

CULTURAL INSIGHTS IN LANGUAGE TEACHING FROM LANGUAGE AND LITERATURE PERSPECTIVES¹

DİL VE EDEBİYAT PERSPEKTİFLERİNDEN DİL ÖĞRETİMİNE KÜLTÜREL BAKIŞ

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Culture is regarded as an essential component of a society. It encompasses several aspects of human life, including the language, literature, art, attitudes, beliefs, customs, and morals of people who live in the same community and share the same history. The cultures of people living in different societies have their own unique cultures, even if they are somewhat similar to each other. In the same vein, language reflects the culture to which it belongs and differs from one society to another. Language is the most important communication tool that provides social elements of a society. It is best passed down from generation to generation through literature such as poetry, fairy tales, stories, or novels. Literature offers the opportunity to understand the lives, thoughts, and feelings of people from the same culture and society. As mentioned, it is clear that culture, literature, and language are interdependent and cannot be considered separate from each other. Culture is also important for language teaching and cannot be disconnected from one another. From this point, this paper focuses on how language, literature, and culture are interrelated and the role of culture in language teaching.

ABSTRACT

Kültür, bir toplumun temel bir bileşeni olarak kabul edilir. Aynı toplumda yaşayan ve aynı tarihi paylaşan insanların dili, edebiyatı, sanatı, tutumları, inançları, gelenekleri ve ahlakı da dahil olmak üzere insan yaşamının çeşitli yönlerini kapsar. Farklı toplumlarda yaşayan insanların kültürleri, birbirlerine bir şekilde benzeseler bile, kendilerine özgü kültürleri vardır. Aynı şekilde dil de ait olduğu kültürü yansıtır ve bir toplumdan diğerine farklılık gösterir. Dil, bir toplumun sosyal unsurlarını sağlayan en önemli iletişim aracıdır. Şiir, masal, hikaye veya roman gibi edebiyat türleriyle en iyi şekilde nesilden nesile aktarılır. Edebiyat, aynı kültürden ve toplumdan gelen insanların yaşamlarını, düşüncelerini ve duygularını anlama fırsatı sunar. Belirtildiği üzere, kültür, edebiyat ve dilin birbirine bağlı olduğu ve birbirinden ayrı düşünülemeyeceği açıktır. Kültür, dil öğretimi için de önemlidir ve birbirinden bağlantısız değildir. Bu noktadan hareketle, bu makale dil, edebiyat ve kültürün birbiriyle nasıl ilişkili olduğuna ve kültürün dil öğretimindeki rolüne odaklanmaktadır.

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Introduction

Society is a community where people live together and share the same culture and history. Belias and Koustelios (2014) describe that culture is the product of a group of people living in the same place and sharing similar histories, religions, norms, values, and artifacts. According to this definition, people are born into the same society and are shaped by the cultural aspects of their society. As a part of a society, culture is a set of rules, norms, and ethics that enable people to live in harmony with each other. Therefore, the culture of every society is not the same, so it can vary from one community to another. Different cultures have different perspectives to understand the way of life. Culture is seen as specific to a community although the cultures of some societies are similar to each other in some respects. Similarly, language is unique and belongs to the society in which it is spoken. As Kramsch (2014, p. 32) states, “No two languages are ever sufficiently similar to be considered as representing the same social reality”. Language is an important part of culture because it provides the society’s social elements. Jiang (2000) clarifies that “Language and culture make a living organism; language is flesh, and culture is blood. Without culture, language would be dead; without language, culture would have no shape” (p. 328). On that ground, culture, and language are interrelated, and the two cannot be considered separately.

Besides language, one of the best ways to reveal culture is through literature. As a written source, literature is an effective way to express and display the cultural characteristics of a society. According to Patil (2015), literature, as a valuable tool, can be used to improve the capacity to communicate effectively in foreign cultural environments. In this approach, literature shows how people communicate in different societies and helps readers understand how to chat and communicate with these people. Moreover, literature successfully demonstrates the cultural aspects of the society that produced the language. As Cruz (2010) states, literature is the aesthetic representation of a language as well as culture. From this point, literature is a means of reflecting culture as well as language. It reflects the lifestyle of the characters, their daily routines, and the conditions of the region in which they live. At the same time, the language used in literature is more sophisticated and the way it is written is different for each society. Similar to how language is specific to every society, literature is also unique to each social context. Consequently, culture and literature are inseparable, like language and culture.

