

CROSS-CULTURAL CLASSES AS A PLEDGE OF EFFECTIVE TEACHING ENGLISH

Modern globalization of all spheres of our life can be realized in the context of intercultural communication and tolerant attitude to people of different nationalities, religions, traditions, and customs.

Cultural aspect of English classes is the main tool for achieving these goals. The aim of this article is highlighting of cultural aspect as a key element in teaching English.

The question of cross-cultural aspect integration during English learning classes is under consideration. The author stresses on the importance of cross-cultural classes of English for achieving such goals as learning about other cultures and lifestyles, self-respect and respect for others, tolerance and personal growth, making intercultural English communication effective.

Keywords: *cross-cultural classes, process of learning, different cultures, teaching process, social culture, cultural background, target language.*

Statement of the problem. The project “Education for democratic citizenship and human rights education”, approved by the Council of Europe in 2010, is aimed at the development of the ‘system of human values based on the self, relationship with people, according to environment and society’. Here, among other constituents, they emphasize the importance of global cultural understanding because awareness of cultural patterns among the different cultures of the world helps to decide how to act in cross-cultural situations and makes intercultural communication effective [1, p.7].

Foreign language learning involves not only phonetics, grammar, sentence structure and academic components, but cognitive and sociocultural aspects as well. That is why culture should be highlighted as a key element in teaching English, because it is impossible to attain high communicative competence of language learners without integration of cultural aspect in teaching process. Such researchers, philologists and methodologists as Richard Hames, Sarah Knowles, Olha Madylus emphasize that success in language learning is impossible without acquisition of cultural knowledge.

Purpose of the article. Foreign language learners acquire cultural background in order to communicate and to increase their comprehension in the target

language. In educational context one can mention teaching students' knowledge, beliefs, values, views and behavior that we share with others who have a different cultural heritage.

The adoption of cultural aspect in English teaching can solve the problem of motivating and stimulating students and therefore make the learning process more effective and student-oriented. Besides, cross-cultural classes are the source of authentic materials, connecting formal and informal English learning, developing learning based on students' daily experience, personal values, attitudes and feelings.

The purpose of the article is to prove the importance of cultural aspect integration in English teaching process.

Statement of the main material. British philologist and methodologist Olha Madylyus claims that the word "culture" as a term can be divided into three main categories:

- products (literature, folklore, art and music);
- behaviors (customs, traditions, habits, dress style, food and leisure);
- ideas (beliefs, values and institutions).

Within these categories there is a range of topics that can interest and engage students of all ages. Usually, young learners do not have strong motivation for learning English. They learn English because their teacher makes lessons interesting and fun. They are interested in learning the topics which can connect the language to the countries where the language is spoken, as well as use English to explore how the world around is linked. When the lessons are held by Ukrainian English teacher and Chinese or Italian volunteers at once, for example, the young learners can make the links and it will make learning more meaningful.

For example, topic "Food" is cross-cultural itself. We can start asking children about their favourite food and drinks. Write their answers on the board. They will mention not only national Ukrainian dishes and beverages but also dishes like pizza, hot dog, sushi, and drinks like Cola or Pepsi. Next, let them divide the dishes and drinks into two groups: local and foreign. Help them if necessary. Ask young learners where the foreign drinks and dishes come from. After, we can practice vocabulary of

such topic as “Countries, nationalities”. If you have a map of the world in the classroom, you can ask children to find the countries where the foreign drinks and dishes were originated. For example, young learners called pizza and cola, practice: “It is from Italy”, “It is Italian”, “It is from the USA”, “It is American”. During cross-cultural classes it would be better to cook some national dishes by foreign volunteers (of course, if you have opportunity). Children will have opportunity to taste real national food. Their motivation in learning new facts about foreign cultures through English will rise.

Adults and teenagers usually have clear reasons for learning English. They want to travel, get better jobs, become compete specialists, academically successful students. Having classes with adults or teenagers on the topic “Food” we can write the following words on the board: snails, sushi, kebab, burger, noodles, pasta and so on. Ask the students if they know what these food are and in which countries these food was originated. Talk about these food asking the questions:

- Have you ever tried this food?
- Did you like it?
- Have you ever tried unusual or strange food?
- What is your favourite food?

The students can interview each other with these questions; make mini-presentations or research on food in different countries on the internet. But if the classes are with foreign volunteers children can ask about their national food.

Other topics like greetings, clothes, houses, weather, school life, hobbies, music, traditions and customs, holidays are great opportunity for involving students in cross-cultural awareness. Examining other cultures helps to highlight what is special, unique, different or unusual about our own culture [3].

