

**LATIP 2021****International Conference on Language and Technology in the Interdisciplinary Paradigm****DEVELOPMENT OF E-COURSE IN FOREIGN LANGUAGES:  
PAROEMIA AS A LINGUOCULTURAL COMPONENT**

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**Abstract**

This article considers the concept of paroemia, the criteria for the demarcation of proverbs and sayings as the main types of paremiological units as well as the possibility of their integration into the system of tasks in German as a second foreign language based on the first foreign language (English). Universal and differential peculiarities of proverbs and sayings are identified in research. Proverb is a short, stable used in speech, rhythmically organized sentence with didactic function. This kind of paremiological unit is a complete sentence (complex or simple) which includes information about people's life experience and national-cultural peculiarities of the linguistic world picture. Saying is a single-term in its syntactic structure or consists of one simple sentence. The research object is the process of teaching German and formation of linguocultural competence among students specializing in foreign languages. The research subject is teaching German paroemias to students of linguistic specialities using a system of interactive tasks, including online assignments in the E-learning course. The relevance of the research is the development and testing the system of interactive tasks, including online assignments in German (the second foreign language) based on the first foreign language (English), integrated into E-learning course. In conclusion, findings are carried out in linguistics and methodology of teaching foreign languages.

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*Keywords:* E-learning course, German, interactive online assignments, proverb, paremiological unit

## 1. Introduction

Nowadays the knowledge of the German language as a second foreign language (FL) is required for students specializing in linguistics. This is due to the development of modern higher education in the period of globalization, the increasing number of exchange students from Germany in educational institutions, the possibility of getting a job in a specialty in foreign organizations and the need for intercultural communication. Considerable attention is paid to the study of the grammatical features in the language, the lexical component of the language fund, etc. Study of the grammar in the German language and vocabulary contributes to the formation of incomplete language competence among students. It is not enough for students of a higher educational institution to have knowledge of the lexical and grammatical structure in the German language for successful communication with representatives of the German linguoculture and the use of the studied language in future professional activities.

The interest of students specializing in the language study, practice and use of a foreign language is observed at the time when students perceive themselves "not only as a representative of a certain culture, but as citizens of the world, subjects of the cultural polylogue" in classrooms (Belova & Hripunova, 2009, pp. 19-22). Lessons should be organized in the German language using educational material, resources and exercises aimed at the formation of communicative and linguocultural competences. Linguocultural competence is associated with communicative competence and involves the ability of students to apply knowledge about the national and cultural specifics of the linguistic community when communicating with German speakers and in other practical activities, therefore, the teacher should choose culturally-marked language units for task development, i.e. paroemias (proverbs and sayings) (Biryukova, 2016).

In the period of development and popularization of information and communication technologies it is important to create a system of interactive tasks with proverbs and sayings. Moreover, these tasks should be integrated into eTextbooks/ e-learning courses in order to form communicative and linguocultural competences among students.

## 2. Problem Statement

As a result of comparative analysis of teaching aids/ textbooks and eTextbooks of the most famous German publishers "SCHUBERT", "Ernst Klett Sprachen", "Sprachenlernen24", "Cornelsen", "Langenscheidt", the international book publishing house "Macmillan", the British publishing house of educational literature "Pearson", specializing in the production of educational methodological literature on the study of foreign languages) we conclude that the inclusion of proverbs and sayings in the course of teaching a foreign language in many textbooks and (E) teaching materials is presented in a small amount. The analysis of existing teaching aids in a foreign language showed that the study of paroemias is carried out fragmentarily and not systematically. The number of tasks aimed at studying the structural and semantic features of nationally marked linguistic units, i.e. paroemias (proverbs and sayings), is usually insufficient. There is no phased study of paroemias.

The survey of students carried out within the framework of the study included 40 respondents studying German as a second foreign language. The survey results showed that more than 90% of

students consider it expedient to include proverbs and sayings in the German language course, 98% approve the study of paremiological units based on English as the first foreign language. 70% of respondents noted that the most optimal number of units included should not exceed 10 units within each topic, 28% – 5, 2% of respondents believe that up to 15 units can be studied within the framework of the discussed topic.

