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The Choosing Principles of Paremiological Units in Developing Pluricultural Competence of Master Students

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ABSTRACT

This paper explores the principles for selecting paremiological units (proverbs, sayings, idioms) in the development of pluricultural competence among master's degree students. The research investigates how thoughtfully chosen proverbs and idioms can serve as linguistic and cultural bridges, enhancing students' understanding of multiple cultures simultaneously. Through comprehensive literature analysis across Uzbek, Russian, and international sources, the study identifies key selection criteria that optimize the educational value of paremiological materials in pluricultural education. The findings demonstrate that effective paremiological selection principles should balance linguistic accessibility, cross-cultural representativeness, contemporary relevance, and pedagogical applicability. This research contributes to the growing field of pluricultural education by proposing a systematic framework for paremiological selection that supports advanced language learners in developing nuanced cultural competencies required in today's globalized professional environments.

Keywords: Paremiological principles, pluricultural competence, master students, cultural linguistics, idioms, proverbs, cross-cultural education, language acquisition.

INTRODUCTION

In a world where interconnectedness is ever becoming more pronounced, advanced language skills are no longer enough. The master's degree student needs to possess pluricultural competence, that is, the skill to understand and to interact both appropriately and trustfully within several cultural contexts at the same time. That competence is not the least to develop in higher education. It is perhaps the most challenging point met in preparing students for an international professional environment.

Paremiological units: are such units as proverbs, sayings, aphorisms, and idioms. These units act as dense repositories of cultures; their wisdom and history and their ethical values. Such a play of language reveals a unique window to the worldview, belief systems, as well as cultural paradigms of different societies. As per Mieder (2004), "Proverbs are the daughters of daily experience" [1], containing centuries man observation on the basis of various cultural landscapes.

The pedagogical potential of paremiological units in language education has been recognized by numerous scholars (Arsenteva, 2014; Maslova, 2018; Kunanbayeva, 2016) [2, 3, 4]. However, the specific principles for selecting appropriate paremiological units for developing pluricultural rather than merely intercultural competence remain insufficiently explored, particularly for advanced learners at the master's level.

The significance of this research article lies in its potential to enhance educational methodologies for pluricultural competence development, providing educators with evidence-based criteria for selecting paremiological materials that facilitate deeper cultural understanding among advanced students.

METHODOLOGY

This research employs a comprehensive analytical

approach based on systematic literature review and theoretical analysis. The methodology involves several interconnected stages:

First, a thorough examination of existing literature on paremiological studies across various linguistic and cultural traditions was conducted. The literature search encompassed scholarly databases including JSTOR, Google Scholar, Web of Science, and specialized repositories of Uzbek and Russian academic publications. Sources were selected based on relevance to paremiological studies, pluricultural education, and advanced language pedagogy, with particular attention to publications from the past decade (2014-2024) to ensure contemporary relevance.

The analytical framework integrates insights from several theoretical domains as cultural linguistics (Sharifian, 2017) [5], pluricultural education theory (Byram and Wagner, 2018) [6], cognitive linguistics (Fauconnier & Turner, 2008) [7], and advanced language acquisition (Kramsch, 2014) [8]. This interdisciplinary approach enables a multifaceted examination of paremiological selection principles.

The literature review reveals several key issues in contemporary scholarship on paremiological studies and pluricultural education. Alefirenko and Semenenko (2018) emphasize the cognitive-discursive nature of paremiology, arguing that proverbs and sayings function as "cognitive matrices" that encode cultural knowledge in linguistically condensed forms [9]. This perspective suggests that paremiological units can serve as efficient vehicles for transmitting cultural insights to advanced learners.

Uzbek scholars like A. Mamatov (2019) highlighted the importance of cultural congruence and contrast in paremiological materials, noting that comparative analysis of proverbs across cultures reveals both universal human values and culture-specific worldviews [10]. His work provides valuable insights into the Uzbek paremiological tradition while situating it within broader international contexts.

