

THE ELECTRONIC DICTIONARY OF CURRENT EAST SLAVONIC PROVERBS AS A TOOL FOR PROJECT BASED LEARNING

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Abstract

E-learning is expanding worldwide. The advantage of this form of education is that it is based on a variety of accessible databases and courses.

This paper presents new approaches for the use of ICT (information and communication technologies) in education at universities. It is done through a main conceptual framework with the first stage being the realization of the scientific project "The electronic dictionary of current East Slavonic proverbs". This project is related to the development of the database for the Information Retrieval System (IRS) pertaining to this electronic dictionary and which contains Belorussian and Ukrainian current proverbial parallels to the Russian actively used proverbs.

The objective of the paper is to introduce a dictionary database, which consists of the frequently used Russian proverbs together with its corresponding Belorussian and Ukrainian proverbs. The paremiological lacunae of these two East Slavonic languages in relation to the Russian language are also recorded. Thanks to this database, students can improve their knowledge of these three East Slavonic languages, especially in the area of the cultural and historical heritage (which is based on folklore and paremiology).

The methodological grounds of the research are: the system-structural paremiographic approach, the method of the comparative cultural linguistics studies and the project-based learning approach.

The entry of the Electronic dictionary of current East Slavonic proverbs has three parts: Russian, Belorussian and Ukrainian. The Russian section contains the most frequent proverbs with the description of their basic meanings (500 proverbs), which mainly belong to the paremiological minimum of G. L. Permyakov. The Belorussian and Ukrainian parts cover the most common proverbial parallels to the Russian proverbs, if they exist.

The database can be used by translators and interpreters. In addition, the format of the database enables its use in foreign language teaching, with a focus on deepening the students' cognitive skills and the ability to build their knowledge.

Keywords: current proverbs, electronic dictionary, Russian, Belorussian, Ukrainian, project-based learning.

1 INTRODUCTION

This paper presents new approaches for the use of ICT (information and communication technologies) in education at universities. It is done through a main conceptual framework with the first stage being the realization of the scientific project "The electronic dictionary of current East Slavonic proverbs". This project is related to the development of the database for the Information Retrieval System (IRS) pertaining to this Electronic dictionary and which contains Belorussian and Ukrainian current proverbial parallels to the Russian actively used proverbs.

The proverb is an object of paremiology – a philological science. The origin of paremiology dates back to the year 1500, and it intensified its development in the last quarter of the twentieth century.

The objective of the paper is to introduce a dictionary database which consists of the frequently used Russian proverbs together with their corresponding Belorussian and Ukrainian proverbs. The paremiological lacunae of these two East Slavonic languages in relation to the Russian language are also recorded. Thanks to this database, students can improve their knowledge of these three East Slavonic languages, especially in the area of the cultural and historical heritage (which is based on folklore and paremiology).

2 METHODOLOGY

The methodological grounds of the research are: the system-structural paremiographic approach, the method of the comparative cultural linguistics studies and the project-based learning approach.

3 RESULTS

The Electronic dictionary of current East Slavonic proverbs has three parts: the Russian-Belorussian-Ukrainian electronic proverbial dictionary itself; Thematic index of the Russian active proverbs, introduced in the 1st part; the Alphabetical index of all words from the Russian proverbs in the dictionary.

The format of the database allows the dictionary to be useful in foreign language teaching. This is defined on the project-based learning approach, with a focus on deepening the students' cognitive skills and the ability to construct their knowledge.

3.1 The structure of the entry in the Electronic dictionary of current East Slavonic proverbs

The relevance of the project is connected with the task to identify and to represent a comprehensive comparative linguistic and cultural description of active Belorussian and Ukrainian proverbial correspondences of current 'living' Russian proverbs (i.e. the paremiological minimum of the Russian language). The study of the Russian proverbial representation of the world in comparison with the proverbial representations of the world of the Belorussian and Ukrainian languages will allow to achieve one of the main tasks of cultural linguistics and imagology: the analysis of the specifics of mentality and stereotypes via the proverbial visions of the world in the Russian, Belorussian and Ukrainian languages. This constitutes the scientific novelty of this research.

Such an experience does not yet exist either within the framework of comparative Slavonic paremiology or within the framework of comparative cultural linguistics.

