Sociocultural gaps and the ways of their elimination during foreign language study

Brechas socioculturales y las formas de su eliminación durante el estudio de lenguas extranjeras

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ABSTRACT

In order to take part in the intercultural communication of students, an idea of national traditions, cultural values, customs, and realities of the studied language country must be developed. Lacunae are the gaps in knowledge of the country and the people culture who speak the language being studied. When you work with lacunae, it is necessary to check the correct understanding of their meaning constantly, as well as introduce them into the active vocabulary of students. This is why this study seeks to address the sociocultural gaps and the ways of transfer during the study of foreign languages

Keywords: foreign language teaching, intercultural communication, lacunae, sociocultural context

RESUMEN

Para participar en la comunicación intercultural de los estudiantes, se debe desarrollar una idea de las tradiciones nacionales, los valores culturales, las costumbres y las realidades del país de la lengua estudiada. Las lagunas son las lagunas en el conocimiento del país y la cultura de las personas que hablan el idioma que se estudia. Cuando trabajas con lagunas, es necesario verificar constantemente la comprensión correcta de su significado, así como introducirlos en el vocabulario activo de los estudiantes. Es por esto que este estudio busca tratar la Brechas socioculturales y las formas de su eliminación durante el estudio de lenguas extranjeras

Palabras clave: enseñanza de lenguas extranjeras, comunicación intercultural, lagunas, contexto sociocultural.

Introduction

Currently, a significant place is given to the training of intercultural communication in educational systems, which contributes to the successful interaction of representatives of various national cultures (Abdurazakova, 2016). Communication problems arise as the result of a lack of understanding of their partner cultural features (Henslin, 1993). Without knowledge of the sociocultural background, the development of communicative competence will be difficult, since foreign language communication teaching is inextricably linked with sociocultural and regional knowledge, with the development of a "secondary linguistic personality".

The criteria of a developed secondary linguistic personality are usually mainly the ability to interact with the representatives of the culture of the language being studied, with the knowledge of lexical and grammatical material, syntax, the knowledge of the phonetic norms of the language, etc. S. Ter-Minasova says: "The need for restructuring of thinking, reshaping one's own, familiar, native picture of the world according to a foreign, unusual model is one of the main difficulties in foreign language mastering" (Ter-Minasova, 2000).

The following criterion is also important - the style of speech. If the phrase "   " is translated "She is not at home", it will sound like "in Russian" and the native speaker will say "She is out". The next criterion is the mastering of behavioral patterns characteristic of a foreign language culture representatives. These include: facial expressions, gestures, etiquette of communication, everyday behavior, conditioned by traditions and customs. For example, the British have a tradition of drinking tea at five o'clock in the evening, other peoples do not have such a custom. Ignorance of the norms of behavior accepted in the recipient's country can create difficulties in communication.

The knowledge of the native speaker country characteristics of the language being studied has an impact on the motivational-personal sphere of the learner in the process of a secondary language personality development. This includes value orientations, motivational structure and personality traits (Ter-Minasova, 2000).

The discrepancies in terms of language and culture among the participants in intercultural communication are usually called lacunae. Lacunae define national realities that are unknown to the native speaker of another language and culture.

Research methods

In linguistics, the term "lacuna" was first introduced by Yu.S. Stepanov, who called them "spaces", "white spots on the semantic map of the language" (Stepanov,, 1985).

The methodological basis of this work is the study of Russian linguists who have dealt with socio-cultural issues: L. S. Barkhudarov, E. M. Vereshchagin, I. G. Kostomarov, R. A. Budagov, G.D. Gachev, Yu. S. Stepanov and others. We are attracted by the definition of lacunae proposed by V.N. Komissarov, who calls lacunae "the designations of phenomena specific to a given culture, which are the product of the cumulative function of the language and can be considered as the containers of background knowledge, i.e. the knowledge in the minds of speakers" (Komissarov., 1999).

Language lacunae are usually divided into absolute and relative. Absolute lacunae are the words that have no equivalent in the form of a word in another language, for example, it is a day, peer, birthday, boiling water for English, and grandparents, siblings for Russian. Relative lacunae include the words that are used in special cases - these are the Russian words: longing, soul, fate (Muraviev 1975).

Domestic scholars A.A. Makhonin, M.A. Sternin subdivide interlanguage lacunae into the groups: nominative, generalizing, and concretizing (Makhonina 2005).