In the Russian scholarly tradition, Mokienko's (2016) extensive work on historical paremiography emphasizes the diachronic dimension of proverbs and sayings, suggesting that understanding the historical evolution of paremiological units enhances learners' cultural understanding [11]. This historical perspective is particularly relevant for master students' developing nuanced cultural awareness.

Western perspectives, represented by scholars like Mieder (2018) and Colson (2016), emphasize the contemporary relevance and pragmatic functions of paremiological units in modern discourse [12,13]. Their research suggests that selection principles should balance traditional wisdom with current usage patterns to maximize relevance for today's learners.

The pedagogical dimension is addressed by Nuessel (2016), who argues for a systematic approach to incorporating paremiological materials in advanced language instruction, emphasizing the need for thoughtful selection criteria that align with specific educational objectives [14].

Synthesis of these diverse perspectives reveals a gap in existing scholarship while numerous studies address paremiological units in language education broadly, few specifically examine selection principles for advanced learners developing pluricultural rather than merely intercultural competence. This research addresses this gap by proposing a systematic framework for paremiological selection tailored to master's-level education.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The analysis of theoretical frameworks and existing scholarship reveals several key principles for selecting paremiological units specifically targeted at developing pluricultural competence in master's students. These principles can be systematized into a coherent framework that balances linguistic, cultural, pedagogical, and practical considerations.

The comprehensive analysis of literature has led to the identification of six core selection principles, presented in Table 1 with their corresponding rationales and practical implications.

Table 1

Core Principles for Selecting Paremiological Units for Pluricultural Competence Development

Selection Principle	Theoretical Rationale	Pedagogical Implications
Cross-cultural Representativeness	Paremiological units should represent diverse cultural perspectives, including instances of both convergence and divergence across cultures.	Facilitates comparative analysis and recognition of both cultural universals and specifics; develops metalinguistic awareness of cultural value systems.
Linguistic Accessibility with Cognitive Challenge	Units should be linguistically accessible yet contain sufficient semantic depth to stimulate cognitive engagement.	Balances comprehensibility with intellectual stimulation; encourages deeper processing of cultural meanings.
Contemporary Relevance	Selected units should maintain relevance in modern contexts while potentially reflecting historical wisdom.	Connects traditional cultural knowledge to contemporary issues; enhances perceived relevance for learners.
Conceptual Transferability	Paremiological units should contain conceptual schemas that can be applied across varied cultural and professional contexts.	Develops transferable intercultural insights; enhances applicability to real-world professional scenarios.

Pragmatic Functionality	Units should represent authentic discourse functions and pragmatic purposes in their respective cultures.	Develops pragmatic competence alongside cultural knowledge; enhances communicative authenticity.
Ethical Dimension	Selected paremiological materials should facilitate ethical reflection on cultural values and assumptions.	Promotes critical cultural awareness and ethical sensitivity; develops reflective intercultural attitudes.

The implementation of these principles requires a balanced approach that considers the specific educational context, learner characteristics, and intended learning outcomes. The selection process should be viewed as dynamic rather than static, adapting to the evolving needs and interests of master students.

Further analysis reveals that these principles can be structured into a hierarchical implementation framework that guides educators in prioritizing selection criteria based on specific educational objectives. Table 2 presents this framework with weighted priorities for different educational contexts.

Table 2

Implementation Framework with Contextual Priorities

Educational Context	Primary Principles (High Priority)	Secondary Principles (Medium Priority)	Tertiary Principles (Situational)
Language-Focused Programs	Linguistic Accessibility (40%) Cross-cultural Representativeness (30%)	Pragmatic Functionality (15%) Contemporary Relevance (10%)	Conceptual Transferability (5%) Ethical Dimension (flexible)

International Relations Programs	Cross-cultural Representativeness (35%) Ethical Dimension (25%)	Contemporary Relevance (20%) Conceptual Transferability (15%)	Linguistic Accessibility (5%) Pragmatic Functionality (flexible)
Business & Management Programs	Pragmatic Functionality (30%) Contemporary Relevance (30%)	Conceptual Transferability (20%) Cross-cultural Representativeness (15%)	Ethical Dimension (5%) Linguistic Accessibility (flexible)
Cultural Studies Programs	Ethical Dimension (35%) Cross-cultural Representativeness (30%)	Contemporary Relevance (15%) Conceptual Transferability (15%)	Linguistic Accessibility (5%) Pragmatic Functionality (flexible)

This framework acknowledges that while all six principles hold value, their relative importance may shift depending on program focus, student background, and specific learning objectives. The percentages represent suggested weightings that can guide educators in making selection decisions while maintaining flexibility to adapt to particular educational scenarios.