There for, the study of proverbs and sayings in the framework of linguistics and methods of teaching a foreign language is promising. The study of structural-semantic features of paroemias will allow developing an effective system of tasks, including interactive online assignments, in the format of the e-learning course aimed at studying proverbs and sayings in the German language based on the first FL (English).

### 3. Research Questions

#### 3.1. Paremiological unit as a carrier of cultural information

The choice of language material is important to identify national-cultural features of world pictures. It is necessary to select those language units which contain information about universal and national-cultural peculiarities of different world pictures. Such language units traditionally include *paroemias* (*paremiological units*), which fix and transmit human values from generation to generation around the world as well as the uniqueness of the speaker's world-view. The study of universal and national-cultural features of languages and world-views, expressed by paremiological units, is relevant in linguistics and methodology of teaching foreign languages.

According to the etymological reference, the term *παροιμία* (Gr.) (*paroemia*) is formed using the prefix *παρά* and the root *οιμός* (*oimos*) which the Greeks used to designate the nouns "road, way" (Karagiorgos, 2015). Currently, the paremiological unit (or *paroemia*) is considered as a unit determined by national and cultural specifics and represents one of the ways to depict the surrounding reality. A special place in language and culture studies is occupied by proverbs, since cultural and national traditions are recorded via proverbs in order to be passed on through generations (Kirsanova, 2018). The term "paremiological unit" is very common in various fields that are closely related to language, culture, and communication in general. Paremiological units reflect the peculiarity of the people's world-view which is formed in daily life in the course of practical cognitive activity when a person comes into contact with the outside world (Chernysheva, 2004). *Paroemias* are considered as secondary language signs, i.e. closed stable phrases that are markers of situations or relations between realities and mechanisms for encoding and decoding different linguocultures (Letova, 2004). The purpose of creating paremiological units is not only to fix the surrounding world, but also to express the interpretation, evaluation and subjective attitude of representatives to the considered objects. *Paroemia* is a generalization of the people's experience and recommendation to native speakers for doing certain actions based on it.

In accordance with the relationship between language and culture, paremiological units are classified into the following groups (Chernysheva, 2004): 1) *stable language units that convey the universal experience to explore surrounding reality, obtained under the same conditions*: Eng. *As you make your bed, so you must lie on*, Germ. *Wie man sich bettet, so schläft* with the meaning "the result

depends on the work quality", etc.; 2) stable language units that *convey the universal experience to explore surrounding reality, obtained in different situations caused by extralinguistic factors*: Eng. *Don't count your chickens before they're hatched*, Germ. *Ende gut, alles gut* have a similar meaning "completing the work and achieving the results", but different structures and lexical components, etc.; 3) *stable language units that represent the national vision of the world*: germ. *Deutsch sein heißt, eine Sache um ihrer selbst willen treiben*.

As a result of comparing the paremiological units in different languages, the first group of paroemias contains only universal characteristics; the second group includes proverbs with identical meanings, but different structures and lexical components. The third group conveys exclusively the national-cultural specifics of the world picture.

Considering paroemias as linguocultural units in the comparative aspect it is necessary to classify them into the following groups (Chernysheva, 2004): 1) absolute equivalents that coincide in structures, lexemes, meanings and convey the universal specifics of various linguocultures: Eng. *The end crowns the work*; Germ. *Das Ende krönt das Werk* have the general meaning "doing/ completing work"; 2) paremiological units in the certain languages that are similar in meanings, but different in structures and lexical components: Eng. *Better a little fire to warm us, than a great one to burn us*; Germ. *Es ist dafür gesorgt, dass die Bäume nicht in den Himmel wachsen*. These units do not have absolute lexical equivalences, but they emphasize the importance of the sustained work; 3) ethno-cultural lacunar paremiological units, which reflect national-cultural specificity of the certain world picture: *Einen Teil sollst du verschenken, einen Teil sollst du ausgeben, einen Teil sollst du sparen*. Thus, paroemias as language units and carriers of linguocultural information are resources for studying the universal and national-cultural specifics of languages and world-views. Paroemias include two types of language units – *proverbs and sayings* which have universal and different peculiarities in structural composition and functions.

