LANGUAGE UNITS DENOTING CULTURAL FEATURES OF A NATION

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ABSTRACT

This article is about language units that have cultural specifics of a nation and the problem of interpretation of such units.

Keywords: culture, values, norms, artefacts, vulnerability, cultural heritage, behavior, sphere of agriculture, interpretation.

INTRODUCTION

Cultural life is not only concerned with symbolic communication, it is also the domain in which we set collective tasks for ourselves and begin to grapple with them as changing communities. Cultural studies are devoted to understanding the processes through which societies and the diverse groups within them come to terms with history, community life, and the challenges of the future.

The language serves as gaining and saving cultural-significant information. In some units, this information for modern speakers is implicit or hidden, but it works in the level of cognition. The word culture is derived from Latin '*colore'*, which means upbringing, progress, since XVIII c. under this notion, everything, which appeared thanks to human activity is expressed. V.A. Maslova revealed the connections between language and culture: Language is the fact of the culture, because: 1) it is the part of the culture, which we follow after our ancestors; 2) the main instrument, by which we form the culture; 3) language –most important from all phenomena of cultural system or if we want to understand the essence of the culture – science, religion, literature, then those should be accepted as codes.

The question of culture has been analyzed by a great number of philosophers, historians, linguists and other scientists concerning various forms and aspects of the notion. It is a complicated concept and may be approached from different sides, pointing out various aspects or forms.

METHODOLOGY

Different definitions of culture reflect different theories of understanding, or criteria for valuing the concept. The notion of culture includes such categories as habits, customs and traditions, beliefs and feelings, religious elements, myths and

legends, and lastly, geographical and environmental elements. As described in on-line Wikipedia Encyclopedia (http://www.wikipedia.com), presently the UNESCO defines culture as the "set of distinctive spiritual, material, intellectual and emotional features of society or a social group". Although this could not be considered a standard definition of the concept of culture, most alternatives incorporate three elements: *values* (ideas), *norms* (behaviours), and *artefacts* (things, or material culture). Therefore *culture* could be defined as the system of shared beliefs, values, customs, behaviours, and artefacts that the members of society use to cope with their world and with one another, and that are transmitted from generation to generation.

Beyond a doubt culture includes the concept of national identity, which could be described as a set of features and properties that unite the representatives of the nation within the nation and make the nation to a certain extent different from the others.

On the other hand, being a part of culture, language is influenced and shaped by that culture. Lotman's theory states that "no language can exist unless it is steeped in the context of culture; and no culture can exist which does not have at its center the structure of natural language". There is a close link between the vocabulary of a language and the lifestyle, values and institutions of its people. Every language possesses specific words for special kinds of realia: things, events or customs. Besides the language we can consider occupied geographical area, history, religion and by all means such culture formants as traditions, folklore, customs, and a certain set of values to be the most significant features and properties contributing to the formation of the culture of a certain nation.

Despite the differences in explanations and stresses, one may say that the role of the abovementioned factors in general is hardly questionable. Moreover, the cultural heritage of every nation and of Lithuanian in particular is very rich, especially in folklore. The problem here is that Uzbek culture has a very strong agricultural background, for Uzbekistan during practically the whole period of its existence was an agricultural country.

RESULTS

A big part of Uzbek traditions, rites, and folklore is related particularly to the mentioned sphere of agriculture. It presents a rather significant obstacle in interpretation and therefore rendering of words denoting such cultural categories (e.g. *dala mehnatkashlari, oq oltin, dala malikasi* etc.) make a challenge for an interpreter. Culture of communication is an art of using each language unit according to the norms which were accepted during the years. As for instance, let`s take greeting behavior. Greeting is the main tool of all nations` culture, it has it`s own characteristics due to

the national features. A scientist F. Xolmuradova, which explored characteristic features of communication culture, tells several interesting information. According to V. Dal`s words, communication style is carried out not only due to the relation, profession, gender, age among people but also to the time, period, works people are dealing with. When greeting Uzbek people say, to people who are in hashar for building or cleaning some places, the word "Hormanglar" in the meaning of "Never get tired" . And the answer is usually "Salomat bo`ling ! Bor bo`ling! " that means thankfullness. When gathering the harvest people greet by saying "Xirmonga baraka!" and answer will be : "Umringizga baraka!". If you pay attention to this type of greeting, the tune of addressing and answering is expressed logically, elegantly and pleasantly to people. They have a strange power that even if they are told in anger or spite they do not hurt anybody.

