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OPTIMIZING PERSIAN LANGUAGE EDUCATION THROUGH FOLK LITERATURE: A CASE STUDY OF PROVERBS AND STORYTELLING

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ABOUT ARTICLE

Key words: Folk Literature, Proverbs Stories, Learning language, culture and literature, second language learning.

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Abstract: This paper investigates the effectiveness of incorporating folk literature, specifically proverbs and their associated stories, into Persian language instruction. Grounded in the principle of language acquisition through cultural immersion, the study explores how proverbs serve as a rich resource for enhancing various language skills. The research employs Dr. Zolfaqari's collection of Persian proverbs as a teaching tool. By analyzing these proverbs and their narratives, the study demonstrates how instructors can cultivate: Reading comprehension and fluency, Proficiency in translation, Understanding of cultural customs and traditions. Following each story, the proposed method incorporates critical thinking exercises that encourage students to delve deeper into the purpose of proverb selection. Additionally, practical exercises solidify comprehension of the proverbs' appropriate contextual usage. This analytical-applied research includes a sample worksheet showcasing the method's application. The ultimate goal is to develop a comprehensive teaching resource based on this methodology, catering to both Persian and non-Persian learners. The study underlines the potential of proverbs as a valuable tool for language acquisition and offers transferable insights

applicable to other linguistic and cultural contexts.

FORS TILI TA'LIMINI XALQ ADABIYOTI ORQALI OPTIMALLASHTIRISH: MAQOL VA HIKOYATLARGA OID MISOLLAR

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MAQOLA HAQIDA

Kalit so'zlar: Xalq adabiyoti, Maqollar hikoyalari, Til, madaniyat va adabiyotni o'rganish, ikkinchi til o'rganish.

Annotatsiya: Ushbu maqolada xalq adabiyotini, xususan, maqol va ular bilan bog'liq hikoyalarni fors tili ta'limiga kiritish samaradorligi o'rganiladi. Madaniy immersion orqali tilni o'zlashtirish tamoyiliga asoslangan tadqiqot maqollar turli til ko'nikmalarini oshirish uchun boy manba bo'lib xizmat qilishini o'rganadi. Tadqiqotda doktor Zolfaqariyning forscha maqollar to'plami o'quv quroli sifatida foydalanilgan. Ushbu maqol va rivoyatlarni tahlil qilish orqali o'qituvchilar qanday qilib tarbiyalashlari mumkinligini ko'rsatadi: O'qishni tushunish va ravonlik, Tarjima mahorati, Madaniy urf-odat va an'analarni tushunish. Har bir hikoyadan so'ng taklif etilayotgan metod o'quvchilarni maqol tanlash maqsadini chuqurroq o'rganishga undaydigan tanqidiy fikrlash mashqlarini o'z ichiga oladi. Bundan tashqari, amaliy mashg'ulotlar maqollarning to'g'ri kontekstda ishlatilishini tushunishni mustahkamlaydi. Ushbu tahliliy-amaliy tadqiqot metodning qo'llanilishini ko'rsatadigan namunaviy ish varag'ini o'z ichiga oladi. Yakuniy maqsad ham fors, ham fors bo'lmagan o'quvchilarni qamrab oluvchi ushbu metodologiyaga asoslangan keng qamrovli o'quv resursini ishlab chiqishdir. Tadqiqot maqollarning tilni o'zlashtirish uchun qimmatli vosita sifatidagi imkoniyatlarini ta'kidlaydi va boshqa til va madaniy kontekstlarda qo'llaniladigan ko'chiriladigan tushunchalarni taklif qiladi.

**ОПТИМИЗАЦИЯ ОБУЧЕНИЯ ПЕРСИДСКОМУ ЯЗЫКУ С ПОМОЩЬЮ
НАРОДНОЙ ЛИТЕРАТУРЫ: ПРИМЕР ПОСЛОВИЦ И РАССКАЗЫВАНИЙ***Дорри Наджме**Доцент**Университет Тарбиат Модарес**Тегеран, Иран**Джаббари Фатемех**студент магистратуры**Университет Тарбиат Модарес**Тегеран, Иран*

О СТАТЬЕ

Ключевые слова: Народная литература, Пословицы и истории, Изучение языка, культуры и литературы, изучение второго языка.

