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Functioning of Regional Component in the Russian Language Teaching Process

When learning a language from a native speaker, language personality is not only formed by the national life style but also reflects the peculiarities of its own national mentality. That is why the choice of text based on some cultural, historical, and regional backgrounds is very important. If teaching Russian as a foreign language, regional texts are used to form communicative, geographical, and cultural competence. Cossack culture is a source for regional texts in Volgograd region. Bylines, funny stories, and moralistic allegories narrate routine Cossack life, love, separation, loyalty, wisdom, native wit and bravery of the Cossacks. Their traditions are an integral part of Russian national richness.

During the analytical reading, the language units are reviewed in context, and the peculiarities of their functions in the chosen texts are taken into consideration. Such kind of analysis in the assimilation of the specific paradigmatic and syntagmatic connections of the elements of different levels, interacting on the semantic base. Special attention is paid to culturally-colored lexicon, proper names, aphorisms, dialectal words, colloquial lexicon, and formulas of speech etiquette.

So, analytical reading of regional texts makes it easier for students to master a foreign language. Being a source of information about the history and culture of the region, the adequate interpretation of the lexicon plays an important role. It (analytical reading) helps foreign students to become aware of the interaction between the literary language and dialectal speech as well as to form an image about the richness and expressiveness of the Russian language, its stylistic resources. We believe that such teaching methods can be used for teaching any foreign language.

The problem of language and culture interaction, which is of current interest for modern scientific researches, finds direct reflection in practice of teaching Russian as a foreign language. Purposeful and consistent inclusion of culturally marked materials in educational process allows raising the level of general knowledge of a foreign language and boosting motivation for its learning. Nowadays we observe a revision of methodical stereotypes. In our view, among new tendencies there exists a special attention of scientists toward the creation of motivated learning base. Moreover, scientific works of many linguists are focused on the importance of regarding cultural specifics when teaching a foreign audience a language. This direction proposes learning of the language and its structural patterns when comprehending a man as a native speaker, as a language

personality reflecting ways of national thinking, formed by the lifestyle of a nation (1). Linguists and methodologists have defined this approach as linguocultural and cultural (2).

As we see it, special attention should be paid to a regional component. Within this approach, acquaintance with a regional subculture, in which a foreign student lives when learning Russian, is much more conscious (3).

According to methodologists, systematic and consistent inclusion of a regional component that reveals special speech features of residents within a particular area, in courses of learning Contemporary Russian, allows foreigners to get to know Russia through its territory peculiarities (district, city, region) (4).

This approach is used when teaching Russian as foreign language, because “interest in a language, its culture and spiritual values arises when during the lessons we regard specific features of a language personality not only as a native speaker of a language, but also as a creator of spiritual and material values” (5). The experience of teaching foreign students the Russian language shows that they are interested in the life of a province. They are eager to learn how people live in towns and villages.

Within the direction, the correct choice of working forms with foreign students is important. Thus, in a short-term process of the Russian language learning and its culture at Volgograd State University, Russian Language Department, they visit Cossack towns and villages, lyceums and grammar schools of the city and its regions, meet Volgograd writers.

Besides, during the lessons on speech development, professors in educational process use presentations on the Cossacks life with the help of audio- and video- materials, different texts reflecting special language features of the region. A foreign audience takes an interest in reading regional literature (6) – Cossack legends and fairy-tales. The stories of the analysed texts tell histories of creating names of the Don khutors (farms), of residents’ complicated characters, loyalty to the debt, wisdom of the Cossacks, the original traditions which are the integral part of Russian national wealth. The contents and the language of folk-

lore literary texts give students information about the routine live, spiritual and material values of the Cossacks.

During the analytical reading, language units are reviewed in complex, the peculiarities of their functioning in the chosen texts are taken into consideration. The analysis assists in assimilation of the specific paradigmatic and syntagmatic relations between the elements of different levels, interacting on the semantic base (7). In a teaching process of foreign students, professors draw attention to the culturally colored Russian vocabulary in fairy-tales, to stylistic characteristics of words, their meanings and emotional colorings.

The analysis of the particular text allows foreigners to enrich their vocabulary. The Cossack fairy-tale “*About happiness*” (8), chosen for reading during lessons, tells about a traditional folklore subject - looking for a sense of life, appreciation of happiness. It narrates the destiny of two brothers, to whom the father before his death told to save happiness. The reasonable, kind force is embodied in the image of younger brother, who despite of poverty has managed to hold happiness in his house. At the same time older brother, rich and fat, has not understood why happiness turned away from him.