In Uzbek culture, there is a gesture — placing right hand on left chest meaning "I am happy from my heart". Besides that, we could observe numerous variations of greetings in Uzbek language .

Besides behavioural and etiquette rules, religion has an affection to the speech either. As the country's main religion is Islam, phrases with meaning of "Thanks Allah", "Thanks God", "Alhamdulillah" are very common. In Uzbek, asking about third person's condition even he /she is taking part in the conversation is sign of polite. For instance, wife, husband and their friend are speaking. Friend: hello, Mr. A. How are you? How is your wife? or vice verse is normal polite situation in Uzbekistan.

Uydagilar yaxshimi? — Are your family members good? (uydagilar — people who are at home)

Onangiz/Otangiz sog'— omonmilar? — Are your parents OK?

Katta-kichiklar yaxshimi? — Are elder and younger people Ok?

In Uzbek culture to show more politeness, while asking about family members, people ask as if interlocutor's relatives are their relatives too. First person possessive affixes are used for relative words. Example:

- Opam/akam/amakim/xolam/jiyanim/ukam/singlim yaxshimi?
- How is my sister/brother/uncle/aunt/cousin/daughter/son?

These speech etiquette units have meaning as "I am close to you. I am like your relative" in order to show respect towards others. While looking through the history we will assume that Uzbek language was so rich in different greeting styles and it was of great importance at that time. For instance, our ancestors welcomes guests saying "Xush kelibsiz, qadamlaringizga hasanot!". If the guests are expected greatly and are dear for the host, they are greeted with delicate and charming words. In the work of a

great Uzbek writer Muhammad Ali “Ulug` saltanat” you can see the welcoming process of Amir Temur and Temurids :

“ - Assalom aleykum, g`amguzorim, mehribonim egachim! Marhabo, xonadonimizga hush kelibsizlar! Barchangizga podshohlik qutlug` bo`lsin, ardoqli kelinlarim!”

“ - O`zingizga ham qutlug` bo`lg`ay, ey bonuyi kubro hazrati oliyalari!”

It will not be any exaggeration if we consider this conversation a characteristic model of speech etiquette. Somewhat, every addressing with the words “g`amguzorim, mehribonim, muhtarama, ardoqli, bonuyi kubro” is welcomed with it`s delicacy. In every communication a word is in the highest degree. Especially it can be seen in speech communication. Greeting is the symbol of mankind behaviour as one type of speech culture. It is the sign of respect towards people and is the beginning part of mutual communication. In nameless addressings it is not important to know the person closely. Such addressings are short and made in order to define or to get some information about an unknown subject or object.

DISCUSSION

Transmitting the specific semantic meaning of such kind of realia denoting lexical units helps preserving the features of national identity. Now that the nation is open to the cultural influence of the west, it does not have much to counterbalance it with, since the majority of the population is living in urban areas, and the agricultural-based culture is rather strange to them and therefore practically impossible to identify with, especially having in mind the attractiveness of today's mass pop culture that is to a large extent international. Here arises the problem of relative 'vulnerability' of the national culture. Beyond any doubt, Uzbek culture has to change to some extent (as a matter of fact, it is currently undergoing rather significant changes), the question is in what direction and at what expense.

The present multicultural contacts with business and cultural partners require qualitatively new perception of a foreign language as well as a new attitude towards interpretation. The volume and significance of interpretation as increased with the growing recognition of the importance of international and cross-cultural collaboration among countries, rapid changes in socio-political and economical situation all over the world, as well as the process of integration in the world community.

Interpretation has been instrumental in transmitting culture, ever since countries and languages have been in contact with each other. While rendering various pieces of writing and especially fiction, which reflects different kinds of cultural realia, an interpreter is continually facing the problem of equivalence or in a wider sense a problem of translatability.

CONCLUSION

By stressing the significance of preservation and development of national culture and identity, it is important to keep in mind the European context and its implications. Classifications of cultural realia cover such essential types of cultural categories as: geographic, ethnographic, political, religious. They are further subdivided into different subcategories. The most suitable interpretation strategies should be determined by a variety of factors: the type of the text, the type of realia, the degree of acceptance of unusual collocations in receiving culture, and the model reader.

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