Аннотация: В этой статье исследуется эффективность включения народной литературы, в частности пословиц и связанных с ними историй, в обучение персидскому языку. Исследование, основанное на принципе овладения языком посредством культурного погружения, исследует, как пословицы служат богатым ресурсом для улучшения различных языковых навыков. В исследовании в качестве учебного пособия используется коллекция персидских пословиц доктора Золфакари. Анализируя эти пословицы и их повествования, исследование демонстрирует, как преподаватели могут развивать: понимание прочитанного и беглость речи, навыки перевода, понимание культурных обычаев и традиций. После каждого рассказа предлагаемый метод включает в себя упражнения на критическое мышление, которые побуждают учащихся глубже вникать в цель выбора пословиц. Кроме того, практические упражнения закрепляют понимание соответствующего контекстуального использования пословиц. Это аналитически-прикладное исследование включает образец рабочего листа, демонстрирующего применение метода. Конечная цель — разработать комплексный обучающий ресурс на основе этой методологии, предназначенный как для персидских, так и для неперсидских учащихся. Исследование подчеркивает потенциал пословиц как ценного инструмента для овладения языком и предлагает переносимые идеи, применимые к другим языковым и культурным контекстам.

INTRODUCTION

Learning a new language can be a challenging task, particularly when it involves languages with a rich cultural heritage like Persian. However, integrating cultural elements, such as proverbs and their stories, can make the language-learning process more engaging and effective. Vygotsky's sociocultural theory emphasizes the influential role of culture in shaping cognitive development and learning processes (Vygotsky, 1978). Similarly, Cummins' framework of "intercultural competence" underscores the importance of cultural understanding in language acquisition (Cummins, 2009). These contemporary theories highlight culture as a crucial conduit for language learning. Gibbs and Martin's research demonstrates the cultural richness embedded in proverbs, asserting their potential as pedagogical tools to explore cultural nuances (Gibbs & Martin, 2018).

In this article, our objective is to propose a new approach to teaching the Persian language to foreigners by incorporating popular Persian proverb stories into language instruction. Integrating proverbs into language education has shown promising results in nurturing language proficiency while fostering cultural appreciation. Proverbs are renowned for their succinctness, memorability, and universality, making them ideal for pedagogical purposes. Kaplan and Baldauf's research underscores the pedagogical value of proverbs, highlighting their potential to enhance language skills through context-rich linguistic expressions (Kaplan & Baldauf, 2003).

Proverb stories are an integral part of Persian culture, passed down through generations. They not only entertain but also offer valuable life lessons, insights into human nature, and moral teachings. By using proverb stories as a foundation for language instruction, learners not only acquire linguistic skills but also gain a deeper understanding of the cultural norms and values of Persian society. Proverbs have transcended time and geographical boundaries, emerging as reservoirs of cultural insights and linguistic richness. Tannenbaum and Silva's seminal work attests to the cultural profundity of proverbs, emphasizing their capacity to encapsulate cultural ethos within linguistic expressions (Tannenbaum & Silva, 2007).

One of the primary advantages of this approach is that it facilitates a deeper understanding of the language within its cultural context. Proverbs' dual linguistic-cultural nature has drawn attention to their integration into language education. By exposing learners to the rich cultural heritage of Persian through proverb stories, they can gain insights into the customs, traditions, and beliefs that underpin the language. Moreover, proverb stories make language learning more engaging and motivating, as learners can easily relate to the characters and situations depicted in them, even when facing challenges in their studies.

Furthermore, Persian proverb stories provide a more natural and authentic learning experience. Language learning involves more than memorizing words and grammar rules; it

requires understanding the context in which the language is used. Proverb stories offer learners a glimpse into real-life situations and a better grasp of the language's nuances.

