«ԵՐԵՎԱՆԻ ԼԵՌՑԻ ԱՆՎԱՆ Հ. 65 ԱՎԱԳ ԴՊՐՈՑ» ՊՈԱԿ

ՀԵՐԹԱԿԱՆ ԱՏԵՍՏԱՎՈՐՄԱՆ ԵՆԹԱԿԱ ՈՒՍՈՒՑԻՉՆԵՐԻ ՎԵՐԱՊԱՏՐԱՍՏՄԱՆ ԴԱՍԸՆԹԱՑԻ ՀԵՏԱԶՈՏԱԿԱՆ ԱՇԽԱՏԱՆՔ

Առարկա ` <u>ԱՆԳԼԵՐԵՆ</u>

Մասնակից` _Մերի Դանիելյան_

Ղեկավար` _Գայանե Վարդանյան_

Թեմա` _The Development of Communication Skills by Means of Idioms

Երևան, 2022թ.

The Importance of Culture in Teaching English as a Second Language

Introduction

A language has a communicative function. The success of this process much depends how the speaker uses his background knowledge. We should underline the importance of the speakers' cultural awareness, the factors that support the communication, how language and culture correspond among themselves, how language reflects the world through consciousness of the person, how the individual and collective mentality, ideology and culture are reflected in the language, how language and culture create a world picture - primary, from the native language, and secondary, acquired when studying foreign languages. The maintenance of a cultural and national connotation of idioms is interpretation of the figurative basis of idiomatic picture of the world in the sign of cultural and national "space" of this language community. From this point of view it is possible to deduce methodologically important consequences: the cultural knowledge can be "caught" from an internal form of the idiom: there are some "traces" of the cultures, customs and traditions, historical events and life elements and the culture can be understood as a way of orientation of the subject in empirical, cultural, spiritual life on the basis of norms, standards, stereotypes, symbols, myths, etc. signs of the national culture which has been traditionally established in certain national language society.

The paper focuses on the inseparability of language and culture, highlighting the significant role of cross-cultural awareness and communicative competence in teaching English as a second language (TESL) in the context of increasingly internationalized global world. Cross-cultural awareness has always been important in modern language studies, as preparing students for effective and competent intercultural communication requires not only mere teaching of linguistic skills like phonology, morphology, lexicology, and syntax, but also the vital component of cultural knowledge and awareness. Communication that lacks appropriate cultural content often results in an odd or humorous situation leading to misunderstanding and miscommunication. Therefore, the

present paper claims that in TESL it is necessary to incorporate and develop aspects of cross-cultural awareness as a part of the course curriculum to immerse students in effective intercultural communicative competence. It is strongly believed that developing cross-cultural awareness through learning and practicing the patterns of the current lifestyle in the target culture will help the learners overcome both cultural shock and intercultural communicative barriers easier, compare the target culture with their own, and find the similarities and differences between them, thus coping with cross-cultural communication problems successfully. There are many challenges related to teaching English as a lingua franka in a cross-cultural context of globalization—English, not being the native language of the learners, triggers a great number of problems connected with teaching and developing cross-cultural awareness. This paper offers some strategies for coping with them The paper focuses on the inseparability of language and culture, highlighting the significant role of cross-cultural awareness and communicative competence in teaching English as a second language (TESL) in the context of increasingly internationalized global world. Cross-cultural awareness has always been important in modern language studies, as preparing students for effective and competent intercultural communication requires not only mere teaching of linguistic skills like phonology, morphology, lexicology, and syntax, but also the vital component of cultural knowledge and awareness. Communication that lacks appropriate cultural content often results in an odd or humorous situation leading to misunderstanding and miscommunication. Therefore, the present paper claims that in TESL it is necessary to incorporate and develop aspects of cross-cultural awareness as a part of the course curriculum to immerse students in effective intercultural communicative competence. It is strongly believed that developing cross-cultural awareness through learning and practicing the patterns of the current lifestyle in the target culture will help the learners overcome both cultural shock and intercultural communicative barriers easier, compare the target culture with their own, and find the similarities and differences between them, thus coping with cross-cultural communication problems successfully. There are many challenges related to teaching English as a lingua franka in a cross-cultural context of globalization—English, not being the native language of the learners, triggers a great number of problems connected with teaching and developing cross-cultural awareness. This paper offers some strategies for coping with them.

