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**LINGUOCULTURAL APPROACH AS MODERN EXPERIENCE  
IN LEARNING FOREIGN LANGUAGES**

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*Abstract*

The article discusses the importance of the culture of target-language country in the system of foreign language education of pupils and students. Being the base on which all foreign language speech communication is built, the culture of target-language country (history, life, traditions, national character of native speakers, etc.) determines the learning process itself, contributing to a deeper knowledge of their native culture and their native language. It is necessary to pay due attention to special features and cultural differences of a foreign language at all levels and stages of education: pre-school, school (primary, secondary, senior, profile-oriented levels), secondary professional, higher. The authors show through the examples based on personal practical experience in teaching the English and French languages at the North Ossetia State University named that the development of a personality of a student is performed while comparing several linguistic cultures, languages, cultural phenomena and facts of these languages. A foreign language is a tool for learning a different linguistic picture of the world. The linguocultural approach implemented in teaching both the first and second foreign languages is regarded as effective knowledge of foreign languages and cultures in the broadest sense.

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## 1. Introduction

In the 21st century, the century of constant conflicts and wars, misunderstanding of one nation by other nations and intolerance of fraternal peoples to each other, the issue of learning and foreign languages and cultures is particularly relevant not just as a tool for communication between representatives of different communities, but as a powerful weapon of transition from politics wars and capture to a culture of peace, cooperation and mutual understanding. Moreover it is recognized that knowledge of non-native languages is one of the conditions for the successful socio-economic, technical and cultural development of society and country. The modern labor market makes serious demands on young professionals of any profile. Nowadays necessary aspect of professional component today is presented by the knowledge of a foreign language (hereinafter referred to as FL).

However, the expansion of international contacts, the introduction of ICT in our lives, the possibility of wide access to the vast information space, labor migration, international cultural and educational programs form new public and social needs. In the foreseeable future, a specialist will need to know not only English, but two or even three foreign languages.

The question of the need to study the FL at all stages of human development was considered from different angles, and was solved in different ways. In some cases, students were taught only grammar, or only reading texts. The objectives of learning FL also seemed to be varied, depending on the age of students, on the occupation and the living environment of them.

The main goal at the present stage, the stage of social and cultural transformations of the 21st century, is the formation of foreign language communicative competence, including linguistic, sociocultural, sociolinguistic, psychological, social and other components (N.D. Galskova, A.A. Miroyubov, E.I. Passov, V.V. Safonova, E.N. Solovova, E.F. Tarasov, I.I. Khaleeva, A.V. Shchepilova, A.N. Shchukin, etc.). The consideration and combination of the above mentioned competencies allow the teacher to achieve positive results in teaching FL at all the levels of education, from pre-school to university. In addition to mastering the language skills - phonetic, lexical and grammatical, a student must also learn speech skills and abilities - listening, reading, speaking and writing in FL (Passov, 1999; Solovova, 2005; Solovova, 2008).

However the knowledge of students will not be complete and deep, if the whole process of learning the linguistic basics of FL does not go in parallel and in combination with the knowledge of the culture of target-language country. It is an indisputable fact that without knowledge of cultural peculiarities, customs and traditions, it is impossible to know the depth and essence of the language itself, since the culture of a people, its national character and spirit is reflected in language. A well-known fact, which is now recognized by scientists, is the learning not foreign only languages, but first and foremost, the learning of foreign-language culture. The authors agree with the opinion of Yu.N. Karaulov, according to which, "The national character is determined not only and not primarily by language, because along with language, one of the most important features of an ethnos is a common cultural values and traditions" (Belaya, 2014).

Nowadays due attention is paid to learning FL. Parents seek, as early as possible, to introduce their children to foreign languages and cultures, giving them the opportunity not only for intellectual, but also emotional and moral development. For this purpose, early development schools, language and linguistic centers have been created and continue to be created throughout the country, in which children, along with

Russian and native languages, are taught English, German or French. The courses for students of different ages are organized. Particular attention is paid to the English language due to the fact that it has become almost a language of global importance, serving all spheres of life of the world community.

