

Заглавие документа:

Зайцева, В.А. Teaching American English in the Framework of Culture Paradigm. / В.А. Зайцева // Сборник материалов международной научно-практической конференции «Языковая личность и эффективная коммуникация в современном поликультурном мире», Минск, 23-24 октября 2015 г. – Минск: БГУ, 2015. – С. 186-190.

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Тема: Лингвистика

Дата публикации: 2015

Издатель: Белорусский государственный университет

Аннотация: *В статье рассматривается обучение американскому варианту английского языка в рамках культурной парадигмы. Обращается внимание на необходимость изучения культурного контекста языка, который отражает культурные ценности и традиции американского общества. Такой подход требует от студентов умений анализировать и правильно интерпретировать языковые элементы изучаемой культуры, помогая им адаптироваться и понять ее смысл, что необходимо для успешного кросскультурного общения.*

В.А. Зайцева

**TEACHING AMERICAN ENGLISH IN THE FRAMEWORK OF
CULTURE PARADIGM**

Teaching English, we cannot but take into account the fact that close to 70% of all native English speakers are U.S. Americans. A constant stream of American TV, films, songs, computer games and websites have spread American words and expressions far beyond its borders. Perhaps the most obvious example is the expression “OK”, adopted by languages everywhere. Through sheer volume, American English has gradually replaced the British variety as the accepted international standard. In fact, it has even made inroads into British English itself, replacing words like “*stupid*” with “*dumb*”, “*angry*” with “*mad*” [2]. In addition, together with words the elements of American culture has been spreading.

Therefore, a particular target language teaching as well as American English teaching based on culture paradigm accepts that cultures influence the way we view the world, make decisions and interact with others. Communicating across cultures persons focus on the socio-cultural features of speaking and behaving and share their country values with each other.

Thus, foreign language education as a branch of applied linguistics should be associated with culture education. Students are to be prepared to cross-cultural dialogue forming active speech skills of a foreign language and acquiring the cultural values of the country the language of which they study. This concept finds its reflection in M. Byram and M. Fleming's approach focusing on an integration of linguistic and cultural learning that facilitates communication and interaction preparing learners to meet and communicate in cultures and societies [4, p. 7].

According to culture paradigm, English teaching is predetermined by the fact that languages and cultures cannot be separated as languages symbolize culture values which are considered as ideas about what is good, right, fair, and just and these ideas are different in different cultures.

Consequently, American values and customs find their reflection in the language. Accordingly, American English is filled with references to time, giving a clear indication of how much it is valued: "*Time is money*", *time* is something to be "*on*," to be "*kept*," "*filled*," "*saved*," "*used*," "*spent*," "*wasted*," "*lost*," "*gained*," "*planned*," "*given*," "*made the most of*," even "*killed* [5]." For Americans seem always be "*on the go*", because sitting quietly doing nothing seems like a waste of time [3].

The other U.S. American core values include accomplishment, material success, problem solving, reliance on science and technology, democracy, patriotism, charity, freedom, equality and justice, individualism, responsibility, and accountability. Considering some major U.S. American cultural values Marian Beane asserts that U.S. Americans like their privacy and enjoy spending time alone. Foreign visitors will find U.S. American homes and offices open, but what is inside the American mind is considered to be private. To ask the question "*What is on your mind?*" may be considered by some to be intrusive. She also asserts that a competitive spirit is often the motivating factor to work harder. Americans often compete with themselves as well as others. They feel good when they "*beat their own record*" in an athletic event or other types of competition [3]. The better understanding of some certain cultural values of U.S. Americans illustrates the following table suggested by L. Robert Kohls [6]:

Value	Explanation Behavior
1. Personal Control over the Environment	People can/should control nature, their own environment and destiny; future is not left to fate.
2. Change/Mobility	Change is seen as positive, good, meaning progress, improvement and growth.
3. Time and Its Control	Time is valuable; achievement of goals depends on productive use of time.
4. Equality/ Egalitarianism	People have equal opportunities; people are important as individuals for who they are, not for their family or status.
5. Individualism, Independence/ Privacy	People are seen as separate individuals (not group members) with individual needs; Privacy is valuable.
6. Self-Help	U.S. U.S. Americans take pride in their own accomplishments.
7. Competition/ Free Enterprise	U.S. Americans believe competition brings out the best in people and free enterprise produces the most progress and

	success.
8. Future Orientation / Optimism	U.S. Americans believe that, regardless of past or present, the future will be better and happier.
9. Action and Work Orientation	U.S. Americans believe that work is morally right, that it is immoral to waste time. Taking action is superior to inaction.
10. Informality	U.S. Americans believe that formality is “ <i>un-American</i> ” and a show of arrogance or superiority.
11. Directness, Openness, Honesty	One can only trust people who “ <i>look you in the eye</i> ” and “ <i>tell it like it is.</i> ” The truth is valued whether it is negative or positive.
12. Practicality / Efficiency	Practicality and logic are often the most important considerations when decisions are to be made.
13. Materialism/ Acquisitiveness	Material goods are seen as the just rewards of hard work. Often a priority in obtaining material objects.

The core American values can be analyzed with the help of cultural dimensions theory introduced by Geert Hofstede. These dimensions demonstrate the effects of cultures on the values of their members and their verbal and nonverbal behaviour.

U.S. cultural dimensions according to the data presented by the Geert-Hofstede Centre are the following [7]:

Power Distance = 40. (In USA, equality governs most interaction between superiors and subordinates.)

Individualism = 91. (U.S. Americans are encouraged at an early age to be independent and to develop their own goals in life.)

Masculinity = 62. (The male dominates a significant portion of the society and power structure.)

Uncertainty Avoidance = 46. (Americans tend to be more tolerant of ideas or opinions from anyone and allow the freedom of expression.)

Long Term Orientation = 26. (This low ranking reflects a freedom in the culture, which allows greater flexibility and the freedom to react quickly to new opportunities.)

Indulgence = 68. (Americans are optimistic and place higher importance on leisure and activities considered enjoyable.)

Without doubt, all these cultural values and dimensions find their reflection in American English, in its idioms, proverbs and sayings. Therefore, acquiring U.S. cultural values and recognizing the dimensions of the culture is one of the main keys for facilitating cross-cultural communication and mastering American English in all its varieties, in all the ways it appears in everyday life, builds a world of meanings. When you run into different meanings, when you become aware of your own and work to build a bridge to the others, ‘culture’ is what you are up to. Language fills the spaces between us with sound; culture forges the human connection through them [1, p. 28]. Language has no function independent of the context in which it is used, thus language always refers to something beyond itself: the cultural context [5].

Thus, American English teaching should be centered on culture paradigm aimed at increasing cultural understanding and providing university students with skills in analyzing and adapting cultural aspects of the language.

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