

## PHILOLOGY AND LINGUISTICS

# The fundamental nature and role of paremiology in german language linguistics

Akbarova Rana<sup>1</sup> 

<sup>1</sup> Master's student (Specialization: Methodology of teaching  
a foreign language (German language));  
Baku Slavic University; Republic of Azerbaijan

**Abstract.** Paremiology in linguistics studies the cultural-social aspects of the language by studying proverbs, revealing the richness and expressive power of the language.

**Keywords:** *Paremiology, German language, linguistics.*

### Introduction

One of the significant things about learning other languages and purely linguistics in Germanic philology is exactly paremiology, due to the nature and purpose of its main functions. Paremiology is the formal study of proverbs, idioms and phrases (or phrases) with definition and denotation used in spoken language or textual content in almost all languages worldwide. Paremiology as a Part of the German Studies Paremiology in German language linguistics provides information about how rich this language is, its history and culture and view of the world (Frackowiak, 2015).

Especially in modern times Paremiology in German language linguistics calls for special attention. This field allows us to understand the formation of a language, and its various permutations as history changed; the social-cultural changes. The significance of paremiology is great as part of the language change, changes in people's minds and daily life that are reflected in the language, as well as scientific study and training of the language.

The sphere of paremiology are linguistic units / proverbs, problems, idioms, phraseologies. This is how peoples ideas, values, beliefs and life experiences are transmitted into language. The study of these objects in German linguistics allows to explore the historical and cultural environment of

## PHILOLOGY AND LINGUISTICS

the language (Yusupova, 2015).

Since then, paremiological research has expanded to include a diverse range of scholars in many fields that deal with some broader aspect of human language. These topics are analyzed and compared using paremiological units that have been established in different periods of the language and in other cultures (Shaimardanova, 2021).

The scientific novelty of paremiology is access to the study of how people saw the world by language, what are the cultural differences and similarities in situational descriptions over time since they can be studied from moving pictures. It contributes development and refinement to new theories in methods of linguistic analysis. This allows us to study paremiological units with more precision and on a larger scale using modern technologies and digital resources.

Paremiology has a constructive place in the processing of the German language. Quite a few researchers have made remarkable contributions to this problem and have considered paremiological units in various periods. Nonetheless, this field continues to develop, making it ripe for further studies (Spellerberg, 2022).

Paremiology is of great importance for both linguistic research and the study of language acquisition. This field helps us better to know richness and diversity of language, thoughts and cultural values of the people. They have attracted attention of teachers who argued that the use of paremiological units in the process of teaching and learning language will contribute to making such learning interesting and productive.

The significance of paremiology consists in the examination of the specific cultural-historic background to the language, sociolinguistic implications and the picture of the world that it portrays. With this field one can get how the language has evolved from one era to another. Also in the context of (foreign) language learning and teaching, paremiology plays an important role in German linguistics (Yusupova, 2015).

The main purpose of researching the topic is to gain insight into the cultural and historical context of the language. Paremiological units reflect human thoughts, values and experience; therefore they are of procedural, strategic and pedagogical significance in the realm of teaching and learning how to use a language. The analysis of proverbs within the framework of the German language study allows to

## PHILOLOGY AND LINGUISTICS

touch upon its multi-aspect character and influence on new formations (Ulland, 2023).

To conclude, research in paremiology in the context of Germanic linguistics is an invaluable resource for studying and reconstructing not only the culture but also the history, and social life of the language. It is an important factor in language learning and teaching, and how a language can be expressed richer and more diverse (Spellerberg, 2022).

It can therefore be conclusively reasoned that through the study of paremiology in German linguistics, one is able to reveal cultural, historical and social aspects of language. Paremiology studies proverbs, sayings, idioms, and phraseological units collected and passed down as collective wisdom, value judgment and experience of a language community. In the arena of German linguistical paradigms, paremiology features an essential key into how language itself evolved, blueprints for a change in the cultural norms and good reasons for societal drift, thereby adding to the episodes that fashion our cultural map.

The importance of paremiology is also in its ability to tie together the past and the present: language develops over centuries, changing only with shifts in human society. This means that by accessing this rich repertoire of public language use, researchers in German linguistics are able to trace the evolution of languages across time, space, and cultural worldviews. This not only enriches our understanding of language but also gives a flavor of the collective seu-subconscience of its community (Unseth, 2016).

