

THE CONCEPT OF LEARNING FOREIGN LANGUAGE IN THE WORLDVIEW OF ABAY

Madina KOZHKANOVA*

Özet: Bu çalışmada, büyük Kazak düşünürü Abay'ın Kazakların başta Rusça olmak üzere yabancı dil öğrenmesiyle ilgili düşünceleri ele alınmaktadır. Abay'ın hayatı ve öğrenimi bağlamında yabancı dille ilgili düşüncelerine ve özellikle de bunların onun dünya görüşündeki yeri üzerinde durulmaktadır.

Anahtar kelimeler: Abay, Abay'ın dünya görüşü, Kazak kültürü, Yabancı dil öğrenimi, Kazak folkloru

Abstract: The purpose of this essay to evaluate the great thinker of Kazak Abai's thoughts about learning of foreign languages e.t.c. Russian. For this reason Abai's life briefly is taken consideration and a special attention is given to his thoughts about learning of foreign language.

Key words: Abai, World view of Abai, Kazak Culture, Learning of foreign language, Kazak Folklore

The purpose of this essay is to explain the concept of learning foreign language and it's functions according to Kazakh philosopher Abai. The great Kazakh poet was born in 1845 in the Chinghis Mountains in Semipalatinsk Region. His mother gave the name Abai instead of Ibrakhim. His clan is Tobykty. His great grandfather Irgyzbay was born in Torgay near the river Irgyz. Irgyzbay was his people's commander hero and leading biy¹. When Tobykty's area was small. He removed with his people from Turkistan to Shyngys Mountain because it was comfortable for cattle. His grandfather Oskenbay was called as fair biy. He was making up not only his but strifes between another distance people. His father

* Al Farabi University of Kazakhstan, Kazakhstan.

¹ Biy - a judge

Kunanbay was also an important person among the Kazakhs. Abai was first taught at home by a hired mullah, and then his father took him to Semipalatinsk and placed him in the Ahmet-Riza madrasah. He had studied Russian for three months there. After that he stopped his study. When he was 15 he used to be among adults. In his twenties people were calling him as orator. He was sharp. He knew a lot about biy's decisions, orators' sayings, leaders' actions, about pleasant jokes, proverbs, fable and things stuff like this.

It's obviously that he will be one of the famous biy's if the time would like before. That time people considered it's better to have cattle than education. He had never agreed with statement like this. He devoted his education, his skill to party relevant. He could be one of the volost who didn't care about people. But fortunately he chose another way of life.

A diligent and extremely gifted boy, Abai learnt a great deal in the five years he was there. Then, Abai began writing poetry while still at the madrasah. Among the few of these early attempts which have survived we find lyrical fragments, epistles and love poems obviously written under the influence of classical Oriental poetry, and also some impromptu verses composed in the manner of the akyns.

Abai's poetry were not like any other poets' words. They were so different, there were fewer words but their meanings had deep value. If you read quickly to someone who didn't know about them before he can't catch all of them. You can understand their sense only after somebody's explanation. That's why words of Abay are difficult to understand. But that gravity is not Abay's fault it's just because of pupil's conceivable degree. Whatever he wrote they have deep root meaning, feature, secret intention.

While writing he knew thing's feature, mystery. For that reason they took a great place in people's soul and also it's criticism for pupils' education and an exam for them. If the pupils criticize the word, then words also will criticize them. Abay's words are unsurpassed and the best; and stands separately among other poets from that epoch. That superiority and individuality is not just in his words but in him. We didn't see Abay but we know about him from people who saw with their own eyes. It will not be superfluous if we notify about his words and him.

He was familiar with intelligent man Mikhaelis and with Gross who was gleaning information about Kazakh people's customs. They both were exiled. They knew that Abay was not an ordinary man. They helped to Abay to learn about Russian famous poets like Pushkin, Lermontov, Nekrasov, also about writers like

Tolstoy, Saltykov, Dostoevskiy, Belinskiy, Dobroluvov, Pysarev. They told him about their books and explained that it's much more important than Kazakh volosts and biys. When he finally understood that most of Kazakh poets were losing their esteem among people by writing poems as ordinary beggars he started to write his own piece.

