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WIDE BUT ONE WORLD

Бу мақола кўптіллилиқ (мультилингвализм)нинг аҳамияти ҳақида бўлиб, унда турли тилларни ўрганишнинг ижобий таъсирлари, жумладан, фикрлаш даражасининг кенгайиши, бошқа миллатларнинг тили ва маданиятига бўлган ҳурматнинг ошиши ҳақида сўз боради. Муаллиф кўптіллилиқ миллатлар орасидаги тотувликка етаклайди, деб таъкидлайди.

Статья посвящена мультилингвализму и его положительным влияниям на человека, таким как расширение кругозора и увеличение уважения к языкам и культурам других народов. Автор утверждает, что мультилингвализм открывает путь к взаимопониманию между народами.

This is article is devoted to multilingualism and its positive impacts to a person such as widening one's outlook and paying more gratitude to other nations' languages and cultures. The author claims that multilingualism paves the way to mutual understanding among nations.

Калит сўзлар: кўптіллилиқ, хорижий тилларни ўрганиш, маданиятлараро ўзаро ҳамжиҳатлик.

Ключевые слова: мультилингвализм, изучение иностранных языков, взаимопонимания между культурами.

Key words: multilingualism, learning foreign languages, mutual understanding among cultures.

Asked where he (Diogenes) came from,
He answered: "I am a citizen of the world".

For those, who consider themselves world citizens, the earth is home and all the other nations are their brothers and sisters. From my understanding, multilingualism paves the way towards mutual understanding among different nations. Multilingual ability is the key to win the hearts of other people. As Nelson

Mandela said, if you speak to a man in a language that he understands, that goes to his head, if you speak to a man in a language that he speaks, that goes to his heart.

To illustrate, I studied at the World Languages University where more than 20 languages are taught. Having entered the university, I learnt three languages: English, Russian, and Japanese. I distinctly remember a professor from our university saying: “if you read a book in its original language, you will truly understand what the author intended to say.” These words still inspire me to learn foreign languages.

Knowledge of foreign languages opened my eyes to see the differences in our perceptions of the world. When I am learning a language, I wholeheartedly feel that I am becoming more open minded about different viewpoints. For example, we define the notion of snow, based on our Asian background, as “the small white pieces of ice which sometimes fall from the sky when it is cold.” Yet, there are more than 20 words to call “snow” in Eskimos languages. This clearly shows that Eskimos divided the world of snow into four or five categories while we had only one. Here we can see how language represents our understanding of the world. Another example can be given that every language has different distinctions for color, for instance, in some languages, green and blue are not different colors, but different shades of the same color. The Vietnamese word “xanh” is the color of both tree leaves and the sky. To elucidate such peculiarities in languages, linguists claim that what colors you can say are related to what colors you can see. The surrounding world exerts its influence on how we perceive something and it is clearly illustrated in the language we speak.

Having given such facts, if a person who knows only one language says “I understand the world”, he is certainly mistaken. Learning a language enables us to think out of a “box” – our own perception of the world which we are confined to. As for me, being open-minded is like having an open parachute. If you open your parachute, you are able to fly high, see and discover what’s beyond your usual horizons. If you do not, you are staying still in the same place. Definitely, multilingual ability allowed me to soar into the sky and see what is there in the far-off places.

One of the most memorable experiences of my language learning is the time of cultural events. “The Festive of Oriental Languages” is annually held at university, and in of those events our group was supposed to represent the Japanese culture as it was a second language for us. Preparation process was tough and tiring: at first, we started searching for information about Japanese culture and googling videos on YouTube. After much discussion, we arrived at a decision to perform a Geisha dance – a type of Japanese national dances. Then, we were rehearsing the dance everyday after the classes. Personally, I found myself quite clumsy as I tried to repeat the dance movements of professionals on the video. However, I repetitively practiced each single movement in the dance until I got it in the right way even though it would take

hours. After much persistent practice, as my ears caught the tune, my hands were spontaneously moving in the air and my heartbeat was following the rhythm of the music. In the last rehearsals, when we put on kimonos and other Japanese national clothes, an unknown feeling preoccupied me. As I danced, I deeply felt the underlying meaning of this dance and what it intends to say to the viewers. I began feeling the pains and gains of a real Geisha dancer. That was something I have never experienced before. Finally, the day of the events came. On that day I observed other participants who were representatives of about 15 cultures and were excitedly waiting for their turn behind the stage. The students were wearing different national clothes, hairstyles, and, even, make-ups. They were singing songs in different languages and performing national dances on the stage. And, in their eyes, I witnessed the feeling I experienced in the last rehearsals! That day inherited in my heart a strong love – a strong love to feel how it is to be a member of another culture, just for a few minutes in the material world, but spiritually unforgettable for infinite period of time.

From my own experience, I came to understand that language teaches us to see and appreciate our differences. This will, hopefully, result in maintaining mutual understanding among speakers of different languages. It is awesome when people understand each other: this would lead to no wars and no collisions.

When I think of differences what comes to my mind is the scene of people on the platform of the airport who are waiting for their flight. Needless to say, they all have different luggage, and their luggage is what makes them different. In the same way, when people from different backgrounds gather in one place, every one of them has their own distinct features, such as, language, race, religion, culture, points of view, etc. But we have the same destination, like the people on the airport platform. Our destination which unites us is the big purpose – to make the world a better place to live.

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