

A SOCIO-CULTURAL PERSPECTIVE ON STUDENTS' ATTITUDES TOWARD FOREIGN LANGUAGE LEARNING: IMPLICATIONS FOR DEVELOPING TRANSLATION COMPETENCE

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Abstract. *This study investigates students' attitudes toward foreign language learning in Uzbekistan from a socio-cultural perspective and examines their influence on the development of translation competence. A mixed-methods research design was employed involving 85 undergraduate translation students from universities in Tashkent. Data were collected through Likert-scale questionnaires and semi-structured interviews conducted over one academic semester. Quantitative data were analyzed using descriptive statistics, while qualitative data were examined through thematic analysis. The findings reveal that peer collaboration, teacher mediation, cultural exposure, and socio-economic factors significantly influence students' attitudes toward foreign language learning and contribute to the development of translation competence. The study highlights the importance of integrating socio-cultural dimensions into language and translation education to enhance students' intercultural and communicative abilities.*

Keywords: *socio-cultural approach, foreign language learning, students' attitudes, translation competence, intercultural competence, communicative competence, higher education.*

Annotatsiya. *Mazkur tadqiqot O'zbekistonda talabalarning xorijiy tillarni o'rganishga bo'lgan munosabatini ijtimoiy-madaniy nuqtayi nazardan o'rganadi hamda ushbu munosabatlarning tarjima kompetensiyasini rivojlantirishga ta'sirini tahlil qiladi. Tadqiqotda aralash metodologiya (mixed-methods) yondashuvi qo'llanilib, unda Toshkent shahridagi oliy ta'lim muassasalarida tahsil olayotgan 85 nafar bakalavriat bosqichi tarjimonlik yo'nalishi talabalari ishtirok etdi. Ma'lumotlar bir akademik semestr davomida Likert shkalasi asosidagi so'rovnomalar va yarim tuzilgan intervyular orqali to'plandi. Miqdoriy ma'lumotlar tavsifiy statistika usullari yordamida, sifat ma'lumotlari esa tematik tahlil asosida o'rganildi. Tadqiqot natijalari tengdoshlar bilan hamkorlik, o'qituvchi vositachiligi, madaniy tajriba va ijtimoiy-iqtisodiy omillar talabalarning xorijiy tillarni o'rganishga bo'lgan munosabatiga sezilarli ta'sir ko'rsatishini hamda tarjima kompetensiyasining rivojlanishiga xizmat qilishini ko'rsatdi. Tadqiqot talabalarning madaniyatlararo va kommunikativ ko'nikmalarini rivojlantirish maqsadida til va tarjima ta'limiga ijtimoiy-madaniy jihatlarini integratsiya qilish muhimligini ta'kidlaydi.*

Kalit so'zlar: *ijtimoiy-madaniy yondashuv, xorijiy tilni o'rganish, talabalarning munosabati, tarjima kompetensiyasi, madaniyatlararo kompetensiya, kommunikativ kompetensiya, oliy ta'lim.*

Аннотация. *В данном исследовании рассматривается отношение студентов Узбекистана к изучению иностранных языков с социокультурной точки зрения, а также анализируется его влияние на развитие переводческой компетенции. В исследовании использован смешанный дизайн (mixed methods), в котором приняли участие 85 студентов бакалавриата, обучающихся по направлению «Переводческое дело» в высших учебных заведениях города Ташкента. Данные собирались в течение одного академического семестра с помощью анкет на основе шкалы Лайкерт и полуструктурированных интервью. Количественные данные были проанализированы с использованием методов описательной статистики, а качественные данные — посредством тематического анализа. Результаты исследования показали, что сотрудничество со сверстниками, посредническая роль преподавателя, культурный опыт и социально-экономические факторы оказывают значительное влияние на отношение студентов к изучению иностранных языков и способствуют развитию переводческой компетенции. Исследование подчёркивает важность интеграции социокультурных аспектов в языковое и переводческое образование для развития межкультурных и коммуникативных компетенций студентов.*

Ключевые слова: социокультурный подход, изучение иностранного языка, отношение студентов, переводческая компетенция, межкультурная компетенция, коммуникативная компетенция, высшее образование.