### 3.2. Types of paremiological units: universal and differential features

In the present research, it is important to determine the belonging of a particular paremiological unit to the certain type: a *proverb* or a *saying*. Accordingly, it is necessary to study these notions and their definitions in detail as well as to identify their universal and differential features.

Proverbs and sayings were fixed in languages in 4th century B. C. Aristotle (384-322 BC) argued that the proverb was a record of "old wisdom" and the linguistic element remained in languages due to their brevity and accessibility of the material (Karagiorgos, 2015). After some time the saying appeared in languages as a new kind of paroemias. Currently, native speakers often use equally the terms "proverbs" and "sayings". However, linguists use proverbs and sayings as linguistic, folklore and ethnographic terms, clearly differentiating them.

**Saying** defines or evaluates an important life phenomenon for a given linguistic culture. Sayings are expressions based on metaphor, hyperbole, comparison and paradox. Sayings differ from proverbs and consist of one-member sentences. This kind of the paremiological units is devoid of instructive meaning and represents a part of the sentence. Sayings, i.e. language clichés are devoid of imagery. These paremiological units are frequently used without a certain context, therefore, they are neutral (Korolkova,

2007). This kind of paroemias conveys a direct meaning, for example, *Besser spät als nie; Alle zu Seiner Zeit*. **Proverb** is a figurative and logically complete utterance (Vlavatskaya & Zaikina, 2019). Proverbs have compositional structures organized by rhythm, assonances, rhyme and alliteration. These paroemias are didactic and represent a simple or complex sentence with two parts. In contrast to sayings, proverbs contain literal and figurative meanings, e.g. *Den Brunnen schätzt man erst dann, wenn es kein Wasser mehr gibt; Die dümmsten Bauern haben die dicksten Kartoffeln*. In axiological aspect proverbs and sayings are equipollent, because they are not only *notions* that reflect universal or national-cultural specifics of the certain object or phenomenon in the ambient reality, but also express *judgments* about the world and people's behavior with the help of meanings (Zhukov, 2014).

Thus, proverbs and sayings belong to the paremiological fund in the presence of the following universal properties (Nelyubova et al., 2020): 1) *common usage* or *reproducibility*: proverbs and sayings are used in speech in the form of fixed and syntactically indivisible language units; 2) *stability*: all paroemias are used in their original forms and easily distinguished from the general text; 3) *codification*: proverbs and sayings are fixed in the corresponding paremiological dictionaries; 4) *imagery*: paremiological units do not always have a literal meaning, consequently there is a need for semantic analysis of these language units in order to correctly present the utterance; 5) *nationwide*: paroemias are nationally significant and widely distributed among speakers of different languages. Proverbs and sayings have these properties, because they represent cultural-historical values and people's attitudes to a particular object of the world. Moreover, it is important to study the semantics of paremiological units and their correct interpretation; 6) *general significance*: all paremiological units have a didactic function, reflect the accumulated cultural and historical experience of the people, represent the features of objects in the ambient reality, contain cultural and linguistic values; 7) *semantic integrity (recognizability)*: it is possible to preserve semantic integrity and to recover an original variant of the transformed utterance. Thus, paroemias (i.e. proverbs and sayings) are stable, nationally and culturally marked units that perform a didactic function and contain information about the axiological component of a certain world picture.

