

TEACHING THROUGH PROVERBS

ანდაზებით სწავლება

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Abstract. Proverbs embody the collective wisdom of generations, encapsulated within concise, flexible sentences. They serve as cultural artifacts, reflecting the ethos of a nation. However, the interpretation of proverbs can vary across cultures, incorporating elements of logical, verbal, and conceptual thinking. In foreign language instruction, it is essential to teach through proverbs as they offer insights into the mental frameworks, worldviews, and cultural nuances of a country, thereby enhancing language acquisition.

This research focuses on methodologies for teaching through proverbs, delving into the content and historical context of specific proverbs. Linguistic considerations encompass semantic, lexical aspects, artistic ways, as well as peculiarities of proverb translation.

Keywords: Paremiology, Proverb, Teaching, Concept.

Introduction. Proverbs are an integral part of language functioning. In their structure and stylistic design, they are symbolic units of speech that serve both moral and utilitarian norms. These norms may coincide or differ within the same culture or across different cultures.

The study of proverbs is directly related to linguocultural studies, which investigate the culture and interaction of language in both synchronic and diachronic aspects. In this field, culture is considered the highest form of language, a system of cognitive concepts, and the creator of thought structures. The essence of the proverb is well articulated in the linguistic and cultural aspect by Iacob Gogebashvili: "People's accumulated experience, observation, the whole nation's thought, felt wisdom, faith, opinion and troubles, the nation's mindfulness, its morals, its nature and character are reflected and crystallized in this one-sentence statement" (Gogebashvili, 1990).

Thus, an in-depth study of a proverb, along with the language, implies studying the ethnic (physical and mental) characteristics of the people who created it and the established patterns of thought within a given mental space. This approach essentially involves the study of ethnopsychology.

The distinction between language and speech made by linguists, along with the interest in the semantic and pragmatic aspects of language functioning and semiotic studies, has clarified that studying the connections within individual sentences is insufficient to explain human interaction. Consequently, research has expanded beyond the sentence to encompass speech as a connected sequence of speech acts, expressed through various texts that need to be analyzed from different perspectives. These perspectives include pragmatic, semantic, and referential aspects. Therefore, it is possible to discuss and study proverbs from these viewpoints (Zandukeli, 1980).

When teaching through proverbs, the studies in the scientific literature are noteworthy. Professor Vera Zdragu of the Moldavian State Pedagogical University "Ion Kreanga" in her scientific article "Proverb - a didactic tool in teaching a foreign language" notes that a proverb is a general term, during the teaching of which it is possible to focus on such stylistic categories as maxims, aphorisms, sayings, sentence. Although it is possible to differentiate them, the boundary that separates one from the other is not really clear. (Zdraguş, 2015) Also, in his article, she gives some examples of teaching grammar tenses (present, past) with proverbs, he also offers some exercises, such as omitting words in proverbs and filling them in, and also gives some proverbs in one table and their meanings from another table to be connected.

Proverbs can be integrated into all four language skill modules: oral comprehension, written comprehension, oral expression, and written expression. These interactive skills are inherently linked to a cultural component that enhances understanding. (Sagayar, 2022).

Therefore, the integration of proverbs plays a crucial role in the process of teaching a foreign language. Proverbial expressions represent a sophisticated level of language proficiency. Language learners gain a deeper understanding of foreign realities by identifying similarities with their native language. Since some proverbs are often not directly translatable, they enable students to grasp the language authentically and explore the values, beliefs, and social norms of a foreign culture. These concise formulas facilitate easy retention of concepts and enhance both oral and written communication. Once acquired, proverbs are used instinctively in appropriate contexts, contributing to natural fluency in speech. Neglecting these expressions in teaching can hinder comprehension. (Tumanishvili, 2010).

In a study conducted by N. Can (2011) in which situations and for what purposes students use proverbs, the answers were varied: for better communication in the native language; to show that they have a good command of the language; to create humor; for better self-expression and better understanding; to support arguments; to beautify the language; to give an example; for a better description of the event; in oral presentations; to understand speech in the native language;

to write effective compositions; for brevity; to warn someone politely; to summarize; In informal communications; for advice (Can, 2011).

This list confirms the role of proverbs in learning a foreign language. Unfortunately, proverbs, especially Georgian-French ones, are often not included in textbooks. Teachers need to create additional resources and materials to address this gap.

