



Representation of culture in the process of teaching a foreign language from the point of view of Russian linguists



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ABSTRACT

Language is the main tool for learning and mastering the outside world. It also acts as the main means of communication between people. In this way, language makes it possible to know other cultures. In recent decades, the cultural perspective has found an important place in language teaching. In addition to language, learning culture is also necessary and has become an important goal in foreign language teaching. This article examines the views of well-known Russian linguists such as Bakhtin, Lotman, Ter-Minasova, Vereshagin, Safonova, Vorobiov, Furmanova, and others on the importance and role of culture in the process of teaching foreign languages. At present, the purpose of language teaching is not only limited to language and communication skills, but also intercultural competencies.

Because international contacts are constantly expanding, language learners are increasingly meeting people from different cultures. The purpose of this article is to reveal the importance of culture in foreign language teaching, to determine the role of foreign language teachers and their professional competencies, and also to determine the role of textbooks in including cultural concepts and topics in the educational process to represent culture. The language teacher must not only teach the learner the ability to understand a foreign language, but also the ability to understand the culture of the language being taught.

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1- Introduction

Previously, language teaching focused on the structure and form of language, and described language in terms of various systems, for example, from the point of view of grammar, and these systems were the subject of instruction. In 1970's, the use of communication was emphasized and attention was paid to the need and ability of the individual to use language for the purpose of communication. In modern societies, with the expansion of relations with other countries, special attention is paid to the study not only of language, but also the development of the ability to understand a common and different culture of the native language and the culture of the target language.

The concept of "language" has many definitions. In the Russian dictionary's Dal language is defined as: "Language is the set of all the words of the people and their correct combination to convey their thoughts" (Dal, 1980-1978, language entry).

Akhmanova defines language as follows: "Language is one of the main semiotic systems, which is the main and most important means of communication between members of a given human set, which is also a means of developing thought, transmitting cultural and historical traditions from one generation to another" (Akhmanova, 1966, language entry).

In almost all of the definitions of "language", everyone agrees that language is a means of communicating and expressing thoughts and is a purely communicative process. Thanks to the language, the transfer of culture from the past to the future is possible. Culture is transmitted through language and distinguishes the individual's ability from other beings.

It can be argued that language is both a product of culture and an important component of it and a condition for its existence. Ter-Minasova believes that "language preserves cultural values in words, grammar, idioms, proverbs and expressions, folklore, literature and science, in written and spoken language" (Ter-Minasova, 2000, 15). Culture is the product of texts and messages with which people exchange, from this perspective, culture can be considered as the automatic connection of humanity.

According to Humboldt (1971), the three main concepts of language, culture, and thought have a dialectical relationship: language is not separate from thought, and it is these cultures that understand language. Rather, it stems from the culture that expresses that language. But according to Foucault, "there is a dialectical and two-way interaction between culture and science." Culture as a whole dominates science and science is influenced by the dominant context of culture" (Parsania, 1390, 50).

"Due to the culture-oriented nature of the language, it is one of the key points in foreign language teaching. The role of language in the transmission of culture is so obvious that no language without culture can be sustainable. Language and culture are interdependent, and the ability of any language learner depends on his or her level of awareness and mastery of culture. Ignoring the cultural factors of language leads to the occurrence of linguistic error" (Ebrahimsharifi and Valipour, 1398, 255).

Russia has paid special attention to language education in recent decades. The purpose of this article is to show the necessity of teaching culture in the process of language teaching from the perspective of Russian linguists and researchers, and we seek to answer the

question of what characteristics language teachers and textbooks should have in order to use cultural components in the language teaching process.

2. Literature Review

Undoubtedly, various articles have been written about the relationship between language and culture. Rostambeyk Tafreshi and Ramezani in article entitled "The role of culture in foreign language teaching" (2012), while presenting some theoretical issues, reviewing some researches of English linguists, have discussed the importance of language teaching in the cultural context of the target language.

