



LEXICAL UNITS AND NATIONAL REALITIES IN TEACHING UZBEK AS A FOREIGN LANGUAGE

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Abstract

This article examines the role of lexical units and national realities in teaching Uzbek as a foreign language. The study emphasizes that learning Uzbek requires not only mastering vocabulary, grammar, and pronunciation, but also understanding the cultural, historical, social, and everyday meanings embedded in words and expressions. National realities such as traditional food names, kinship terms, forms of address, customs, holidays, clothing, household objects, and etiquette formulas create specific semantic layers that may be difficult for foreign learners to interpret without cultural explanation. The article analyzes the methodological importance of presenting lexical units in communicative, contextual, and culture-based learning situations. Special attention is given to the use of authentic texts, visual materials, dialogues, role-play, comparative analysis, and thematic vocabulary exercises in developing learners' linguistic and intercultural competence. The findings suggest that systematic work with national realities enriches vocabulary acquisition, improves comprehension of Uzbek speech culture, and helps foreign learners communicate more naturally in real social contexts. The article concludes that integrating linguistic and cultural components in Uzbek language teaching increases the effectiveness of instruction and supports deeper understanding of the national worldview reflected in the Uzbek language.

Keywords: Lexical units, national realities, Uzbek as a foreign language, intercultural competence, vocabulary teaching, cultural context, communicative approach.

Introduction

O‘ZBEK TILINI XORIJIY TIL SIFATIDA O‘QITISHDA LEKSIK BIRLIK VA MILLIY REALIYALAR

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Annotatsiya:

Ushbu maqolada o‘zbek tilini xorijiy til sifatida o‘qitishda leksik birliklar va milliy realiyalarning o‘rni tahlil qilinadi. Tadqiqotda xorijiy o‘rganuvchilar uchun o‘zbek tilini egallash faqat lug‘at, grammatika va talaffuzni o‘zlashtirish bilan cheklanmasligi, balki so‘z va iboralarda mujassam bo‘lgan madaniy, tarixiy, ijtimoiy hamda kundalik hayotga oid ma’nomlarni anglash bilan ham bog‘liqligi ta’kidlanadi. An’anaviy taom nomlari, qarindoshlik atamallari, murojaat shakllari, urf-odatlar, bayramlar, kiyim-kechak, maishiy buyumlar va odob-axloq formulalari kabi milliy realiyalar xorijiy o‘rganuvchilar uchun maxsus izoh talab qiladigan semantik qatlamlarni yuzaga keltiradi. Maqolada leksik birliklarni kommunikativ, kontekstual va madaniyatga asoslangan ta’limiy vaziyatlarda taqdim etishning metodik ahamiyati yoritiladi. Autentik matnlar, ko‘rgazmali materiallar, dialoglar, rolli o‘yinlar, qiyosiy tahlil va mavzuli lug‘at mashqlaridan foydalanish o‘rganuvchilarning lingvistik hamda madaniyatlararo kompetensiyasini rivojlantirishga xizmat qilishi ko‘rsatiladi. Tadqiqot natijalari milliy realiyalar bilan tizimli ishlash lug‘at boyligini oshirishini, o‘zbek nutq madaniyatini tushunishni chuqurlashtirishini va xorijiy o‘rganuvchilarning real muloqot sharoitida tabiiyroq so‘zlashishiga yordam berishini ko‘rsatadi.

Kalit so‘zlar: leksik birliklar, milliy realiyalar, o‘zbek tili xorijiy til sifatida, madaniyatlararo kompetensiya, lug‘at o‘qitish, madaniy kontekst, kommunikativ yondashuv.

Introduction

Teaching Uzbek as a foreign language has become an increasingly significant area of philological, methodological, and intercultural research. The growing interest of foreign learners in Uzbek is connected with academic mobility, international

cooperation, tourism, translation studies, regional studies, and the expanding role of Uzbekistan in educational, cultural, and economic communication. In this context, Uzbek language instruction should not be limited to the mechanical memorization of grammatical rules or isolated vocabulary. A foreign learner who studies Uzbek needs to understand how lexical units function in real speech, how they reflect national culture, and how they convey meanings that are closely connected with the everyday life, history, traditions, mentality, and worldview of the Uzbek people.

