

# Impact of Social Networks on The Use of Proverbs

**Prof. Dr. Nataša Jakop**

Postgraduate School ZRC SAZU, Slovenia

## Abstract

Proverbs as a genre of folklore and a carrier intangible cultural heritage are frequently used in various types of social networks. Yet the use of these figurative language of social media is not well researched and understood. We sought to explain how and why people use proverbs or their variants and modifications on social networks by evaluating their usage in corpus, covering ~200 million words from tweets, forum posts, news, comments, Wikipedia, blogs and blog comments in contemporary Slovenian. The parameters we took into account in a corpus-based linguistic analysis are: the type and specifics of social media, the characteristics of the social network user (public profile, gender, etc.), the frequency of use and familiarity of proverbs, as well as their pragmatic functions within the context of a social network (advising, warning, criticizing, encouraging, expressing feelings, etc.). Our preliminary findings show that the use of proverbs is the most noticeable on Twitter, even though this type of social media has a quite limited number of characters. And also, the emphasizing and spreading socio-political and culturally relevant messages by means of proverbs is perceptible on Twitter. In the paper, we analyze which factors have an impact on the choice of proverbs and we try to explain why. The empirical analysis is focused on proverbs with the component of the semantic field of economy: wealth and poverty. The findings will help uncover and understand some general and universal reasons for using proverbs on social media.

**Keywords:** figurative language, phraseology and paremiology, pragmatics, Slovenian language, wealth and poverty