Nowadays, a great number of people of different ages are studying English - the language of international importance. The methods of teaching in different age groups are different, depending on the objectives of learning. However, one requirement must be observed in all methodologies - this is learning to speak in a foreign language. Students need to learn not only language skills, but also to sufficiently master speech skills in order to be able to talk with communication partners speaking FL: be able to ask for information, answer the questions posed.

Apart from the need to communicate with native speakers, there are many other areas that require linguistic and cultural knowledge. These include reading fiction and scientific literature, watching movies, telephone communication and correspondence in social networks with representatives of other countries, etc.

In 2007, a decree was signed on the introduction of a second foreign language in secondary schools. This decision was enthusiastically accepted by many teachers of FL. In fact, it all ended with a reduction in hours of education of one FL, and there is still no mandatory introduction of a second FL to many schools. In the Republic of North Ossetia-Alania, for example, only in some secondary schools, gymnasiums and lyceums pupil do study the second FL in the amount of 2 hours per week from 7th to 9th grades.

However, mass English language training in our country led to the fact that the traditionally taught European languages (German, French) began to be gradually excluded out of the school curriculum. The dominance of English in the world also contributes to the active disappearance of the languages of the "small" nations, and this process cannot but be alarming. Some scientists speak of a serious bias towards the English language, arguing that the concept of a multilingual education cannot be fully implemented only on the basis of a single FL.

The linguodidacts have developed concepts for teaching German and French on the basis of Russian and English.

The first FL is introduced as an educational school subject from the second grade of the primary level of the secondary school. The introduction of the second FL is associated with the emergence of the social need for multilingual education of students.

According to the authors, mass learning of the second FL in the secondary school could be of great benefit: to contribute to the development of linguistic and intellectual inclinations of students. According to many psychologists and methodologists, learning the second FL, based on the first FL, and compared with it takes less time, and learning the language is much easier than learning the first FL. It is known that with a common Indo-European basis, French, English and Russian languages belong to different groups of languages (Roman, German and Slavic), have a number of both correspondences and differences.

Despite the commonality of Russian and Western European cultures, relations between Russia and the countries of Europe are not so good at present time. Obviously, at the present stage - the stage of all sorts of sanctions from the United States, some EEC countries, Great Britain, etc., it is necessary to rely on long-standing ties and partnership relations between Russia and Germany and France, which are also important today and are of great interest in politics, economics, commerce and education. Our society is

realizing the significance of these European languages. Consequently, the study of the languages of these countries, along with English, should be encouraged, incorporated into the school course of Foreign Languages, reflected in the standards of Federal Educational Standard.

## **2. Problem Statement**

The task of this study is to consider some examples and prove that learning of the FL is impossible without knowledge of the culture of target-language country. A language cannot exist outside the culture of a nation speaking a given language, since language is a manifestation of culture in all its aspects. Learning the cultures target-language countries, students enrich and expand their linguistic horizons, developing intercultural competence. Students come to a deeper understanding and significance of their native culture. Comparing the cultural peculiarities of peoples - the carriers of these languages, students replenish their knowledge, expand their ideas about the world, become multicultural linguistic personalities, which are characterized by such features as openness to everything new, tolerance and friendly attitude towards other people and cultures. However, foreign language training in our country should not be limited to English language. Along with it, it is necessary to introduce into the educational process second FI at all levels of education, and if conditions allow, then the third one. Thus, when studying FL, the linguocultural approach is fully implemented in educational process, the problems of which are set out in the works of a number of scientists (Ter-Minasova, 2000).

## **3. Research Questions**

In national universities the students of Foreign Languages Faculty learn two or three FLs, which correspond to the requirements of the modern multicultural world. As a result of training, a multicultural personality is formed, able to practically communicate with representatives of various communities on common and professional topics, to solve the problems. International contacts provide great opportunities for our youth to study and work abroad, to join the world cultural values, to use in the future the positive experience of other cultures.