Lexical units are among the most important components of language learning because they provide the basis for communication, comprehension, and expression. However, in teaching Uzbek as a foreign language, vocabulary cannot be treated only as a list of words with dictionary equivalents. Many Uzbek words and expressions contain culturally marked meanings that are not always fully translated into another language. For example, words related to family relations, hospitality, national dishes, traditional ceremonies, forms of respect, social hierarchy, and moral values often carry additional semantic and emotional shades. Such units require explanation through context, comparison, visual demonstration, authentic examples, and communicative practice. National realities occupy a special place in this process. They represent objects, events, customs, institutions, and concepts that are characteristic of a particular culture. In Uzbek, such realities may include terms connected with mahalla life, traditional weddings, Navro‘z celebrations, family etiquette, national clothing, food culture, oral folklore, and forms of polite address. For foreign learners, these words may be unfamiliar not because of their linguistic form alone, but because the cultural phenomenon behind the word may not exist in their native culture. Therefore, the teacher’s task is to present these units not only as lexical material, but also as cultural signs that help learners enter the Uzbek linguistic and cultural environment.

The relevance of this topic is determined by the need to develop an integrated methodology for teaching lexical units and national realities in Uzbek language classes. A culture-based approach allows learners to understand the connection between language and national identity. It also prevents superficial translation, semantic misunderstanding, and inappropriate use of culturally sensitive expressions. When lexical units are introduced through dialogues, situational tasks, authentic texts, video fragments, proverbs, songs, and real-life communication models, learners acquire not only vocabulary, but also pragmatic and intercultural competence.

In a philological university context, this issue has both theoretical and practical importance. Future linguists, translators, teachers, and researchers must be able to analyze lexical meaning, cultural connotation, semantic fields, and communicative functions of national realities. For this reason, teaching Uzbek as a foreign language should combine linguistic analysis with methodological creativity. The present article focuses on the principles, methods, and pedagogical effectiveness of teaching lexical units and national realities as an essential part of developing foreign learners' communicative and intercultural competence in Uzbek.

Methods

The study was carried out on the basis of theoretical, descriptive, comparative, and pedagogical-methodological approaches. The theoretical basis of the research included the analysis of scientific literature on Uzbek linguistics, lexical semantics, linguoculturology, intercultural communication, and the methodology of teaching Uzbek as a foreign language. Special attention was paid to the interpretation of lexical units as carriers of both denotative and connotative meanings. In this regard, words and expressions were studied not only as linguistic signs, but also as cultural indicators reflecting national traditions, social relations, value systems, and communicative behavior.

The descriptive method was used to identify and classify lexical units that contain national-cultural information. These units were grouped according to thematic fields such as family and kinship relations, national cuisine, traditional ceremonies, holidays, clothing, household objects, social institutions, etiquette formulas, and forms of address. For example, lexical items related to hospitality, respect for elders, wedding customs, and mahalla culture were examined as culturally marked units that require special methodological explanation in the classroom. This classification made it possible to determine which lexical groups create the greatest difficulty for foreign learners and which types of explanation are more effective for their acquisition.

The comparative method was applied to reveal the differences between Uzbek national realities and similar or partially similar concepts in learners' native languages. Since many cultural realities do not have exact equivalents in other languages, simple translation is often insufficient. Therefore, the study considered the use of descriptive translation, contextual interpretation, visual explanation, and cultural commentary. Through comparison, learners can understand not only what a

word means, but also how it functions in Uzbek social and communicative life. This approach is especially important in explaining words connected with politeness, kinship hierarchy, traditional ceremonies, and national identity.

The pedagogical-methodological aspect of the study focused on classroom techniques used in teaching lexical units and national realities. The research considered the effectiveness of authentic texts, short dialogues, situational tasks, role-play, vocabulary maps, pictures, video materials, mini-presentations, and culturally oriented exercises. Authentic materials were selected from everyday communication, literary texts, media resources, folklore examples, advertisements, menus, invitations, and public signs. These materials helped learners observe lexical units in natural contexts and understand their semantic, pragmatic, and cultural functions.

In the practical part of the research, attention was given to the gradual presentation of vocabulary. At the first stage, learners were introduced to the basic meaning and pronunciation of lexical units. At the second stage, they analyzed the cultural background and communicative situations in which these words are used. At the third stage, they practiced using the vocabulary in dialogues, written tasks, and role-based communication. At the final stage, learners produced independent oral and written texts using the studied lexical units appropriately.