Clearly, language cannot be taught in isolation from culture. In this context, proverbs play a fundamental role, as teaching them significantly impacts the development of students' cultural awareness and intercultural competence.

Considering this, understanding the mental characteristics, worldview, and conceptual concepts of a particular country during language teaching helps students learn the language more effectively.

The purpose of the research is to present the methods and approaches for teaching proverbs, particularly focusing on the content and history of proverbs. From a linguistic perspective, the research examines the semantic, lexical aspects, and artistic techniques involved.

Methods. We used the following methods in our work: descriptive, analytical, comparative, contrastive, critical analysis, synthesis, induction, and deduction.

Results. Proverbs have undergone a long development path. This article discusses their origins, genesis, and methods of teaching them. Artistic techniques, specifics of translation, and lexicological and cultural aspects can be studied through the teaching of proverbs.

Incorporating proverbs into the educational process and conducting linguistic and cultural analyses also involves examining the cognitive aspects of communication, which entails the conceptualization and categorization of knowledge.

Discussion. When teaching proverbs, attention should be focused on two main goals: proverbs as a linguistic category and proverbs as determinants of a nation's culture and mentality.

In general, to optimize vocabulary teaching, we present three main axes:

- lexical morphology: structural rules (production, composition, etc.);
- Lexical semantics: semantic relationship between lexical elements, contexts (polysemy, synonymy, hyperonymy, solid expressions, etc.);
- Culture: cultural representations conveyed by poetry (Galisson, 1999).

The teaching of proverbs includes all three aspects.

This practical research involves reasoning and discussing these issues through the study of French proverbs.

Teaching of lexical units of a foreign language using proverbs.

This practical research involves reasoning and discussing these issues through the study of French proverbs.

First of all, during the teaching of proverbs, it is possible to teach thematic lexical units. For example, there are many proverbs in the French language where the names of animals are used as concepts. For example:

Wolf:

La faim chasse le loup du bois (Hunger drives the wolf out of the woods).

Un loup est un loup, il mourra dans sa peau, si on ne l'écorche vif (A wolf is a wolf, he will die in his skin if we don't skin him alive).

On fait le loup plus grand qu'il n'est (We make the wolf bigger than it is).

Jamais poil de bique n'a étranglé loup (No fur has ever strangled a wolf).

Tel loup, tel chien (Like wolf, like dog).

Fox:

Renard endormi ne prend pas de volaille (Sleeping fox does not take poultry).

Au renard qui dort ne vient aucune nourriture (No food comes to the sleeping fox).

À renard endormi rien ne lui tombe en la gueule (Nothing falls into the mouth of a sleeping fox)

Le renard qui dort la matinée n'a pas la gueule emplumée (The fox that sleeps in the morning does not have a feathered mouth).

A renard endormi ne vient bien ni profit (To a sleeping fox comes neither good nor profit).

Pig:

Vie de cochon courte et bonne (Pig life short and good).

Aux pourceaux les bonnes poires tombent en gueule (Good pears fall into the mouths of swine).

Qui a un seul pourceau, il le fait gras (Whoever has one swine makes it fat).

Il ne faut pas jeter les marguerites devant les pourceaux (We must not throw daisies before swine).

On ne peut le lard et le cochon (We can't have bacon and pork).

On n'engraisse pas les cochons avec l'eau claire (We don't fatten pigs with clean water).

Aux cochons l'ordure ne pue point (To pigs, garbage doesn't stink).

Goat:

Il faut ménager la chèvre et le chou (We must take care of the goat and the cabbage).

À la chandelle la chèvre semble demoiselle (By candlelight the goat seems like a young lady).

Autant va la chèvre aux choux qu'elle y laisse la peau (As much as the goat goes to the cabbages, it leaves the skin there).

Où la chèvre est liée, il faut bien qu'elle broute (Where the goat is tied, it must graze).

Quand la chèvre saute au chou, le chevreau y saute itou (aussi) (When the goat jumps to the cabbage, the kid jumps there (too)).

On ne donne pas les choux à garder à la chèvre (Cabbages are not given to the goat to keep).

Tel hiver vient, que le chevreau meurt avant la chèvre (Such winter comes that the kid dies before the goat).

There are many proverbs about animals such as horses, sheep, cows, and dogs. Additionally, it is possible to study lexical thematic units in French proverbs related to family members, colors, weather, friendship, money, and more.

