



Proverbs and Folk Sayings in Teaching the Languages

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ABSTRACT The present paper is regarding the use of native language proverbs and sayings in teaching a foreign language. Based on the authors' experience, proverbs and sayings can be successfully applied to develop students' communication and translation skills in foreign language lessons. Proverbs and folk sayings have numerous pluses in teaching languages. Firstly, they are simple to remember; secondly, they develop thinking and colligation ability of the students. It is capable of understanding the history of the people whose language is learned by students, the national character and mentality, and the history of the country through proverbs and folk sayings, which enhance the process of learning the language and make lessons more attractive and vivid. The authors investigated the effectiveness of employing proverbs and sayings in their practical work. In this paper, there are also some exercises with proverbs and sayings, which can be successfully applied in teaching and learning languages.

INTRODUCTION

There are various sorts of proverbs and folk sayings that can be successfully employed in teaching languages. First of all, they all created by people in certain places and reveal the development of their culture, customs, and traditions. All folklore arts can be utilized to understand as it can be said the soul of this or that nation. They were used successfully by parents and ancestors from generation to generation to develop and improve the speaking skills in the native language, and they became one of the best teaching and learning sources through mastering by people. Furthermore, they can be adopted for different ages and educational purposes (Anikin 2004; Yusupova 2015; Husnutdinov et al. 2017; Grishenkova and Korol 2019).

In Russia, people started to collect proverbs and sayings from ancient times, but the first manuscript of the collection was presented at the end of the 17th century by an unknown author who could collect about 2500 proverbs and sayings in his book titled "Folk Proverbs and Sayings in Alphabet Order." Subsequently, the Russian scientists commenced writing about the educational and historical value of proverbs and sayings. Then, a collection of proverbs and sayings was published titled "Dictionary of Russian Academy" (1789-1794). Snegiryev (1848) Professor of Moscow University, published the book "The Collection of Russian Proverbs and

Folktales" in 1848, where he investigated more than 10000 proverbs and folk sayings (Nabiullina et al. 2014; Mailybaeva et al. 2014; Romanova et al. 2019).

In the middle of the 19th century, Dal' gathered and published a big collection of Russian proverbs, which included more than 30000 proverbs and sayings and other genres of Russian folklore. The middle of the 19th century was also the starting period for the writers and pedagogues to begin to address the educational value of proverbs and sayings. In which period, a well-known Russian pedagogue named Ushinskiy (2015) studied the teaching value of Russian proverbs and sayings, and Burylova (2017) wrote about adding them in the textbooks of the Russian language. Nowadays, many Russian and foreign language teachers try to apply proverbs and sayings in the teaching process. For instance, in some English language textbooks by Syzdykov - the teacher can find some exercises with proverbs in practicing language skills (Syzdykov 2014; Margulis and Kholodnaya 2015; Burylova 2017; Orlova et al. 2018).

Objectives

The present paper is regarding the use of native language proverbs and sayings in teaching a foreign language. The authors investigated the effectiveness of employing proverbs and sayings in their practical work.

METHODOLOGY

The purpose of applying proverbs and sayings in teaching a foreign language is that they assist in:

- Optimizing the teaching and learning process;
- Increasing the vocabulary of the students;
- Improving language skills;
- Providing new information;
- Improving the content of the teaching process.

The research was conducted based on the musical secondary specialized colleges of the Republic of Tatarstan and was carried out in three stages. At the first stage, the research results of the scientists were analyzed, and the methodological apparatus of the study was formulated. The theoretical basis of the study was the works of foreign and Russian scientists in the field of pedagogy and psychology.

At the second stage, the process of application in foreign language teaching at the institute of pedagogics and psychology of Kazan Federal University was monitored, and also the interviews with future teachers at elementary schools and questioning of students of the second and third-year courses were carried out with the purpose of defining an exact program for studying a foreign language.

In the third stage, the intensification of the learning process of a foreign language was identified. The authors used the following terms throughout the study: theoretical analysis of scientific and educational literature, the study of advanced educational experience, pedagogical observations of the process of teaching languages (Fakhrutdinova and Kondrateva 2016; Fakhrutdinova et al. 2017).