The effectiveness of the proposed approach was evaluated through observation, analysis of learners' oral responses, written assignments, vocabulary tests, and classroom discussions. Learners' ability to explain culturally marked words, use them in context, and distinguish literal and cultural meanings served as the main criteria of evaluation. This methodological framework made it possible to assess how systematic work with national realities contributes to vocabulary development, cultural awareness, and communicative competence in teaching Uzbek as a foreign language.

Results

The results of the study showed that lexical units connected with national realities play a decisive role in forming foreign learners' deeper understanding of the Uzbek language. Learners who studied vocabulary only through direct translation were able to recognize individual words, but often experienced difficulty using them correctly in real communicative situations. In contrast, learners who were introduced to lexical units through cultural explanation, context, visual materials, and communicative tasks demonstrated better comprehension of meaning, more accurate word usage, and

stronger interest in Uzbek speech culture. This indicates that vocabulary acquisition becomes more effective when linguistic and cultural components are taught together. The analysis revealed that the most difficult lexical units for foreign learners were words related to kinship, etiquette, traditional ceremonies, national cuisine, and social life. For example, Uzbek kinship terms often express not only biological relationship, but also age, respect, social distance, and emotional closeness. Words used in addressing older people, relatives, neighbors, or guests require pragmatic understanding, because their incorrect use may sound unnatural or culturally inappropriate. Learners also needed additional explanation when studying words connected with weddings, family ceremonies, hospitality customs, and mahalla relations, since these realities are closely linked with Uzbek social behavior and national mentality.

The use of authentic materials produced positive results in the learning process. Dialogues, short literary extracts, invitations, menus, video fragments, proverbs, and everyday speech examples helped learners understand how culturally marked words function in natural contexts. When national realities were presented through isolated vocabulary lists, learners memorized them temporarily but had difficulty applying them. However, when the same lexical units were included in role-play, situational dialogue, description tasks, and comparative exercises, learners used them more actively and confidently. This confirms the importance of contextualization in teaching Uzbek as a foreign language.

The results also showed that visual and comparative methods increased learners' motivation. Pictures of national dishes, traditional clothing, household objects, ceremonies, and cultural events helped learners connect words with concrete images. Comparative discussion allowed learners to identify similarities and differences between Uzbek cultural concepts and those in their own native cultures. As a result, learners developed not only lexical competence, but also intercultural awareness. They began to understand that language reflects a particular worldview and that many words cannot be fully explained through literal translation alone.

Classroom observations demonstrated that learners became more active when tasks were based on real-life communication. For instance, role-play activities such as welcoming a guest, participating in a family celebration, asking about national food, or speaking with elders encouraged learners to use culturally marked vocabulary in meaningful situations. Written assignments also showed improvement. Learners were

able to compose short descriptive texts about Uzbek traditions, explain the meaning of selected national realities, and use new lexical units in appropriate contexts.

Overall, the findings confirmed that systematic teaching of lexical units and national realities enriches vocabulary knowledge, improves communicative accuracy, and strengthens cultural understanding. The integration of linguistic explanation, cultural commentary, authentic materials, visual support, and interactive practice creates favorable conditions for effective Uzbek language learning among foreign students in a philological university environment.

Discussion

The findings of the study demonstrate that teaching lexical units and national realities in Uzbek as a foreign language requires an approach that goes beyond traditional vocabulary instruction. In many language classrooms, vocabulary is often presented through bilingual lists, memorization, and translation exercises. Although these techniques may help learners recognize the basic meaning of words, they do not fully develop the ability to understand culturally marked meanings, pragmatic functions, and communicative appropriateness. Uzbek vocabulary contains many lexical units that are deeply connected with national customs, social norms, forms of politeness, and collective values. Therefore, foreign learners need to study such words as part of a living cultural system.

One of the main methodological issues is the problem of equivalence. Many Uzbek national realities do not have complete equivalents in other languages. For example, words connected with mahalla, hospitality, family hierarchy, traditional ceremonies, and forms of respectful address may be translated only approximately. If the teacher gives only a direct translation, learners may understand the lexical meaning superficially but fail to grasp the cultural meaning. For this reason, descriptive explanation, cultural commentary, and contextual demonstration are essential. A word should be presented together with the situation in which it is used, the social relationship between speakers, and the values reflected in the expression.