When he was young he was writing comic and love poems. But then after becoming an adult he gave up that and devoted them to serious kinds of topics. After Abay's poems we learnt to distinguish real poems from meaningless ones.

It's not enough to be only writer, he should be also critic. Also it needs cogitative skill, critical relation and education. Abay had these three qualities. He knew very well all the conditions in writing poem. That's why his creations were perfect. But there was just one disadvantage- poem's reams were rambling. But if we put them in right order it will be correct. He is controller of his own words. Nobody can find out mistakes from his work.

The advantage of Abay's poems from another Kazakh poet is he could see things from within. Maybe other poets were orator but we know that Abay's knowledge was much better. They used to exaggerate but Abay liked to say everything in its position. He didn't like changing them in order to present more likely. Abay knew too many things. But he never tried to change his creation or make it easier for people's understanding. He just tried to give things' real nature. By Galikhan Bokeykhanov's opinion Abay read Spenser's, Louis' and Dreaper's books. That's why it's hard for simple people to understand his poem's meanings. He liked reading great Russian poet, Lermontov's poems. We know many people who memorizing his hundreds of poems, but they can't grasp all of them.

Abai was the first to enrich Kazakh poetry with philosophy. He discovered a new poetry, realizing the synthesis of philosophical and artistic principles. With the name of Abai, a new Kazakh poetry of conscious philosophical and stylistic purpose was born on the steppe.

Abai was a light star appeared among the Kazakh people. He was a great poet, musician, translator, philosopher and political activist. He followed I. Altynsarin's way and called every young to learn, to get education. He invited the people to the culture and science. He put the problems of learning, art, knowledge in front of the young people

When I was young I didn't give much thought to knowledge,
I saw the use, but didn't test it out.
When I grew up, I didn't know how to latch onto it.
I stretched out my hand to it very late. (Seisenbaev 2009: 301)

In this stanza, Abai regretted of his not learning when he was young and now it was late and the time could't be returned. Also Abai advised to young people not to spend time all for nothing, to spend the youthfulness to science and education. There are two kinds of learning. Rich people taught their children for being the head of the clan, to take rank. Abai's view was contrary, he wanted youth to use the knowledge for the necessity of the people

Inviting people to get an education he also mentioned from what kind of things young people should to escape, and to bring closer.

Look to the future, whatever you do!
Bragging and slander, odious lies,
Foul dissipation, laziness, too –
These are five things a man should despise!

...

Now about virtues my verses shall tell –
Work and persistence, study profound,
True moderation, goodness as well –
Those are the five best friends to be found! (Kunanbayev, 1970: 39).

Abai's words still have important meaning. Nowadays we are still fighting with the things that Abai mentioned before such as: bragging, slander, odious lies, foul dissipation, laziness and also good things such work, persistence, study profound, true moderation, goodness are similar for today's upbringing In his song he also raise the upbringing problem.

Abai's Book of Words is a deeply meaningful way to truth. The idea that permeates it is both simple and grand. In his Word twenty five (Karasoz) Abai called them to learn Russian culture. He wrote that if Kazakh people would know Russian language they would achieve everything, that wealth, education, culture in the hand of Russian nation. There is the passage of his 25th karasoz: " One should learn to read and write Russian. The Russian language is a key to spiritual riches and knowledge, the arts and many other treasures. If we wish to avoid the vices of the Russians while adopting their achievements, we should learn their language and study their

scholarship and science, for it was by learning foreign tongues and assimilating world culture that the Russians have become what they are. Russian opens our eyes to the world. By studying the language and culture of other nations, a person becomes their equal and will not need to make humble request. Russian learning and culture are a key to the world heritage. He who owns this key will acquire the rest without too much effort.(Seisenbaev 2009: 301).

In conclusion we see that Abai was thinking foreign language as a instrument for learning culture and science during the late 19th century. For this reason it will not be wrong to think about Abai as one of the founder father of Kazakh enlightenment era.

REFERENCES

Kunanbayev, Abai.(1970). Selected poems. Moscow: Progress Publishers.

Rollan, Seisenbaev.(2009). Book of words. Alma-Ata. International club of

Abai