

LINGUOCULTURAL STUDY AS A “CONTAINER” FOR CULTURAL INFORMATION

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Abstract:

The aim of the article is to enlighten linguistic problems of intercultural communication as well as to reveal linguistic and extralinguistic factors of emerging language-related problems in the process of intercultural communication.

Key words: linguoculturology, vital, social, political, religious, moral, aesthetic

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In today's world learning English plays an important role in each field of human activity. A good specialist of the English language is always in high demand in any country of the world. It is known that a good translator has to be familiar with the culture, social norms and customs of both languages. Moreover, mastering cultures and social norms of these two lingual societies are important. All this data can improve the quality and authenticity of translation. Translation takes place in the frame of social and cultural contexts. In translation of cultural specific items the role of translator's knowledge both of mother tongue and translated language can lead to effective translation.

Specialists or translators of intercultural communication often face the problems which deal with cultural values. According to N.F. Alefirenko, the following types of cultural values are widely represented in the language:

vital: life, health, living, environment;

social: social status, profession, wealth, sexual equality, tolerance;

political: freedom, democracy, lawfulness, peace;

religious: God, faith, sacred laws, salvation, blessing;

moral: goodness, kindness, friendship, honour, love, decency;

aesthetic: beauty, ideal, harmony, lifestyle [5, 68].

All these values are reflected in language system and are expressed by language units. Accordingly, D. Krech asserts that language in this sense fulfills three main functions:

1. language is the primary vehicle of communication;

2. language makes possible the growth and transmission of culture, the continuity of societies, and the effective functioning and control of social groups [4, 378].

So, language serves not only as a tool of communication and the main means of expressing people's thoughts but also it is the accumulation of culture-related information. Being a complex system of signs, language is a means of delivering,

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storing, using and transmitting culture from generation to generation. The problem of language and culture is one of the most important issues occupying the minds of linguists, anthropologists, psychologists and philosophers. Language is bound up with culture in multiple and complex ways. It is acknowledged that efficient communication is impossible without deep and wide background knowledge of native speakers' culture which implies ways of life, mentality, vision of the world, the national character, customs, beliefs, systems of values, kinds of social behaviour [1, 167].

From the perspectives of this paradigm a human being is not just a bearer of a language, but rather of a certain conceptual system according to which he understands and conceptualizes information about the world and culture. Currently, many linguistic researches are done within the framework of the anthropocentric paradigm. Moreover, the emergence of the anthropocentric paradigm caused the shift in linguistic views, methods of investigations and the emergence of new interdisciplinary trends such as Cognitive science, Sociolinguistics, Linguoculturology, Genderology in linguistics, etc., focusing on the study of relationships between language and society, language and mind, language and culture.

Linguoculturology is one of the newly emerged linguistic disciplines developed within the framework of the anthropocentric paradigm. It is a rapidly expanding field at the interface between linguistics, culture, cognitive linguistics, ethnolinguistics and sociolinguistics [2,344].

However, it has its own integral aspect of studying language within the culture and vice versa. Linguoculturology deals with the deep level of semantics of linguistic units, and brings into correlation semantic meanings and the concepts of universal and national cultures.

V.N. Teliya defines Linguoculturology as “a study aimed at investigating and describing the interconnection of language and culture in scope of modern culture national self-consciousness and its sign representation”. V.V. Vorobyev states that it is “an integrated linguistic discipline studying interactions between culture and language in their functioning”. V.V. Krasnikh considers linguoculturology as a branch of linguistics which studies “manifestation, reflection and fixation of culture in the language and discourse”. It should be mentioned that though the definitions given above vary, the central idea is that Linguoculturology studies language in its close connection with the culture. Thus, it studies how culture is presented in language, and how language preserves and conveys culture to representatives of a definite language society or ethnic group.

So, the aim of Linguoculturology is to study linguistic means with the help of which language embodies, stores and transfers culture. The object of the study are the linguistic units (at all language levels: phonological, lexical, syntactical, etc.), which contain culture specific information. The subject of linguocultural studies is the interaction between language, culture and the human who uses language regarded as a “container” for cultural information.

As Linguoculturology is a rapidly developing field of study, V.A. Maslova points out four linguocultural schools in Moscow:

1. Linguocultural school headed by Yu.S. Stepanov – the aim is to describe cultural concepts and constants in their diachronic aspects;

2. The school of N.D. Arutyunova studying universal cultural models, on the basis of the texts belonging to different ages and nations;

3. The school of V.N. Teliya which is known as “Moscow school of linguocultural analysis of phraseological units” – the aim is to study phraseological units with the aim to provide a deeper insight into cultural semantics;

4. The school of linguists established at the Russian University of People’s Friendship by V.V. Vorobyev, who develops the ideas of country-study by E.M. Vereschagin and V.G. Kostomarov.

Linguoculturology as a rather new branch of linguistics is supposed to have its own methods and techniques of analysis. However, being an interdisciplinary and integral science, Linguoculturology employs a combination of methods; some of them are borrowed from the adjacent disciplines – Cognitive Linguistics, Psycholinguistics, Ethnolinguistics, Sociolinguistics, etc. It should be kept in mind that the borrowed methods undergo certain notifications; they are adjusted to the aims of linguocultural studies.

Since Linguoculturology is a relatively new aspect, there is no exact periodization of its evolution. However, V.A. Maslova singles out two periods. The first one is based on the works by W. Humboldt, E. Sapir and B. Whorf in western linguistics. The second period started in the 90th of the XX century and since then it has been regarded as an independent aspect of linguistics. Along with these two periods, the scholars outline an upcoming one in the last decade – the development of Linguoculturology as an interdisciplinary science [3, 639].

It should be mentioned that although Linguoculturology as a linguistic discipline emerged not so long ago, its central assumptions are not new. The ideas of this science are traced back to the fundamental works by famous linguists, who always emphasized the idea that language is a major instrument of fixation, storing and transferring culture, knowledge, and information about the world. The idea of relationship between language and culture was initially put forth by V. W. Humboldt who proclaimed that: “Language is deeply entwined in the intellectual development of humanity itself, it accompanies the latter upon every step of its localized progression or regression; moreover, the pertinent cultural level in each case is recognizable in it. Language is, as it were, the external manifestation of the minds of peoples. Their language is their soul, and their soul is their language. It is impossible to conceive them ever sufficiently identical.

To conclude, the English language is so rich in phrases and set expressions that we face problems in correct choice in translation. A good translator should be aware of meaning of such phrases and set expressions. Some gestures, mimics can also be helpful for guessing the meaning which speaker wants to express by using them in his/her speech. Sometimes even words can’t be translated from one language into another because they can be used in one language in metaphorical way and in the process of translation into another language they cause fun, surprise, misunderstanding and even offence.

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