Nominative lacunae appear if there is no corresponding definition in the language (fortnight – two weeks). Generalizing lacunae arise if the language does not have the appropriate generalization according to various criteria: (by action: eye-opener – something that causes a lot of surprise; according to assessment). Concretizing lacunae appear if the language does not have an appropriate concretization by a certain attribute: (by the manner of behavior: nosyparker – a person sticking his nose everywhere; by some reason: cross-purpose – confusion based on mutual misunderstanding). There are also other definitions that designate the concept of "lacuna", namely: ethno-eidems, linguistic cultural rhemes, ethnolinguistic cultural rhemes.

Main part

In the process of teaching a foreign language, it is important to consider how the elimination of lacunae occurs. Two main methods are offered: filling and compensation. Filling is the explanation of any definition using the translation-description, explanatory translation (Glazunov, 2013).

Compensation is used when it is necessary to overcome the national barrier in communication between the

representatives of two cultures. In this case, the translation of the value is transmitted using the "analog" or calque. They often use such methods of lacuna elimination as transcription (the transmission at the level of phonemes) or transliteration (the transmission at the level of graphemes), which are accompanied by descriptive translation. Transcription and transliteration convey the sound and graphic appearance of a word and do not provide text volume increase (Kamalova, 2015) (Koskenoja 2019).

Calquing - the translation of a compound word which is used when a translated unit has components (skyscraper - , brain drain -). Among the compound lacunae there are the phrases that cannot be translated verbatim, as this will lead to inaccuracies: red tape is not a "red ribbon", but bureaucracy (Solovova, 2016) (Bahremand, 2015) (Martins, 2018).

Analog is a ready-made approximate equivalent of lacuna. The English word drugstore is translated into Russian as a pharmacy, but it is also important to know the background information, that is, this is the place where you can have a snack and buy not only pharmacy products. Using an explanatory translation, as the method of sociocultural lacuna elimination, it is possible to determine its lack - it leads to a text expansion. For example, the explanation of the lacunae can take several lines: townhouse - a residential building within the city, usually of two floors, the walls of which are adjacent to such houses, and a continuous line of buildings is formed.

Students have to deal with different types of lacunae: linguistic, ethnographic, cultural, behavioral and others. Analyzing the teaching materials in English, we conclude that the number of lacunae in the educational material varies depending on the stage of training. The number of gaps in the textbooks of the initial stage of training is small. The purpose of lacunae at this stage is to increase the motivation to a foreign language learning, since they carry sociocultural information that is interesting for students.

At further stages of language learning in authentic texts, there is a large number of language expressions that are used in the situations of natural communication, phraseological units, set phrases and, of course, various lacunae. At these stages, it is important that students understand the national-cultural and national-mental characteristics of the language being studied.

Let's consider the difference between the lacunae and foreign language material unknown for students (Solovova, 2006) (Nuriyev, 2018) (Sazesh, 2018).

The method of working with gaps begins with highlighting a gap in a text. If students do not indicate a gap, they may not fully understand the proposed text. First of all, a teacher must initially and carefully study the training text in order to identify gaps.

The following are the stages of working with gaps: the stage of language unit semantization, the stage of speech skill development; the stage of speech skill improvement and development.

When you work with gaps according to the methodology of a foreign language teaching, the main link is semantization. Then the formation of speech skills and their development takes place.

Students can offer the following exercises to enhance the use of sociocultural vocabulary in speech. The following exercises are effective at the sentence level and over-phrasal unity:

1. Explain the following words: Killjoy, Fogy, Shagrag, Pighead, Gasbag.

2. Here are the nicknames of several states. Explain the implicit meaning of the nickname.

> 1) The Pilgrim State
> 2) The Land of Milk and Honey
> 3) Midway, U.S.A.
> 4) The Border State
> 5) The Grand Canyon State
> 6) The El Dorado State

1. Massachusetts was named "The Pilgrim State" because of the Pilgrims settlement in Massachusetts and the establishment of the Plymouth Colony. The Pilgrims set up a government in Massachusetts with the "Mayflower Compact". In 1621, the first Thanksgiving was held.

2. California is called "The Land of Milk and Honey" as in a land of opportunity, with reference to "Promised Land" in the Bible.

