

V. ПРОБЛЕМЫ МЕЖКУЛЬТУРНОЙ КОММУНИКАЦИИ (ПЕРЕВОД, ЛИНГВОКУЛЬТУРОЛОГИЯ, ЛИНГВОДИДАКТИКА)

ENHANCING SENSITIVITY TO OTHER PEOPLE'S CULTURES: FILM AS A PEDAGOGICAL TOOL TO RAISE CONSCIOUSNESS

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The idea of culture is dynamic, responding to environmental forces, and culture itself is extremely complex. The concept of "national" cultural characteristics may in fact serve to mask the existence of subcultures with strikingly different characteristics. That is, the whole may sometimes be a misrepresentation of the sum of the parts. Essential to the development of effective cross-cultural communication is the development within students of, firstly, an understanding of the differences between macro-level cultural characteristics, and secondarily those features which may represent significant variations within a culture. Furthermore, it is important to understand the social issues that underlie cultural norms in order to communicate effectively.

In the case of teaching English to Russian college students, the authors have found the use of film a significant aid in this process of students' development of understanding of cultural variety and difference, a means to provide an effective vehicle for the bridging of cultures that is essential for effective cross-cultural communication.

Some may question the efficacy of film for such a task, and legitimate questions may be posed. American films produced in Hollywood are often casually dismissed as vulgar, trite, uninspiring, and commercially driven. That modality of criticism, however, is irrelevant to the present case. Films have already entered into common use in the classrooms for courses in the English language, and for good reasons. Commercial films may provide an entertaining means to show how the language is actually used in common practice in a variety of different contexts, and they provide immediate access for students to modeling by a range of native speakers, albeit perhaps not an accurate reflection of the dialects, usages, and pronunciations employed in society as a whole. There is, however, a further significant purpose that such cultural documents can serve. Used as social documents and appropriately deconstructed, many American films can provide insights into cultural attitudes, social issues, ethical perspectives, and everyday practices that can be powerfully helpful to assist in teaching cross-cultural communication.

A more serious concern that may give pause in any decision to make use of film in the classroom is the stereotyping that is often characteristic of Hollywood films. Because stereotype is a common approach to humor, this is a particular concern in using the comedies that are, paradoxically, often among the most effective films to employ in the classroom. This problem must be addressed by the instructor from the outset in preparing to use any film, and the instructor's preparation and introduction of the material to students requires a sufficient depth of intercultural understanding to avoid some very real traps. A continuing strand of the process of deconstruction must be to train students to look for cultural stereotypes and to articulate their understanding of them. Using such films without realizing what they say and do not say about the culture that they are supposed to represent, as well as a sound conceptualization of the ways in which good drama may necessarily distort real life, may lead to serious misunderstanding on the part of students and thus defeat the cross-cultural purpose of the exercise.

The second major problem is how to use the films in order to enhance how Russian students may be able to conceptualize and interpret their own cultures to others, a task that is equally as important as the ability to understand other people's cultures. American films may be of some use in this context if they are employed in order to introduce, within a non-threatening environment, certain cultural issues relating to class, ethnicity, and gender that may inhibit cross-cultural communication between Russians and others.

Many American films may be found to have utility in developing consciousness about cultural differences. Choice of cinematic material to use in the classroom will doubtless remain a matter of personal choice and comfort for the instructor, but it seems reasonable to offer some suggestions, based on the experience of the authors, as an initial guide. The selection that is offered here also has a strong emphasis on educational experiences in America, a theme that may be more immediately engaging to Russian students as well as their teachers. A fairly typical problem of the films is the difficulty in communication among sub-groups within the population, particularly where values may not be mutually shared or understood. Other films listed below relate to aspects of business, and this is important because facilitation of commerce is a common goal of the intercultural communication taught in English language programs.

"Mr. Holland's Opus," a film "biography" of a frustrated composer who is forced through financial circumstances to work as a high school music teacher, is easy for Russian students to follow and raises issues of values and public policy in a context that may make Russians look at America in a different light. Disability issues are also addressed, but Russian students typically find it difficult to understand how the governor of the state, a former student of Mr. Holland, is unable to intervene to prevent the music program at his school from being cancelled. This seeming lack of credibility in the plot can provide an interesting point of entry for a discussion of differences between American and Russian political as well as educational systems. Several possible lines of discussion may present themselves, including the political problems that might prevent the governor from intervening to use her influence (e.g. lame duck status, a difficult campaign, state budget difficul-

ties). Even more to the point, in America such decisions are normally made at the local level by elected school boards, and state officials' participation would be unwelcome. There are also some effective portrayals of high school students, with well-structured nuances suggesting change over time.