Dahmardeh, in his English-language essay entitled "Cultural Competence: Interculture, Transculture, and Metaculture" (2020), considers the main purpose of language learning to be the development of effective communication skills and understanding of linguistic or cultural differences. Language learners' cultural competencies need to be developed, and this also enables them to have new perceptions of their own culture and that of others. The purpose of this article is to address the issue of cultural competence as one of the most important aspects of language teaching as well as its development over time.

Dahmardeh also in another article entitled "An analysis of the representation of cultural content in English coursebooks" (2021), by analyzing the cultural content of English textbooks in Iranian schools, concludes that despite the large number of cultural elements in these textbooks, the culture of origin has received much more attention than international and global cultures and has addressed the consequences of imbalances in cultural representation.

Babazadeh in the article entitled "Language, culture, terms and their

relationship with foreign language teaching" (2009), examines terms and interpretations in language teaching as one of the main curriculum that contains the richest cultural information.

3. Method

In the present study, the author examines the relationship between language and culture and its importance in foreign language teaching from the perspective of Russian linguists and researchers in a library manner and by studying the theories of great thinkers such as Bakhtin, Lotman, Vereshagin, Safonova and others. He examines the role of language teachers and textbooks in transmitting cultural concepts to the learner. The quotations of Russian scholars have been translated from the original language by the author.

4. Discussion

The language of any nation is its historical memory embodied in words. The mother tongue is the soul of the nation and is its main and most obvious sign. In language and through language, important characteristics such as national psychology, national nature, their unique national ideas and works, their artistic creation, ethics and spirituality emerge. Words are the key to communication between people of different cultures. Language is the broadest structure in national culture.

Emphasizing the spirituality of language, the famous Russian linguist Ushinsky writes: "People have been expressing their thoughts and feelings through language for millennia. The nature of the country and the history of the people, which is reflected in the human soul, is expressed in words. Man is destroyed, but the word he creates is an immortal, infinite and indescribable treasure of the national language ... To express our thoughts and feelings, we not

only inherit the word from our ancestors, but inherit these thoughts and feelings” (Graudina and Shiryaev, 1998, 52).

The ecology of language and, more broadly, the ecology of culture is one of the most pressing tasks of contemporary society. "Preserving the cultural environment is no less important than preserving the environment. As much as man needs nature for his biological life, he also needs a cultural environment for moral and spiritual life and dependence on his mother tongue..." (Oganesyanyan, 1998: 89).

Most scholars believe that when teaching a foreign language, the presence of socio-cultural components in the content is important, which includes knowledge of national realities, the most important historical events, great figures of literature and art, science and technology, and a national perspective of the world. Modern educational research argues that linguistic-socio-cultural competence is "one's readiness to understand other people's culture, having a positive attitude towards it, understanding its facts, ethics, values and other components through the lens of one's own culture are different from using a foreign language” (Kostikova, 2011, 83).

It is important to note that there are a number of theoretical models in Russia for the study of language and culture that indicate a dynamic relationship. Here are some models of studying language and culture from the point of view of Russian linguists that Volkova has also mentioned:

Safonova (2010) is one of the Russian linguists who has studied language and culture and considers foreign language teaching in close connection with the ethnic, social, religious and cultural spectrum of the target language country.

He believes that a foreign language is a tool for socio-cultural education of language learners. He also pays special attention to the mother tongue and argues that when studying a foreign language, the mother tongue provides an overview of the culture of the language being studied.

Vorobiov (1993), another Russian linguist, has also paid special attention to the study of language and culture. He has compiled a list of socio-cultural vocabulary through which one can understand the culture of the target language. Vorobiov believes that language carries cultural information; Thus, language learning enhances the socio-cultural skills of language learners. Unlike Safonova, Vorobiov does not consider the influence of the indigenous language and culture when learning a foreign language.

For the study of language and culture, Furmanova (1994) considers three aspects: cognitive, communicative, and axiomatic: she considers the cognitive aspect as a system of knowledge about cultural facts that the study of culture should be based on the contents of the socio-cultural dictionary. The communicative aspect includes the mastery of culture through intercultural communication, considering several narratives in the field of communication that favorably affect the joint study of language and culture. The axiomatic aspect means being aware of the value system and traditions of another culture. In his model, Furmanova considers the study of indigenous culture as an important component in understanding the culture of the target country.