People of different cultures can refer to different things while using the same language forms. For example, if a Ukrainian thinks about birthday, it can be a cake with juice and sweets, but an Indonesian will dream about a long table covered with banana leaves and served with rice and vegetables on it. In Ukraine we can use both hands to present or give something, but in Indonesia it is banned to use left hand in

such cases. Moslem girls cannot walk with uncovered head in the streets, but Christian girls can do it freely. It is easy to infer from these meaning-making process of culture differences interpretation.

Every new aspect of culture is the transaction between individual's culture and social culture. Therefore, atmosphere of classes have to allow and encourage students to recognize their own cultures and to reflect on these transactions. There are many activities that may help students to understand culture as continuous interactions between individual's culture, social culture and target culture through recognition, exploration and reflection.

Such topics as "Personal identification", "Family traditions", "National holidays", "National food", "Cultural differences" and many others can be familiar for everyone. Their structure and goals alter students' understanding about different spheres of life in different countries. We can tell students about cultural differences using modern textbooks or internet resources. Students can find on the internet interesting or curious facts about foreign countries and use them in the classroom, but it is better to communicate with a real foreign representatives that to know true facts about cultural and everyday life of their countries. Furthermore, students should use only English. It is another great value and advantage of such communication. It is not so important to have cross-cultural classes with native English speakers only. Representatives of any foreign country can realize the goals of such classes through English communication. The experience of my cross-cultural classes in the summer camp shows that Chinese, Indonesian, Tunisian, Turkish, Egyptian, Italian, Polish, Brazilian, Columbian, Estonian, Algerian, Slovenian, Swedish, Portuguese people can be fluent in English too. They tell real stories about their countries using photos, videos, drawings, national symbols and costumes. They cook national food and tell about history of their countries. Students ask questions they are interested in and tell about Ukraine. Mistakes and incorrect pronunciation do not stop communication. After every day classes and communication during three weeks the results are excellent. Goals of cross-cultural classes are achieved. Thus, students learn to

understand cultural differences of different cultural groups, societies, behavioral patterns.

Bearing in mind the status of English as an international language, teachers should not foster general image of the native speaker that is a linguistic myth. It is becoming apparent that a new notion of communicative competence is needed, one that recognizes English as world language and consequently where culture is a world itself. This would encompass local and international contexts as settings of language use, involve native-nonnative and nonnative-nonnative participants, and take as teaching models successful bilinguals with intercultural insights and knowledge. It would aim at realization of intercultural communicative competence in teaching English [2, p. 26].

Conclusions. It is necessary to stress the fact that only due to the acquiring by culture a new role in English language teaching process, where it is no more an additional device for attaining artificial and temporary interest in language learning but its integral component we can achieve qualitative learning results. As learners are not only expected to acquire accurate forms of the target language but also to learn how to use these forms in social situations in the target language setting to convey appropriate, coherent and strategically-effective meanings both for native and nonnative speakers. Cross-cultural classes are very important and actual for teaching students of diverse cultural backgrounds and travelling experience.

Cross-cultural classes with foreign volunteers are great opportunity to learn about other cultures and lifestyles, form lifelong friendships and make lasting memories. The concepts of self-respect and respect for others, tolerance and celebration of diversity, ethical behavior and personal growth are fostered via educational tasks of cross-cultural classes. Cross-cultural awareness is not just being integrated into education process as a way to include interesting and cognitive topics but to create opportunities for different age students to be encouraged to think critically, learn about citizenship as well as appreciate and accommodate diversity.

Cross-cultural education in all its forms is the key factor in developing collaborative communities capable to innovate and create new ways of mutual peaceful coexistence for people with different cultural backgrounds.

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Шевченко Світлана. Культурологічний аспект занять – запорука успішного викладання англійської мови.

Сучасну глобалізацію усіх сфер нашого життя може бути реалізовано у контексті міжкультурної комунікації та толерантного ставлення до людей різних національностей, релігійних конфесій, традицій та звичаїв.

Культурологічний аспект занять з англійської мови є головним інструментом для досягнення таких цілей. Мета цієї статті – відокремлення культурологічного аспекту як ключового елементу у викладанні англійської.

Статтю призначено питанню інтеграції культурологічного аспекту до канви завдань на заняттях з англійської мови. Автор акцентує на важливості проведення занять культурологічної спрямованості для поліпшення якості знань, самовдосконалення, виховання толерантних міжкультурних взаємовідносин та підготовки слухачів до вільного спілкування англійською мовою в різних соціальних ситуаціях.

Ключові слова: міжкультурні заняття, процес навчання, різні культури, процес викладання, соціальна культура, цільова мова.