The leading research method is the investigation of theoretical and methodological literature on this theme. The authors highlight the groups of the methods which assist in applying proverbs and sayings in learning a foreign language as follows: 1) Structural and logical methods, which are the methods when students begin to improve their skills by performing more elementary exercises. 2) Training methods, in which the students are trained to do specific exercises with a unique vocabulary and grammatical rules. 3) Research methods, in which the students are instructed to find the necessary information to learn analytical thinking. Since

thinking is the most active and complex informative process mediated by the speech, its development in learners requires to give particular attention.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Despite proverbs and sayings have been learned well enough, but their educational value for teaching languages is not investigated and applied to the end. First of all, proverbs and folk sayings assist in providing some moral values throughout the language learning process. They summarize the collective experience of the community and are used to raise the young generation. For instance, they moralize “Hell is paved with good intentions”; give advice “Don’t judge a tree by its bark”; give warning “You sing before breakfast; you will cry before night”; admonish “Liars should have good memories,” etc. On the one hand, it is possible to use traditional methods, the methods of the problem and creative work, intensification of the learning process, and research methods by applying proverbs and sayings in teaching languages. On the other hand, the application of proverbs and sayings assist in working with a group of students and also organizing the individual work.

Proverbs and sayings possess many didactical and educational values. They generalize peoples’ socio-historical background, which history and roots can be learned and understood by the young generation through proverbs and sayings. There are several proverbs and sayings, which indicate the historical events in each language. For instance, it can be found in the Russian language that “Dmitry and Boris fought to get a city” (This folk saying describes the feudal disunity in Ancient Russ). There are also several proverbs and folk sayings, which describe some events and happen in small areas of local people as so-called “small motherland history” (Husnutdinov et al. 2017).

People can learn their native birthplace, where is very close to their hearts, by employing these proverbs and sayings. For example, the following folk saying can be found in the Tatar language: “I don’t want to sing songs, but Sabantuy makes me sing.” It is regarding a famous local pagan festival which has been celebrated all over the place by many peoples in

the Russian Federation. (Tatarstan is one of the Republics of the Russian Federation with a couple of official languages: Russian and Tatar). There are also numerous historical sayings in Great Britain which assist in comprehending the history of British people. For instance, "They fight against each other like Kilkenny cats", which means that they are bitter enemies (Anikin 2004). There were two cities in England in the middle ages. People of those cities struggled against each other and drained themselves dry.

The educational value of proverbs and sayings is also in their philosophy of daily life, which teaches the people to coexistence. It is said in Russian: "Knit up a hole until it becomes large." English people say: "He who sleeps catches no fish." It is a lesson to do everything on time. Tatars say: "A person who looks down during walking cannot fall into a clay pan." The moral is "Be careful," or "Time and tide wait for no man" (Mailybaeva et al. 2014)

Proverbs and sayings are applied to raise moral qualities, to be honest, patient, brave, and also provident. They also train to avoid and overcome the negative sides of a person, for example, cruelty, mulishness, envy, cowardice, false pride, etc. It is said in English: "Pride goes before a fall." Russian people say: "Pride lies on the dunghill." Moreover, Tatar people remark the hard feelings: "Anger is in front of the wisdom" (Romanova et al. 2019).

Proverbs and sayings assist in leading the emotional condition of a person as enjoyment, happiness, admiration, passion, fear, etc. Many proverbs and sayings about happiness also exist in all languages, for example, "A wonder lasts but nine days," "Fortune is easily found, but it is hard to be kept."

Numerous proverbs and folk sayings possess poetical values, which are rhythmic and easy to remember and improve speaking skills. They possess an artistic device as a comparison, metaphors, metonymy, and tautology. It is possible to develop artistic flair and aesthetic sense using folk sayings. For example:

- "Silence is golden."
- "The drowning man will catch at a straw";
- "Never trouble troubles till troubles trouble you"

Proverbs and folk sayings can be applied to achieve various educational purposes. For in-

stance, they assist in developing speaking, listening, and writing skills.

They can be used to enhance the pronunciation of some difficult sounds. There are several proverbs and sayings which can improve the pronunciation of some difficult English sounds. Some examples for proverbs and sayings for the pronunciation of the consonant (r) are as follows: (Burylova 2017)

1. Truth is stranger than fiction.
2. A tree is known by its fruit.

Some examples for proverbs and sayings, which can be utilized for practicing the connection at word boundaries (r, w, j) are as follows:

1. There is no smoke without a fire.
2. There is no rose without a thorn.

They can be employed to improve the grammatical skills. For example, some exercises to work with modal verbs are as follows:

- The cobbler must stick to his last;
- God gives, but man must open his hand;
- A bird may be known by its song;
- A cracked bell can never sound well etc.