Thus, when we give thematic proverbs to the student, we also teach the thematic units included in the lexical groups and the proverbs of the language he/she is learning.

Teaching artistic techniques with proverbs:

Proverbs, as short figurative expressions, are rich in artistic techniques. Teaching proverbs can help teachers highlight these artistic techniques.

French proverbs are characterized by parallelism, in Greek "paralelismos" means parallel, putting two things together. By its nature, parallelism is close to artistic comparison and metaphor. (Gachechiladze, 1997).

In a specific case, **parallelism** is the best way to emphasize contradictory moments, to open the main idea of the proverb. Parallelism is very common in French proverbs, e.g.:

- Ce que le gantelet gagne, le gorgerin le mange (What the gauntlet gains, the gorget eats).
- En petit ventre, gros cœur (Small stomach, big heart).

- Main serrée, cœur étroit (Tight hand, narrow heart).
- Tel qui rit vendredi, dimanche pleurera (He who laughs on Friday, Sunday will cry).

In the proverbial formula, certain events or facts are intended for contradictory confrontations, based on contrast, i.e. artistic, stylistic method - **antithesis**. Antithesis is a stylistic technique, which consists in opposing opposite concepts. (Chabashvili, 1989).

For example:

- Noire geline pond blanc œuf (Black geline lays egg white).
- Bonjour lunettes, adieu fillettes (Hello glasses, goodbye girls).
- Longue langue, courte main (Long tongue, short hand).
- Froides mains, chaudes amours (Cold hands, warm loves).

To convey the main motif in a proverb, one of the types of tropical speech is very often used - **personalization**. **Personification**: personification (Lat. persona - face, person; facere - doing) is a way of artistic representation, which is characterized by attributing human qualities to objects and events, humanizing inanimate and spiritual objects. An inanimate object is represented as a person who feels, thinks, acts. It differs from metaphor in that in metaphor all qualities can be transferred from one object to another, while in personification only human qualities are transferred, e.g.:

- Ce n'est pas à la poule à chanter devant le coq (It's not up to the hen to crow in front of the rooster).
- L'amour apprend aux ânes à danser (Love teaches donkeys to dance). (Fouquet, 2000).

Also, when teaching a proverb, it is possible to focus on such an artistic technique as **hyperbole**, which is a trope that exaggerates an object or event. (Gachechiladze, 1997). e.g.:

- L'amour est la seule maladie dont on n'aime pas guérir (Love is the only disease we don't want to cure).
- Femme tombe sept fois et toujours se relève (A woman falls seven times and always gets up again).

A proverb is characterized by an **allegory** - a figurative form that does not have a direct meaning and serves to express another subject or event (Gachechiladze, 1997). It is possible that both the word and the thought are allegorical. For the proverb genre, the allegoricality of the thought is more significant and specific. e.g.:

- Mieux vaut être tête de souris que queue de lion (It is better to be the head of a mouse than the tail of a lion).
- Il n'y a pas grenouille qui ne trouve pas son crapaud (There is no frog who cannot find his toad).
- Un bon renard ne mange jamais les poules de son voisin (A good fox never eats his neighbor's chickens).
- Il faut coudre la peau du renard avec celle du lion (You have to sew the skin of the fox with that of the lion).

By teaching with proverbs, it is also possible to focus on one of the artistic forms - rhythm, which is the orderly **repetition** of symmetrical speech units. In other cases, the rhythm of French proverbs is based on repeating the same word several times. e.g.:

- De bon vin, bon vinaigre (Good wine, good vinegar).

Assonance also contributes to the musicality of proverbs, which means the repetition of vowel sounds in the proverbial formula:

- Femme de marin, femme de chagrin [am-am, a-a] (Sailor's wife, woman of sorrow).
- La fortune change comme la lune, [la-la, yn-yn-yn] (Fortune changes like the moon).

Study of the genesis of the proverb

Linguist-folklorist Jagodnishvili notes that proverbs are mainly created by people and have three sources of origin:

1. **Life practice:** A person inadvertently creates a proverb, pronounces it in a certain way, and then someone hears it, repeats it, and the process continues.
2. **Literature:** A saying by a talented writer, which can be called a maxim or an aphorism, eventually turns into a proverb.
3. **Foreign language influence:** This refers to cultural influence. People are naturally neighbors, and cultural influence should not be considered a threat. This is how the elegant proverbs of any nation come down and spread among us. (Nozadze, 2010).