Culture is so comprehensive that it plays an active role in the language teaching process as it does in almost every field. In the same way that language and literature cannot be isolated from culture, language teaching, and culture cannot be apart from each other. When teaching a language, inevitably culture is also being taught (McLeod, 1976). In this sense, language cannot be taught without culture, just as culture cannot be taught without language. The culture of a society makes language teaching and learning more understandable and meaningful, as it reflects the history, way of life, relationships between men and women, behaviors, traditions, memories, feelings, emotions, aspirations, and ideas of people from the same society. For this reason, language teaching cannot be considered independent of culture. Through literature, that is, literary texts, culture is best reflected in language teaching. Patil (2015) describes that “Literature is a slice of life; it holds a mirror to life. Literature, they say, is a seismograph of the society it portrays.” (p.155). If literature is the mirror of a society, it is also the mirror of a culture. In this manner, literature is used as a tool to integrate culture into language teaching. Thus, culture is important in language teaching and needs to be integrated into the teaching through literature.

Just as we see our shadow when we lean over the water, culture is the shadow of a society. To this extent, culture reflects the society in which people live together and these people live their lives with cultural characteristics from birth to death. Everything is part of culture from the moment of birth to the way we live life, our entertainment, our understanding of war and peace, the moment of death, funerals and mourning. In fact, culture, which expresses all of these, reveals cultural characteristics that vary from society to society. One of these cultural characteristics of a society is language, because language is how people communicate and convey their norms, positive or negative. There is no culture without language, which is the lifeblood of society, and no language without culture. Therefore, the place of culture in language teaching is indispensable. Crozet and Liddicoat (1997) emphasize that culture must be integrated into language teaching. Otherwise, even if learners are linguistically competent, they may be socially incapable of communicating effectively with native speakers. It becomes difficult for them to understand cultural nuances beyond grammatical structures

and to use language appropriately in contextual and real-life situations. So, culture needs to be taught alongside language teaching, not as an independent supplement. However, educators and curriculum designers still do not realize that language teaching and culture teaching are integral, and in some societies the teaching of culture and language together is even frowned upon.

The role of literature in language teaching is also important. This is because language teaching is not only about acquiring skills such as speaking, listening, reading and writing, but also about learning culture and literature. Khatib and Rahimi (2012) maintain that literature is one of the most important materials of language teaching, it teaches the target language by providing communicative situations and their authentic and real contexts. It also provides the joy of language learning through interesting stories and can broaden learners' knowledge and experience of the world. As expressed in the above statements, literature, as an authentic material, best reflects both language and culture. Therefore, it is necessary to recognize that literature and culture are a united whole and to integrate them into language teaching. That's not only because language reflects literature, but also literature reflects culture in the best way. But unfortunately the importance of literature is still not fully understood and literary texts are still not used in language teaching. In fact, although there are studies on the importance of culture, language and literature, there are still debates and lack of practice on the intertwining of literature with culture and its reflection on language teaching. The place of culture in language learning is inadequately addressed and the relevance of culture to language learning or literature is presented as separate studies. This study approaches culture from a broader perspective by considering culture in terms of language, literature and language teaching. This paper aims to present some concrete examples of this issue from a theoretical point of view by making use of the relevant literature, emphasizing the importance of culture in terms of language, literature and language teaching and giving some suggestions in this regard.

Literature Review

What is Culture?

People have to set some rules, laws, morals, and ethics to live together in a society. All of these can be defined as culture. Indeed, there are numerous definitions of culture. According to Kramsch (1998), culture can be addressed as the fact that individuals living in a community share the same history and that these individuals follow these beliefs and values wherever they go. Since it is difficult for people to break away from their own culture, people intend to continue their culture wherever they go. Patil (2015) describes that “Culture shows itself in everything-language, literature, performing arts, verbal and non-verbal behavior of people, etc.” (p. 143). This definition fairly reveals that culture encompasses everything about the community. As an example based on this definition, in the 2024 Paris Olympics, France used mascots with Phrygian hats because they symbolize freedom and the French revolution. To the French, these hats mean a lot to their culture, but to other societies, they may not mean much at all. In order to understand cultural aspects of a society, it is necessary to understand the society and its background. Brown (2014) defines culture as a way of life in which people exist, feel, think, and relate to others. As in the phrase “When in Rome, do as the Romans do”, when people visit a foreign place, they are expected to behave like the locals, eat like them and think like them. This means that it is very difficult to live in a society where you know the language but not the culture. It is therefore essential to learn culture as well as language.

For a more detailed definition of culture, Kramsch (1995) addresses it from two different perspectives. In terms of social sciences, culture means that members of that community share attitudes, beliefs, and ways of thinking, behaving, and remembering. In terms of humanities, culture is the way a social group of people expresses themselves from generation to generation through material productions such as literature, art, and social institutions. Besides, Mazari and Derraz (2015) assert that culture reveals the particular way of life and values of a group of people, not only in the world of art but also in institutions. By these definitions, culture is not only sharing a society's thoughts, feelings, beliefs, and attitudes but also concretely conveying them. For example, while some societies give importance to balconies in buildings, others prefer to use attics in their structures. Some communities build stone houses with high ceilings and large rooms, while others like smaller houses with a combined kitchen and living room. Moreover, in some nations, paintings and sculptures that are naked do not have artistic value, whereas in many other places everything touched by human beings is art. While in other countries gothic architecture is prominent, in some countries Islamic architecture stands out.