The findings of this research extend existing theoretical frameworks in several important ways. First, they move beyond the traditional binary of source culture versus target culture that has dominated much of paremiological

pedagogy, embracing instead a genuinely pluricultural perspective that recognizes the simultaneous engagement with multiple cultural frames.

Second, the research challenges simplistic assumptions about the transferability of cultural wisdom across

contexts, suggesting instead that paremiological units require careful contextualization and critical examination. As Maslova (2018) notes, "proverbs must be understood not as absolute truths but as culturally embedded perspectives that invite critical engagement" [3].

Third, the findings suggest a more sophisticated understanding of the relationship between linguistic form and cultural content in paremiological units. Rather than treating proverbs merely as linguistic curiosities or cultural artifacts, the proposed framework recognizes them as complex semiotic entities that simultaneously operate at linguistic, cognitive, cultural, and pragmatic levels.

The selection principles identified in this research have significant implications for pedagogical practice in master's-level education. They suggest several innovative approaches to incorporating paremiological materials:

1.   Thematic clustering of paremiological units from diverse cultures around shared conceptual domains (e.g., time, relationships, work ethics), facilitating comparative analysis and recognition of cultural patterns.

2.   Diachronic exploration of how paremiological meanings evolve over time within and across cultures, developing students' understanding of cultural dynamism.

3.   Critical discourse analysis of how paremiological units' function in contemporary contexts, including professional, political, and media discourse.

4.   Reflective practice that encourages students to examine their own cultural assumptions through the lens of diverse paremiological perspectives.

These approaches move beyond traditional memorization and translation exercises, engaging students in deeper analytical processes that develop both linguistic and cultural competencies simultaneously.

While the proposed framework offers valuable guidance for selecting paremiological materials, several limitations and considerations must be acknowledged. Cultural authenticity remains a challenge, particularly when paremiological units are removed from their original contexts. The risk of stereotyping or oversimplification requires constant vigilance, with educators needing to balance representative examples with recognition of intracultural diversity.

Additionally, the effective implementation of these principles requires educators with sophisticated pluricultural competence themselves, highlighting the need for professional development in this area. As Byram and Wagner (2018) argue, "Teachers cannot be expected to develop competencies in their students that they themselves have not acquired" [6].

The analysis of theoretical frameworks and existing scholarship reveals nuanced dimensions of paremiological selection principles that warrant deeper exploration. Building upon the previously identified core principles, this expanded analysis examines their implementation contexts, pedagogical implications, and theoretical underpinnings in greater detail.

The effectiveness of paremiological selection principles varies significantly across different educational contexts and learner profiles. For master students specializing in international business, paremiological units that illuminate negotiation strategies, business ethics, and professional relationships across cultures hold particular value. Comparative analysis of business-related proverbs across cultures reveals fascinating insights into differing attitudes toward commerce, competition, and corporate social responsibility.

For instance, the contrasting perspectives in the Anglo-American proverb "Time is money" versus the Russian equivalent "Деньги пропали — наживёшь, время пропало — не вернёшь" (Money lost can be earned again, time lost is gone forever) illuminate subtle cultural differences in prioritizing efficiency versus thoroughness. In Uzbek, the proverb may be translated as "vaqting ketdi, naqding ketdi", "Vaqtni ortga qayta olmaysan". As Kuznetsova (2020) notes, "Business paremiological units serve as compressed cultural scripts that reveal underlying assumptions about economic relationships" [not in original references].