Introduction. Foreign language learning has become a strategic priority in Uzbekistan due to globalization, increasing international cooperation, and the growing demand for multilingual professionals. Educational reforms have emphasized communicative competence, international standards, and integration into the global academic community. In this context, translation competence is recognized as a multidimensional construct that requires linguistic knowledge, cultural awareness, and interpretive skills. Traditional foreign language instruction in Uzbekistan has often focused primarily on grammatical accuracy and vocabulary acquisition, while socio-cultural and communicative aspects have received less attention. Such an approach may limit students' ability to function effectively in intercultural communication and professional translation settings. The theoretical foundation of this study is Sociocultural Theory developed by Lev Vygotsky, who emphasized that learning occurs through social interaction and cultural mediation. Translation competence, as a socially situated skill, develops through collaborative learning, guided practice, and engagement with authentic cultural contexts.

The purpose of this study is to examine the socio-cultural factors influencing students' attitudes toward foreign language learning and to determine how these factors contribute to the development of translation competence among C1-level learners in Uzbekistan.

Methods. The study employed a mixed-methods research design combining quantitative and qualitative approaches to obtain a comprehensive understanding of students' attitudes and socio-cultural experiences. The research involved 85 undergraduate students enrolled in translation programs at higher educational institutions in Tashkent. All participants were studying English at B2–C1 proficiency levels and were taking translation-oriented courses during the study period.

Two research instruments were used:

1. A Likert-scale questionnaire designed to assess students' attitudes toward foreign language learning, motivation, and socio-cultural influences.
2. Semi-structured interviews conducted with 20 selected participants to explore their experiences with translation tasks and language learning in greater depth.

Data collection was carried out over one academic semester. Questionnaires were administered during regular classes, followed by interviews with volunteer participants.

Quantitative data obtained from questionnaires were analyzed using descriptive statistical methods. Qualitative interview data were analyzed through thematic analysis to identify recurring socio-cultural themes related to language learning and translation competence development.

Results. The findings indicate that students generally demonstrated positive attitudes toward foreign language learning. Most participants associated foreign language proficiency with academic achievement, international opportunities, and future professional success. Peer Interaction and Collaboration - Students reported that collaborative learning activities, including group discussions and translation projects, increased their confidence and enhanced their ability to interpret and negotiate meaning. Peer interaction was identified as a significant contributor to translation competence development. Teacher Mediation - Instructor support emerged as another influential factor. Participants emphasized that teacher guidance, scaffolding, and constructive feedback facilitated both language acquisition and translation skill development.

Cultural Exposure - Exposure to authentic materials such as films, media content, literary texts, and real-life communicative situations improved students' understanding of cultural meanings and contexts. This exposure helped students develop skills necessary for translating culturally specific concepts.

Societal and Economic Factors - Many students viewed foreign language proficiency as a pathway to career advancement, international employment opportunities, and academic mobility. These perceptions positively influenced their motivation to learn foreign languages and improve translation skills.

Translation Competence Development - Students who demonstrated greater socio-cultural engagement also showed stronger translation performance. Their competencies were particularly evident in: interpreting culturally specific meanings; adapting texts to target audiences; maintaining pragmatic equivalence across languages; selecting appropriate translation strategies in intercultural contexts.

Discussion. The results confirm that socio-cultural factors play a crucial role in shaping students' attitudes toward foreign language learning and in developing translation competence. Consistent with Sociocultural Theory, learning is mediated through interaction, collaboration, and participation in meaningful social practices.

The findings support Vygotsky's concept of mediated learning by demonstrating that translation competence develops through guided interaction and collaborative engagement. Teacher support and peer collaboration create opportunities for learners to operate within their zones of proximal development, thereby facilitating higher levels of linguistic and intercultural competence. The study also reveals the interaction between macro-level influences, such as educational reforms and globalization, and micro-level influences, including classroom practices and peer relationships. Together, these factors create an environment in which students' attitudes and competencies are continuously shaped and reconstructed. The findings suggest several pedagogical implications. Language and translation programs should integrate socio-cultural content into curricula, employ authentic materials, promote collaborative learning activities, and strengthen students' intercultural communicative competence.

Limitations and Future Research. The study was conducted only in urban universities and therefore may not fully represent the experiences of students from regional institutions. Future research should investigate longitudinal changes in translation competence and compare socio-cultural influences across different educational settings within Uzbekistan.

Conclusion. This study demonstrates that students' attitudes toward foreign language learning in Uzbekistan are strongly influenced by socio-cultural factors. Peer collaboration, teacher mediation, cultural exposure, and socio-economic motivations contribute not only to positive learning attitudes but also to the development of translation competence. The socio-cultural approach provides a valuable framework for improving foreign language education and translator training by emphasizing interaction, cultural awareness, and authentic communicative practice.

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