Overall, a society's art, architecture, and buildings also reflect its culture. In fact, culture is everything and when one learns a language, one learns these things and so one becomes culturally aware, including the architecture of the buildings.

Culture means blindly adhering to the beliefs born within it and not questioning them. As indicated by Brislin (1990), culture is a set of values and ideals that people living in a society consciously or unconsciously accept as correct. In this manner, every society has its rights and wrongs, and these are accepted without question by the people living in this society. Kramsch (1995) claims that "Culture is always linked to moral values, notions of good and bad, right and wrong, beautiful and ugly" (p. 2). To this definition, culture is the collection of concepts of good and bad produced by the people of a society. For instance, some societies consider polygamy and having many children to be right. In some communities, it is believed that it is better for people to live together before marriage. At the same time, in some regions, it is considered acceptable to live together and have children without getting married. Furthermore, abortion is accepted in some societies but not in others. In some nations, giving birth to a girl child is seen as humiliating. As Patil (2015) states, "What is considered acceptable, polite, and appropriate in one culture may not be considered so in another culture" (p. 144). To illustrate, it is appropriate to kiss each other on the cheek in many societies whereas it is common to kiss on the lips in some. In some social groups it is suitable to shake hands when greeting or leaving, while in others it is proper to simply say hello or goodbye without touching. Further to illustrate, in some societies it is not approved for women to shake hands with men, while in others both men and women are treated equally, regardless of gender. Learning a language means learning the correct and incorrect behaviors of people belonging to that language, and making communication more comfortable and accurate.

Culture is actually how societies are similar or differentiated from each other by small nuances or big differences. For Yıldırım (2012), what distinguishes one group of people from another is their way of thinking, their way of communicating, their way of behaving, what religion or philosophy they believe in, and what meaning they attribute to life. Overall, the cultures of societies are the same in some respects but they still have many different characteristics. Way of thinking, lifestyle, beliefs, morals, attitudes, language, folklore, holidays, cuisine, family, male-female relations, even marriage and mourning rituals, degree and place of entertainment, and every other issue varies from society to society. As examples for women's positions, in some nations women are not allowed to do every job, and in others, women's duties in every sector are regarded as normal. While in some societies housework is shared by men and women, in many others housework is considered solely women's duty. This situation is slightly different, especially in male-dominated societies where men are promoted more easily than women in the workplace and men earn more than women, even if the salaries of men and women doing the same job are not equal. As exemplified in other issues, caring for elderly mothers and fathers continues to be a responsibility and a tradition in some areas whereas in other places, they are sent to nursing homes and their needs are met in this way. In some social groups, it is customary to visit elders on holidays or festivals. In many areas, there is a funeral meal, prayers and condolences at the funeral home, in others mourning is shown by wearing black and sending wreaths to the graves. In some locations, it is not welcome to have fun until the early hours of the morning. In some districts there are too many entertainment places, while in other districts it is not an acceptable situation. Furthermore, eating raw fish is considered appropriate in some societies, but not in others. While alcohol is an indispensable beverage in many societies, it is not consumed at all in some. In some places, home-cooked cuisine dominates, while in other places fast food cuisine is widespread. In many locations the meal is set on the floor, while in others a dining room and table are required. On the whole, the culture is regarded as specific to a particular society although the cultural aspects of some societies are more or less similar to each other. The similarities between cultures or their differences in many ways provide both convenience and cultural awareness in language learning.

The Connection Between Culture and Language

Language is the existence of a society. A nation without the language that remains mute is doomed to extinction. For this reason, a society that protects its language also protects its culture. According to Mazari and Derraz (2015), a way of expressing and sharing culture is through the language of the community. That is why language and culture are interdependent. Risager (2005) explains that language can be accepted as an integrated part of society and culture, so language is cultural in some aspects all the time. At this point, culture

is the product of people living in the same place, and language is a tool produced by these people. With this tool, people get along, live together, and cooperate within the same society. Brown (2014) focuses on the connection between language and culture that the two cannot be separated without losing the importance of one another. In this respect, there is always culture where language exists and there is always language where culture occurs. Just as language produces culture, culture produces language. Since language reflects culture through verbal or written language, it has a very important place in language learning. So, focusing on cultural elements in language teaching contributes to effective language learning.

