen und System der Sprache." In: R. Jakobson, Selected Writings II.

The Hague, 1971; 629–658.

Jakobson, R./Yu. Tynyanov (1928): "Probleme der Literatur und Sprachforschung." In: R. Jakobson, Poetik. Ausgewählte Aufsätze 1921–1971. Herausgegeben von E. Holenstein und T. Schelbert. Frankfurt, 1979; 63–66.

Jakobson, R./Yu. Tynyanov (1929): "Die Folklore als eine besondere Form des Schaffens." In: R. Jakobson, Poetik. Ausgewählte Aufsätze 1921–1971. Herausgegeben von E. Holenstein und T. Schelbert. Frankfurt, 1979; 141–154.

Jolles, A. (1929): Einfache Formen. Halle/Saale, 1956.

Kanyó, Z. (1980): "Sprachlich-gedankliche Bedingungen der Abbildung der Sprichwortstruktur." In: Studia Poetica 3. Studies in the semantics of narrative – Beiträge zur Semantik der Erzählung. Szeged, 1980; 149–180.

Kanyó, Z. (1981): Sprichwörter – Analyse einer Einfachen Form. Ein Beitrag zur generativen Poetik. Budapest/The Hague, 1981.

Kanyó, Z. (ed.) (1982): Einfache Formen – Simple Forms. Szeged, 1982. [=Studia Poetica 4]

Kharitonov, M.S. (1969): "Mendeleevskaya tablitsa poslovits." Znanie –Sila, (10) 1969; 25.

Kirshenblatt-Gimblett, B. (1973): "Toward a theory of proverb meaning." Proverbium, (22) 1973; 821–827.

Klemperer, V. (1930): [Rez.: A. Jolles, Einfache Formen] Literaturblatt für germanische und romanische Philologie, (51) 1930; 404–416.

Koch, W.A. (1987): Simple Forms. An Encyclopedia of Simple Text-Types in Lore and Literature. Bochum, 1987. (forthcoming)

Köller, W. (1975): Semiotik und Metapher. Stuttgart, 1975.

Krikmann, A.A. (1971): "Zur Problematik der Metasprache als Ausdruck der Bedeutungsstreuung der Sprichwörter." Proverbium, (17) 1971; 624–626.

Krikmann, A.A. (1974a): On Denotative Indefiniteness of Proverbs. Remarks on proverb semantics 1. Tallin. 1974. [Repr.: Proverbium. Yearbook of International Proverb Scholarship. Vol. 1, 1984; 47–91].

Krikmann, A.A. (1974b): Some Additional Aspects of Semantic Indefiniteness of Proverbs. Remarks on proverb semantics 2. Tallin, 1974. [Repr.: Proverbium. Yearbook of International Proverb Scholarship. Vol. 2, 1985; 58–85].

Krikmann, A.A. (1984): "1001 Frage zur logischen Struktur der Sprichwörter" In: Grzybek (ed.) 1984; 387–408.

Kuusi, M. (1972): "Towards an international typesystem of proverbs" Proverbium, (19) 1972; 699–736.

Kuusi, M. (1974): "Tiefenstruktur und Oberflächenstruktur in der Parömiologie" Proverbium, (23) 1974; 920–924.

Lévi-Strauss, C. (1955): "Die Struktur der Mythen." In: C. Lévi-Strauss, Strukturale Anthropologie 1. Frankfurt, 1978; 226–254.

Lotman, Yu.M./A.M. Pyatogorsky (1968): "Text und Funktion." In: Ju.M. Lotman, Aufsätze zur Theorie und Methodologie der Literatur und Kultur. Herausgegeben von Karl Eimermacher. Kronberg/Ts., 1973; 320–337.

Lotman, Yu.M. (1964): Vorlesungen zu einer strukturalen Poetik. München, 1972.

Martinet, A. (1955): Economie des changements phonétiques. Traité de phonologie diachronique. Berne, 1955.

Meletinsky, E.M. (1969): "Zur strukturell-typologischen Erforschung des Volksmärchens." In: V. Propp, Morphologie des Märchens, Frankfurt, 1975; 241–276.

Messenger, J.C. (1959): "The Role of Proverbs in a Nigerian Judicial System." In: A. Dundes (ed.), The Study of Folklore. Englewood Cliffs, 1965; 299–307.