Sysoyev (2004) presents a theoretical model of the subject of the dialogue of cultures through a foreign language. He tries to solve the problems of study of language and culture with transforming

language learners from racist to cultural dialogue in foreign language and culture. A foreign language has tremendous opportunities to borrow from other cultures. Learning a foreign language not only introduces another culture, but also introduces one to global values and, consequently, cultural knowledge. Studying the culture of the target country is important for developing the ability to communicate in the target language.

In the second half of the twentieth century, cultural traditions in the study of foreign languages expanded, and linguists such as Lasera (1947) also noted the importance of national culture. Accordingly, Lasera believed that "information about culture constitutes the main wealth of education. The teacher should not be limited to the traditional purposes of the language. Without resorting to cultural phenomena, the study of language becomes poor and is reduced to the study of phonetic, lexical and grammatical phenomena" (Lasera, 1947: 201).

Later, the idea of the mutual study of language and culture was reflected in the works of other Russian linguists who believed that in the process of teaching foreign languages, the culture of the target country should be considered. From the beginning of the 1990s, serious efforts began for the joint study of language and culture and the development of methods for learning foreign languages.

The linguistic-cultural approach was presented by Vereshagin and Kostomarov in the book *Language and Culture*, which included the need to examine culture as a complementary aspect along with phonology, vocabulary, and grammar. They suggested the main source of linguistic-cultural information, the lexical combination of the word: equivalent and unequal lexical concepts, contextual words, terms and interpretations. Issues

related to the relationship between language and culture, and attention to this interrelationship are profound in the process of learning a foreign language. In their view: "When a person learns a language, he simultaneously penetrates in a new national culture, and receives the extraordinary spiritual richness preserved in the language under study (feminine)" (Vereshagin and Kostomarov, 1990, 4).

Cultural dialogue or the dialogue of cultures is a concept that has been widely used in twentieth-century newspapers and articles. The most common interpretation of the dialogue of cultures introduces this phenomenon as a process of interaction, the influence of different historical or contemporary cultures, and certain forms of coexistence. It should be noted that the idea of intercultural dialogue is not new, but has been addressed in Bakhtin's work and has been significantly deepened and expanded in Bibler's work.

What Mikhail Bakhtin has said about the issue of intercultural dialogue is still relevant today. For Bakhtin, the dialogue of cultures means the ability to evaluate the cultural realities of the past from the position of today. Bakhtin, for example, argued that "neither Shakespeare himself nor all his contemporaries knew the great Shakespeare we know today" (Bakhtin, 1979, 59), and this is not the result of modernization or distortion, but the fact that "There is something in his work that "neither he nor his contemporaries could consciously understand and evaluate in the context of the culture of their time" (Bakhtin, 1979, 60).

Bakhtin's other argument from the dialogue of cultures is also noteworthy: "There is a very one-sided and therefore erroneous notion in better understanding the foreign culture, that you have to forget yourself, move into the foreign culture, and look at the world from the point of view of this foreign culture..." (Bakhtin,

1979, 52).

Rejecting this one-sided view, Bakhtin argues that "one thought reveals its depth in the face of another thought, as if a kind of dialogue begins between them that overcomes the isolation and one-sidedness of these meanings and cultures." We raise new questions for the culture of the "other", which was not raised for ourselves, we seek answers to these questions in the foreign culture, and the foreign culture answers us and opens its new dimensions to us... In the dialogue of cultures, they do not merge, each maintains its own unity and transparency, and both are mutually enriched" (Bakhtin, 1979, 61).

This understanding of the interaction of different cultures and the dialogue of cultures, according to Bakhtin's definition, does not evaluate the excellence of the adapted cultures, but determines the authenticity of each of the cultures by their adaptation.