During the teaching with proverbs, it is also possible to highlight such proverbs in the French language, which have been established from the Gospels, parables, literature, for example:

- Mauvais herbe croit Soudan (Weed believes Sudan) - a **fable**.
- Le temps est un grand maître (Corneille, Sertorius) (Time is a great master) - a **play**.
- Sans la liberté de blâmer, • Il n'est d'éloge flatteur (Beaumarchais- Le mariage de Figaro) (Without the weakness of blaming, • There is no flattering praise) – **literature**.
- C'est folie de semer les roses aux porceaux (It is madness to sow roses to swine) – **Gospel**.
- Pour un point Martin perdit son âne (For one point Martin lost his donkey) - a **story**.
- Rouge le soir, blanc le matin • C'est la journée du pèlerine (Red in the evening, white in the morning • It's the pilgrim's day) - Historical transmission) (Maloux, 1998).

During the teaching of the proverb, it is also possible to teach the history of the proverb, for example the French proverb: "Il ne faut pas mélanger les torchons et les serviettes" (Do not mix dishcloths and towels). When teaching this proverb, the student can read the story of the origin of this proverb: In the 16th century, the bourgeoisie used table napkins, and servants used kitchen towels. Therefore, the napkin represents the rich social class, and the tea cloth represents the servants. Initially, this expression had a strong social connotation. Today they say that we should not mix different things. In this connection, we can also read to students: Pierre Bergé, a former companion of Yves Saint Laurent, refused to have his portrait displayed with other portraits of fashion designers in the Andy Warhol exhibition at the Grand Palais in Paris. He said: Il ne faut pas mélanger les torchons et les serviettes. (Lalle, 2008).

In this way, we will teach the student new words and provide translations. As a result, the student will learn new vocabulary, improve reading and translation skills, and gain an understanding of the cultural peculiarities and mentality of France.

Translation of the proverb

During the translation, it is also possible to ask the student to find and compare, for example, exact analogies in the Georgian language.

French Proverbs	Georgian Proverbs
Un chien est fort sur son palier	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ძალს თავის კარზე დიდი გული აქვს (The dog has a big heart on his door.) • ყველა ძალლი თავის კარზე მამაციაო. (All dogs are brave at their door.) • ძალს თავის ფარაზე დიდი გული აქვსო. (The dog has a bigger heart than its flock.). (Kordzaia, 2000)
Goutte à goutte la mer s'égoutte.	წვეთი წვეთს დაეცა და ზღვად გადაიქცაო. (Drop fell and turned into sea.)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Il ne faut pas jeter de l'huile sur le feu. • On n'éteint pas un feu avec de l'huile. (Visetti, 2006). 	ცეცხლზე ნავთს ნუ დაასხამო. (Do not pour fuel on the fire). (Chkanava, 2001)
Les envieux mourront, mais jamais l'envie	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • შურიანები კვდებიან, შური კი ისევ რჩებაო. (Envious people die, but envy remains). • შურიანები იხოცებიან, შური კი ისევ რჩებაო. (Envious people die, but envy remains.). (Kurdovanidze 2011)
Tel pere, tel fils.	რაცხა მამა, იგი – შვილიო. (What the father is, so is the son.).
Bon temps, bonne vie, père et mère oublie.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • დედ-მამა შვილისათვის, შვილი მარტო თავისათვისო. (Parents for their children, children only for themselves). • მშობლები შვილებისთვის, შვილები კი თავისთვისო. (Parents for children, and children for themselves.)

As a result, the student will develop the ability to use the comparative method, learn new words, the teacher can focus on the fact that the same concept in similar proverbs is perceived uniformly in different cultures and languages.

Conclusions: Proverbs primarily serve didactic and educational purposes, making their teaching crucial in the educational process. The results of this research can be summarized as follows:

- Teaching lexical-thematic units of the foreign language through proverbs.
- Teaching artistic-stylistic techniques through proverbs.
- Mastering the specifics of translation through proverbs.
- Gaining access to the culture of a foreign language through proverbs.

Although no one has yet counted how many proverbs exist in each language or identified which peoples created these philosophically rich formulas, it is universally acknowledged that thousands of proverbs exist worldwide. This vast collection of proverbs represents a common world heritage, making their teaching essential for opening new horizons for students in the educational process.

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