3. Kansas is called "Midway, U.S.A." because it is located close to the middle of the contiguous 48 states.

4. The nickname "The Border State" was given to Maine because its northern border is with Canada

5. The popular nickname for Arizona "The Grand Canyon State" references the incomparable Grand Canyon in the northern part of the state, one of the world's natural wonders.

6. The first nickname for California was "The El Dorado State". This nickname was used for California after gold was discovered there in 1848.

2. All the words have been defined by an American student. But he was watching TV at that moment and accidentally made 4 mistakes. Read the definitions and find mistakes.

Potluck – a party to which every family has to bring own special dish to share it with the others;

Buck – a 25 cent coin;

Grace (to say grace) – most American families do that before starting dinner. It is like saying thank you to God for the food given;

Nuts (to go nuts, to be nuts about something) – crazy;

S'mores – any shoes for sport or walking;

Sandwich Man –a guy who likes sandwiches very much.

Storytime – a children's section in a large bookstore. It is an area with toys, building blocks where kids can play while their parents rummage through the books on the shelves;

Open House –one that is open because the owners forgot to close and lock the door.

Buck–1 dollar; S'mores – sweet sandwiches with warmed-up marshmallows and waffles; Sandwich Man– a person, who carriesan advertising. Open House –it is a time when an institution is open to the public.

In order to intensify the use of non-equivalent and background vocabulary the following game is effective: "More words." During the game, students are divided into two teams. It is assumed that team members name as many words as possible on the topic being studied. The team that names the most words wins.

During the game "The Most Interesting Story", you also need to organize two teams and each team makes a story using the vocabulary that they could remember and all the material covered. The team that makes the most interesting story and uses the most vocabulary wins.

The next game is «Do you believe or not»

T: Now I'm going to read some statements and you must tell me if they are true or false.

Do you believe that…
+… the English are individuals.
-… the Irish have a strong sense of being different from others (British).
-… the Scots are mainly Anglo-Saxon in origin (the English).
-… the Welsh have a strong sense of national identity (the Scots).
+… the Welsh pride themselves on being the true Britons.

It is important to teach students the tactics of group communication for a teacher. Pupils should be able to speak logically, coherently and productively. It is important to introduce communicative speech stamps into the speech so that students can express their opinion (As for me ..., In my opinion ...); consent and disagreement (I think the same, I agree with you, That's true, No, I can't say ..., I'm not sure ..., I'm afraid you're wrong); conclusion (On the whole..., In general).

Results and discussion

Analyzing the test work on improving the lexical skill of high school students using the method of filling in sociocultural gaps, at MAOU "Secondary School No. 24 with UIOP", Stary Oskol, in which 28 people took part, we concluded the following:

High school students have the need to acquire knowledge and information about the culture, customs and traditions of the country of the language being studied. To do this, one should study new vocabulary and improve already familiar one. As follows from our study, the methods described by us for filling in sociocultural gaps, as well as speech exercises, which are the productive means for the studied non-equivalent and background vocabulary

assimilation, serve this purpose. At the first stage of the experiment, the test was conducted that allowed us to determine the level of sociocultural competence development among high school students.

For half a year of work, training lessons were held using the method of filling in sociocultural gaps, which made it possible to determine the levels of students learning new vocabulary, the ability to use it in speech during the developing experiment.

At the end of the experimental work, the second test was conducted to identify the level of lexical skill development among high school students. The obtained and processed data showed that the high level of the lexical skill development after carrying out experimental work increased by 25.1%, the average level of knowledge increased by 18.3%, there were no students with a low level on a given topic.

Conclusions

Thus, we can conclude that the work done to improve the lexical skill of high school students during the filling in of sociocultural gaps has increased their level of vocabulary on a given topic. It is important to note that participation in the communication process requires something more, namely the possession of equivalent and background vocabulary, the use of various speech cliches and colloquial forms. Mastering a foreign language is inextricably linked with mastering a new vocabulary, which must be improved, for example, by filling in sociocultural gaps, as described in this paper. Using this technique helps to improve the lexical skill.

Summing up, it should be emphasized that it is important to semantize lacuna correctly and control the correctness of its understanding. Besides, the studied equivalent units should be introduced into student speech. The absence of a foreign language equivalent of a lacuna implies a thorough working out of the lacunae and a sufficient amount of time to develop the sense of language and linguistic intuition of students.

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