Language is the guide of a society. It reflects beliefs, rules, and norms as well as being a means of communication. Patil (2015) states that “language orchestrates the culturally conditioned patterns of perception, attitude and behaviour of its community” (p. 147). Language, like the conductor of an orchestra, organizes how the culture is expressed in the best way and how it reflects the culture in harmony. That is to say, language is a tool used by people to implement the culture to ensure harmony with each other. Sapir (1921) emphasizes the importance of the relationship between language and culture and claims that language reflects the history and social structure of its speakers and is learned and transmitted culturally rather than biologically. To him, language is created and shaped by people sharing the same culture and it is a heritage passed down from generation to generation as an indispensable part of the culture. Jiang (2000) describes that “Communication is like transportation: language is the vehicle and culture is traffic light. Language makes communication easier and faster; culture regulates, sometimes promotes and sometimes hinders communication” (p. 329). In this sense, culture is the set of norms and rules organized by people living in the same place in order to ensure unity among people through language. Knowing these norms and rules enables healthy communication with native speakers. Therefore, it is essential to address culture in language learning.

Language reflects daily life experiences, relationships, and positive or negative behaviors. As Kramsch (1995) mentions, culture occurs through language use, reflecting the words and actions of speakers in daily life and language enables understanding of particular situations between friends and acquaintances, local transactions between sellers and customers, and employers and employees. For instance, in some societies, when addressing adults, it is normal to use expressions such as elder sister, elder brother, father, mother, etc., while in other societies, it is fine to address people only by their first names. In some places it is acceptable to live with their family elders, while in others it is preferable to live alone and with one's own family. Kinship relations are very important in some societies and not so important in others. The relationship between employee and employer, working hours, wages of the employee, and the attitude and behavior of the employee to the employer vary from society to society. On the whole, all of these are culture and the language is the best way to reflect it. For this reason, these cultural elements should also be included in language teaching, so that learning culture along with language produces effective results in language learning.

Although culture is similar in some features, it varies from society to society, so an attitude perceived positively may be perceived negatively in another society. Patil (2015) claims that speech acts differ from one culture to another in terms of their content, distribution, linguistic realization, function, and frequency. By way of example, an attitude, behavior, or action that is considered blasphemous in one society may have more positive meanings in another society. That is, hand signs, facial expressions and the words the speakers use to express themselves vary as well. Patil's claim highlights that the verb comes at the end when making a sentence in Turkish, but is used in the middle of the sentence in English. It may also be that the written language of languages that do not use an alphabet, but instead use pictures or signs, is different from spoken language. Chinese, Japanese, and Russian are given as examples. To communicate effectively, it is necessary to pay attention to this cultural context while learning a language. Lovrović and Kolega (2021) emphasize that cultural misunderstanding prevents effective communication and successful social relationships. According to their discourse, in some societies it is considered rude to ask questions about private life, in others it is acceptable. In some places, it is considered impolite to speak loudly in conversation, while in other places it is regarded as normal. In some nations, it is seen as disrespectful to interrupt and ask questions before the other person finishes speaking, but in others it is a common habit. If an unnatural situation arises because of such examples, healthy communication cannot be established and the conversation may end there. Therefore, it is not enough to just know the language of a society; it is also very important to know the culture of that society. The use of slang words, the expression of anger, sincerity, kindness, rudeness, prayer, oath, curse,

compliment, criticism, and sincerity are specific to a culture. Although there are differences in each society, language helps us express them in the best way possible in a social and cultural context. Language is not only a means of communication, but also a means of correctly understanding and expressing social boundaries and the culture of society. Therefore, including them in language teaching helps learners to understand the culture that underpins the language.

The Connection Between Culture and Literature

Language is a cultural component that is transmitted from one generation to the next. Mazari and Derraz (2015) claim that language allows the development, elaboration, and transmission of culture, especially with its written form. This definition implies that language and culture are best conveyed in written form and this is through literature. While language is a reflection of culture, literature is a reflection of culture and language. According to Collie and Slater (1987), literature is a variety of written materials and is permanent rather than temporary. Based on this explanation, literature, as a written material, ensures the permanence and continuation of culture. As the Turks say, “Spoken words fly away, written words remain.” In other words, what is said may be forgotten, but the written materials are always persistent. Thus, literature is a valuable written resource that reflects culture as well as language. Literature is not only an unspoiled expression of language in written form, but also a tool that best reflects culture. That’s why the inclusion of literature in language teaching helps to gain the best understanding of the culture and language of that language.

