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THE ROLE AND IMPORTANCE OF TRANSLATION IN TEACHING A FOREIGN LANGUAGE

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Abstract. This article examines the role and importance of translation in teaching foreign languages. The study analyzes how translation activities contribute to vocabulary development, grammatical understanding, and intercultural competence among language learners. The findings show that translation can serve as an effective pedagogical tool that supports deeper language comprehension and bilingual competence.

Keywords: translation, foreign language teaching, language learning, bilingual competence, intercultural communication

Annotatsiya. Mazkur maqolada xorijiy tillarni o‘qitish jarayonida tarjimaning o‘rni va ahamiyati tahlil qilinadi. Tadqiqotda tarjima mashqlarining so‘z boyligini rivojlantirish, grammatik bilimlarni mustahkamlash hamda madaniyatlararo kompetensiyani shakllantirishdagi roli yoritiladi. Natijalar tarjima usuli til o‘rganishda samarali pedagogik vosita ekanligini ko‘rsatadi.

Kalit so‘zlar: tarjima, xorijiy tilni o‘qitish, til o‘rganish, ikki tillilik, madaniyatlararo kommunikatsiya

Аннотация. В статье анализируется роль и значение перевода в обучении иностранным языкам. Рассматривается влияние переводческих упражнений на развитие словарного запаса, грамматических знаний и межкультурной компетенции. Результаты показывают, что перевод является эффективным педагогическим инструментом в процессе изучения языка.

Ключевые слова: перевод, обучение иностранным языкам, изучение языка, билингвальная компетенция, межкультурная коммуникация

INTRODUCTION

In the contemporary globalized world, the ability to communicate in foreign languages has become an essential component of professional, academic, and social development. Educational institutions across the world increasingly emphasize the importance of multilingual competence as a key element of modern education. Within this context, the methods used for teaching foreign languages continue to evolve in order to meet the needs of learners and the demands of international communication. Among the many pedagogical techniques applied in foreign language instruction, translation has historically occupied a complex and controversial position. For centuries, translation was considered the primary method for learning foreign languages. Classical education systems widely relied on the grammar-translation approach, which focused on analyzing grammatical structures and translating literary texts between languages. Although this method contributed significantly to linguistic awareness, it was later criticized for neglecting communicative competence and spoken language skills.

With the emergence of communicative language teaching in the late twentieth century, many educators attempted to exclude translation from language classrooms. They believed that excessive reliance on the learners’ native language could hinder immersion in the target language and reduce opportunities for spontaneous communication. However, contemporary linguistic and pedagogical research has begun to reconsider the role of translation. Scholars

argue that translation is not merely a mechanical transfer of words between languages but rather a complex cognitive activity that supports deeper language understanding. In recent years, researchers in Uzbekistan and other countries have emphasized the pedagogical value of translation in language education. They argue that translation can serve as a bridge between languages, helping learners understand linguistic structures, cultural meanings, and semantic nuances. Furthermore, translation activities encourage analytical thinking, linguistic awareness, and intercultural competence.

The purpose of this article is to analyze the role and importance of translation in teaching foreign languages from a theoretical and methodological perspective. The study focuses on the linguistic, cognitive, and pedagogical functions of translation and examines how translation activities can support effective language acquisition. Special attention is given to insights from Uzbek linguistic scholarship and educational practice.

Main part

Theoretical foundations of translation in language teaching. Translation has long been regarded as one of the fundamental tools in language learning. From a theoretical perspective, translation is not merely a linguistic operation but also a cognitive process that involves understanding meaning, context, and cultural references. According to many linguists, translation requires a deep comprehension of both the source language and the target language. The translator must analyze grammatical structures, semantic relationships, and stylistic features in order to convey meaning accurately. This analytical process develops learners' linguistic competence and helps them recognize similarities and differences between languages.

Uzbek linguists have also emphasized the educational importance of translation. Scholars in Uzbek language pedagogy highlight that translation allows students to compare linguistic systems and better understand grammatical patterns. Through translation exercises, learners develop the ability to analyze sentence structure, vocabulary usage, and contextual meaning. From a cognitive perspective, translation activates multiple levels of language processing. When learners translate a text, they engage in comprehension, interpretation, and reformulation. These processes strengthen memory retention and enhance language awareness. As a result, translation can contribute significantly to vocabulary acquisition and grammatical accuracy.

Another theoretical aspect of translation involves the concept of bilingual competence. Language learners often rely on their native language as a cognitive framework for understanding new linguistic information. Translation activities make this process explicit by allowing learners to consciously compare linguistic systems. Furthermore, translation contributes to the development of metalinguistic awareness. Learners become more conscious of language structures and patterns when they translate between languages. This awareness supports more accurate and flexible language use.