"According to many linguists, language cannot be separated from culture, and these two components are inseparable. Every language is formed in a specific cultural context and every culture includes a natural language at its center, so there can be no denying the close relationship between language and culture... Of course, the collision of two different cultures should not be considered as a condemnation, but on the contrary, depth of the meaning of a concept becomes apparent only when confrontation with other cultures takes place and intercultural conversation takes place. It is at this time that the closed and one-sided space of meaning disappears and a wider view and a deeper culture is reproduced" (Pakatchi, 2014, 36).

The term "dialogue of cultures" in the sense used by Bakhtin seems to be more successful than the term "intercultural

approach" found in other works. The term "dialogue" emphasizes the difference and independence of each culture; A culture that is in contact with another. This understanding of the interaction of different cultures seems very significant for the whole concept of education in a foreign cultural environment.

On the one hand, national absolutism, which leads to the isolation of national culture, eliminates. On the other hand, it allows any culture to maintain its national identity. This approach emphasizes the importance of each culture and also makes it possible to look at a non-indigenous culture, not as an "alien", but as an "other" and to avoid common misconceptions about an "alien" culture.

The main way to change learners' perspectives on the other culture is to identify commonalities in indigenous and non-indigenous cultures and to enter the specific national world of the "other" culture. Familiarity with the culture of the "other" must be based on a solid foundation of national-indigenous culture. Only by using this principle can the next step be taken to reach an emotional understanding and experience of another cultural phenomenon or reality.

When confronted with the "other", which is not similar to the culture of the "self", the culture can initially be perceived as "alien" and cause negative attitudes. "Contact between people with different cultures and traditions will reduce their misunderstandings and stereotypes about each other and will increase understanding and compatibility between them" (Rezaian, Ghahhari and Dahmardeh, 1396, 175).

It goes without saying that the state of cultural dialogue should not be understood only in a positive sense: often the result of this process is the

disappearance of a weaker culture under the pressure of another that develops more. As a result, cultural dialogue is possible positively if a number of conditions are met: equality of all cultures, recognition of the right to difference for cultures, and respect for the culture of the "other."

The concept of cultural dialogue is related to the phenomenon of globalization, events and features of intercultural communication in our time. Accordingly, it is important to refer to the issue of preserving cultural diversity, which is cultural integration at the acute inter-regional scale especially in the period of imitation of the West or the United States.

According to Bibler, the phenomenon of culture "permeates all the crucial events of life and consciousness of the people of our century" (Bibler, 1990, 261). Bibler, like Bakhtin (1975), argues that it is through dialogue with other cultures that personal and public treasures of knowledge, skills, and the ability to understand codes and symbols that reflect the historical meaning of each phenomenon are created. This meaning, in turn, is the main criterion of aesthetic-social, psychological and cultural behavior.

In their theory, these scholars reflected an important fact in historical and cultural understanding that, based on self-knowledge and subsequent solidarity with the "other," a cultural dialogue begins, which subsequently expands to international relations. For Bibler, culture is "a kind of contact between real people on the horizon of one's communication" (Bibler, 1990, 289). The concept of "other" is key to Bakhtin's philosophy, because in his view one knows oneself only in relation to the "other" as one should.

Bibler and Bakhtin, in their theory, point to the nature of humanitarian thinking: Humanitarian thinking invites one to the "other" to seek knowledge through a common meaning in cultural discourse. Revealing this meaning determines the nature of the issues affecting personality development (Bibler, 1991, 37).

As a result, the concept of cultural dialogue is realized in the process of interpreting and understanding the "other" and oneself. It should be added that the dialogue of cultures is a concept of modernity that reflects the century and the process of new and general changes in culture and manifests itself as a new form of 21st century culture. Yuri Lotman's works also show examples of adaptation to present cultural phenomena on a micro and macro scale.

Lotman has always sought a metalanguage to describe culture as a system, arguing: "If you take an arbitrary position and describe from that point of view a certain amount of truth, then that situation itself is inevitably the result of the whole truth under study" (Kuzovkina, 2013, 281) and he meant that because we describe phenomena in the language of our culture, distortions inevitably appear.

