

THE LANGUAGE LACUNA

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One of the topical directions of the development of foreign language teaching is connected today with a special attention to the problems of intercultural communication, strengthening the peculiarities of national cultures and features of national perception of the surrounding world.

Success which can be achieved due to the expansion of cultural and language outlook of students promote development and reinforcement of the positive attitude of students to language learning. Formation of the so-called “feeling of the language”, understanding the form connection and its context are practical results of such training technique.

The goal of the given work is to show the possibility of step-by-step formation of “linguistic flair” alongside with linguistic, social and cultural competence of students based on understanding lacunas.

Modern researchers describe lacunas as nationally specific elements of the culture which have found corresponding reflexion in the language and speech of native speakers which are not completely understood, or misunderstood by informants of another lingvoculture while communicating [1, p.21].

There are different types of lacunas:

- culturalological,
- text lacunas,
- background knowledge lacunas,
- behavioural lacunas,

- kinetic lacunas,
- speech and language lacunas [5, p.14].

The language lacuna is a discrepancy between two languages which is shown:

- in the absence of equivalent of the language unit of another language;
- in the absence of the expected form;
- in the absence of the expected meaning [5, p.14].

Specific language lacuna is only urgent for two compared languages because it reflects discrepancies of one language system in relation to another system and is connected with the world language picture of different peoples directly or indirectly.

Language lacunas can be divided into 3 big groups:

1) Single component lacunas.

They reflect the absence of words or concepts which exist in another language in one of two compared languages. They can be divided into:

- Absolute lacunas which are connected with the real absence of language unit in one of the languages (дом отдыха, борщ) [4, p. 38].

- Relative lacunas – lacunas which are singled out on the basis of frequency comparison and urgency of use of units of one language in comparison with another one. Relative lacunas (погибать, лень, безделье, взаимно) theoretically have equivalents in the English language (to perish, laziness, idleness and reciprocally), but their use is strictly limited by the situation and definite context [2, p. 10].

2) Two–component lacunas, reflecting the presence in both compared languages semantically incomplete (and even false) equivalents (i.e. absence of the expected meaning or the expected form). Very interesting example of a two–component lacuna is the concept Страстная Пятница: Good Friday (хорошая пятница) in English and Long Friday (длинная пятница) in the Scandinavian languages [5, p.15].

3) Multicomponent lacunas (vector), presented in both compared languages by three or more units which conceptual meanings do not coincide.

Some examples of different kinds of Russian–English vector lacunas are the following:

- Conceptual: друг, приятель, знакомый and a friend, an acquaintance, a pal;
- Semantic: помнить, запомнить, вспомнить and to remember, to memorize, to recall;
- Lexical: a dream / сон и мечта;
- Lexical and grammatical: жить, прожить, пожить, отжить, дожить, пережить, выжить, вжиться, ужиться;
- Grammatical lacunas: так и такой / so and such.
- Usual: принять лекарство и выпить лекарство / to take medicine [5, p. 16].

Lacunas are deciphered by means of frames – a way of the organization of experience, and also knowledge about subject and event peculiarities which are traditionally incorporated with one another in practical activities of the participant of communication [3].

Regular work with language lacunas expands lingvocultural outlook of students, helps them understand cultural and language phenomena, gives the chance to see the surrounding world in a different way, “opens the window” to other cultures.

Literature references

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