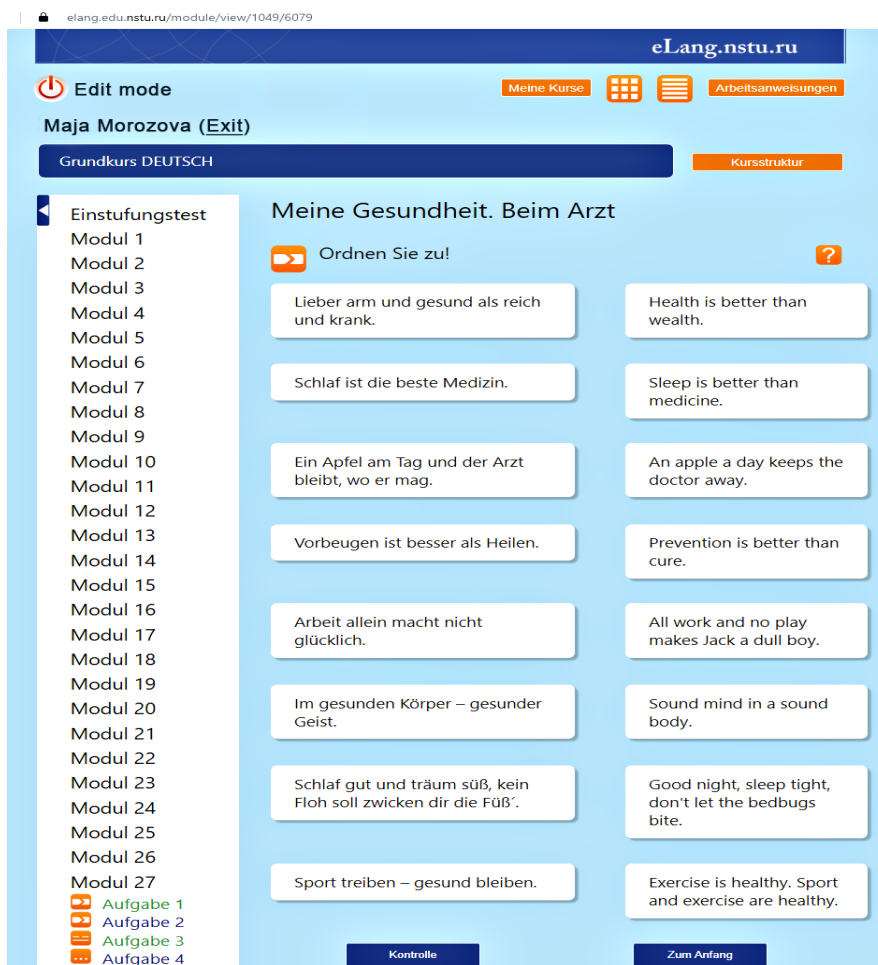
In the present research, to create the system of tasks in the German language it is necessary not only to distinguish between proverbs and sayings, but also to consider their structural and semantic features in order to 1) correct their use in the context for linguistic analysis in German, 2) select an exact equivalent and analogue in Russian or English to the paroemia in the German language, 3) eliminate incorrect interpretation of the semantics in paremiological units; 4) correct use of paroemias in the certain task formats; 5) develop lexical skills and linguocultural competence among students using tasks aimed at studying and learning the paroemias in the German language.

### 3.3. A system of tasks for E-Learning course

The conducted theoretical analysis of linguistic literature confirms the validity of including paremiological units in the system of tasks in the e-learning course in German as a second language. It is worth nothing that proverbs and sayings as stable linguistic units and national-cultural markers contribute to the formation of linguocultural competence closely interconnected with communicative competence among students.

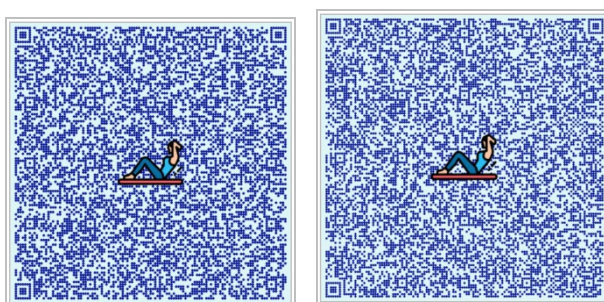
Task development for the e-learning course required an analysis of German textbooks and the experience of teaching a foreign language by means of proverbs and sayings, as well as determination of significance to study proverbs and sayings within the framework of the discussed topics by students specializing in foreign languages. According to the experience of inclusion in the process of teaching German as a foreign language, it is important to study proverbs and sayings systematically through a variety of motivating exercises that contribute to the preservation of learned units in long-term memory (Miletić, 2019).