It was in this direction that comparative studies came to his attention. In "Some Problems of Comparative Study of Art Texts" Discovered in 2005 by Staff of the Estonian Lotman Semiotic Heritage Foundation, Lotman points out some theoretical aspects of comparative studies: "Every culture is a set of codes and requires at least one to communicate. Share these codes. A complete and adequate understanding of the message occurs less frequently and is more a reflection of it" (Kuzovkina, 2013, 279).

As Konrad, a Russian expert on

comparative literature, writes in East and West; "Humans have always been in contact with each other in the field of culture, despite all the conflicts, and without this contact they could not have continued" (Konrad, 1927, 429).

Now that we are familiar with some of the views of Russian linguists on the relationship between language and culture and the necessity for culture education for language learners, we turn to the role of foreign language teachers in transmitting culture when teaching a foreign language.

Modern teaching methods attach great importance to increasing the professional competence of teachers, and modern educational standards emphasize the need to review traditional teaching methods. Education systems in developing countries are experiencing significant changes, including the standardization of government exams.

Nowadays, a foreign language teacher must upgrade his / her professional competencies and provide the ground for the development of language learners' personality and their connection with society. A foreign language teacher should not only strive to teach the learner to understand the foreign text, but should also strive to understand the learner in the phenomena common and different between the native culture and the target language culture. The inclusion of cultural information in the process of teaching a foreign language is essential. Some linguists emphasize the importance of focusing on the mother tongue when studying a foreign language and believe that knowing a foreign language is practically impossible without knowing the native language and culture.

Foreign language teachers usually show cultural components with detailed information about the history and

geography of the country, but this will not be a complete picture of the culture of that foreign language. Literature, in turn, has the potential to have a special effect on the transmission of culture, because it can even convey ideas that have no logical proof. For this reason, literature courses, in addition to their specific educational purposes, can provide a means for language learners to become familiar with cultural facts.

According to linguists, each language reflects a different worldview, and each nation has its own system of concepts, so it is necessary to include in the educational process texts from the lives of the people and the country of the language being studied. They have proposed a plan for learning the language, including historical events, geographical information, customs and traditions of the country under study. Therefore, in this method, the main focus is on interest in different cultures. "Language learners should be familiar with the history of countries and the most important issues of other language cultures. This helps them to broaden their horizons. Paying attention to culture develops communication skills, imagination, patience and respect for the culture of others" (Carmelina, 2019, 213).

Foreign language instructors can significantly improve the level of language learners' learning by upgrading their professional competencies and try to solve educational problems by using creative ideas and modern technologies. Thus, the most important task of a language teacher is to acquaint language learners with the cultural characteristics of the target country, which at the same time allows a deeper understanding of the national cultural characteristics of the language learner. To achieve this goal, it is necessary to use different types of educational materials: authoritative texts that show the lifestyle and behavior of

indigenous speakers, customs, traditions and special features of their thinking. The use of literary works, literary translations of poetry, films, teaching aids, etc. are also considered.

The condition for intercultural learning requires the ability to accept the phenomena of another culture. The teacher should encourage the learner to observe the foreign culture and compare its phenomena with the phenomena of their native culture.

Hughes (1986: 167-168) The most practical methods of teaching culture developed by qualified instructors, which instructors need to use when teaching a foreign language; It looks like this:

1. Comparison. Teacher the phenomena of a foreign culture that is different from the culture of language learners; Introduces. Teachers and language learners discuss these differences, which can make it difficult to interact with a foreign culture.

2. Cultural assimilation. The teacher helps the learners to adapt to the conditions of the foreign culture. Cultural assimilation is the brief description of an incident in intercultural interaction that language learners may not have well understood. The teacher gives the learner four possible explanations from which to choose the right option. If they make the wrong choice, they need to look for additional information to help them reach the right conclusion.

3. Cultural capsules. This method is similar to cultural assimilation, but it is not a written exercise. The teacher describes the fundamental difference between the customs of indigenous and foreign cultures. Differences are visualized and the teacher asks questions that encourage learners to talk.