English as an international Language

English has been designed as a source of intercultural communication among the people from diverse linguistic and cultural backgrounds. A range of linguistic and cultural theories contribute meaningful insights on the development of competence in intercultural communication. The speculations suggest the use of communicative strategies focusing on the development of learners' efficiency in communicating language through cultural context. The assignment study recommends integration of cultural awareness into a language teaching program for an overall achievement of competence in intercultural communication.

English has become a very essential language in Armenia. It is currently the most frequently taught second language and when we speak about its importance, we should think how to help learners achieve communicative competence. Linguistic creativity much depends on how language is used by the speakers in relation to local contextual purposes and especially for interpersonal interaction. One of the main difficulties is the correct usage of an idiom. A further difficulty is whether an idiom is appropriate in the given context or if a non-native speaker tries to translate an idiom from his native language into English. It confuses a listener due to the lack of the common ground between their cultures. There is nothing that is obviously wrong, but somehow native speakers know that they wouldn't express themselves in quite that way. Louisa Bukingham (2006) remarks that "Idioms are widely recognized to be a stumbling block in the acquisition of a foreign language; it is often maintained that their 'arbitrary', language-specific nature makes them difficult for learners to understand and acquire, and resistant to translation." Learning idioms develops students' cultural awareness that benefits their proper usage in communication.

In the global context, English should be used as a mode for representing national thought and values. Through learning English, learners can understand and know how to preserve their national cultural identities, which are being challenged by globalization and an invasion of Western values. It is necessary for English to serve the aim of enhancing and preserving national values. There should be a balance between a desire to communicate with the world and a will to preserve one's national

cultural identity. It is essential to include the core identity of a nation in language pedagogy, to maintain cultural independence, and to promote a national self-pride. It is time for language education to place emphasis on traditional values such as nationhood, patriotism and so on. English language education needs to concern how to teach English for understanding the Self in relation with the Other and the reciprocal relationship between the Self and the Other in the universe. It is important to be aware that the final aim of English language education is not merely learning English language and cultures, but more importantly, leading to self knowledge: the understanding of who I am/who we are in this world.

Culture in Second/Foreign Language Learning

Culture and language are means of collective co-existence and social practice kept in the memory of the society that is created by the people during the centuries. Cultural awareness helps people to become more understanding and tolerant of behaviors which are different from their own.

It is observed that language is used in a cultural phenomenon to exchange ideas and opinions or share experiences. It is so much interrelated that without understanding properly the cultural setting and social behavior of a language use, it leads to misinterpretation and breakdown in the language communication, or it may result into errors and misunderstanding because language is not simply sending or receiving information but it functions as a social behavior in certain cultural context. There are difficulties which are very complex to understand for foreign or second language learners according to required context to interpret and communicate [Emitt & Komesaroff, 2003].

Competence in intercultural communication is the ability of an individual's understanding of key issues involved in the communication of language in culturally different contexts. These cultural differences convey dissimilar meanings and values attached to a social system demanding a great deal of understanding on the part of speakers taking part in intercultural Culture in communication. It even requires higher level of communication skills to make sense of the meaning communicated in culturally diverse contexts. Furthermore, the studies on intercultural communication not only determine the role of competence but also advise the understanding of cultural awareness for meaning