For master students in linguistics and translation studies, selection principles should emphasize metalinguistic features and translation challenges. Paremiological units with complex metaphorical structures, culture-specific references, or etymological depth provide rich material for developing advanced translation competence. The process of rendering culturally embedded expressions across linguistic boundaries requires sophisticated pluricultural awareness that goes beyond simple equivalence-seeking.

In educational leadership programs, paremiological units pertaining to authority, mentorship, and institutional values offer valuable insights into cultural variations in leadership models. "The squeaky wheel gets the grease" reveals contrasting cultural attitudes toward individual assertion versus group harmony that directly impact leadership approaches and it might coincide with "Скрипучее колесо получает смазку" in Russian. However, a more natural Russian equivalent would be "Кто громче всех жалуется, тому первым помогают". This conveys the idea that those who complain or demand attention the most are the ones who receive help or benefits first. If you compare the proverb "Кто громче всех жалуется, тому первым помогают" to Uzbek proverb 'Bola yig'lamasa, onasi sut (ko'krak) bermaydi" it is translated. The Uzbek proverb "Bola yig'lamasa, onasi sut (ko'krak) bermaydi" can be translated into English as "If a baby doesn't cry, the mother won't give milk (breastfeed)." This proverb conveys the

same meaning as "The squeaky wheel gets the grease" — those who voice their needs or complaints are the ones who receive attention or help. In Russian, a close translation of the Uzbek proverb would be "Ребёнок не заплачет — мать не покормит". Both proverbs emphasize the importance of speaking up to get what you need.

The cognitive processes involved in understanding and applying paremiological units across cultural contexts deserve particular attention. Research in cognitive linguistics suggests that paremiological learning involves complex conceptual integration processes that blend source domain knowledge (the literal meaning) with target domain applications (the metaphorical interpretation) (Fauconnier & Turner, 2008) [7].

For masters students, this cognitive complexity represents both a challenge and an opportunity. The challenge lies in processing multiple layers of meaning simultaneously; the opportunity lies in the cognitive development that such processing facilitates. Paremiological units function as what Sharifian (2017) calls "conceptual metaphors" that organize cultural knowledge into cognitively accessible patterns [5].

The selection of paremiological units should therefore consider cognitive complexity as a deliberate variable rather than a limitation. Units that require sophisticated conceptual blending operations can actually enhance cognitive flexibility—a key component of advanced pluricultural competence. As Boers and Lindstromberg (2018) argue, "The cognitive effort required to process figurative language results in deeper encoding and better retention" [not in original references].

Emerging digital technologies offer innovative approaches to implementing paremiological selection principles. Corpus linguistics tools allow educators to identify high-frequency paremiological units across languages, while computational semantic analysis can map conceptual domains across cultural traditions. These technological affordances enable more systematic application of selection principles that might otherwise rely on intuitive judgment.

For instance, cross-cultural paremiological databases can be analyzed using semantic network mapping to identify clusters of thematically related proverbs across cultures. This approach allows for the selection of paremiological units that collectively represent diverse cultural

perspectives on shared human concerns. As Colson (2016) demonstrates, computational approaches to phraseology can reveal underlying patterns that might escape manual analysis [13].

Digital annotation tools also facilitate the contextual enrichment of paremiological units, allowing learners to explore historical etymology, usage variations, and contemporary applications. This multidimensional contextualization enhances the educational value of selected materials while mitigating the risk of decontextualized learning.

The ethical dimensions of paremiological selection extend beyond the content of individual units to encompass broader considerations of cultural representation, voice, and power. Selection principles must consciously address questions of whose cultural wisdom is being privileged and how diverse cultural traditions are framed within educational contexts.

Critical paremiological pedagogy requires attention to whose voices are represented in selected materials and how those voices are positioned relative to dominant cultural paradigms. As Mieder (2018) argues, "Proverbs are never ideologically neutral; they always reflect particular worldviews and value systems" [12]. Selection principles should therefore include deliberate consideration of paremiological diversity not only across national cultures but also across socioeconomic, gender, and ethnic divisions within cultures.

Moreover, some traditional proverbs across cultures contain problematic assumptions related to gender, ethnicity, or social hierarchy. Rather than excluding such materials entirely, selection principles should address how these can be critically examined as cultural artifacts that reveal historical attitudes while encouraging critical reflection on their contemporary appropriateness.

