



PROBLEM OF THE VERBALIZERS OF CONCEPT OF “MAN” IN MODERN LINGUISTICS

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Abstract

The concept of “man” is used in different places with different meanings. If we investigate about the verbalizers of the concept of “man”, we can say that this word is widely used in different spheres of Linguistics.

Introduction

When it comes to the semantic field of a word, one may encounter a number of problems, especially in translation. Words have multiple meanings and are often hard to translate. That is why, in this chapter of our qualification paper, we have tried to focus on the semantic field of the word man, by the medium of different phraseological expressions, derivatives or compounds, idioms, slang words and proverbs.

Main part

The semantic field of the word man, just like the semantic field of any other word in the English language, shifts over time. Thus, the original meaning of this word was human being exclusively, while nowadays it is prevailingly used to refer to adult male. Nevertheless, its semantic field also extends in some uses to the generic human.

This article aims at focusing on the semantic field of the word man (with its plural form men), by trying to render its different meanings and connotations. We are all aware of the fact that the word man, just like any other word, has been submitted to a systematic process of linguistic evolution, to the point that the modern meaning is fundamentally different from the original use. Regarding the etymology of the word man, it is first encountered in Old English, having the form *mann*, meaning adult male, although it could also designate a person of unspecified gender. The Old English form is derived from Proto-Germanic *mannz*, meaning human being, person, which is also the etymon of the German word *mann*, meaning man, husband.

The domain of **phraseological expressions** based on the word man (with its plural form men) consists of a limited number of expressions:

- a man about town = a society man;
- a man as honest as the skin between his brows = the most honest man in the world;
- a man cannot spin and reel at the same time = one cannot do two things at the same time;
- a man of sense = a reasonable person;

As far as **derivatives** are concerned, man can be found in the following words:



- manful (adjectival suffix -ful) = male, virile;
- manfully (adjectival suffix -ful, adverbial suffix -ly) = stout-heartedly;
- manhood (noun suffix -hood) = humanity; masculinity, virility; maturity;
- mankind (noun suffix -kind) = humanity;
- manlike (adjectival suffix -like) = masculine, virile;
- manliness (adjectival suffix -ly, noun suffix -ness) = masculinity, virility;
- manly (adjectival suffix -ly) = masculine, virile;
- mannish (adjectival suffix -ish) = masculine;
- mannishly (adjectival suffix -ish, adverbial suffix -ly) = stout-heartedly;
- mannishness (adjectival suffix -ish, noun suffix -ness) = masculinity, virility;
- manwise (adverbial suffix -wise) = humanly.

The **compound words**, having in their structure the word man (or its plural form men), are numerous and are given below:

- man-at-arms = soldier, military man;
- man child = male child;
- man eater / man-eating = cannibal, anthropophagus;
- mangold = stock beet;
- manhandle = to transport with one's arms; to behave bluntly with someone;
- man hater / man-hating = misanthropist;
- manhole = a hole in the floor; gully hole;
- man-hour = a labour hour;
- manhunt = raid, descent;

The linguistic domain of the **idiomatic expressions** based on the word man / men is delineated by means of certain illustrative phrases. Here are some examples:

- a dirty old man (used in informal language) = an older man who thinks too much about sex;
- a ladies' man = a man who likes the company of women and is successful with them;
- a / the grand old man (of something) = an old man who is very experienced and respected in a particular profession, etc.;
- a man / woman of few words = someone who does not talk much;
- man's best friend = a way of describing a dog;

The **slang expressions** related to the word "man" and its derivatives are numerous, either we speak of the British slang or the slang used by the other Anglophone countries: America, Australia, Canada, New Zealand or South Africa. Man (or its plural form men) appears in various slang expressions, among which we can mention the following:

- action man (British English, military term) = a dynamic, active man;
- alderman (British English, humorous) = tail (of an animal);
- alias man (American English) = scrounger; shrewd, stealer;
- arse-man = a man who appreciates mostly a woman's nates;
- auntie-man (British English) = an old gay;



- backdoor man = 1. a married woman's lover; 2. (deprecatory meaning) an active homosexual;
- happy as a man weeding the asparagus (Canadian slang) = as happy as a bird, extremely happy;
- hard man = 1. (British English) murderer, gangster; 2. (American English) potent man;
- hatchet man (American economic term) = 1. a company manager who announces the names of the employees who are going to be given the sack; 2. triggerman, hit man;
- headache man (American English, humorous) = law maker;
- Isle of Man (British English, humorous) = frying pan;
- jug man / needle man (American English) = drug addict;
- junker man (American English) / shitman (British English) = marijuana smoker;
- kilo-man / k-man = drug dealer;
- little men with (their bloody) hammers (American English) = a drinking induced headache;
- lurkman (Australian slang) = sneak-thief;
- main man (American English) = best friend; a woman's lover; chief, boss;
- medallion man (deprecatory meaning) = the hub of the universe;
- men in blue (American English) = bobbies, cops; the press, the police;
- men in grey suits (British English) = wire pullers; the richest ten thousand men in England;

The word man (or its plural form men) can also be encountered in a few **proverbs** given below. For each and every English proverb we have tried to give an explanation, in an attempt to render its significance:

- “A man can die but once.” = This saying is used to encourage someone who is reluctant to undertake a dangerous endeavor.
- “A man is known by the company he keeps.” = People may base their judgement of someone on the reputation of his / her friends.
- “A man's hat in his hand never did him any harm.” = Kind words worth much.
- “A man's home is his castle.” (American English) = Someone's home is a place where they can be private and safe and do as they like.
- “Calamity is man's true touchstone.” = One never knows who his / her real friends are until one is in need.
- “Clothes do not make the man.” / “It is not the coat that makes the man.” = The way in which someone dresses is not relevant for his / her personality or way of thinking. / One must never judge another person from appearances.
- “Don't scald your lips in another man's porridge.” = Do not interfere into other people's affairs.
- “Every man has his faults.” = Everybody can sometimes make mistakes.
- “In the kingdom of blind men the one-eyed is king.” = A smart man, within a group made up of foolish people, is considered a great genius.
- “It is not good praising a ford till a man be over.” = One shouldn't talk big before finishing his / her task.
- “It's every man for himself.” = One must think about his / her own interests first, before the interests of other people.



• “Like master, like man.” = If the master is a good employer, the man (the servant) is a good employee, and vice versa.

• “No man is born wise or learned.” = The more you practise, the more you know.

• “One man makes a chair, and another man sits in it.” = One man works, and another reaps the benefits.

• “One man’s meat is another man’s poison.” = What one person likes very much, another person does not like at all.

• “Time and tide wait for no man.” = No one is so powerful that they can stop the march of time.

• “You can’t keep a good man down.” = Someone who wants something very much will succeed.

This article has tried to render as many constructions or combinations of words as possible based on the word man, which help any learner of English distinguish spoken from written, formal from informal, literal from figurative usage.

People who are learning English find many types of figurative language to be hard to understand because of their vocabulary limitations. The efficiency of vocabulary learning is a prerequisite for the success of language learning. Students or other speakers of English find it hard to remember all the English words or phrases at the same time because some of them can look alike. English words are numerous and only a systematic arrangement of them, based on the semantic field theory, would lead to the development of one’s linguistic competence.

During the vocabulary learning process, one can compare the words that have similar semantic meanings which can be used incorrectly owing to their slight differences. When discussing the semantic field of a word, it is very important to understand the difference between the literal and figurative meanings of that particular word. Thus, the idiomatic constructions, the slangs, the metaphors, the similes, the hyperboles or the sayings based on the word man provide a new perspective on this specific word for anyone who wants to be at home with the English language.

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