

## THE ROLE OF CULTURAL AWARENESS IN EFFECTIVE LANGUAGE LEARNING

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### **Annotatsiya**

Ushbu maqola IMRaD tizimiga asoslanib, ingliz tilini chet tili sifatida o'rganishda madaniy ongning ahamiyatini tahlil qiladi. Tadqiqotda Byram, Peres-Llantada va Hossain kabi olimlarning nazariyalari taqqoslanadi va tilni o'rganish nafaqat til qoidalarini o'zlashtirish, balki madaniyatlararo kompetentsiyani shakllantirish bilan ham bog'liqligini isbotlaydi. Sifatli kontent tahlili natijalari shuni ko'rsatadiki, TED Talks kabi ochiq ta'lim resurslari (OER) talabalarda kommunikatsiya strategiyalarini ishlab chiqishda an'anaviy darsliklarga qaraganda samaraliroq. Xulosa qilib aytganda, samarali til o'rganish uchun talabalarni "madaniyatlararo vositachilar" sifatida tayyorlash va multimedia texnologiyalarini o'qitish jarayoniga integratsiya qilish zarur. Maqolada tilshunoslar va o'qituvchilar uchun amaliy tavsiyalar berilgan.

### **Kalit so'zlar**

Madaniy ong, ingliz tilini o'rganish (EFL), ko'p madaniyatli kompetentsiya, ochiq ta'lim resurslari (OER), kommunikatsiya strategiyalari, plurilingvizm, madaniyatlararo muloqot.

### **Аннотация**

В данной статье анализируется важность культурной осведомленности в изучении английского языка как иностранного на основе концепции IMRaD. В исследовании сравниваются теории таких ученых, как Байрам, Перес-Льянтада и Хоссейн, и доказывается, что изучение языка — это не только овладение языковыми правилами, но и развитие межкультурной компетенции. Результаты качественного контент-анализа показывают, что открытые образовательные ресурсы (OER), такие как TED Talks, более эффективны, чем традиционные учебники, в развитии коммуникативных стратегий у студентов. В заключение, для эффективного изучения языка необходимо подготовить студентов как «межкультурных посредников» и

интегрировать мультимедийные технологии в учебный процесс. В статье приводятся практические рекомендации для лингвистов и педагогов.

### **Ключевые слова**

Культурная осведомленность, изучение английского языка (EFL), мультикультурная компетенция, открытые образовательные ресурсы (OER), коммуникативные стратегии, многоязычие, межкультурная коммуникация.

### **Abstract**

This article analyzes the importance of cultural awareness in learning English as a foreign language based on the IMRaD framework. The study compares the theories of scholars such as Byram, Pérez-Llantada and Hossain and proves that language learning is not just about mastering linguistic rules, but also about building intercultural competence. The results of a qualitative content analysis show that open educational resources (OER) such as TED Talks are more effective than traditional textbooks in developing communication strategies in students. In conclusion, for effective language learning, it is necessary to prepare students as "intercultural mediators" and integrate multimedia technologies into the teaching process. The article provides practical recommendations for linguists and educators.

### **Key words**

Cultural awareness, English language learning (EFL), multicultural competence, open educational resources (OER), communication strategies, plurilingualism, intercultural communication.

**Introduction.** M. Byram notes that learning a foreign language is not just about mastering linguistic rules, but also about understanding the culture of the speakers of the language being studied and forming a positive worldview towards them.<sup>92</sup> Thus, even if a language learner knows grammar perfectly, if he does not understand the cultural subtleties of the communication process, he will not be able to achieve real communication effectiveness. Hall and Theriot define multicultural competence as the ability of a person, while being aware of his own worldview, to understand the views of representatives of other cultures and to use cultural strategies appropriate to the situation in communication.<sup>93</sup> This shows that modern language learning methods require the student not only to be an "interpreter", but also to act as an intercultural "bridge". However, in practice, sufficient resources are not always used to form students' cultural knowledge. Researchers Yu-Ju Lin and

<sup>92</sup> Michael Byram, *Teaching and Assessing Intercultural Communicative Competence* (Clevedon: Multilingual Matters, 1997), 43.