IDIOM AS A CULTURE- BASED LANGUAGE UNIT

An idiom most often reflects the national specificity of the people. It is a figurative interpretation of reality and an emotional model of communication. Idioms are highly interactive items. They are strong and colorful examples of cross-cultural relations. The source of their origin is sometimes difficult to ascertain. They are firmly assimilated in various languages and have become part and the whole of these cultures. The main difficulty is whether an idiom is appropriate in the given context when a non-native speaker tries to translate an idiom from his native language into English. It may confuse a listener. The problem is often one of collocation, which is a central characteristic of the language in use. The way native speakers use English in the real world is largely idiomatic and it assumes that a fluent non-native speaker should be similarly idiomatic. When even very good learners of the language speak or write English, the effect is slightly odd. Since idioms evaluate the whole narrative summarizing the main events or opinion, a native speakers' unconscious knowledge of collocation is an essential component of their idiomatic and fluent language use and is, therefore, an important part of their communicative competence. A large number of idioms are of folk origin; however, there are huge numbers of the biblical, mythological and authorspecific idioms. Knowing culture, literature and traditions of different nationalities will help the language learner to communicate with a native speaker adequately. In this way, an idiom is the key, which enables people to open the gate of the national culture, history, traditions and beliefs of different people. Luke Prodromou remarks that the love of puns and wordplay, often based on idiomatic sayings, is a common feature of a native speaker: "What is striking about informal uses of English is not only how common the idiom principle is, but just how common creativity with idioms is among native-speakers" (L. Prodromou, 2003, 42). Indeed, the need for greater idiomatic competence is precisely what linguists propose for the non-native speaker.

TEACHING IDIOMS TO ARMENIAN STUDENTS

Armenia aims at creating favorable conditions for learning foreign languages. Without profound knowledge of foreign languages, students would find it difficult to integrate in this area and fully realize their own personal abilities. The Armenian national curriculum aims to develop skills of communication based on "dialogue of cultures" that means to respect every lingua-cultural identity, creation of a positive attitude and interest towards cultural diversity and the whole world. Priority objectives of foreign language teaching are to: develop adult speech skills (listening, reading, writing, speaking) in at least two foreign languages; ensure developing of good communication skills; give a positive mood linguistic - cultural diversity and realize it as a manifestation of the private world of diversity; develop the ability to understand different cultural concepts prepare for cooperation in different linguistic - cultural identity; develop effective teaching of language skills. The most important aim of learning foreign languages is communication with people of different nationalities. Cultural awareness means to understand human behaviors, traditions and values of different people. Development of multilingualism helps a person to perceive cultural and language diversity. The lingua-cultural approach towards teaching English focuses on perception of the world through culture "prisms": its installations, concepts, stereotypes, symbols, standards, having emphasized thus a special role in the process of interpretation.

Creative use of English idioms by the Armenian students depends on the tasks and the exercises, and can be characterized by the following didactic principles:

Presentation. Comparing and defining differences or similarities of Immediate Constituents and the meaning of the Armenian and English idioms. To outline similarities or differences between the English and Armenian idioms the best way is to present them in the context where students meet idioms which are familiar to them as they exist in their native language and idioms which have no analogy in Armenian. Several idioms are presented and students are asked to guess the meaning; they recognize idioms that are common in the Armenian Language, then jumbled meanings are given and they match them to the idioms. Idioms with soma-center, animalisms, biblical phrases, color idioms are easily guessed, these concepts have similar understanding in both languages. E.g. Biblical idioms exist in both languages nearly with the same IC and the meanings. For example:

A drop in the bucket-Մի կաթիլ օվկիանոսում - a drop in the sea-A very small proportion of the whole. Origin-From the Bible, Isaiah 40:15 (King James Version): "Behold, the nations are as a drop of a bucket, and are counted as the small dust of the balance: behold, he taketh up the isles as a very little thing." 'A drop in the bucket' is the predecessor of 'a drop in the ocean', which means the same thing, and is first found in a piece from The Edinburgh Weekly Journal, July 1802: "The votes for the appointment of Bonaparte to be Chief Consul for life are like a drop in the ocean compared with the aggregate of the population of France." (http://www.phrases.org.uk/meanings/124000.html)

Forbidden fruit – Արգելված պտուղ–A prohibited article.

Origin Forbidden fruit originates from the Garden of Eden bible story. The biblical 'forbidden fruit' was of course the apple. In the story the type of fruit isn't actually mentioned - God forbade Adam and Eve to touch the fruit of the tree of knowledge. It is widely interpreted as being an apple though and the 'Adam's apple' is named after the fruit which is supposed to have stuck in Adam's throat.

