

Linguistic Peculiarities and Main Problems of Intercultural Communication

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Abstract. The present article is devoted to investigation of the problems of intercultural communication as well as to the ways of solving these problems. The notions “culture”, “intercultural” are deeply analyzed in the article. The author enlightens the linguistic peculiarities of the process of intercultural communication between representatives of different lingual cultures.

Key words: culture, intercultural communication, speech formula, native speaker, international, phrases, speech act.

Introduction

Actuality and urgency of the theme of investigation. The modern world linguistics pays more attention to linguocultural problems of languages in the process of communication of their native speakers. The linguocultural aspect of language learning has obtained the top position in world linguoscience. Problems concerning the use of speech formulas, translation of set expressions from one language into another, training of specialists of intercultural communication demand deeper and wider investigations from linguocultural point of view. It is very important in the process of world globalization.

In world scientific centres and linguistic schools of the world more attention is paid to speech patterns of international dialogues, styles of speech acts, pragmatic functions of set expressions. In this aspect lingual-cultural approach to the linguistic issues in the frame of international relations acquire special significance. Conditions of intercultural communication in the modern world, when a foreign language is a means of communication, comprehension, getting and gathering information demand different types of speech activity: speech etiquette and rules of polite communication. Modern international surrounding, economical and political integration into the world result in rising number of specialists in different spheres of science and technique who directly deal with foreign people in the frame of international scientific-technical relations, cultural and business affairs. All this points at the need in mastering foreign languages and speech etiquette.

The degree of study of the theme of investigation. The problems of speech etiquette were investigated by E.I. Belyaeva, E.M. Vereshagin, V.E. Goldin, V.V. Kolesov, A.A. Leontiev, S.S. Oganessian, N.I. Formanovskaya and others. The authors of many books on the problems of intercultural communication express similar idea that communication does not deal with just giving a piece of information but it is a result of productive thinking and solving definite problems or exchange of professional experience. Later, Wilhelm von Humboldt's idea that “Man lives in the world about him principally, indeed exclusively, as language presents it to him” [V. Humboldt, 1985, p. 31] was further promoted by many famous linguists all over the world. Among W. Humboldt's followers in the United States there are W.D. Whitney, J.W. Powell, F. Boas, E. Sapir and B.L. Whorf who made a great contribution to the conception of the inseparability of language and culture.

So, the last quarter of the 20th century is considered to be the period of intense study and establishment of Cultural Ethno-linguistics. One of the well-known linguists working in this field A. Wierzbicka has developed “the hypothesis of language universals” and has published a number of influential comparative works on semantic universals and conceptual distinctions in different languages: “English: Meaning and Culture” (2006); “Emotions Across Languages and Cultures: Diversity and Universals” (1999); “Understanding Cultures Through Their Key Words: English, Russian, Polish, German, Japanese” (1997); “Semantics, Culture and Cognition: Universal human

concepts in culture-specific configurations” (1992); “Cross-cultural Pragmatics: The semantics of human interaction” (1991). Another well known linguist J.W. Underhill explores the relationship between the linguistic worldview and its reflection and transformation in the individual world picture. J. Underhill in his books “Creating Worldviews: Language, Ideology & Metaphor” (2013) and in “Ethnolinguistics and Cultural Concepts: Truth, Love, Hate & War” deals with the problem of ethnolinguistics, cross-cultural linguistic analysis and the problem of cultural concepts (2012).

In Russia the researches on the problem of language and culture are also intensively developing. Suffice it to mention the names of such prominent linguists as N.F. Alefirenko, N.D. Arutyunova, S.G. Vorkachev, V.V. Vorobyov, V.I. Karasik, Yu.S. Stepanov and many others who have published a number of scientific works in the field of cultural linguistics.

The following Uzbek scientists have printed scientific issues dealing with the problems of culture and language: D.U. Ashurova, T.A. Bushuy, M.R. Galieva, A.E. Mamatov, N.Z. Nasrullaeva, G.H. Rahimov, M.I. Rasulova, Sh.S. Safarov, I.M. Tukhtasinov and others.

The following methods of the research were used: descriptive method, comparative method, componential analysis and cross-cultural analysis.

Discussion and Results

It is acknowledged that language and culture are closely connected with each other. The word “culture” appeared in Ancient Rome and it meant cultivation, processing, “cultivation” of the earth. However, a well-known ancient Roman orator Cicero used this notion in his philosophical works to denote “spiritual cultivation”. This meaning gradually became the core meaning, and the notion of “spiritual culture” has got recognition in world science.

A well-known anthropologist Edward Tylor was the first to give the definition of the notion “culture”, in his book “Primitive Culture” describes culture as a complex which consists of knowledge, beliefs, morality, law, custom and other features and habits acquired by a person being a part of society” [E. Tylor, 1971, p. 132].