At the initial stage of learning English, students find it difficult to perceive a foreign language structure of intonation, often different from usual structure of mother tongue. For example, the same phrase, pronounced with different intonations, will have different semantics. In English, the phrase Good morning, pronounced with a descending tone, means greeting - Good morning! The same phrase, pronounced with an ascending tone, means goodbye. Intonation of a special question also sounds very unusual for Russian-speaking students. If this is a question, it should be pronounced with a rising intonation, like all questions. However, a special question in English, i.e. a question that begins with a question word is pronounced with a descending intonation, as a statement. If a special question is pronounced with an ascending tone, it is perceived as extremely frivolous, not serious.

Learning the vocabulary of the English language is associated primarily with the polysemy of lexemes, and in some cases with the inconsistency of the volume of meanings of the lexical units of English, Russian and native languages associated with the cultural characteristics of different peoples. This can be demonstrated by the example of the lexeme "please". In English, this lexeme corresponds to the following phrases, depending on the meaning of the phrase. 1. Give me a book, please. - Give me the book, please. 2

Thank you very much - please. - Thank you. - Not at all. (My pleasure; be my guest; don't mention it) 3. Pass me the salt, please. - Here you are. - Will you pass me the salt, please? - Here you are. One Russian word - please - will be translated in different ways depending on the communication situation.

Cultural characteristics are important to know while reading and analyzing literary works that are difficult to understand without ascertaining some details regarding national customs and traditions. Reading the story "Betrayal" ("The Betrayal" by Celia Fremlin (1988)), students are confronted with a misunderstanding of one of the episodes. The main character, Maisie, comes to visit her former lover, now a sick man, and brings him twelve roses. "She dumped the twelve red roses onto the bed. Something cheaper would have done equally well, but she had only remembered at the last minute that one is supposed to bring an invalid something, and roses were all that was left in the shop." (Book for reading in English, 144). The surprise of students was caused by the even number of roses brought by the heroine as a gift to her former friend. The reaction of the students is as follows: she should have brought an odd number of roses to a living person, since an even number of flowers is for dead. In national tradition of the Ossetians, an even amount is associated with the afterlife, with death. Afterlife (Even) - Living World (Odd).

The teacher must explain to students that in the British national tradition there are no such associations with even numbers. This seems absurd to students, but, having considered the situation, they come to the conclusion that different nations have different traditions, that there cannot be a single rule for everyone, because all nations have different history and different paths of development and formation.

In the story of Harper Lee "To Kill a Mockingbird", the heroine, a first-grader girl, and her brother call their father Atticus. Students who live in the Caucasus and are raised with respect for the older generation, and even more so for their parents, thus they will never allow themselves to call their father or mother by name. It should be remembered here that in English there are no differences between the pronouns of the second person singular and plural - you and you (plural). In English, there is a pronoun you, which is used in both cases, and does not carry such a semantic distinction as in Russian. Accordingly, if the children in the English work call the father by name, this does not mean that they disrespect him. Here you can give another example - the treatment by name and patronymic in the Russian national tradition, and the absence of patronymic in western countries.

Many textbooks contain texts telling about the tradition of celebrating the New Year in the UK, USA, Russia and many other countries. It is possible to trace many common features in the celebration of the most beloved holiday. There is one tradition that is almost the same in Scotland and Ossetia, and this fact seems surprising to all students. This tradition is associated with the first minutes and hours of the New Year. In Scotland, in the first hours of the New Year, a dark-haired man should enter the house first, which will bring good luck to a family. This tradition is called "first-footer". In our republic in many families there is a similar kind of custom, when the first guest of a house should be a dark-haired man, which promises happiness and prosperity for a whole year. Despite the large number of features and differences in the traditions that students face during the period of study, there are many similarities that indicate that the world is one in its diversity.

Students always express great interest in the works "About King Arthur and the Knights of the Round Table". The main character - King Arthur has many similarities with the national Ossetian hero Batradz. He also got his sword out of stone, and performs similar feats. Many common features with the

national Ossetian tradition are presented by knight meetings at the round table, equipment of knights, burial ritual of a knight with weapons, etc. Not long ago, the Sarmatian - Alanian origin of King Arthur was proved (Howard Reid, "Arthur – the king of dragons"). Along with the differences, there are many similarities showing that people have always communicated and shared their knowledge and traditions, learned from each other, accepted a different culture and thereby enriched their culture and their knowledge.