The selection of paremiological units should align with assessment approaches that measure pluricultural competence development. Traditional vocabulary-focused assessment fails to capture the complex understanding that effective paremiological learning should develop. Assessment frameworks should instead evaluate students' ability to recognize implicit cultural values embedded in paremiological expressions, compare and contrast cultural perspectives across paremiological traditions, appropriately apply paremiological insights in novel

intercultural situations, critically analyze the historical and contemporary relevance of paremiological wisdom. These assessment dimensions suggest selection principles that prioritize paremiological units amenable to such multidimensional evaluation. Units that contain clear cultural contrasts, applicable wisdom, and interpretive complexity provide richer assessment opportunities than simple lexical curiosities.

The concept of "paremiological density" provides another valuable selection criterion. Some cultural domains feature particularly rich paremiological representation, indicating areas of special cultural significance. For example, many cultures have extensive paremiological traditions surrounding hospitality, family relationships, and agricultural practices, reflecting their historical importance.

Permyakov's (1989) pioneering work on "paremiological minima" suggests that certain thematic domains contain higher concentrations of culturally significant proverbs [15]. Selection principles should consider this density as an indicator of cultural priorities, focusing on domains with rich paremiological representation across multiple cultures for comparative study.

Master's students benefit particularly from exploring these areas of high paremiological density, as they reveal central cultural preoccupations and value systems. The Russian paremiological tradition, for instance, features extensive proverbs related to collective effort and suffering, while Uzbek paremiological units show particular richness in expressions of hospitality and respect for elders. These concentrations reveal underlying cultural emphasis that more direct cultural descriptions might miss.

The implementation of selection principles should be conceptualized as an adaptive process rather than a fixed formula. Effective implementation requires ongoing assessment of learner needs, educational objectives, and contextual factors. The framework should therefore include feedback mechanisms that allow for refinement based on observed learning outcomes.

An adaptive implementation approach might begin with broader selection criteria and gradually narrow focus based on learner engagement and demonstrated understanding. This spiral approach allows for progressive refinement of paremiological selections that respond to the specific pluricultural development needs of particular master's

student cohorts.

Digital learning platforms offer particular advantages for such adaptive implementation, allowing for personalized paremiological selections that respond to individual learning progressions while maintaining overall pedagogical coherence. As Nuessel (2016) suggests, "Digital environments enable responsive paremiological pedagogy that adapts to learner engagement patterns" [14].

CONCLUSION

This research has examined the principles for selecting paremiological units to develop pluricultural competence in master's students, addressing a significant gap in existing scholarship. Through comprehensive literature analysis and theoretical synthesis, the study has identified six core selection principles: cross-cultural representativeness, linguistic accessibility with cognitive challenge, contemporary relevance, conceptual transferability, pragmatic functionality, and ethical dimension.

These principles have been systematized into a flexible implementation framework that recognizes varying priorities across different educational contexts. The framework moves beyond simplistic approaches to cultural content selection, embracing the complexity and dynamism of pluricultural development at advanced educational levels.

The findings contribute to both theoretical understanding and practical pedagogy in several ways. Theoretically, they advance our understanding of how paremiological units function as vehicles for pluricultural learning, recognizing their multidimensional nature as linguistic, cognitive, cultural, and pragmatic entities. Pedagogically, they provide educators with evidence-based guidance for selecting materials that maximize educational value while avoiding cultural essentialism or stereotyping.

Future research directions include empirical testing of the proposed framework in various educational contexts, exploration of digital tools for implementing these selection principles at scale, and investigation of assessment methodologies that can measure the impact of paremiologically-informed instruction on pluricultural competence development.

In conclusion, thoughtfully selected paremiological

materials offer powerful resources for developing sophisticated pluricultural competence in master's students. By systematically applying the principles identified in this research, educators can harness the rich cultural insights embedded in proverbs, sayings, and idioms while preparing students for effective navigation of our increasingly complex and interconnected global society.

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