Language is the transmitter of traditions, habits, routines, and social and economic context, and when mastered through literature, it reflects the human soul (Cruz, 2010). In this respect, literature is a means of showing society's emotions, feelings, perspective on life, clothing, marriage events, and the value given to men and women. For example, the novel *Great Expectations*, written by Charles Dickens, reflects the difference between the peasants and the urbanites of 19th-century England. This novel also mirrors the greed for money and the girls' desire to marry someone from high society at that time. Here's another example, the novel *Jane Eyre*, by Charlotte Brontë, indicates religious oppression, class distinction and male supremacy of 19th-century England. Both authors focused on the class division in 19th century England from different perspectives and pointed out different problems they had seen. Here are some more examples, *Invisible Man*, by Afro-American author Ralph Ellison is a novel about black Americans and racism in 19th-century America. It represents the difficulties and challenges faced by African Americans due to discrimination of white people. The novel *Burmese Days*, by English author George Orwell is centred on the relationship between the British coloniser and the colonised, and portrays the superiority of the white British colonialists over the non-white native colonised Burmese and Indians. The novel *Anna Karenina*, by Russian author Leo Tolstoy, reflects the social and political aspects of 19th-century Imperial Russia, addressing love, morality, and social norms. Moreover, *The Shirt of Flame* was written by Turkish author Halide Edib Adivar. This novel reveals the social and political reality of the Turkish people's National Struggle by focusing on love, death, separation, pain and war. It is evident from the examples that these literary pieces contain human emotions, feelings, love affairs, family relationships, wars, discrimination, conflicts, as well as human behaviour in all areas of culture. Although some basic features of culture remain constant, culture is a changing phenomenon and changes from time to time in society. Therefore, the fact that literary texts reflect the period and history gives the reader a lot of information about culture. Literature is effective in language teaching as it presents culture, history and language to the reader in a real authentic way and enables language learners to further internalize the language they learn.

Literary texts that contain literature can be considered as a tool that reflects every aspect of the society that speaks the language. According to Hişmanoğlu (2005), through literary texts such as novels, plays, short stories, etc., it is easier to understand how people in that country communicate. In this manner, literary texts, which are a component of literature, show the communication characteristics of the society. Literary texts convey to us the daily language of society, rhetorical arts, proverbs, or idioms in the best way. That is, literature shows the language of society and also represents the language of the period in which the author wrote the work. For example, the epic poem *Bewolf* was written in old English. The author presents the readers with the English used at that time and reveals the heroism, beliefs, and wars of the society of that period. Further examples, the language Shakespeare used in his works is called Early Modern English, from the 1500s to the 1700s. Shakespeare reflects love, loyalty, family ties, inheritance, death and social conflicts in his works during the Elizabethan age. Dede Korkut Tales were written in Old Anatolian Turkish and are

about the migration and village life of the Turkish people at that time. Based on these examples, literature is the most reflective tool of the language spoken and written in a certain period. That's why the period in which the author writes is very important and reflects the culture of that society. Hence, the use of literary texts in language teaching shows the history of language and how it has changed over time and how culture has been influenced over time, which helps language learners to better recognize and interpret the language that is intertwined with culture.

Literature presents similarities and differences between various cultural groups (Genc & Bada, 2005). Although culture is specific to each society, some similar or different aspects of societies are the same and literature conveys this best. For instance, the essay *A Room of One's Own*, written by Virginia Woolf, reflects the social, economic, and psychological effects of inequality between men and women in every field, especially when women cannot take part in literature in England. It also provides readers with an insight into twentieth-century feminist thought. In the same way, the novel *The Bell Jar*, by American author Sylvia Plath is about women giving up their studies, careers and dreams in order to raise children at home and be a housewife. In other words, it is a novel that highlights the inequality between men and women. Moreover, the novel *Woman Has No Name*, by Duygu Asena, also emphasizes twentieth-century feminist thought and refers to the women's inequality in Turkey. Certainly, women were not as equal as men in many societies at that time. In their literary works, these authors explained this issue with examples from England, America and Turkey based on their own countries. Even though they put emphasis on their feelings and thoughts, they reflected the dominant culture of their societies at that time and perhaps became the voice of the same problems experienced in many societies. As a result, although literary texts describe the author's feelings and thoughts, imaginary plot, characters, world and events, they can reveal similar and different cultural aspects of societies. When language learners learn about the similarities and differences between the culture of their mother tongue and the new language they learn, this leads them to a more conscious learning. While learning a new language, language learners also learn about different cultures and broaden their horizons by learning different perspectives.

The Role of Culture in Language Teaching

The relationship between literature, language, and culture is as important as the relationship between culture and language teaching. Kovács (2017) states “It is difficult to imagine language teaching without referring in one way or another to the target culture; therefore, culture has always been present in the teaching process” (p. 74). With this statement, it is apparent that culture is an integral part of language teaching. Yıldırım (2012) emphasizes the importance of culture in language learning and asserts that understanding language is impossible without understanding culture. In that point, both language learning and teaching should not only include grammar and vocabulary, but also the culture of the society that creates the language. How language is used and how it is shaped is related to culture. Therefore, language teaching and culture are intertwined. Because learning a language is not only about grammar and vocabulary, but also about what those words or sentences mean to speakers of that language.