Rich material illustrating the cultural characteristics of the countries of target language is presented by proverbs and sayings. If you deeply study the phraseology (P) of the FL, which is impossible due to the limited number of study hours, you can understand the language and cultural characteristics of the country much better. Comparing the phraseological units of English and Russian, students find many similarities and differences. For example: as like as two peas - as like as two drops; He laughs best who laughs last. - The one laughs best who laughs last. Two heads are better than one. - Two heads are better than one. The culture of the country of target language is studied by students while they are learning language and speech skills.

In primary grades, pupils become acquainted with English folklore, folk tales, some of them are no longer perceived as foreign (for example, the tale of Winnie the Pooh). As you learn English, knowledge of students about the culture of the country of target language is enriched. Reading literary works of home reading lessons shows students the life, traditions and customs of another country, which is significantly different from the familiar, native environment. Familiarity with cultural characteristics contributes to a better understanding and assimilation of linguistic knowledge, since the language itself is reflected in people and their culture.

As it was mentioned above, it is difficult to understand and explain certain linguistic phenomena without knowledge of the culture of the target language country. At the same time, a deep insight into the phonetic, grammatical and lexical features of target language helps to better understand cultural characteristics. These are two interrelated and interdependent processes that require careful investigation. A teacher should be aware of these features and try to explain to students the inconsistencies of linguistic phenomena of FL with the phenomena of mother tongue in the process of studying phonetic, grammatical phenomena, as well as during the introduction of lexical units. The language experience that a teacher possesses should be transmitted from him to students. Transmitted knowledge about FL and in FL is subject to obligatory consolidation, control and practical application.

Nowadays the French language is in demand as the second FL based on first English, both at school and at university levels of study. The rich culture of France and French-speaking countries should not be limited to the study of the language only by native speakers. The multilingual approach in language education provides the learning of several languages other than English. The introduction of ICT in the areas of human activity, including the teaching and learning of foreign languages and cultures, makes this process more efficient and qualitative, providing students with the opportunity to practice several languages.

Francophone culture plays an important role in European and world cultures and presents the same interest for us as well as the culture of peoples who are carriers of Germanic languages. From preschool age, children are introduced to the tales of the famous French storyteller Charles Perrot. The heroes of his fairy tales - Little Red Riding Hood, Little Finger, Cat in Boots, Sleeping Beauty, Bluebeard, and others

have become favorite international characters that still excite the imagination of children, evoking different emotions. During the pedagogical period, our students set small scenes from fairy tales loved by children, in which the children themselves take part, which, undoubtedly, contributes not only to the consolidation of lexical and grammatical material, but also to the development of speech skills.

The pearl of the world cultural fund of France is the book of A. de Saint-Exupéry “The Little Prince”, recognized as the best book of the 20th century and which has been translated into many languages of the world, including Ossetian (translator T.T. Kambolov). At the faculty of the Institute of Foreign Languages the students of undergraduate courses (the second foreign language), are obliged to read this book in “home reading”.

Using the translations of this book into Ossetic and Russian languages, it is possible to compare them with the original, identifying lexical and grammatical constructions used by translators, stylistic and syntactic means of communication, estimate the adequacy of translation. In educational process, the dialogues of the little prince with the author of the work and other characters, his “non-childish” questions and philosophical reflections present great interest. According to the authors, this material should be taught both in monologue and dialogic communication in French, taking into account the rich speech experience of students in both their native and Russian languages, and the first foreign language.