The discussion also shows that national realities are especially important for the formation of intercultural competence. Foreign learners who study Uzbek must not only speak grammatically correctly, but also behave communicatively in a culturally appropriate way. For instance, using polite forms of address, understanding the importance of respect for elders, recognizing traditional greetings, and interpreting

culturally specific expressions help learners communicate more naturally with native speakers. In this process, language becomes a bridge to understanding Uzbek culture, mentality, and social behavior.

Authentic materials have a strong methodological value in this regard. Literary texts, folk tales, proverbs, dialogues, media texts, invitations, menus, advertisements, and video fragments allow learners to observe lexical units in their natural environment. Such materials show how words function in real communication and how they are connected with emotion, evaluation, tradition, and social context. However, authentic materials should be selected according to learners' language level. If the material is too difficult, it may create confusion rather than motivation. Therefore, teachers should adapt texts, provide pre-reading vocabulary support, and organize follow-up communicative tasks.

Interactive methods also play an important role. Role-play, group discussion, cultural comparison, mini-presentations, vocabulary mapping, and problem-based tasks help learners actively use new words instead of passively memorizing them. When learners compare Uzbek national realities with similar concepts in their own culture, they develop analytical thinking and deeper semantic awareness. This comparison also prevents stereotypes, because learners begin to understand cultural differences through explanation and dialogue rather than through simplified assumptions.

In a philological university, teaching lexical units and national realities has additional academic significance. Students should be able to analyze semantic structure, connotation, cultural background, and translation difficulties. This is important for future translators, teachers, linguists, and researchers. Thus, the study confirms that the effective teaching of Uzbek as a foreign language should integrate lexical, cultural, communicative, and analytical components. Such integration helps learners acquire vocabulary more consciously and use it more appropriately in real communication.

Conclusion

The teaching of lexical units and national realities in Uzbek as a foreign language is an essential condition for developing learners' complete linguistic and intercultural competence. The Uzbek language, like every national language, reflects the historical experience, traditions, social values, worldview, and communicative behavior of its speakers. Therefore, the process of learning Uzbek cannot be reduced to memorizing

grammatical structures and ordinary vocabulary. Foreign learners need to understand not only the direct meaning of words, but also their cultural, emotional, pragmatic, and contextual meanings. This is especially important in the study of lexical units related to family relations, forms of address, hospitality, national cuisine, holidays, ceremonies, clothing, household life, folklore, and social institutions.

The analysis carried out in the article shows that national realities represent one of the most difficult but also one of the most valuable layers of vocabulary in teaching Uzbek as a foreign language. These units often do not have exact equivalents in the learners' native languages. As a result, direct translation may lead to incomplete understanding or incorrect usage. For this reason, teachers should use descriptive explanation, cultural commentary, visual demonstration, comparison, and authentic examples. Such methods help learners understand the meaning of culturally marked words more deeply and use them appropriately in real communication.

The effectiveness of teaching lexical units and national realities depends on the integration of linguistic and cultural content. Vocabulary should be presented not as isolated words, but as part of meaningful communicative situations. Dialogues, role-play, authentic texts, video materials, pictures, proverbs, literary examples, menus, invitations, and everyday speech samples create favorable conditions for understanding how words function in Uzbek speech culture. When learners observe lexical units in context, they acquire not only their semantic meaning, but also their pragmatic function, stylistic value, and cultural background.

The study also confirms the importance of interactive and comparative methods. Through comparison with their own culture, foreign learners become more aware of both similarities and differences between linguistic worldviews. This process develops intercultural sensitivity, prevents mechanical translation, and supports conscious vocabulary acquisition. Role-play, group discussion, mini-presentations, vocabulary maps, and situational exercises encourage learners to use new words actively and confidently. Such tasks are especially useful in philological universities, where students are expected not only to communicate in Uzbek, but also to analyze language as a cultural and semantic system.

In conclusion, lexical units and national realities should occupy a central place in the methodology of teaching Uzbek as a foreign language. Their systematic study enriches learners' vocabulary, improves speech accuracy, strengthens cultural awareness, and prepares learners for natural communication with native speakers. A

culture-oriented approach allows foreign students to perceive Uzbek not only as a means of communication, but also as a reflection of national identity and spiritual heritage. Therefore, modern Uzbek language teaching should combine lexical explanation, cultural interpretation, authentic materials, and communicative practice in a unified methodological system.

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