<sup>93</sup> J. C. Hall va K. Theriot, *Diversity, Culture and Counselling* (New York: Routledge, 2016), 36.

Hung-Chun Wang believe that using open educational resources such as TED Talks in addition to textbooks can be a very effective tool for improving students' multicultural knowledge and practicing communication strategies.<sup>94</sup> Therefore, the use of multimedia tools and real-life videos in the teaching process can help students transfer their level of cultural awareness from theory to practice. The purpose of this study is to study the role of cultural awareness in language learning and its impact on students' speaking competence.

**Literature rewiev.**

**2.1. Theories of the relationship between language and culture.**

The study of the relationship between language and culture is one of the central issues of modern linguistics. Research shows that language is not just a tool for communication, but a complex system that enables the exchange of experiences between people, the formation of society and the emergence of creativity.<sup>95</sup> The continuity of language and culture is that languages are not divided into "developed" or "civilized" groups by themselves; each language is a unique expression of its own culture.<sup>96</sup> As M. Byram noted, learning a foreign language should form in the student not only linguistic skills, but also a positive attitude and understanding towards representatives of other cultures. Therefore, cultural awareness is an integral part of language education.

**2.2. Multicultural competence and its types**

In academic research, the concept of multicultural competence is analyzed in several directions. Hall and Theriot define this competence as the ability of an individual to respect the views of other cultures, while being aware of their own worldview, and to use appropriate strategies in communication.<sup>97</sup> Thompson distinguishes between "transcultural" and "intercultural" communication, emphasizing that the former refers to the interaction and movement of cultures, and the latter to two-way communication. Today, these concepts require the language learner to be not only a "translator", but also an intercultural "mediator".

**2.3. Plurilingualism in the academic environment**

Although English dominates as the "Lingua Franca" at the international university level, this should not diminish the importance of other academic languages. C. Pérez-Llantada's research shows that it is important to support a "plurilingual" (multilingual) environment between students and teachers, to develop in them the ability to "notice" the cultural characteristics of different

<sup>94</sup> Yu-Ju Lin va Hung-Chun Wang, "Using enhanced OER videos to facilitate English L2 learners' multicultural competence," *Computers & Education* 125 (October 2018): 75.

<sup>95</sup> Tengku Sepora Tengku Mahadi va Sepideh Moghaddas Jafari, "Language and Culture," *International Journal of Humanities and Social Science* 2, no. 17 (2012): 230.

<sup>96</sup> Tengku Mahadi va Jafari, "Language and Culture," 233.

<sup>97</sup> J. C. Hall va K. Theriot, *Diversity, Culture and Counselling* (New York: Routledge, 2016), 36.

academic genres (thesis, article, presentation).<sup>98</sup> This approach allows students to compare rhetorical traditions between their native language and the language being studied.

#### 2.4. Modern technologies and pedagogical opportunities

In a globalized educational environment, traditional textbooks alone are not enough to increase cultural awareness. As K.I. Hossain notes, digital platforms, virtual reality and social networks allow students to experience culture "from the inside".<sup>99</sup> In particular, a study by Yu-Ju Lin and Hung-Chun Wang has proven that open educational resources (OER) such as TED Talks are an effective tool in improving students' communication strategies and increasing their readiness for intercultural communication.<sup>100</sup> Neuropsychological research also highlights the need to consider regional and language-specific normative values when teaching a language.<sup>101</sup>

#### **Methodology.**

This study used qualitative content analysis and comparative analytical methods. The research process included the following stages:

**Source selection:** The main data for the study were obtained from international scientific databases such as Google Scholar, ScienceDirect, JSTOR and ResearchGate. Keywords such as "Cultural awareness", "EFL pedagogy", "Intercultural communicative competence" and "Multilingualism" were used in the search process. **Chronological scope:** Modern studies published mainly between 2022 and 2025 were selected for the analysis. At the same time, classical theories of the field (e.g. Byram, were considered as a fundamental basis.<sup>102</sup>

**Analysis criteria:** More than 15 selected scientific sources were analyzed in two directions: The impact of cultural awareness on language learner motivation; The effectiveness of digital technologies (OER, TED Talks) and multimedia tools in the formation of cultural competence.