In conclusion, this article aims to inspire language teachers and learners to explore innovative approaches to Persian language instruction by leveraging its rich cultural heritage. By incorporating proverb stories into language instruction, we intend to create an enjoyable, effective, and culturally enriching learning experience for Persian learners. The subsequent sections will delve into the theoretical background of using proverbs and their stories in language teaching and learning. We will introduce a range of popular Persian proverb stories from the book “The Proverbs Stories” by Dr. Hasan Zolfagari and provide examples of how they can be utilized for language instruction, including exercises and activities to practice language skills. Additionally, we will discuss the challenges and limitations of this approach, along with suggestions to overcome them. Finally, we will explore the potential benefits of our approach and propose avenues for further research.

THE MAIN RESULTS AND FINDINGS

In this study, the effectiveness of using Persian proverb stories in language instruction for teaching Persian to foreigners was evaluated, aiming to gather data on the potential benefits and challenges of this approach. The results indicate that incorporating Persian proverb stories in language instruction can significantly enhance language acquisition and cultural understanding among Persian language learners, while also increasing their motivation to learn the language.

Integration of Culture and Language Learning: Our study aligns with the foundational principle that language acquisition is most effective when immersed in its cultural milieu. By showcasing the potential of leveraging folk literature, particularly Persian proverb stories, we have created an immersive language-learning experience. This approach resonates with contemporary language education philosophies that emphasize the integral role of cultural comprehension in language acquisition.

Proverbs as Effective Pedagogical Tools: The success of our method underscores the suitability of proverb stories as pedagogical tools. The simplicity and memorability of proverbs, combined with their cultural resonance, have been harnessed to augment reading and comprehension skills, improve translation proficiencies, and provide learners with insights into Persian customs and traditions. This reaffirms the significance of incorporating cultural elements into language learning curricula.

Enhancing Critical Thinking and Interpretation: By incorporating thought-provoking questions following each story, learners are prompted to engage in critical thinking and delve deeply into the underlying themes and messages embedded in the stories. This cultivates a profound connection with the material, encouraging learners to explore the contextual factors that

shape the application of specific proverbs. This approach not only facilitates language acquisition but also nurtures analytical aptitudes.

Contextual Learning and Real-World Application: Our method provides exercises that contextualize the utilization of proverbs within real-world scenarios, bridging the gap between language instruction and practical application. Learners not only grasp linguistic components but also gain insights into the appropriate usage of acquired expressions in authentic situations. This aspect of our approach holds broad implications for learners transitioning to real-life conversations and interactions.

Transferability to Other Languages and Cultures: While our study focuses on the Persian language, the methodology we have proposed exhibits potential applicability across diverse languages and cultural settings. The utilization of proverbs as cultural artifacts encapsulating linguistic nuances and societal values can be adapted to various languages, thereby enriching the language learning journey with cross-cultural insights.

Future Prospects and Expanding the Methodology: The innovative nature of our research sets the stage for further exploration. Our intent to develop a comprehensive educational resource signifies our commitment to refining and expanding this pedagogical approach. As we progress towards the publication of a book based on our method, its impact on the realm of language education is anticipated to be substantial.

Contributions to Language Education Theory: Our study contributes to the evolving landscape of language education by illustrating the potency of infusing folklore into language instruction. This symbiotic fusion of linguistic elements and cultural context offers a holistic perspective on language learning, potentially influencing future theories and methodologies within the field.

Overall, the findings of this study suggest that using Persian proverb stories in language instruction can be an effective and engaging teaching tool for foreign language learners. However, language instructors should carefully select and adapt appropriate stories to suit the needs of different learners and be prepared to invest additional time and effort into incorporating these stories into language instruction. Future research could explore the potential effectiveness of different types of stories, such as fables or myths, in language instruction and investigate the benefits and challenges of using technology to enhance the learning experience for foreign language learners.

For the Teaching and Learning Task (TTC) of teaching language through proverb stories, the following steps can be followed:

1. Objective: The objective is to improve language proficiency through the use of proverb stories.

2. Target Audience: The target audience is intermediate-level language learners (level B1 or B2).
3. Materials: Prepare a collection of Persian proverb stories, a worksheet, and an audio recording of the proverb story.
4. Procedure: Introduce the proverb story, analyze the meaning and usage of the proverb, and apply the proverb in context through activities and exercises.
5. Assessment: Assess learners' understanding through quizzes, presentations, and written assignments that require the application of proverbs in context.
6. Worksheet: Develop exercises and activities related to the proverb story, such as fill-in-the-blank questions, matching exercises, and writing prompts.
7. Answer Key: Provide an answer key for the worksheet to facilitate self-assessment and feedback.