Learning a language is not limited to just the language; it is also necessary to know the culture of that society. For Hariri (2022), “Learning a language is not only about learning its words, grammar rules, pronunciation, or language skills (reading, writing, listening, and speaking), but it is also about learning the culture that is associated with the language” (p. 1). For example: “it is raining cats and dogs” is an English idiom and it means that it is raining heavily. If the person does not know this idiom, a misunderstanding happens. Another example, “it's no use crying over spilt milk” is an English proverb. It means that it is useless to cry over past events that cannot be changed and that regret is useless. Someone who does not know this proverb cannot understand the meaning of spilled milk. Learning a language also requires learning the idioms and proverbs that are part of the culture. As stated by Kovács (2017), the culture of native speakers can not be denied in the language teaching and learning process. In other words, knowing and understanding the culture of native speakers is an important part of language learning. To illustrate, Christmas day is celebrated in many societies, while in others it is not even known what it is. The Chinese New Year is a centuries-old tradition in China and other societies don't know how much value the Chinese attach to it. It is also unknown what to do or when to celebrate Easter, which is not practiced in many places. From the historical traditions, for instance, it is important to know what Juneteenth National Independence Day means and what is its significance in history,

or why American Independence Day is celebrated. Language learning and teaching cannot be fully achieved if the person does not know what these events given in the examples mean in reading passages, listening texts or in speech. Thus, knowing the important dates, festivals, religions and rituals of the native speakers is very important in language teaching and learning, because knowledge of festivals and rituals helps language learners to better interpret such expressions when they come across them in reading or conversation.

Literature is the most appropriate and best source that helps language learners learn about the culture while learning a language. As Arikan (2005) explains, literature encourages learners to understand people from other cultures as well as their own. It is apparent from this explanation that learners acquire their own culture and other cultures and make comparisons when necessary. At the same time, they become tolerant of other cultures and respect other people's lifestyles. Van (2009) claims that besides enhancing learners' language skills, literature also engages their imaginations, improves cultural awareness, and stimulates critical thinking about themes, plots, and characters. In this regard, literature reflects culture as well as language. Although the novel, the play, and the story, which are literary texts, present an imaginary world of the author, the author is influenced by the culture of the society. The characters and events are described from social and regional backgrounds. For this reason, literature offers a different horizon to learners by synthesizing culture and imagination. Bland (2018) asserts that literature provides readers with foreign language and culture, and new perspectives in the world. The reader therefore begins to look at events from the perspective of diverse cultures, thus improving the reader's ability to empathize by recognizing different races, ethnicities, desires, goals, knowledge, beliefs, memories, aspirations, and worldviews. Looking at things from the perspective of different cultures accelerates language development and prevents language learners from learning a language with a flat logic.

Literature is a tool for developing all language skills and vocabulary usage (Povey, 1972). In this connection, with literature, which includes literary texts, language learners learn words, word patterns, and grammar rules. At the same time, they improve their reading and speaking skills by making sentences from the words and sentence structures they learn. While reading literary texts, students also learn about many different linguistic patterns, communicative features, and what native speakers mean (Hişmanoğlu, 2005). To illustrate, "Here you go." is used to pass an object to another person. "Go" in the original form means to leave, but the meaning here is quite different. "Guess what?" is used to draw attention to something the person is about to say. "You are welcome." is used as a polite acknowledgement of thanks. "Why not?" may seem to have a negative meaning, but in fact it means acceptance of the offer. "I can't help laughing." means I can't stop laughing, but normally "help" means doing a favour. These language patterns are commonly used in English by native speakers. In the English language, there are many more such usages, as well as phrasal verbs, conjunctions, relative clauses and pronouns, and it is important to know them. One of the best ways to comprehend their use and meaning is through literary texts. Indeed, to learn a new language, it is necessary to know the grammar, vocabulary, and linguistic features of the language, and this is achieved through literary texts. Ökten (2013) assumes that literature broadens language and cultural knowledge by offering authentic materials. In this way, literature with original materials reflects the natural and real uses of the language and makes the learning process of language learners efficient. To sum up, as a written source, literature reflects both the spoken language and culture of the society in the best way.