Secondly, paremiology enriches the didactics of the German language, making learning the language more interesting and exciting by imbuing it with elements of its own culture.

Paremiological research in German linguistics is very complex and does not seem to abate. New opportunities of investigation and analysis are now being afforded by developments in technology, digital resources and interdisciplinary work that relate to linguistic phenomena. Further research in the domain can concentrate upon comparative paremiology, examination of proverbs through digital corpora, proverbial cognition from the cognitive linguistics perspective or pedagogical implications of paremiological learnings for language teaching (Unseth, 2016).

In a nutshell, paremiology offers an insight to the

## PHILOLOGY AND LINGUISTICS

cultural soul of a language and all layers of knowledge cultivated by its speakers. By integrating all those different disciplines, such as Germanistics, folklore studies, you can name the rest (psychology and cognitive science), Wissensraum Linguistik bears its interdisciplinary subjects through and develops to an indispensable subject within the German linguistics. Proverbs and idiomatic expressions are very like treasures of wisdom, as you and I go more underneath, in that vast world we find out linguistics gems, a lot of the things written cryptically tells us about our thinking and societal development.

### **Main part of research**

Paremiology is a branch of linguistics that deals with the study of proverbs, idioms, and other fixed expressions. This field allows us to better understand the relationship of language with culture, history and social life. The role of paremiology is particularly important in languages with a rich culture and history, such as German. In this article, the fundamental nature of German language paremiology and its role in linguistics will be broadly analyzed.

Paremiology comes from the Latin word "paroimia" and literally means "parable". Paremiology occupies a special place in linguistics, because proverbs and idioms reflect the unique characteristics, culture and historical development of each language. The German language is no exception in this regard. Proverbs and sayings in the German language reflect the people's way of life, way of thinking and value system (Spellerberg, 2022).

The history of paremiology in German goes back to ancient times. Proverbs and idioms have been found in written sources since the early Middle Ages. For example, Tacitus' work "Germania" provides information about the life and traditions of the German people, where certain fixed expressions are used. In the Middle Ages, proverbs and idioms were widely used in poetry types such as Minnesang and Meistersang. The works written in this period are considered as rich language materials that reflect the way of life and thinking of the German people (Yusupova, 2015).

Studies conducted in the field of paremiology show that proverbs and sayings have a certain structure and can be divided into different categories based on this structure. For example, from a functional point of view, proverbs are categorized as advising, warning, amusing, and instructive. From the structural point of view, proverbs consisting of

## PHILOLOGY AND LINGUISTICS

simple and complex sentences are distinguished (Yusupova, 2015).

For example (Yusupova, 2015):

Simple Sentences: *"Übung macht den Meister"* (*Experience is the master*).

Compound Sentences: *"Wer anderen eine Grube gräbt, fällt selbst hinein"* (*He who digs a well for another falls himself*).

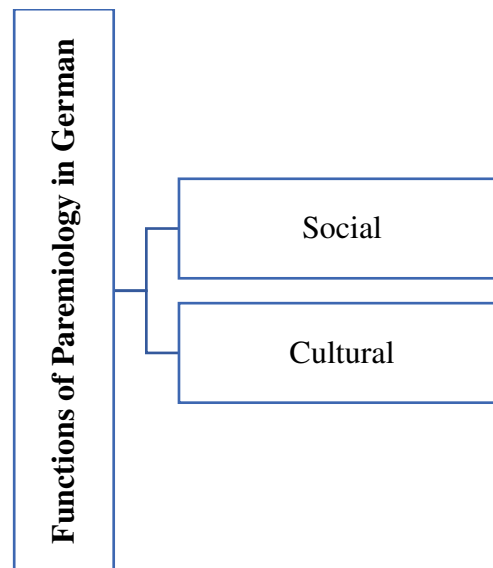


Figure 1

### Functions of Paremiology in German<sup>1</sup>

The true duties of German proverbs and idioms are distinct. Not solving punctuation problems only adds to the wealth of the language, but has cultural and social exponents.

Saying and proverbs are employed to solve social wars, share oral history, argue much from meaning or maybe praxis ideals. The phrase *"Ehrlich währt am längsten"* (Honesty lasts longest), for example, promotes values such as honesty and truthfulness.