"Mystic Pizza," a film set in a working class New England Portuguese neighborhood, deals with issues of ethnicity, class and (peripherally) gender, as well as the role of religion and education in community life. Women who work in the titular restaurant cope with class and role issues in social relationships, while the owner of the business seeks to gain greater publicity in order to make the business pay. The language of the film is relatively easy to understand.

The portrayals of students in "Ferris Bueller's Day Off," are not very realistic, and this point will need to be made clear to students. Nonetheless, while the film provides a rather hyperbolic view of upper middle class American teenagers in the suburban Midwest, it does include an interesting and diverse cross-sectional tour of Chicago in the 1980's, a humorous snapshot of life in schools, and some interesting observations on cultural issues related to conflict between generations, between siblings, and between teachers and students. The language is also quite accessible for students.

"Trading Places" offers some fascinating insights into the aggressive and sometimes hyper kinetic world of commodities trading while providing commentary on issues of race and class. The viewer must take into account the hyperbolic portrayals typical of comedy films, and perhaps a more serious criticism is that the language employed by the character played by Eddie Murphy involves a lower class African American argot that will be very difficult for students to understand. A glossary or extensive interpretation of his speech will need to be provided. Nonetheless, the film shows some very useful cultural adaptations that result from communication as Billy Ray Valentine comes to appreciate the lifestyle of Louis Winthorpe III at the same time that Winthorpe, as a result of callous manipulation at the hands of the Duke brothers, is forced to come to terms with his own powerlessness and dependence on the good will of the character played by Jamie Lee Curtis. Some instructors will be uncomfortable working with the speech patterns employed by Murphy, but a point that may usefully be made to students is that not all of the people they will meet will employ standard British variants of English, and they will need to adapt in order for effective cross-cultural communication to take place.

A final film that is worthy of note is "Sister Act," which juxtaposes the lifestyle of a Las Vegas lounge singer and that of a cloistered community of nuns. Care must be taken to deconstruct the comic use of hyperbole in this film, too, but it is of interest because it deals with an American subculture (a religious community of women) that might be easily overlooked or discounted. The cultural transformation that takes place in the film is two-fold. The Sisters come to appreciate the singer and the help that she can provide through her music in making contact with the lower class community in which the convent is located, and the singer learns to share in the devotion and dedication to service of the nuns.

Whichever films are chosen by the instructor, the process of presentation will be similar. Careful and repeated previewing will lead to development of a list of relevant vocabulary and phrases, and scenes will need to be identified for purposes of illustrating the issues to be discussed and elements where cross-cultural communication (or failure to communicate) take place. Elements of the films that depict cultural features that would seem odd or unusual to Russian students should be targeted for extended discussion. If the full film is to be shown, this should be done in segments, with opportunities for class discussion and clarification taking place at regular intervals. Passive watching and listening are to be avoided in favor of active participation by students.

If properly introduced, and if the class is well prepared, each of these films should provide a vehicle to enhance the intercultural understanding that must necessarily form the basis for effective communication between individuals from different communities. Students will deepen their understanding of the culture depicted in the films, use that depiction as a vehicle to enhance understanding of ways in which their own culture may differ from that of others, and gain exposure to and experience in employing language forms and dialects other than the standard forms found in the traditional classroom.

К ПРОБЛЕМЕ ХУДОЖЕСТВЕННОГО ПЕРЕВОДА

(драматический монолог «Можно любить и так» Роберта Браунинга)

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На сегодняшний день понятие «перевод» трактуется очень широко, оно давно уже вышло за рамки лингвистики и теории перевода, все больше проникая даже в несмежные с ними науки, такие как программирование, культурология, кибернетика, психология и др. Поэтому в каждом конкретном случае это понятие требует уточнения и терминологического определения. В данной работе речь пойдет о художественном стихотворном переводе. Несмотря на увеличивающееся число книг, посвященных теоретическим вопросам перевода и интенсивный рост количества самих переводов, в силу разных причин целый ряд авторов, среди которых английский поэт викторианской эпохи Роберт Браунинг (1812-1889), один из родоначальников жанра драматического монолога в поэзии, оказался в числе «непереводимых».

Поэзия Браунинга остается не только до сих пор по достоинству не оцененной российским читателем, но даже почти ему неизвестной. Переводили его в России мало, в то время как на родине его называют «вторым Шекспиром». В журналах и сборниках появлялись переводы отдельных стихотворений, и лишь в 1981 году вышел сборник стихотворений Браунинга в переводе С. Маршака, М. Донского, Ю.Корнеева, В. Левика и др. В 90-х годах XX века положение стало изменяться: имя Браунинга все чаще стало появляться на страницах литературных изданий и интернет-сайтов, выходят в