4. Theater. With the help of the teacher, language learners play scenes that need to

be interpreted in foreign culture. The cause of this problem is usually determined in the last scene.

5. Physical reaction. Learners listen to and respond to verbal instructions.

6. Newspapers. Many cultural aspects not found in textbooks; They are presented in newspapers. Students compare foreign newspapers with their own newspapers, for example; Titles, advertisements and weather forecasts, etc.

7. Movies. Films convey cultural information and contribute to lesson diversity. There are usually good films in every country that deal with cultural issues. Also, the films collected by the instructor on his travels can lead to cultural imaginations.

8. Culture Island. The classroom is decorated with posters, photos and bulletin boards as an "island" of culture and is regularly updated to stimulate interest and ask new questions.

But how important is the textbook in transmitting culture while teaching a foreign language? The foreign language textbook significantly influences language learners' interest in a foreign language. Many educators use textbooks in teaching and do not consider it logical or principled to leave them out, as it makes learning more coherent and effective, but some linguists do not acknowledge the absolute focus on the textbook in the teaching process and believe that the main place of the textbook is related to traditional education as well as government curricula with an emphasis on written education and standardization.

In their view, textbooks, while promoting educational justice, may restrict teaching freedom. However, learning a foreign language almost always requires a textbook for written exercises

and skills development. The content of the textbook should be accurate and up-to-date, and commensurate with the ability of the learner.

Culture cannot be fully described simply by a list of cultural facts in a textbook, because culture is a dynamic phenomenon. Separate information on geography and history is necessary but not sufficient for intercultural learning purposes.

Images in textbooks alone can convey a lot of information and express the content of the text. Therefore, educational images play an essential role as information transfer tools in language and culture textbooks. The role of a foreign language textbook, in addition to language teaching, is to provide knowledge and insight about culture and can provide a wide range of intercultural learning content. The summary of the various theories of Russian researchers is that textbooks to promote intercultural understanding; Must have the following features:

Culture education should be as important as vocabulary and grammar education and focus on the intercultural competencies of language learners.

2. The textbook should describe socio-political relations and issues in a realistic way, both in the target language community and in the language community.

3. The textbook should contain sufficient information about the history and geography of the destination country.

4. The textbook should encourage learners to learn about culture and prepare learners for possible study trips.

5. Conclusion

With the expansion of international

cooperation and communication between peoples, globalization and integration of processes in different areas of life of the world community, there is a need for intensive development of intercultural exchanges. Under these circumstances, the diversity of languages and cultures should not hinder communication between representatives of different societies. Accordingly, one of the main tasks in studying a foreign language is to develop intercultural competence, which is to anticipate a caring attitude towards other cultural norms, accepting their characteristics as a positive factor in developing and enriching one's spiritual world.

The philosophical and methodological foundations of this approach are such an understanding of dialogue that none of the worldview systems are excluded, but coexist and interact with it. The only sensible way to truly unite different cultures is through dialogue. Dialogue organizes human thinking. Thus dialogue is a deep understanding and realization of culture. All cultures form a whole in the common human heritage. As a result, people's cultural identity is renewed and enriched in contact with other peoples' traditions and values. Culture, without dialogue and exchange of experience; It disappears in isolation and dies.

Modern methods of language teaching need to be integrated with the culture of people who speak the language. This approach has become one of the main methods of language teaching, because language without culture training can not lead to the formation of complete communication skills. In the modern world, socio-economic and cultural relations lead to increased cultural exchanges and direct communication between government institutions, social groups, social movements and individuals of different countries. The main condition for the effectiveness of intercultural

cooperation is mutual understanding, dialogue of cultures, tolerance and respect for the culture of the "other".

One of the theories that has the greatest practical potential for the possibility of developing higher education is the theory of intercultural dialogue. The conditions and level required for the professional competence of teachers, with mastery of foreign languages and norms of intercultural communication and the use of textbooks with cultural components, are its integral features.

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