German proverbs and sayings are a piece of the culture, they get passed down through generations. They are used in all areas of culture, whether in literature, music, or folk art. One can easily find many proverbs and sayings in the works of great German writers namely.

Modern Linguistics depend on Paremiology. These are invaluable materials in the study of a languages historical

---

<sup>1</sup> Yusupova, 2015

## PHILOLOGY AND LINGUISTICS

development, its semantic structures, and interrelationships culturally. Paremiology makes it possible to experiment with and at the same time describe in language other languages, sharing a semantic and syntactic plane of cognition, bringing it close or even equivalent to the idea of cooperation (Shaimardanova, 2021).

Proverbs and sayings are priceless for language learners. They teach language learners the underlying meanings (many of which are cultural). So, for example, when a German learner comes across "Aller guten Ding' sind drei," this conveys both the grammatical structure of the language and the value Number Three seems to have in German culture.

Another pain point of German is in paremiology (science of proverbs, idioms and metaphors). The major challenges among these are as follows (Frackowiak, 2015):

Many a times proverbs and sayings are literal in meaning, making it challenging to get the right term. Translating word for word may misrepresent the intended meaning.

Proverbs and sayings are born in a culture and make sense in this culture. You would need a deep cultural and historical understanding of Germany to understand the implications of such utterances in German.

Proverbs and sayings are very complex for people who have only recently started studying German. These expressions are a bit more advanced, so not all beginners may get them.

Proverbs and idioms take a different shape and are used with various frequencies in many languages. So while one idiom is often used in German, the same idiom might be never used or not as common in another language (Frackowiak, 2015).

There are various proverbs in different parts of Germany. People find it hard to learn and understand all of these regional differences.

For those who are struggling with this, people can use the following tips to improve your German skills (Ulland, 2023):

a) Reading about German culture, history, and social context assists you in understanding the meaning of proverbs and sayings.

b) The playing field of the use of idioms and proverbs also improves their mastery when used in texts or speech.

c) Sometimes it could be as simple as knowing the proverbs and saying in German vs your own native language to help you learn.

d) Talking to someone who speaks German would be a very

## PHILOLOGY AND LINGUISTICS

useful tool to get acquainted with these expressions.

e) So, to deal with the obstacles in paremiology, it is necessary to enhance cultural and negotiation knowledge as well as linguistic features.

Thus, paremiology constitutes an essential aspect of Germanic studies and therefore the cultural, historical and social background of this field of a language in general. In the same vein, proverbs and sayings, as well as carrying great weight on language use and practice, also recycle cultural values and social attitudes. For the modern science of language, paremiology plays a key role for better understanding of historical processes in language development, its semantic conceptions and cultural relationships. That field has the potential to greatly enrich our understanding of the German language and culture.

### **Conclusion**

Paremiology is a deep and wide field to study in Germanic linguistics, which can help us with our understanding both of universal cultural and historical dimensions as well as specific social manifestations of the language. This field is dedicated to the depth and breadth of the language with particular focus on German proverbs, idioms and fixed expressions; The expressions are indicative of historical processes and thus clearly recommend cultural principles to the population, who are thus shown how to behave in an ethical or moral way and which types of interaction within society may occur.

The study of proverbs, called paremiology, thus not only helps us to better understand the grammatical and lexical systems of a language but also its semantic strata, and directly associated with them cultural phenomena. Over the course of the history of the German language, proverbs and sayings have always been a way to sum up cultural values and customs that continue to be passed on from generation to generation. These are invaluable as they allow language learners to learn authentic language usage, cultural insight, and real thought patterns of the language.

This article realizes the importance of using the German language as an example in the understanding of the myriad idiosyncrasies inherent to paremiology. It was not just about studying related linguistic expressions and syntactic designs but it additionally expands to the social affiliations and our societal convictions. For contemporary linguistics, Paremiology remains one of the main methods to study language historically and in cultural sequences.

## PHILOLOGY AND LINGUISTICS

Germanic paremiology is an important field of study, which helps to show the richness and diversity of the language. This is important for language research and also essential to preserve and promote the culture. Its own progress contributes to a better understanding of German culture and language, and helps to pass it on to the next generation. This is literally the application of paremiology (see more in: Quo vadis paremiology) because it conserves and propagates the specific nature and diversity of the German language and culture.