In senior courses, linguists learn about the works of contemporary French authors, for example, the acclaimed “French novel” (2010) by Frédéric Beigbeder, the all-European literary star, the author of world bestsellers. Students penetrate deeper into the essence of the linguistic phenomena of language, getting acquainted with the cultural facts of contemporary 21st century France. The author, spent several years in USA due to his professional activity, was so imbued with American culture that it affected his earlier works. Numerous Anglo-Americanisms abound in his novels (99 Franks, Love Lives for Three Years, Ideal, etc.) became the object of serious criticism and displeasure of advocates for the purity of the French language in the press and media, which was also discussed with students. In the opinion of the same critics, in The French Novel the mentality and national character of the modern French is reflected more than in his previous works.

The other important layer of the vocabulary of the modern language, without which the language picture of the speakers of this language will be incomplete, is rich phraseological fund of the French language which presents great cultural value. The acquaintance with phraseological units - steady expressions makes speech richer, more expressive. Moreover, in the opinion of the authors, “The phraseology of the French language, vividly reflecting the national identity and the spirit of the people speaking this language as a branch of lexicology, along with other disciplines of the general professional cycle, is of great interest to study, contributing to the formation of sociolinguistic competence of students in the learning process of FL in high school” (Murieva, 2015).

In school course of the French language, starting from the elementary level, it is advisable, based on the native and Russian languages, to make comparisons of languages, to identify both similarities and differences of languages, to form a linguistic sense of students. Such an approach to foreign language learning will be very productive: pupils will be constantly motivated to learn the language and learn new language phenomena. Skillfully used country-specific material in the classroom will make lessons more memorable, because visual supports at this age are dominant. The Internet also provides great opportunities:

any information becomes available if there is a desire to understand and study different culture. A variety of language teaching programs, including French, allow students to make a choice in favor of one or another method. In the course of work on the development of aspects of speech, types of speech activity, intercultural competence is formed, which is associated with the knowledge of another lingvosociety, the development of cultural experience and the expanding of linguistic picture of the world and, in this regard, the formation of a secondary linguistic personality.

#### **4. Purpose of the Study**

The purpose of the research is to show that a full study of the first and second FL is carried out on the basis of a linguocultural approach. The purpose will be fulfilled with the help of practical experience in teaching English and French at the special faculty at the university.

#### **5. Research Methods**

The following methods were used in the course of the research:

- a) theoretical: study and analysis of linguistic, methodical, pedagogical, culturological literature on the problem;
- b) pedagogical: studying the teaching materials in the English language for secondary schools; the observation of the educational process; the conversations with teachers, students;
- c) immanent (description, analysis);
- d) the method of collecting facts;
- e) generalizations.

The description of the methods used when performing the study.

#### **6. Findings**

The study of cultural peculiarities of the country of target language (English, German, French, etc.) helps to more deeply understand language phenomena and facts, which contributes to enriching not only linguistic knowledge, but also expanding the language picture of students, the formation of intercultural competence. It will help them see the diversity of a multi-ethnic and multi-religious world. The study of the culture of target language country must be carried out at all levels of school and university education, since without culture it is impossible to fully learn FL. It is in the process of foreign language learning that students learn the fact that different nations look at the same phenomena differently, interpret and perceive them differently. The vision of the world and its perception among all nations cannot be similar. This dissimilarity determines the diversity and significance of ethnic cultures, which enriches the knowledge of each individual person, makes the world around us brighter, more interesting and more understandable.



## 7. Conclusion

The educational system under the influence of certain factors is constantly changing and improving. Currently, great attention is paid to studying FL in all civilized countries. Anyone wishing to learn FL can find tutorials, video courses, audio courses, etc. Learning foreign language and communicative competence is based not only on learning language and speech skills. Students need to be introduced to the culture of country of target language, which implies not only literature and art, but also history, traditions, customs, way of life and behavioral patterns of the inhabitants of a given country in various situations. Thus, in the modern foreign language educational process, a linguocultural approach is implemented, allowing students

- a) to be open to learning not only their own, but also foreign culture: social, psychological and other intercultural differences;
- b) to adequately perceive someone different linguoculture, demonstrating a tolerant attitude towards everything “new” and “alien”;
- c) to overcome cultural barriers for full-fledged intercultural communication with native speakers of studied languages.

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