

VECU project, part „Proverbs“.

11. Final remarks.

The confrontation of proverbs in different European languages with reference proverbs permitted to compare proverbs of Germanic, Romance and Slavonic origin.

The evaluation demonstrated a high correspondence of contents, the metaphors being different in many cases. This confirms the result of other studies (2).

The Gaelic and the Yiddish proverbs show less correspondence with the other compared languages; therefore we abstained to compare them with the reference proverbs and replaced it by a confrontation with the proverbs of adjoining countries.

As to the contents many Yiddish proverbs seem to comfort people in critical situations, often witty and intelligent; on the other hand, in most European languages educational purpose seems to prevail.

Looking for the reason of the high level of correspondence, we have to take into account the Greek and Roman culture, but also the roots of Jewish and Christian religion.

Over centuries education had been greatly influenced by international religious authorities, in some countries even after the introduction of compulsory school attendance, until the beginning 20th century (14).

Also the weekly sermons at church gave opportunity to use proverbs of the Holy Gospel and wisdom of every day speech, like it is known from Martin Luther and Abraham a Sancta Clara in Vienna.

The Latin language, which was the international link between European scientists and intellectuals, was very useful for distribution of culture, proverbs included.

This result helps to speak of a European culture.

Whether this correspondence can be found in countries outside Europe as well, would be subject of a follow up project. In case this research would have a positive result, the role of every day experience and wisdom for the origin of proverbs must be important.

Proverbs had been proved for centuries as effective method to transfer cultural values; nowadays their importance for education, however, seems to be low.

The rather good knowledge of proverbs of adult people and elder students is certainly the consequence of the introduction of proverbs into every day speech.

However, we see on posters and in every day TV, that short impressive wordings have a good chance also nowadays, to send messages to the people.

Discussions with friends convinced us, that also in business life new wordings are created and used, which seem to be „modern“ proverbs.

Pedagogues and parents should be conscious of the chance of proverbs even today, in case they replace a teaching by a funny, witty character to transmit experience of life and cultural values.

Let`s be creative!