Kuns proposes threefold study of phraseological units (recognition – disclosure of meaning/explanation – practical use) (Miletić, 2019). It seems logical and can be used as a basic formula for studying proverbs in the German course. In addition, it is advisable to design a system of tasks in such way that students are provided at least three times presentation of each unit in different contexts when activating various channels of perception; reliance on the first foreign (English) language; the possibility of organizing various forms of work (individual, group, as well as project and creative); use of a digital component. The contextual study of proverbs and sayings is significant, because it allows students to use phraseological units adequately in a specific situation. The proposed system of tasks is implemented in the format of the e-learning course in basic German as the second foreign language (Basic course GERMAN) (Morozova, 2015) in the NSTU DiSpace e-learning system. The study of proverbs and sayings is provided within each module, the number of which is determined by the specifics of the topic. The system of tasks includes lexical, linguistic (speech), conditional and real-communicative tasks (Arutyunov, 1990). Digital support of the e-learning course is represented by a series of lexical, linguistic (speech), conditionally communicative online tasks created in the eLang NSTU online learning system for foreign languages (Bovtenko, 2015). Examples of lexical tasks are aimed at finding matches in English (Figure 1.), restoring the elements' sequence of a proverb/ saying, filling in the gaps. Language tasks are represented by the selection of the context corresponding to the image, the inclusion of the proverb in the situation that is appropriate in meaning, etc. Examples of conditionally communicative tasks are focused on constructing an utterance within a certain situation (dialogue) using key words and phrases, explaining the meaning of proverbs and guessing a proverb (Figure 2.), real-communicative tasks – constructing an utterance without using supports.



**Figure 1.** The lexical task for finding matches in English

The topic is "My health. At the doctor's". Basic German course. NSTU eLang e-learning system



**Figure 2.** The conditionally communicative task to explain the meaning and guess a proverb in a group

The topic is "My health. At the doctor's". Basic German course. NSTU DiSpace e-learning system

The control and evaluation apparatus includes the performance of training, control-training and final tests, as well as project and creative work. Examples of projects and creative works include the development of the thematic mini-glossary (catalog) of German-English pairs of proverbs and sayings, or games to memorize proverbs and sayings with using visual elements. The implementation of the tasks' system was carried out in groups of students specializing in "Linguistics". The number of respondents

was 30. The quality of paremiological units' retention was checked using the final test created in the constructor of tests, surveys, crosswords Online Test Pad (Morozova, 2020). According to the experiment, which included a comparison of the obtained results after doing exercises in starting and final tests, showed a higher level of paremiological units' retention among students of the experimental group in the comparison with the control group.

#### 4. Purpose of the Study

The purpose of the article is to study the structural and semantic features of paroemias in order to develop a system of interactive tasks, including online assignments aimed at studying proverbs and sayings in the German language based on the first FL (English), implemented in the format of the e-learning course in German as a second foreign language for students specializing in linguistics.

#### 5. Research Methods

In the present research, we used the following *linguistic methods*, i.e. *general scientific*: comparison and opposition, classification and systematization, inductive, deductive, descriptive and *special*: definitional, semantic, semen and seminal, component, structural-semantic and lexicographic analyses. *Methods of pedagogical research*: theoretical (literature analysis), empirical (collection and accumulation of data (questionnaires, testing, analysis of the products of students' activities, teachers' work experience), control and measurement (tests).

#### 6. Findings

**Linguistic part:** *paroemias are differentiated from the phraseological units*: unlike the phraseological unit, proverbs and sayings have both direct and figurative meanings; linguistic components that make up paremiological units can be highlighted with logical stress; paroemias are not devoid of actual division in comparison with phraseological units; *the criteria for the demarcation of proverbs and sayings are determined*: proverbs contain causal relationships, consist of one or two simple sentences, sayings are single-term syntactic structures which are devoid of the logical conclusion of thought. **Methodological part:** creature of the system with interactive tasks, including online assignments, aimed at practical using proverbs and sayings in speech, supplementing the control and evaluation apparatus with tasks to check proverbs' and sayings' retention within the framework of the lexical topics studied in the German basic e-learning course. This development experience can be used in the design of professionally oriented training courses for FL.

#### 7. Conclusion

Generalization of the linguistic literature made it possible to determine the structural and semantic features of such types of paremiological units as proverbs and sayings. The result of the analysis is the basis for the development of the system with interactive tasks aimed at the retention and practical use of proverbs and sayings in speech, and its integration into the modules of the e-learning course in German as



a second foreign language. Effective retention of units is possible in the case of threefold study of proverbs and sayings, mandatory inclusion of lexical, linguistic (speech), conditional and real-communicative tasks in the system of tasks, as well as. interactive online assignments in the format of contextual learning.

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