



The role of cultural background in the process of language learning

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Abstract

Abundance of works have been written on the complexity of the language learning process. In addition to linguistic structure study of a language should also include description of the cultural background of the target language, healthy communication among nations, besides overcoming linguistic difficulties, is associated with the study and perception of the language from the cultural point of view, which leads to the perception of the stereotypes and the view of the world characteristic of the specific language collective by the learner.

My field of interest besides linguistic approach to the language is revealing the awareness of the learner about the cultural background of the language to be studied, as well as discussion on the development of necessary recommendations concerning conceptual approach to the language.

The research, in which twenty-two Georgian learners of Turkish language took part, shed light on the learners' awareness of the cultural world of the target language (Turkish), it gave us the opp-

portunity to discuss the existing picture and discuss the need to develop recommendations to eliminate the deficiencies.

The results of the questionnaire survey showed us the following outcome: the awareness of Georgian language learners is limited only to those modern figures and events, which are provided by visual media: news channels, video clips, internet sources. Unfortunately, the Georgian language learner is not familiar with the cultural depths, which represent the national spirit of the language collective, literary traditions, persons and events that became a precedent as a result of stereotypical representations.

My recommendations serve to eliminate the stated deficiencies present throughout the language learning process: when learning a language it is crucial to ensure the involvement of cultural elements in the process: providing graded readers reflecting the culture of the linguistic community in a language-learning process; it is desirable to develop a lingo-cultural dictionary, which, based on the reflection of the nation's culture, provides the language learner with information about the spiritual world of the language to be studied and, as a result, determines healthy communication between the nations.

Keywords: learning a foreign language; cultural background; lingo-cultural dictionary; factors hindering cross-national communication; precedent units.

Introduction

Conceptual perception of the target language corresponds an inseparable part of a language learning process. After some time from the beginning of learning, the language learner should gradually, in small doses and in a way that is adapted to the level, be a frequent visitor to the conceptual world of the target language, the cultural life of a certain nation.

It should be agreed that the stated issue is not a simple one. Along with the process of perceiving and studying the grammatical

structure of the language, perceiving the various realities in the core of the target language, as well as the cultural background of the language collective is a rather difficult and long process and is only plausible as a result of a large dose of exposure of the native literary traditions of the target language. Therefore, the concept of language fluency, in addition to the linguistic structure, also includes the culture of the language to be studied, because, as is known, a healthy cross-national communication is only possible as a result of the combination of a language and culture.

The topic of my research is the difficulties of learning the national-cultural world beyond the Turkish language and the discussion of various recommendations for the conceptual approach to the language, including the role of the lingo-cultural dictionary.

The role of dictionary in the process of learning a language is commonly agreed, dictionaries have been written throughout years, and accordingly, their style and form have changed countless times. In general, the dictionary is created in accordance with the new addressee, the new needs, because the events that take place in society are reflected in the language in the form of elements of lexical correction, syntax and word formations. This is the reason why lexicographic works should always be updated. A complete dictionary should serve all fields of society, including literature, religion, history, law etc. A dictionary should have an encyclopaedic form, the main goal of which should be provision of characteristics of linguistic elements as well as conceptual world beyond a word (Akhvlediani, 2018:10).

Poor state of Georgian-Turkish lexicography should also be noted: the majority of Georgian-Turkish dictionaries are mainly in the form of directories, containing little information on word meanings, and are focused on superficial knowledge of the vocabulary of the language. In many cases, the existing dictionaries do not provide a broad contextual definition of a word; only one or two main meanings of the word are given lacking any illustrative material, simple morphological information about the word etc. To meet the needs of

the growing market of Turkish language users, these dictionaries need serious refinements considering various criteria.

In order to carry out healthy communication and avoid intercultural misunderstandings, the language learner should perceive the national-cultural perspective of the nation, which is settled in the mind and thinking of the linguistic collective, as a native language. In such a difficult task of accessing the nation's cultural memory, linguistic and cultural dictionaries provide assistance, the essence and purpose of which is a conceptual approach to the language.