Mieder, W. (1977): "Träger und Gebrauchsfunktion des Sprichworts." In: L. Röhrich/W. Mieder, Sprichwort. Stuttgart, 1977; 78–82.

Milner, G.B. (1969a): "Quadripartite structures." Proverbium, (14) 1969; 379–383.

Milner, G.B. (1969b): "What is a proverb?" New Society, (332) 1969; 199–202.

Mohr, W. (1956): "Einfache Formen." In: W. Kohlschmidt/W. Mohr (eds.), Reallexikon der deutschen Literaturgeschichte. Berlin, [2]1958; 321–328.

Norrick, N.R. (1981): Proverbial Linguistics: Linguistic Perspectives on Proverbs. Trier: L.A.U.T., 1981.

Permyakov, G.L. (1967): "Logiko-semiotichesky plan poslovits i pogovorok (k voprosu o klassifikatsii zhanra." Narody Azii i Afriki,(6) 1967; 52–68.

Permyakov, G.L. (1968): ("Vvedenie") Izbrannye poslovitsy i pogovorki narodov vostoka. Moskva, 1968; 5–47.

Permyakov, G.L. (1970): From Proverb to Folk-Tale. Notes on the general theory of cliché. Moscow, 1979.

Permyakov, G.L. (1979): "Die Grammatik der Sprichwörterweisheit." In: Grzybek (ed.) 1984; 295–344.

Permyakov, G.L. (ed.) (1984): Paremiologicheskie issledovaniya. Sbornik statei. Moskva, 1984.

Pilorz, A. (1964): "Le proverbe et la locution considérés dans leur structure syntaxique." Roczniki Humanistyczne, (12) 1964; 69–80.

Propp, V.Ya. (1928): Morphologie des Märchens. Frankfurt, 1975.

Revzin, I.I. (1978): Struktura yazyka kak modeliruyushchey sistemy. Moskva, 1978.

Röhrich, L. (1973): ("Einleitung") Lexikon der sprichwörtlichen Redensarten. Freiburg, 1973.

Ruef, H. (1983): Scene development as a process at motivation. Trier: L.A.U.T., 1983.

Saussure, F. de (1916): Grundfragen der allgemeinen Sprachwissenschaft. Berlin, 1967.

Savvina, E.N. (1984): "O transformatsiyach klishirovannykh vyrazhenii v rechi." In: Permyakov (ed.), 1984; 200–222.

Schveiger, P. (1981): "Considerations on an important study." Proverbium Paratum, (2) 1981; 124–140.

Seiler, F. (1922): Deutsche Sprichwörterkunde. München, 1967.

Seitel, P. (1969): "Proverbs: A Social Use of Metaphor." Genre, (2) 1969; 143–161.

Seitel, P. (1972): Proverbs and the structure of metaphor among the Haya of Tanzania. Ph.D. Diss.: Univ. of Pennsylvania, 1972.

Shvydkaya, L.I. (1977): "Analiz struktury znacheniya poslovits i aforizmov angliiskogo yazyka." In: Leksiko–grammaticheskaya sochetaemost' v germanskich yazykach. Vyp. 2. Chelyabinsk, 1977; 159–167.

Taylor, A. (1931): The Proverb and an index to the proverb Hatboro/Copenhagen, ^{2}1962.

Taylor, A. (1962): "The riddle as a primary form." In: H.P. Beck (ed.), Folklore in Action: Essays for Discussion in Honor of MacEdward Leach. Philadelphia, 1962; 200–207.

Voigt, V. (1977): "Voprosy obshchei teorii poslovits." Acta Ethnographica Academicae Scientiarum Hungaricae, (26) 1977; 164–174.

Whiting, B.J. (1952): "Proverbs and proverbial sayings." In: The Frank C. Brown Collection of North Carolina Folklore, Vol. 1. Durham, 1952; 331–501.

Zholkovsky, A.K. (1978): "At the intersection of linguistics, paremiology and poetics: On the literary structure of proverbs." Poetics, (7) 1978; 309–332.

Peter Grzybek
Seminar für Slavistik
Ruhr–Universität Bochum
Universitätsstraße 150
4630 Bochum–Querenburg
Federal Republic of Germany