Conclusion

Culture is one of the fundamental elements that build a society. Societal values, behaviors, traditions, beliefs, customs, opinions, and other concepts constitute the basic components of culture. Culture manifests itself in everything in a society. Language, one of them, is the most important construct of a social culture. Indeed, language is a tool that determines how society expresses or reflects its culture with its structure and rules. In that point, positive and negative uses of language, slang, formal and informal language, proverbs, and idioms are evaluated and understood only in a cultural context. To Tannen (1984), the content, form, subject, or style of human communication is culture-specific. Language reflects the content and style of language, language rules, and people's right or wrong behavior, thoughts and attitudes from a cultural perspective. That is to say, it ensures the harmony of a society's communication, cultural rules, norms, beliefs, lifestyles, habits, and routines. Thus, language can only be understood within its cultural framework.

As language comes out of social interactions, it cannot be learned without culture (Dema & Moeller, 2012). In this vein, culture manifests itself in the field of language teaching as in every field. Language learning and teaching includes not only grammatical rules, sentence structures, and vocabulary, but also the culture of the society that creates the language. Since language teaching is impossible without addressing culture, literature, that is, literary texts must be integrated into language teaching. Literature, which is a written source, reflects both the language and culture of a society in the best possible way, thus enabling the transmission of language and culture from one generation to the next. Uslu (2005) emphasizes that literature plays a unique role and offers authentic materials for the language teaching process. Literature offers the most unknown features of society and cultural understanding and awareness. In this way, language learners become acquainted with real language and real-world experiences through literary texts. In sum, just as language, literature, and culture are interwoven with each other, culture is also integral to the process of language teaching.

Since language, literature and culture are inextricably linked, they are considered to be complementary elements. Like culture manifests itself in language and literature, language manifests itself in culture and literature. As literature presents language in its most vivid and contextually rich form and carries the elements of culture, it manifests itself in language teaching. Just as a Turkish bagel is not without tea, a French breakfast is not without croissants and coffee. English tea is with milk and Japanese rice is with chopsticks; these are components that are inseparable for people. Everything that is not considered separately from each other is like integral parts that complement each other. At the same time, there are basic elements that people need, like bread, nature, air, and water, and there are certain components that are inseparable from each other, one without the other. Culture is just one of these elements and it cannot exist without literature and language. Therefore, integrating literature into language teaching not only increases linguistic competence, but also provides an understanding of the culture from which the language originated.

Suggestions for Pedagogical Implications

A great number of language students find literature difficult and feel as if they cannot understand it. One of the reasons for this is that most language coursebooks do not include literary texts or the use of literature in some coursebooks is very rare or limited. Attention should be given to the inclusion of short literary texts in all language coursebooks and these texts should be applied according to the topic or unit. In other words, literary genres such as poetry, short stories, or a chapter from a novel should be included in language coursebooks. By becoming more familiar with these literary texts, students may be able to give up their negative feelings and opinions about literature and change their view that these genres are too difficult. As a suggestion, more literary texts should be included in coursebooks for language classes. Therefore, coursebook writers, curriculum designers, and teachers who know their students best should work together to adapt culture to language teaching.

The majority of language teachers avoid using literary texts in their lessons because they think that literary texts are challenging for their students. In fact, literary texts should be selected according to the language level, interests, needs, and background of the students so that they can participate more actively in the lessons. Many language teachers also think that culture is not necessary in language teaching. Or they don't even think about integrating culture into their lessons for fear of backlash from students and parents. Nevertheless, language and culture lessons should be integrated into the language teaching curriculum and literary texts should be included in language lesson plans.

All language teachers should pay attention to the interrelationship and necessity of language, culture, and literature. They should know that they have to teach culture while teaching language and should act accordingly. They should frequently use literature, that is, literary texts that best reflect culture in their lessons. Since literary texts, which are authentic materials, mirror real language, they help students learn vocabulary, grammar rules, and figures of speech. Therefore, even when preparing lesson plans, teachers should adapt literary texts to the topics and ensure greater exposure of students to these texts. As a recommendation, if necessary, language teachers should even be given courses on the importance of culture and literature in language teaching.

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TÜRKÇE GENİŞLETİLMİŞ ÖZET

Kültür, aynı toplumda yaşayan ve aynı tarihi paylaşan insanların dili, edebiyatı, sanatı, tutumları, inançları, gelenekleri ve ahlakı da dâhil olmak üzere insan yaşamının çeşitli yönlerini kapsar. Kültür, kutlama, festival, bayram, merasim ve tören gibi insanların hayatlarına nüfuz eden bir dizi görünmez kurallar bütünüdür. Bu kurallar ile aynı toplumda yaşayan insanlar sorgusuz bunları kabul ederek onlardan beklenen şekilde davranır, düşünür ya da hareket eder. Kültür, bir toplumun özeli, toplumsal hayatıdır. Kültür, bir toplumun temel taşıdır. İnsanların susuz bir hayat yaşaması nasıl düşünülemezse, kültürsüz bir toplum ve toplumsuz bir kültür de düşünülemez.