Linguistic dictionary of the target language should serve to provide encyclopedic information about the phenomena to be described. The dictionary should give us information about the features of the phenomenon to be described in the discourse of the national-cultural society and its role in the discourse, which will later be used to determine the "semantics" of this or that name. The linguistic and cultural dictionary should give us information about the precedent persons, characters or events, which will clearly depict the real state of discourse of the national-cultural society of a given nation and give us an idea about the spiritual value of the nation. Focusing on the historical changes of the realities recorded by this dictionary, in turn, will show us the meanings of the events, as far as possible, it will manage to describe the characteristic features of the representatives of a specific stratum, developed on the basis of its social status, it will give us an idea of the existence of stereotypes in a certain era and the reasons for their dominance.

Determining the awareness of the cultural background of the language (Turkish) in the process of learning by Georgian learners was carried out based on a survey conducted by me.

On the basis of the respondents' answers in the questionnaire, information about cultural entities: fairy tales, literary, historical figures and modern figures: politicians, athletes, singers, actors, artists, we are given the opportunity to observe how well the Georgian society knows the cultural elements of the language under study, which

represents the nation's cultural and historical past and is the basis for demonstrating modern values and figures. (Akhvlediani, 2018:97).

Twenty-two (12-A2 learners), (10-B1 learners) learners took part in the survey.

The choice of the above stated levels was determined by the following factors: the learner has already covered beginner and basic levels of the language, making it possible for them to use the language independently and more or less to communicate their ideas on topics relevant to their community based on acquired grammatical knowledge and attained vocabulary.

Aim of the study:

1. Revealing awareness of the cultural background and national values of the language (Turkish) of Georgians learning Turkish language.

2. Development of the necessary recommendations based on the obtained clear picture.

Method of the research

Written, questionnaire survey. Based on information we got from the questionnaires about the cultural units of the studied language: fairy tales, literary, historical and modern figures: politicians, athletes, singers, actors, artists, we can observe how well the Georgian language learner knows the cultural elements of the studied language.

It should be noted that the large part of the questionnaires was filled out online, and a small part was filled in manually. According to common practice, the questionnaires were anonymous, only the participant's nationality and language level were submitted. It would be interesting to review the features and differences of the filling the questionnaire from the gender point of view, although the vast majority of the respondents were women, that is why the gender features could not be clearly observed.

For learners of Turkish language

Characters of Turkish fairy tales	Characters of Turkish literature	Turkish historical figures	modern Turkish figures				
			politicians	sportsmen	singers	actors/actresses	other artists

The final version of the questionnaire for precedent names formed in the following manner, it was divided into two parts:

The first part consists of three columns, where the following names that already represent precedent names should be stated: 1) fairy tale characters; 2) Literary characters 3) historical figures;

The second part consists of five columns, which are represented by contemporary figures: 1) politicians; 2) sportsmen; 3) singers; 4) actors/actresses; 5) other artists.

Dividing the questionnaire into two parts was determined by the following factor: the characters or figures given in the first part of the questionnaire already represent precedent units, whereas the second part of the questionnaire, that is precedence of the contemporary figures, definitely is the matter of future, which is determined by the nation's attitude towards national and cultural figures (Akhvlediani, 2018;98).

Results:

The results of the survey of precedent names, the purpose of which is to determine the awareness of the precedent units of language culture in the process of learning by Georgians, revealed the following results:

According to the survey, Georgians are interested in contemporary figures in Turkish culture.

In terms of popularity, the leading place is taken by Turkish actors' field, which has been filled fully. It can be said that the majority of respondents know well the works of actors/actresses such as: Kıvanç Tatlıtuğ, Engin Akyürek, Savaş Baldar, Halit Ergenç, Bergüzar Korel, Cansu Dere, Murat Yildirim.

Modern Turkish singers take the second place. According to the survey, Georgians are well acquainted with the singers such as Tarkan (named by majority), Irem Demirci, Cem Karaca and Sezen Aksu. This is the list of singers, which the Georgian language learner knows the best.

In terms of popularity, the third place went to Turkish athletes. Compared to actors and singers, the list of athletes is scarce, however, only a few of the respondents managed to name such athletes as Mesut Özil (3 participants), and 2 participants have information about the personalities of Zehra Güneş, Doruk Pehlivan.