B.S. Barnow says that “culture is a way of life of a group of people, the configuration of all of the more or less stereotyped patterns of learned behavior which are handed down from one generation to the next through means of language and imitation” [B.S. Barnow, 1973, p. 52]. P. Newmark remarks that culture is “the way of life and its manifestations that are peculiar to a community that uses a particular language as its means of expression” [P. Newmark, 1998, p. 94].

It should be mentioned here that in defining culture some scholars focus on material culture while others on human behaviour. Another scholar W. Goodenough explains culture in terms of participatory responsibilities of members of society. He states that “a society’s culture is made up of whatever it is one has to know or believe in order to operate in a manner acceptable to its members, and to do so in any role that they accept for any one of themselves” [W. Goodenough, 1957, p. 167].

C. Geertz determines culture as a system of symbolic meanings. In other words, “it is a semiotic system in which symbols function to communicate meaning from one mind to another. Cultural symbols encode a connection between a signifying form and a signaled meaning” [C. Geertz, 1973, p. 249]. According to the author, culture is characterized by the following four basic features:

- 1) culture is a kind of social inheritance in contrast to biological heritage;
- 2) culture is shared by the whole community, not belonging to any particular individual;
- 3) culture is a symbolic meaning system in which language is one of the most important factors;
- 4) culture is a unified system, the integral parts of which are closely related to one another [C. Geertz, 1973, p. 331-332].

Really, culture is a unique complex of features of every country which distinguish people according to their history, traditions and cultural background. Culture plays an important role both in humans’ life and society development. The integrative definition of culture contains three significant points. First, the term culture refers to a set of knowledge, people’s long life experience and different norms that are preserved in a definite society. Secondly, culture is a system of

cultural peculiarities which people share and transmit through everyday speech or interaction among each other in a certain society and pass it from one generation to another. Finally, culture encourages people to adapt to the environment they live in, unites people within one aim.

Culture has different edges: if one edge deals with people's traditions, beliefs and values, another one reflects cultural artifacts such as fashion, trends, pop music. Moreover, culture includes a number of verbal and non-verbal symbols. In order to understand any nation's culture we have to match its underlying set of beliefs and values that come out of people's way of thinking, living, communicating, interacting with each other and behaving in the frame of fixed social norms.

So, various definitions of culture can be given, but only being combined together, they can fully reveal the complicated content of culture. There were observed the following main approaches to the notion of culture:

1. National-cultural approach, which concentrates attention on nationally-specific characteristics of culture: national identity, customs, traditions, holidays, national mentality, behavior, etiquette.

2. Evaluative approach in which culture is treated as a set of spiritual values created by human beings. They see culture as a flow of ideas and other products of spiritual creativity. According N. Alefirenko, culture is the realization of the supreme values by cultivating high human virtues.

3. Social approach originating from the works by Yu. Manukhina (2006), N.B. Mechkovskaya (2000), E.S. Nechaeva and others regards culture as a special kind of social activity.

4. Normative approach describes culture as a set of rules, i.e. rules governing the lives of people, their lifestyle. The idea is also supported by J. Fishman (1999) and T.A. Chebotnikova (2011) who understand culture as an inherited collective memory, which is expressed in certain systems of prohibitions and regulations.

5. Functional approach which characterizes culture in terms of functions it performs in the society: informative, adaptive, communicative, regulative, normative, evaluative, integrative, social and others.

6. Textual approach which regards culture as a variety of texts, as a set of texts, as a mechanism of creating texts, to be exact. In other words, texts are considered the "flesh and blood" of culture.

7. Dialogic approach which presents culture as "dialogue of cultures". For instance, the dialogue between different Eastern and Western cultures, the dialogue between subcultures (youth and adults subcultures).

8. Cognitive approach regarding the culture system as a means of presenting, storing, and transferring sociocultural information in the process of human cognition. The representatives of this approach see culture as a system of knowledge shared by a cultural community which people entering a new culture, need to learn this knowledge to cope with their new environment.

9. Symbolic approach includes usage of symbols in describing culture. Culture is a "symbolic universe" some elements of which acquires a special ethnic sense and become symbols of nations.

10. Comparative and typological approaches presuppose cross-cultural analyses aimed to reveal nationally specific features of different nations, their national identity, lifestyle and behaviour.

Communication takes place in the frame of cultural norms which belong to a definite national culture. Cultural norms refer to a set of behavior that may appear in different situations. Cultural norms teach people to follow some particular beliefs. These beliefs may relate to behaviors, manners or expressions. E.g. how to accept guests, how to introduce you to another person or how to behave in a new society. These behavioral aspects differ in various cultures. The reason of such difference is explained by historical, cultural, religious, moral, social background of a definite nation or language speaking society.