In the first (main) part of our project - in the electronic proverbial dictionary itself - is the entry with the following structure will be presented in the alphabetical order by the first word-component of the Russian proverb: a Russian proverb, its definition, its actively used proverbial synonyms (if they exist), its context examples of usage, then its Belorussian proverbial parallel with possible common synonyms and a context example of usage and its Ukrainian proverbial parallel with potential synonyms and a context illustration (if such proverbial parallels are found). If there are no proverbial parallels in modern Belorussian and/or Ukrainian, we mark such cases as proverbial lacunae.

Let us demonstrate below a draft of one entry on the Russian proverb *Дорога ложка к обеду* /lit. "The spoon is good for the meal"/ (cf. the English proverb *After dinner, mustard*) in our Electronic dictionary of current East Slavonic proverbs:

Дорога ложка к обеду /lit. "The spoon is good for the meal"/. Definition: 'Подарок представляет ценность, только если он сделан вовремя' [A gift is valuable only if it is made on time]. Сравни синоним [Cf. the Russian common proverbial synonym]: *Дорого яичко к Христову дню* /lit. "The egg is good for Easter"/. An example of usage in Russian: «Многодетный папа Андрей Скоц знает: хороша ложка к обеду, а детская горка – к лету. Поэтому проект по установке 15 площадок в 12 районах Белгородской области решено ускорить, чтобы дети успели накататься вволю, пока каникулы в разгаре». (<https://gubkin.city/news/society/8673/>).

белорус. [Belorussian] *Дарагая лыжка к абеду* /lit. "The spoon is good for the meal"/. An example of usage in Belorussian: «Ты адным з першых фарсіраваў Віслу, — загаварыў Ваінкоў, — і павінен быў атрымаць самую высокую ўзнагароду. Ды нашы штабісты не паспелі своечасова аформіць дакументы, не да таго было: прамое пападанне ў бліндаж. А потым... Упушчанага не вернеш. Як кажуць, дарагая лыжка да абеду, атут ужо і "вячэра" прыйшла. Словам, зацішша. А няма баёў — няма і ордэнаў. Але ёсць яшчэ больш высокая ўзнагарода — ордэн "Жыцця". Ты яго цалкам заслужыў...» <http://kimpress.by/index.phtml?page=2&id=1099&mode=print>

укр. [Ukrainian] *Дорога ложка до обіду* /lit. "The spoon is good for the meal"/. Сравни украинские синонимы [Cf. the Ukrainian common proverbial synonyms]: *Дорога поміч у свій час* /lit. "Help is good on time"/; *Дороге яєчко до Великодня* /lit. "The egg is good for Easter"/. An example of usage in Ukrainian: «Футбол: дорога ложка до обіду...(заголовок). Фінальний свисток застав гостей у наступі, але якомусь формальному, не позначеному особливою гостротою. В останній грі сезону українська збірна виявила і "пробивну спроможність", і волю до перемоги, що одразу ж породжує

запитання: “А чому цього не було раніше, протягом відбірного циклу?”. Ложка ж, як відомо, дорога до обіду... (Ігор Дуда «Футбол: дорога ложка до обіду»)» <https://zz.te.ua/futbol-doro-ha-lozhka-do-obidu/>.

3.1.1 *Current Russian proverbs as the dictionary entry headings*

Comparative cultural linguistics, as a young branch of linguoculturology, is actively developing, but does not yet achieve the results of the analysis of the Russian proverbial representation of the world across the other East Slavonic languages. This project is designed to fill partly this gap, which is equally relevant for comparative cultural linguistics and for contrastive Slavonic paremiology.

The Russian current proverbs in the Electronic dictionary are the most frequent proverbs, which mainly belong to the Russian paremiological minimum – a list of common Russian proverbs, revealed in the 70-s of the XX c. by G. L. Permyakov by means of sociolinguistic paremiological experiment [1: 154-169]. The Permyakov's list has been updated to some extent in the “*Russian-Slavonic Dictionary of proverbs*” published in 2000 by M. Yu. Kotova [2]. We use here this dictionary and some of our further contributions as the basis for our future Electronic dictionary of current East Slavonic proverbs [3], [4].

3.1.2 *The sources of the Belorussian proverbial parallels for current Russian proverbs*

The Belorussian part covers the most common Belorussian proverbial parallels to the Russian proverbs, if they exist.

In the “*Russian-Slavonic Dictionary of proverbs*” there were used 652 Belorussian proverbs as proverbial parallels for the 500 Russian proverbs [5: 83]. Nineteen years later we released “*Handbooks of a Paremiographer. Issue 5: Belorussian paremiological parallels of the Russian paremiological minimum*” [3] - a collection of these Belorussian proverbial parallels, which we verified by means of the sociolinguistic paremiological experiment (with the help of 100 Belorussian respondents – native speakers from Belarus) and afterwards by searching and finding the contexts in Belorussian fiction and Internet. These two approaches allowed us to determine the frequency of Belorussian proverbial parallels and to fix their proverbial invariants.