Kültürün birçok bileşeni vardır ve bunlardan biri de dildir. Her toplumun kendine ait bir dili vardır ve dil ait olduğu kültürü yansıttığı için bir toplumdaki diğerine farklılık gösterir. Dil, toplumun iletişimini ve sosyal unsurları sağlayan bir araçtır. Dil, kültürel unsurların taşıyıcısı olarak bu unsurların aktarılmasında önemli bir rol oynar. Dil, bir toplumun rehberidir. Bir iletişim aracı olmanın yanı sıra inançları, kuralları ve normları da yansıtır. Aslında dil, yapısı ve kurallarıyla toplumun kültürünü ifade eden ve aynı zamanda onu yansıtan bir araçtır. Bu nedenle, dilin olumlu ve olumsuz kullanımları, argo, resmi ve gayri resmi dil, atasözleri ve deyimler ancak kültürel bir bağlam içinde değerlendirilir ve anlaşılır. Dil, insanların birbirleriyle uyum sağlamak amacıyla kültürü uygulamak için kullandıkları kültürel bir araçtır.

Dil, nesiller arası bir köprü ise köprüdeki bağlantıyı kuran, temel taşları oluşturan da kültürün diğer bir bileşeni olan edebiyattır. Edebiyat, dilin estetik bir şekilde kullanılmasıdır ve kültürün korunmasında ve aktarılmasında önemli bir araç görevi görür. Bu yüzden edebiyat sadece bir sanat değil aynı zamanda kültürel zenginliği yansıtan, ortaya koyan, toplumun bellek birikimidir. Edebiyat, okuyuculara aynı toplumda yaşayan, aynı kültürde birleşen insanların yaşamlarını, düşüncelerini ve duygularını anlama fırsatı sunar. Hem insanların kendi kültürlerini öğrenmesine hem de başka toplumda yaşayanların kültürlerini öğrenmesine olanak sağlar. Okuyucu, farklı bakış açılarından bakmayı öğrenir ve empati yeteneğini geliştirir aynı zamanda eleştirel düşünme gücünü de güçlendirir. Masallar, şiirler, öyküler ve romanlar kültürü en iyi ifade eden ve kültürün kalıcılığını sağlayan edebi türlerdir. Bu edebi türlerle okuyucular, dil becerilerini geliştirir, yeni kelimeler, atasözleri ya da deyimlere aşina olur hem de kültürü en iyi, en doğru şekilde öğrenirler.

Aslında kültürün, her alanda olduğu gibi dil öğretimi alanında da önemli bir yeri vardır. Dil öğrenimi ve öğretimi sadece dilbilgisi kurallarını, cümle yapılarını ve kelimeleri değil, aynı zamanda toplumun kültürünü de içerir. Kültürü ele almadan dil öğretimi mümkün olmadığına göre edebiyatın, yani edebi metinlerin dil öğretimine entegre edilmesi gerekir. Edebi metinler yazarın duygu ve düşüncelerini, hayali olay örgüsünü, karakterleri, dünyayı ve olayları anlatsa da toplumların benzer ve farklı kültürel yönlerini ortaya koyar. Dil öğrenenler, ana dillerinin kültürü ile öğrendikleri yeni dil arasındaki benzerlik ve farklılıkları gördüklerinde, bu onları daha bilinçli bir öğrenmeye yönlendirir. Dil öğrenenler yeni bir dil öğrenirken aynı zamanda farklı kültürler hakkında bilgi sahibi olur ve farklı bakış açılarını öğrenerek ufuklarını genişletirler. Dolayısıyla dil öğretimi ve kültür iç içe geçmiş durumdadır. Çünkü bir dili öğrenmek sadece dilbilgisi ve kelime dağarcığıyla ilgili değil, aynı zamanda bu kelimelerin veya cümlelerin o dili konuşanlar için ne anlama geldiğiyle de ilgilidir.

Sonuç olarak, dil, edebiyat ve kültür ayrılmaz bir şekilde birbirine bağlı olduğundan, birbirini tamamlayan unsurlar olarak kabul edilirler. Kültürün dil ve edebiyatta kendini göstermesi gibi, dil de kültür ve edebiyatta kendini gösterir. Kültür, dil öğretimi için de önemlidir ve birbirinden ayrı düşünülemez. Bu nedenle, edebiyatı dil öğretimine entegre etmek yalnızca dilsel yetkinliği artırmakla kalmaz, aynı zamanda dilin kaynaklandığı kültürün anlaşılmasını da sağlar. Bu noktadan hareketle, bu makale dil, edebiyat ve kültürün birbiriyle nasıl ilişkili olduğuna ve kültürün dil öğretimindeki rolüne odaklanmaktadır.