INTERCULTURAL COMMUNICATION AND LANGUAGE TEACHING

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Abstract: Culturally and linguistically, this thesis is concerned with language in the sphere of intercultural communication and language instruction. It describes the formation of intercultural competence during the process of language acquisition, the role of educators in the formation of this competence, and the need for an understanding of the language 'rules' for communication between people who belong to different cultures. The literature review addresses the following topics: culture and language learning and teaching, the testimonies of English language teachers from international programmes and the impact of globalization on inter- cultural communication.
Keywords: Intercultural communication, language teaching, cultural competence, linguistic differences, language policy, language and culture.

In today's global world, language teaching requires not only mastering grammar and vocabulary but also developing competencies necessary for intercultural communication. Linguistic and cultural differences can lead to misunderstandings and conflicts, which in turn disrupt effective communication.

Intercultural communication is defined as communication between two or more representatives of different cultures through language. Each culture has its own linguistic rules, which dictate how its representatives speak and interact with each other. For example, while direct communication is valued in Western countries, indirect, soft speech is common in Eastern cultures. Language teaching requires not only learning grammatical rules and vocabulary but also learning about culture. Culture is manifested through the values, traditions, and social communication rules expressed in each language. Understanding the relationship between language and culture allows learners to communicate more deeply and effectively in the language.

This section discusses the role of culture in the language teaching process and the approaches that should be applied in this process. Language and culture are closely intertwined; language reflects culture and is shaped by it. Each culture has its unique rules for language use, which reflect cultural values, social norms, and forms of speech. For example:

Pragmatics: Pragmatics reflects cultural behavioral norms in language. This, in turn, means that speech acts (such as greetings, expressing gratitude, and apologizing) are expressed differently in various cultures.

Cultural values: Cultural values are reflected in the structures and communicative styles of each language. For instance, while individualism is an important value in Western culture, collectivism is more recognized in Eastern cultures, and this difference is also expressed through language.

In language teaching, it is necessary to develop not only students' linguistic knowledge but also their intercultural competence. Intercultural competence is the ability to communicate effectively with representatives of different cultures. Developing this competence is an integral part of the language learning process because effective use of a language is not limited to mastering grammar and vocabulary. It is also important to correctly understand cultural contexts and adhere to the communication rules specific to that culture.

Intercultural competence is developed in language teaching through the following methods:

Discussing intercultural phenomena: Creating opportunities for students to learn about the differences in speech acts in different cultures and to study these differences.

Practical tasks in cultural contexts: Introducing students to the situations and speech rules they may encounter in intercultural communication and teaching them how to express speech acts in different cultures through practical assignments.

Failure to consider cultures in language teaching can lead to intercultural barriers. Intercultural barriers are misunderstandings or conflicts that arise due to cultural differences. Such barriers can occur in the following cases:

Semantic differences: Words may have different meanings in different cultures, which can lead to misunderstandings in intercultural communication.

Pragmatic rules: The usual communication methods in various cultures may differ, which can result in misunderstandings during intercultural communication.

In language teaching, it is important to teach the cultural context to overcome such barriers. It is necessary to provide students with an understanding of the cultural differences they will encounter in communication and to develop cultural sensitivity in communication.

Teaching culture in the language learning process can be carried out through the following methods:

Cultural and linguistic comparison: Providing students the opportunity to compare the cultural and linguistic differences between their native language and the language they are learning.

Analysis based on culture: Analyzing the use of language in cultural phenomena or social contexts during lessons, such as studying the expression of politeness or etiquette rules in different cultures.

Interactive games and role-playing: Using games and practical exercises to teach the communication rules of various cultures.

Assessing students' intercultural competence is also an important part of language teaching. Testing and assessment systems should be developed to measure this competence. Student assessment is carried out through the following methods:

Understanding of intercultural phenomena: Students are asked to explain cultural phenomena and how they are reflected in language.

Practical tasks: Teaching students to apply various communication rules in an intercultural environment and assessing their skills in this process.

International language teaching programs (e.g., TESOL, CELTA, DELTA) pay great attention to developing intercultural competence. These programs equip teachers not only with linguistic knowledge but also with skills for teaching cultural differences. These experiences are among the most effective methods for developing skills in intercultural communication.

The role of culture in language teaching is significant. Linguistic knowledge and cultural competencies together help students fully master a language. For successful intercultural communication, it is necessary to correctly understand and teach the cultural context during the language teaching process. Therefore, the teaching of culture should be recognized as a special part of language teaching programs.

In international language teaching programs such as TESOL or CELTA, special attention is given to developing intercultural competence. These programs teach students not only language but also the rules of cultural communication, preparing them for international communication. The programs are aimed at deeply studying the linguistic and cultural aspects of intercultural communication, which helps students to correctly handle cultural differences.

In the process of globalization, the importance of intercultural communication is increasing. The growth of the global economy and international cooperation requires effective

communication between representatives of different nations. Therefore, it is necessary to form international cooperation and intercultural communication in the language teaching process. For this purpose, special modules for teaching culture have been introduced in language teaching programs.

The connection between language policy and intercultural communication affects communication between international organizations and states. In the process of multilingualism policy and intergovernmental cooperation, it is important to consider linguistic differences and cultural barriers. The strength of relations between states depends on the effectiveness of language policy and cultural cooperation.

Language teaching plays an important role in forming intercultural communication. Considering linguistic and cultural factors, students should be taught intercultural competence during the language learning process. If this competence is developed in international language teaching programs, intercultural misunderstandings will decrease, and international cooperation will strengthen.

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