Some more examples to discuss.

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Keep an eye on sth. or sb- Աչքը մեկի/մի բանի վրա պահել

Throw dust in a person's eyes – Աչքին թոզ փչել

Can't believe one's eyes – Աչքերին չհավատալ

To do something behind someone's back – Մեջքի հետևում գործել

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At this stage students are asked to express their impression of the introduced idiom; interpret the given phrase in a free form, having specified its senses and associations, etc. It helps them in the identification of estimated essence and perception of idioms by the Armenian students. Most significant in the lingua-cultural approach are the answers identifying the "traces" of cultural interpretation of phraseology. Basic words or semantic centers (animalisms, sometimes, etc.) indicate this or that type of information taken from the idiom – denotative, figurative, metaphorical, emotive, estimative, etc. Mainly, it is the denotative processing of idioms operating with knowledge of properties of designated, and motivational processing, i.e. Operations with gestalt structures (image of the phraseological unit) which, in turn, are connected with estimation and emotive processing of

information. Such a complete perception of the phraseological unit in all versatility of its senses is caused by the essence of this language sign and speaks about a syncretism of its semantics. [Kovshova, 2009].There are more possibilities to train idioms in speech. This is the most important stage, as it shows achieved results; this is accurate and creative usage of idioms in proper situations. The creativeness is a creation of a new, original image, idea. The image is something similar to real-life. Development of creative usage of idioms promotes understanding of English culture; it accumulates students' bright images about the language picture of the world. Linguistic creativity much depends on how language is used by speakers in relation to local contextual purposes and especially interpersonal interactions with language.
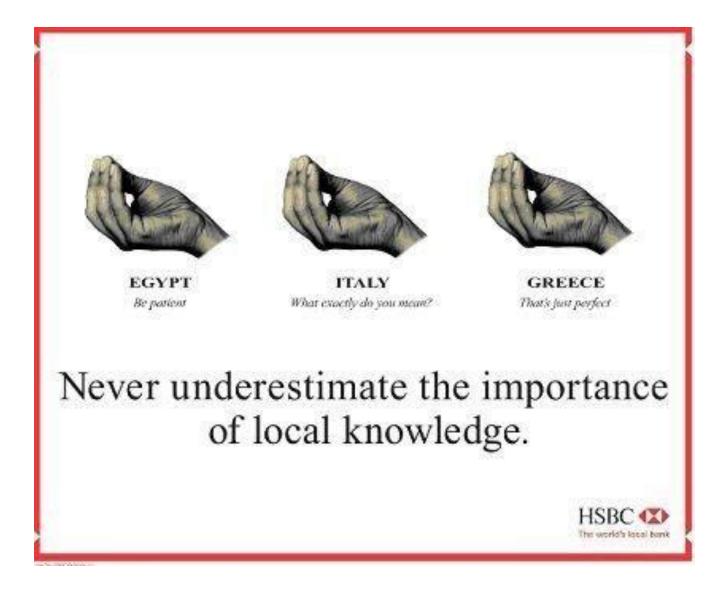
CONCLUSION;

The Lingua-cultural approach of teaching idioms broadens cultural awareness of students; they learn not only language but the traditions and customs of the English people, they become more tolerant of other cultures, they start to respect other people's beliefs through the prism of Armenian lingua-cultural heritage. The Lingua-cultural method includes two aspects of communication - language and cross-cultural. Our students are at least bi-cultural supposedly easily guided in national features, history, culture, customs of two countries, civilizations, the inner worlds. Statistical methods indicators confirm that the modern world constantly speaks with metaphors including idioms. That is proved by their extensive use in oral or written communications. Consequently, nowadays, new epochal challenges and powerful cultural expansion, raise the importance of learning foreign languages for communicative purposes.

96. IDIOMS

"<u>Idioms</u> are groups of words whose cultural meaning is different from their usual meaning."

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