Translation and vocabulary acquisition. One of the most important benefits of translation in foreign language learning is its contribution to vocabulary development. Vocabulary acquisition is a central component of language proficiency, and translation activities provide effective opportunities for expanding lexical knowledge. When students translate texts, they encounter new words and expressions within meaningful contexts. Instead of memorizing isolated vocabulary items, learners analyze how words function within sentences and discourse. This contextual learning improves long-term vocabulary retention.

Translation also helps learners understand semantic relationships between words. Many words in different languages share similar meanings but differ in usage, connotation, or stylistic nuance. By translating texts, learners explore these subtle distinctions and develop a deeper understanding of vocabulary. Uzbek methodological literature emphasizes that translation

exercises can significantly enrich students' lexical competence. Educators often use translation tasks to introduce new vocabulary and reinforce previously learned words. Through repeated exposure and contextual practice, learners gradually internalize new lexical items. Another important advantage of translation is that it helps learners avoid common lexical errors. By comparing equivalent expressions in different languages, students become aware of false cognates and misleading similarities. This awareness improves accuracy and prevents misunderstandings in communication.

Translation and grammar learning. Grammar is another area where translation plays an important educational role. Many grammatical structures in foreign languages differ significantly from those in the learners' native language. Translation allows students to analyze these differences systematically. Through translation activities, learners examine how grammatical categories such as tense, aspect, modality, and word order function in different languages. This comparative analysis enhances grammatical understanding and supports more accurate language production.

Uzbek researchers in language pedagogy note that translation can be particularly useful for explaining complex grammatical concepts. For example, learners may better understand the use of certain verb forms or syntactic patterns when they compare them with equivalent structures in their native language. Translation exercises also encourage students to think critically about grammatical choices. When translating a sentence, learners must consider various linguistic possibilities and select the most appropriate form in the target language. This process strengthens grammatical competence and improves writing skills. Furthermore, translation can serve as an effective diagnostic tool for teachers. By analyzing students' translations, educators can identify areas where learners struggle with grammar or vocabulary. This information helps teachers adjust their instructional strategies and provide targeted support.

Translation and intercultural competence. Language learning is not limited to mastering grammar and vocabulary; it also involves understanding the cultural context in which language is used. Translation plays a crucial role in developing intercultural competence. Many expressions, idioms, and cultural references cannot be translated literally. When learners encounter such elements, they must interpret the cultural meaning behind the words. This process encourages students to explore the cultural values, traditions, and social norms associated with the language.

Uzbek scholars emphasize that translation can serve as a powerful tool for intercultural education. By analyzing literary texts, proverbs, and idiomatic expressions, students gain insights into cultural differences and similarities between societies. Translation also fosters empathy and cultural awareness. When learners attempt to convey meaning across languages, they must consider the perspective of both cultures. This awareness contributes to more effective cross-cultural communication.

Translation in modern communicative language teaching. Although communicative language teaching initially rejected translation, contemporary pedagogical approaches increasingly recognize its value. Modern educators argue that translation can be integrated into communicative learning environments without undermining language immersion. Translation tasks can be designed to promote meaningful communication and collaborative learning. For example, students may work in groups to translate texts, discuss alternative interpretations, and justify their linguistic choices. Such activities encourage interaction and critical thinking.

In addition, translation can be combined with other language skills such as reading, writing, speaking, and listening. Learners may translate dialogues, summarize texts in another language, or interpret spoken messages. These integrated activities support holistic language development.

Digital technologies have also expanded the possibilities for translation-based learning. Online dictionaries, translation tools, and multilingual resources provide learners with immediate access to linguistic information. However, educators emphasize that students should use these tools critically and develop independent analytical skills. Modern research in language pedagogy suggests that translation should not dominate language instruction but rather complement other teaching methods. When used appropriately, translation can enhance comprehension, reinforce linguistic knowledge, and promote deeper engagement with language.

CONCLUSION

The analysis presented in this article demonstrates that translation remains an important and valuable component of foreign language education. Despite earlier criticisms from communicative language teaching advocates, contemporary research has highlighted the pedagogical benefits of translation in language learning. Translation supports vocabulary acquisition, grammar comprehension, and metalinguistic awareness. It encourages learners to analyze linguistic structures, compare languages, and develop analytical thinking skills. Furthermore, translation contributes to the development of intercultural competence by helping learners understand cultural meanings and communication practices.

Insights from Uzbek linguistic and pedagogical scholarship confirm that translation can serve as an effective educational strategy when integrated thoughtfully into language teaching. Rather than replacing communicative approaches, translation complements them by providing learners with deeper linguistic understanding. In modern educational contexts characterized by globalization and multilingual communication, the ability to navigate between languages has become increasingly important. Translation activities help learners develop this ability and prepare them for real-world communication across linguistic and cultural boundaries. Therefore, translation should be regarded not merely as a traditional teaching technique but as a dynamic pedagogical tool that enriches foreign language education. By incorporating translation into modern language teaching practices, educators can enhance learners' linguistic competence, cognitive skills, and intercultural awareness.

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