### References:

- [1] Fraćkowiak, M. (2015). "Time is money - linguistic universals in German and Polish phraseology and paremiology based on lexicographic material." *Linguistics Online*, 74(5), DOI: 10.13092/lo.74.2222. Available at: [https://www.researchgate.net/publication/349996360\\_Zeit\\_ist\\_Geld\\_-\\_sprachliche\\_Universalien\\_in\\_der\\_deutschen\\_und\\_polnischen\\_Phraseologie\\_und\\_Paromiologie\\_am\\_lexikographischen\\_Material](https://www.researchgate.net/publication/349996360_Zeit_ist_Geld_-_sprachliche_Universalien_in_der_deutschen_und_polnischen_Phraseologie_und_Paromiologie_am_lexikographischen_Material)
- [2] Shaimardanova, M. R., Zorina, A. V., & Akhmetova, L. A. (2021). Representation of Communicative and Pragmatic Frame 'Intellect' In English, German and Russian Paremiological World Pictures. *Propósitos y Representaciones*, 9(SPE2). DOI:10.20511/pyr2021.v9nSPE2.1049. Retrieved from [https://www.researchgate.net/publication/352467152\\_Representation\\_of\\_Communicative\\_and\\_Pragmatic\\_Frame\\_'Intellect'\\_In\\_English\\_German\\_and\\_Russian\\_Paremiological\\_World\\_Pictures](https://www.researchgate.net/publication/352467152_Representation_of_Communicative_and_Pragmatic_Frame_'Intellect'_In_English_German_and_Russian_Paremiological_World_Pictures)
- [3] Spellerberg, C. (2022) 'Proverbial markers and their significance for linguistic proverb definitions: An experimental investigation', *Yearbook of Phraseology*, 13(1), pp. 109-132. Available at: [https://www.researchgate.net/publication/366058429\\_Proverbial\\_markers\\_and\\_their\\_significance\\_for\\_linguistic\\_proverb\\_definitions\\_an\\_experimental\\_investigation](https://www.researchgate.net/publication/366058429_Proverbial_markers_and_their_significance_for_linguistic_proverb_definitions_an_experimental_investigation), DOI:10.1515/phras-2022-0007
- [4] Ulland, H. and Dixon, I. (2023) 'Paremiological Equivalence: A Comparative Study of Selected Germanic, Romance, and Slavonic Languages', in *Proverbs Are Never Neutral*. Cham: Springer International Publishing, pp. 45-79. Available at: [https://www.researchgate.net/publication/375980382\\_Paremiological\\_Equivalence\\_A\\_Comparative\\_Study\\_of\\_Selected\\_Germanic\\_Romance\\_and\\_Slavonic\\_Languages](https://www.researchgate.net/publication/375980382_Paremiological_Equivalence_A_Comparative_Study_of_Selected_Germanic_Romance_and_Slavonic_Languages), DOI:10.1007/978-3-031-32646-2\_4
- [5] Unseth, P. (2016) 'Hrisztalina Hrisztova-Gotthardt and Melita Aleksa Varga, eds. Introduction to Paremiology: A Comprehensive Guide to Proverb Studies. (Berlin 2014)-(Peter Unseth)', *Proverbium: Yearbook of International Proverb Scholarship*, 33(1), pp. 453-466. Available at: <https://naklada.ffos.hr/casopisi/index.php/proverbium/issue/view/23/4>
- [6] Yusupova, L. G. and Kuzmina, O. D. (2015) 'Pejorative connotation of proverbs and sayings with zoonym in the Russian, German and Tatar languages', *Journal of Sustainable Development*, 8(4), p. 284. Available at: [https://www.researchgate.net/publication/276134531\\_Pejorative\\_Connotation\\_of\\_Proverbs\\_and\\_Sayings\\_with\\_Zoonym\\_in\\_the\\_Russian\\_German\\_and\\_Tatar\\_Languages](https://www.researchgate.net/publication/276134531_Pejorative_Connotation_of_Proverbs_and_Sayings_with_Zoonym_in_the_Russian_German_and_Tatar_Languages), DOI:10.5539/jsd.v8n4p284