To understand the plot, foreign students should distinguish different living circumstances of the brothers, shown in the fairy-tale context when describing housing conditions of their life. According to linguists, a **house** in the Russian language is the integral part of peoples’ life, the world image where a person lives from birth up to death. Typically, a house is a symbol of family, health, welfare and the center of family traditions (9). In the given folklore literary text, the following nouns are used to name places of living: **house**, **kukhneshka**, **khoromy**. Thus, at the beginning of the fairy-tale the brothers live with their families in the place that is characterized by a literary noun **house**: *Older brother stay with his family in the house* (204). The prosperity of older brother that doesn’t bring him happiness and the poverty of younger brother are emphasized by the usage of two different words in one context. An obsolete noun **khoromy** denotes “a large house usually with a significant number of rooms”

(EDR, IV, 1178). A dialect word **kukhneshka** denotes “a small summer kitchen” (DDC, 254) coupled with the word **obluplennaya** (past participle, passive voice) - “with a peeling high layer of smth” (EDR, III, 661): *Kukhneshka is obluplennaya not as his khoromy* (205).

The poverty of younger brother is also shown by the sentences that characterize the food he and his family eat: *They eat tjurya*. The reference to the encyclopedic dictionary allows us to define the meaning of a literary noun **tjurya** as “primitive food - bread in kvass or in water with salt” (EDR, IV, 843).

Foreign students take a special interest in the use of culturally colored vocabulary with a national component in meaning. In this case we need linguocultural comments. So, in the fairy-tale students meet the word phrase **a red corner**: *And Happiness together with them sits in a red corner on a place of honour* (205). The red, front or sacred corner is considered to be the most honourable place in a dwelling for the Cossacks. It plays a role of the center in the inner construction of a house. At this place there usually were icons, esteemed by the Cossacks, the Bible, photos of the dead relatives; on a wedding day a groom with a bride sat there, a dead person was laid with his head toward the front corner, etc.

Sometimes when studying a fairy-tale vocabulary, we shall give linguistic comments. For denoting eating process in a Cossack fairy-tale, the verb **snedat** is used: *He can see his brother with the wife sitting and snedat(ing)* (105). The historical dictionaries help us to show that the given lexeme was noticed in the written records of the XII century and was supposed to be ambiguous (DS, III, 781 - 782). In the Contemporary Russian literary language the verb **snedat** is marked in the dictionaries as a regional word and is used to denote “to eat, to use in food” (EDR, IV, 319) as well as it has the same root as a bookish and obsolete noun **sned**, meaning celebratory, miscellaneous meal (ND, 96-97).

In the fairy-tale there are nouns, verbs, adverb and words of other parts of speech, that in encyclopedic dictionaries of the Contemporary literary language are marked as “colloquial”, “dialectal”. The colloquial verb **zagostitsya** is used

to show the attitude of older brother towards Happiness that lives in the family of younger brother: *I have come for happiness. It zagostilos at your house* (206). The meaning of any language unit is seen through the analysis of word-formation and semantic relations within a lexical field. Students know that the Russian word **gost** (guest) is characterized as ambiguous in the Contemporary Russian literary language. Foreign students can define the special usage of the verb *zagostitsya* (“to stay with a long visit”), derived from the noun **gost** (guest), by learning the word direct meaning (“a person who visits somebody with the purpose to see, to have a talk, to spend leisure time together”), by interpreting its semantic and grammar characteristics.

Semantic analysis and meaningful comprehension of language units by students, typical for colloquial speech, can be done by finding different synonyms. After a text reading, a professor offers foreign students a system of tasks. When doing them they write a series of lexemes of different degrees of expressiveness and stylistically colored language units on a blackboard. For example, in the extract of the fairy-tale where decisive actions of older brother who wanted to find happiness are described, students meet the verb **kinutsya** meaning “promptly, hitch to be routed somewhere” (DS, I, 97): *In some time older brother kinulsya to look for happiness!* (205). The given lexeme, used in colloquial speech, is included to a synonymic series of verbs, describing different degrees of intensity of actions: *to rush, to hurry, to speed, to dash, to direct somewhere, etc.* (DS, I, 97). Learning of a lexical material by foreign students and extension of their own vocabulary in many respects depends on a level of possession of the Russian language system. The analysis of these words helps to find out how they function in a context.

Non-standard forms used in colloquial and dialectal speech can also be found in Cossack fairy-tales. A professor should explain to foreign students that the usage of the given vocabulary in a folklore text functions as a stylistic mean, when in a literary language it isn't used. Thus, in this text we can find such word forms as **godov**, **otvykshyi** and others. It is necessary to point out in the analysis

that the usage of the genitive case form in plural number of a noun **godov** (years) isn't correct, in a literary language we have the noun **let** (years). The participle **otvykshyi** also has a special form. It is necessary to draw students attention that such a non-standard formation is common to dialectal speech, which is characterized by predicative usage of past participles in the full form, while in a literary language we should use the form **privyk** (to get used to).

Experience shows that lessons on development of speech, the use of different working forms with a regional material, helps foreign students to become closer to the national dialectal speech culture of the Don Cossacks, to learn their history, lifestyle, spiritual and material values of this special ethnic group of the Russians. All these factors promote fast adaptation of foreign students to special cultural environment, they form their own attitude towards wealth and expressiveness of the Russian language.

LITERATURE

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