3.1.3 *The sources of the Ukrainian proverbial parallels for current Russian proverbs*

The Ukrainian part of our Electronic dictionary consists of the most common Ukrainian proverbial parallels to the Russian proverbs.

The number of the Ukrainian proverbial parallels in the “*Russian-Slavonic Dictionary of proverbs*” was 826 [5: 83]. This collection of the Ukrainian proverbs is the main source in our paremiographic work.

In order to find out the current Ukrainian proverbs we are conducting an Internet search for the examples of their context usage in modern Ukrainian language. The lack of such context examples is a signal for a detailed analysis if this or that Ukrainian proverbial parallel can be considered as an actively used Ukrainian proverb.

3.1.4 *The lacunae in the Belorussian and in the Ukrainian parts of the database*

If there are no proverbial parallels in modern Belorussian and/or Ukrainian, we mark such cases in the dictionary entries as proverbial lacunae.

Our results of studying the Russian proverbial representation of the world in comparison with the Belorussian and Ukrainian proverbial representations of the world highlight the scientific novelty of the research. One of the tasks of cultural linguistics and imagology will be realized for the first time: the representation of specific Russian linguoculturemes, that is, the peculiarities of mentality and stereotypes of the proverbial representation of the world of the Russian language. The paremiological lacunae in the Belorussian and Ukrainian languages as a reflection of the Russian proverbial vision of the world obviously emphasize these special features of the Russian proverbial lore.

The relevance of the solution of this problem is determined by the lack of scientific development of this issue, the high level of practical significance of the expected results for comparative cultural linguistics and for contrastive Slavonic paremiology, as well as by the scientific novelty thanks to the comparison of the Russian proverbial representation of the world with the proverbial representations of the world of the other East Slavonic languages.

3.2 The didactic functions of the Electronic dictionary of current East Slavonic proverbs

3.2.1 *The role of the Electronic dictionary in the project-based learning approach*

Many proponents of the project-based learning approach follow the principle "learning by doing", initially promoted in 1897 by John Dewey [6].

The implementation of the strategies of the project-based learning in foreign language teaching improves understanding of concepts, creativity, writing and conversation skills, etc.

On the one hand, the process of creation of the Electronic dictionary of current East Slavonic proverbs can play a role of a target academic research object by involving students in the construction of the body of the Electronic dictionary itself, e.g. by determining the proverbial invariants by examining the results of the sociolinguistic paremiological experiment (expertizing the questionnaires, filled by respondents); in searching the examples of context usage of proverbs on the Internet and media, etc.

On the other hand, the proverbial content of the electronic dictionary is a source for such "real-life" projects as the preparation of some special activities, e.g. writing and editing some student magazines/newspapers with the proverbs as headings; producing training videos/films, in which the meanings and use of the proverbs are described; making the general East Slavonic proverbial representation of the world, which is typical for nowadays, etc.

3.2.2 *Other didactic functions*

The constantly rapid development of the paremiology and paremiography as special branches of the science of philology, face the contemporary demands of the education technologies in teaching/learning languages and cultures via the proverbial lore. Researchers, translators and students in many countries apply to such valuable digital multilingual dictionaries or databases as Dictionary of proverbs by G. Paczolay [7], Dictionary of European Proverbs by E. Strauss [8], SprichWort-Plattform [9] or The Matti Kuusi international type system [10] and others. None of these dictionaries reflect the currently used Belorussian and Ukrainian proverbs, and our future Electronic dictionary of current active East Slavonic proverbs will fill this gap.

4 CONCLUSIONS

The results of the research fit within the framework of the project about Russian, Belorussian and Ukrainian proverbs in the perspective of contrastive Slavonic paremiography and comparative cultural linguistics. It will be in demand in teaching Russian, Belorussian and Ukrainian - both for native speakers and foreigners. It will be used in translation from Russian into Belorussian and Ukrainian. Identification of specifics and stereotypes of the Russian proverbial representation of the world in the linguistic and cultural comparison with Belorussian and Ukrainian, will have a high scientific, as well as pragmatic and didactic significance for Slavonic philology and for other human sciences - psychology, sociology, philosophy, cultural studies.

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