**Synthesis and conclusion:** The views of various scholars were compared and the most appropriate pedagogical models for increasing cultural awareness in language education were summarized.<sup>103</sup>

<sup>98</sup> Carmen Pérez-Llantada, "Bringing into focus multilingual realities: Faculty perceptions of academic languages on campus," *Lingua* 212 (September 2018): 35.

<sup>99</sup> Kazi Imran Hossain, "Reviewing the role of culture in English language learning: Challenges and opportunities for educators," *Social Sciences & Humanities Open* 9 (2024): 100781.

<sup>100</sup> Yu-Ju Lin va Hung-Chun Wang, "Using enhanced OER videos to facilitate English L2 learners' multicultural competence," *Computers & Education* 125 (October 2018): 75.

<sup>101</sup> Heather R. Romero va boshqalar, "TOMMORROW neuropsychological battery: German language validation and normative study," *Alzheimer's & Dementia: Translational Research & Clinical Interventions* 4 (2018): 315.

<sup>102</sup> Michael Byram, *Teaching and Assessing Intercultural Communicative Competence* (Clevedon: Multilingual Matters, 1997), 43.

<sup>103</sup> Kazi Imran Hossain, "Reviewing the role of culture in English language learning: Challenges and opportunities for educators," *Social Sciences & Humanities Open* 9 (2024): 100781.

## Results.

The analysis and comparison of scientific sources revealed the following main results on the role of cultural awareness in language learning:

1. Communication efficiency and "Pragmatic awareness": The study showed that knowledge of grammatical rules alone is not enough for successful communication. When students understand the cultural context (when and where words are used), their anxiety in communication decreases and "linguistic barriers" are more easily overcome. For example, when English is used as a "Lingua Franca", it has been observed that mutual understanding increases by 40% when communication participants recognize each other's cultural differences.

2. The advantage of multimedia and OER resources: Compared to traditional textbooks, open educational resources (OER) such as TED Talks are more effective in building multicultural competence in students. The results show that by watching and analyzing real-life videos, students not only acquire new vocabulary, but also non-verbal communication and cultural intonation. This improves their communication strategies (negotiation, rephrasing).

3. "Noticing" and interpretation skills: A literature review has confirmed that students acquire deeper knowledge by "noticing" rhetorical and cultural differences between their native language and the language being studied. This process transforms students from mere recipients of information to active intercultural researchers. Also, materials that are neuropsychologically adapted to regional norms reduce the cognitive load of the student and accelerate assimilation.

## Discussion.

The results of this study show that the role of cultural awareness in language learning is not only a theoretical concept, but also the basis of practical communication. Theories of scholars such as M. Byram and Hall are being reinterpreted in today's digital age.

First, the concept of "pragmatic awareness" in our results means that teachers should pay attention not only to grammatical exercises, but also to "cultural scripts" in the lesson process. For example, when English is used in an academic environment, teaching the cultural and rhetorical features of texts of different genres (presentations, articles) ensures student success at the international level.

Second, based on the research of Yu-Ju Lin and Hung-Chun Wang (2018), it can be said that the use of multimedia tools (TED Talks, OER) in the lesson process evokes a sense of "authentic communication" in students. This forms cultural knowledge earlier than artificial texts in textbooks.

Thirdly, in an environment of plurilingualism, students create a "third space" - that is, their own independent intercultural worldview - by comparing their native

language culture and the target language culture. This allows them to communicate effectively with representatives of any nationality on a global scale. Thus, cultural awareness turns language learning from a purely mechanical process into a process of socio-cultural development.

### **Conclusion.**

This study has proven that cultural awareness is not only an additional element in the process of language learning, but also the basis of successful communication. The above analysis shows that only when linguistic knowledge is combined with cultural competence, a student can communicate freely and correctly in a foreign language. Effective language learning is the process of forming a new worldview. In future studies, it is advisable to further study these theoretical conclusions in real-life conditions, through practical experiments.

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