As for modern politicians, an absolute majority named Recep Tayyip Erdoğan, it should be noted that none of the fields in the questionnaire was recorded with similar popularity, and only three participants know Ahmet Davutoğlu.

Regarding the historical figures, the majority of the respondents named Sultan Suleiman first, and then, with relatively fewer votes Mustafa Kemal Atatürk. Fatih Sultan Mehmed was named by one person, as well as Hürrem Sultan and Selim the first.

Among other artists, only two people named the writers *Elif*Şafak and Orhan Pamuk.

As for the characters of Turkish literature and fairy tales, which are inseparable part of the cultural world of a language, we came across absolute void. Out of 22 participants, only one was able to name the character of a tale - *Keloğlan* and one - Nasreddin Hodja.

Conclusion

The survey conducted among Georgians showed us the following results: among the respondents, regarding awareness, the field of Turkish actors is the most popular. The characters who stand out in the series with their outstanding appearance, bravery and positive qualities have accumulated many votes. In terms of information abundance, it is inferior to the list of actors, and modern singers take the second place. As for politicians: the full majority of respondents mention the name of Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan, to a lesser extent, but they still mention Minister of foreign affairs of Turkey Ahmet Davittoglu. As for the historical figures, the majority of the respondents named Sultan Suleiman first, and then, with relatively fewer votes, Mustafa Kemal Ataturk.

As for the information about Turkish literature and the fairy tale world, whose characteristic elements are a reflection of the nation's culture, history, and past values, it can be said that they were left empty by both groups.

When comparing the data gained by the survey about modern and precedent names, it should be noted that Georgian learners are more interested in modern figures than in past historical figures. The reason behind this can be the abundance of visual information (news channels, video clips, Internet sources), where political events and persons are particularly actively presented. The role of visual information also showed itself in naming contemporary Turkish actors and singers by Georgians. As it is commonly known, in recent years, a lot of time has been devoted to Turkish soap operas on Georgian TV channels, and Georgians' particularly great interest in their characters was recorded in the questionnaire.

Discussion

The survey clearly showed the following:

1. The result of the only linguistic approach to the language by the Georgian learners;
2. Lack of information about the nation's cultural past, possessing only the information that TV programs and the Internet provide in abundance (series, politics, and entertainment programs).

Despite being in the process of learning Turkish, as well as the close relationship between Georgian and Turkish people, Georgian language learners lack awareness of the cultural background of the target language, the precedent names of the nation. They do not have information about the historical past of the nation to be studied, which is related to the certain persons or events becoming precedents, the cultural taste and spiritual values of the nation.

Recommendations

My recommendations serve as ways of conceptual approach to language: in addition to language systems, consideration of the nation's historical and cultural life is an important factor in language learning, which is one of the prerequisites for conducting intercultural communications and healthy communication:

1. As the questionnaire showed us, modern textbooks cannot provide a reflection of the cultural background of the target language that is why it is desirable to include the cultural elements of the language in a graded form in the teaching process. It is desirable to develop a course book in which, parallel to the linguistic approach to the language, excerpts from the nation's folklore will be given abundantly and adapted to the level, which will be a presenter of the cultural life of the nation of the target language.
2. It is recommended to develop humanitarian-encyclopaedic dictionaries reflecting the nation's culture. A similar dictionary word in the article will elaborate on the cultural beliefs, stereotypes of the phenomenon to be described and its place in

the discourse. Such dictionaries of a mental nature will allow us to organize a historical excursion into the past and to comprehend coherently the spiritual and cultural condition of the nation according to the mentioned realities. Unfortunately, such non-normative, encyclopaedic dictionaries, which would be a real treasure for both language learners and any nation, can be found in English, German and Russian languages, while the Georgian-Turkish lexicography unfortunately does not have it.

Finally, I would like to express my gratitude to the language learners who participated in the survey, whose contribution in revealing the deficiencies of the above-mentioned educational process is great. I hope that this work, which serves as a conceptual approach to language based on the identification of existing faults, will contribute to the implementation of result-oriented recommendations.

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