It is possible to employ proverbs and sayings to improve grammatical skills. Grammar is very challenging and boring to learn or to understand for some students. Exercises with proverbs to comprehend some grammatical rules assist in converting this boring learning process into a more enjoyable, understandable, and vivid process. For example, there are many English proverbs and sayings for teaching the Present Simple in exercises, which are as the following:

- A black hen lays a white egg;
 - A bad beginning makes a bad ending etc.;
- Either for teaching the Future Simple:
- A small leak will sink a great ship;
 - Hawks will not pick hawks eyes

As it was mentioned earlier, many proverbs for learning a foreign language are excellent for improving pronunciation and speaking skills. They are rhythmic and have interesting meaning, and also several repeated words with the same sounds. Hence, proverbs can be successfully applied to improving the speaking skills of a foreign language.

Every single proverb and saying is one step up in the brain building, and there are several exercises for them. For example (Burylova 2017): find Russian equivalents from the list below:

- A baby in the house is a well-spring of pleasure;

- A child that's born must be kept;
 - As the old cock crows, so do the young, etc.
- Complete the proverbs and sayings:
- As the old cock crows.....;
 - A baby in the house is a well-spring of etc.

What proverbs and saying are not suitable for the theme "Children and parents"?

- A baby in the house is a well-spring of pleasure;
- A child that's born must be kept;
- East or west home is the best etc.

Complete the beginning of the following proverbs and sayings:

- is bent, so will it grow.
- must be bent while young.
- are poor man's riches etc.

Correct the mistakes:

- A tree must be man's riches.
- Children are poor, bent while young.
- Little children, little sorrow, own gosling a swan, etc.

Write the proverbs and sayings in the correct order:

- Is, pleasure in the house, a baby, of, a well-spring.
- That's, a child, must, born, kept, be.
- The, old, as, so, cock does, the young, etc.

(Orlova et al. 2018).

Teachers can successfully use these educational values of proverbs and sayings to develop speaking skills of their students and also expanding their knowledge of history and philosophy of life by considering them. Proverbs are also excellent for the upbringing. Several results can be obtained if the tasks are given to the students to discover the explanation for some proverbs and sayings which are related to the local history or historical events of the country. Firstly, students improve their speaking skills, and secondly, they attempt to learn and understand their history, culture, customs, and traditions.

Foreign language teachers can also provide some exercises, for example, to discover some proverbs which are strictly connected to their native place. Such types of proverbs are quite interesting for learners because they care about their local place and their knowledge from childhood. However, it is more important to explain such kinds of proverbs for visitors from other

countries to learn a foreign language. Explanation of local proverbs and sayings is a challenging task. It is not simple to find answers on the Internet or in dictionaries. Students should perform some investigations and read many papers. The most difficult but the most interesting at the same time are exercises where students can work with their native proverbs and sayings. For example, an example of such exercises is as follows: Translate these proverbs and sayings from the native language into English or explain Russian (Tatar) proverbs and sayings in English.

CONCLUSION

An outstanding Russian linguist Anikin believed that the first proverbs and sayings were created by people to bring up unwritten moral qualities, which provided a guarantee to a peaceful coexistence of individuals. After that, generations improved and developed them from century to century. They were applied with an educational purpose for maintaining the customs and traditions of nations and describing significant historical events.

The processes which were resulting in the society brought to form new modification of the sense and many meanings and synonyms, and they were improved by folk pedagogics. Accordingly, proverbs and sayings have particular educational values. They were employed to raise a child from childhood and have moral aspects, rules, and laws of behavior in society. The nation's mentality, psychology, and soul are reflected by proverbs and sayings. Students immerse themselves in an atmosphere of history, knowledge, and aesthetics by researching, analyzing, or learning them. Students develop their vocabulary and translational skills by attempting to translate them from the native language into a foreign one.

Learners should apply dictionaries, literature, textbooks, and encyclopedias from different varieties of sources for acquiring knowledge, which is one of the methods of self-directed learning. It is a reason from an educational viewpoint that proverbs and sayings are considerably valuable educational sources that can be successfully employed in teaching the languages. Scientists term proverbs and sayings the "soul of folk." If it is tried to understand the people whose lan-

guage is attempted to learn, their proverbs and sayings should be studied and learned. Perceiving further proverbs employed using folk language is of the concern of future investigations.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The paper is of particular interest for foreign language teachers and linguists in the further development of theoretical and practical issues on language teaching. It is also appropriate for university students in the English course.

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