Cultural values contain myths, legends, special parties, rituals that are passed on from one generation to another in the form of oral and written patterns. For example, there is a national holiday "Navruz", widely celebrated in Uzbekistan as a culture-related holiday. "Navruz" has a long

history which depicts Uzbek nation's rich traditions. Till present days Uzbek people wear national clothes, sing national songs, arrange parties which demonstrate people's long history, special cultural rituals and traditions connected with this holiday. So, culture is the most important conception that attributes people's identity. For example, "home" refers to a family place where people live together under one roof. In the Uzbek language the notion "home" has wider meaning. According to Uzbek traditions parents in their older age usually live with their sons while daughters leave parents' home after getting married. In most foreign countries young people prefer to live separately from their aged parents. This is accepted as a normal phenomenon. Even being single but getting puberty age, young boys and girls leave their parents' home in order to start independent life. This is one of the vivid examples of difference of national behavior and social norms of different nations, which are very important in the process of intercultural communication.

Cultural communication offers different formats of social interaction among people in society. It unites people within cultural norms and behavioral patterns. In many countries people try deal with foreigner in a polite way to demonstrate their cultural and social ethics. People from western and eastern parts of the world differ by ethnic recognition, way of thinking and mentality. But they are unique in terms of important humanity aspects like honesty, love and respect to each other, care and help. When a person visits a foreign country he or she feels cultural shock, but later understands how to communicate with native people and learn new social rules. Thus they get experience from the host society. People share their experience, knowledge about different cultures and traditions with the help of language units. So, culture is closely connected with language. Linguistics is the aspect in which people's culture is reflected and conveyed. Linguistics is connected with both nature of language system (phonetics, grammar, lexis, etc.) and process of communication. Language cannot be learnt and used apart of culture. It is important to learn a language within the context of its culture which depicts behaviors, mentality and social norms of language bearers. By learning a culture people get familiar with words, phrases and some idioms which are used by native speakers in definite situations. Intercultural aspect is a fundamental investigation of lingual and cultural processes of transferring various meanings between people.

Intercultural communication enriches a language with set expressions and phrases. If there is a good practice of culture-related knowledge, communication will get the aim both functionally and semantically. In particular, when we meet a foreigner we share thoughts basing on background knowledge and mentality, thus learning something new by accepting information from foreign partners. We learn new expressions, cultural phenomena and try to use them in grammatically and syntactically correct way. The more we face such situations, the more we improve our linguistic and cultural competence.

If we investigate the nature of intercultural communication we'll get introduced with the notion "intercultural speaker" – a person who is able to interact with people of another cultural background and comprehend foreign expressions both semantically and pragmatically. Intercultural speaker acts in the frame of diplomatic relationship and copes with tasks in a proper way.

Communication among people of different lingual cultures plays an important role in the development of linguistics, including comparative, typological, cognitive aspects. So, learning foreign languages by future specialists of intercultural discourse should also contain these aspects. Learning language basing only on grammar is a traditional way. In result, learners are not able to speak fluently and correctly due to this or that cultural context, because communication skills are more available to be developed in the environment where language is often used. In such environment we face culture and traditions of native speakers, start learning words, expressions or phrases which are often used and are closely connected with their cultural background. Language helps to understand people better and create favorable environment for them to communicate easily and properly.

Intercultural competence includes the following: knowledge and skills of a person who belongs to a definite social group or society.

So it is clear that language and culture are closely interconnected. Language plays the role of transmitter, “bridge” of culture, it conveys the heritage of national-cultural background from generation to generation for many centuries.

Language is a tool of intercultural communication and cannot exist apart of culture. It describes results of human activities in different spheres of their life: agricultural, social, spiritual, political, economical, etc. Language is a strong social instrument, which forms human gene in ethnos, represents a nation by preserving its culture, tradition, communicative sense and norms of speech acts.

In recent years scientific and technological progress and constant interests of human beings have opened new opportunities, ways and forms of communication and main effective aspects which bring to mutual understanding among people, create dialogues within intercultural communication, express tolerance and respect to representatives of various cultures and religious moralities. This refers to discussion of an important topic of intercultural communication.

Conclusion

The English language became one of the most important international means of communication and is used by millions of people for whom this language is not native. It develops not only political and economic benefit for English language world, but also demonstrates its culture for world nations.

Such situation towards education and science points rather serious tasks: we should research forms, ways of developing the culture of different nations and teach people to respect each others' cultural value. In order to cope with this task, various conferences are organized by scientists and methodologists of this sphere, hundreds of books are written for introducing different cultural disciplines.

Any intercultural communication is the intersection of culture, because foreign word stock reflects a rich foreign culture with numerous cultural realias. To make people speak a foreign language is not easy. Its effectiveness depends on many factors: knowledge of the language, requirements and culture of communication, rules of etiquette, knowledge of non-verbal forms of language (mimics, gestures) and many others.

So, the process of intercultural communication constantly enlarges the borders of language word stock and enriches it by new words, expressions and notions which are accepted into a certain language as a result of international exchange between representatives of different language cultures. Most of the borrowed words and phrases deal with cuisine, technique, sport, economics, culture and geography.

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