These steps can guide the process of teaching Persian to foreigners using Persian proverb stories. It is essential to remember to introduce the proverb story, provide cultural context, analyze the meaning and usage of the proverb, apply it in various contexts through activities, and assess learners' understanding. The worksheet and answer key can serve as valuable resources for learners to practice and self-assess their progress.

Teachers can also adapt the teaching approach and materials based on the needs of their learners. Additionally, they have to consider exploring the effectiveness of different types of stories, such as fables or myths, in language instruction, and investigate the potential benefits and challenges of incorporating technology to enhance the learning experience for foreign language learners.

By following these steps and continuously refining the methodology, teachers can create a dynamic and engaging learning environment that promotes language acquisition, cultural understanding, and critical thinking skills among Persian language learners.

To evaluate the effectiveness of incorporating Persian proverb stories in language instruction, it is essential to employ appropriate assessment methods. Several approaches can be utilized to measure the impact of these stories on language learning outcomes. The following assessment methods are commonly used to assess the effectiveness:

Language Proficiency Assessments: Standardized language proficiency tests or assessments can be administered to evaluate learners' language skills before and after the incorporation of Persian proverb stories. These assessments cover areas such as reading, writing, listening, and speaking, allowing for a comprehensive evaluation of language proficiency improvement.

Vocabulary and Grammar Assessments: Specific tests focusing on vocabulary and grammar can be designed to assess learners' understanding and usage of vocabulary and grammatical

structures related to Persian proverb stories. These assessments help determine the acquisition and application of new vocabulary and grammatical concepts.

Cultural Understanding Assessments: Assessments aimed at measuring learners' cultural understanding and awareness of Persian culture, values, and traditions can be employed. Written or oral assignments that require learners to analyze and reflect on the cultural aspects presented in the proverb stories can provide valuable insights into the impact on learners' cultural understanding.

Learner Feedback and Surveys: Gathering feedback from learners through surveys or interviews can offer valuable insights into their perceptions of the effectiveness of incorporating Persian proverb stories. This qualitative data allows for an understanding of learners' engagement, motivation, and perceived impact on their language learning experience.

Classroom Observations: Observing learners during language instruction sessions where Persian proverb stories are incorporated provides an opportunity to assess learners' participation, engagement, and interactions related to the stories. These observations can provide valuable data on the impact of the stories on learners' language skills and overall engagement.

Long-term Retention Assessments: Follow-up assessments conducted after a certain period can evaluate the long-term retention of language skills and cultural understanding acquired through the use of Persian proverb stories. These assessments help determine the sustainability of the benefits gained from incorporating these stories.

By employing a combination of these assessment approaches, a comprehensive evaluation of the effectiveness of incorporating Persian proverb stories in language instruction can be achieved. It is important to select assessment methods that align with the specific learning goals, instructional context, and target language proficiency level.

CONCLUSION

This study investigated the effectiveness of using Persian proverb stories in language instruction for teaching Persian to foreigners, as well as the potential benefits and challenges of this approach. The results of the study suggest that incorporating Persian proverb stories into language instruction can be an effective way to enhance language acquisition and cultural understanding in foreign language learners. This approach has the potential to increase learner motivation and engagement and to improve the overall quality of language instruction. By incorporating cultural context and folk literature into language instruction, learners can gain a deeper understanding of the language and culture they are studying, leading to more effective language acquisition. Future research could explore the potential effectiveness of different types of stories, such as fables or myths, in language instruction, and could investigate the potential benefits and challenges of using technology to enhance the learning experience for foreign language

learners. Additionally, future studies could investigate the effectiveness of using stories in language instruction for different populations, such as children or refugees. Our study found that this method was highly effective in teaching Persian to both Persian and non-Persian speakers. In addition, this study offers a fresh perspective on language instruction by integrating Persian literature and culture into language learning and has the potential to inspire similar approaches in other language classrooms.

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