

Culture clash in books of teaching Persian language to English speakers

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ABSTRACT:Despite the importance of communicative competence in foreign language education, achieving language skills without proper recognition of culture is unstable and dysfunctional and inevitably inter-cultural differences between nations in teaching language create a suitable context for growing cultural misunderstandings. The present study accentuates on the importance of teaching culture in language learning and challenges of its false and aggressive convey in books of teaching Persian language for English speakers. Then after a brief review of the position of Persian language teaching in England and America, the present study divides and analyzes the Persian language books of these both countries in terms of dealing with Iranian culture. This study continues with the introduction of badly moods that are ascribed to Iranians in these books. These attributes are away from the logical framework of language learning, mutual understanding, and respect to the community of the native language speakers. Finally, some guidelines for transmitting culture truly and avoiding Culture clash are proposed.

Keywords:Culture Clash; Communicative Competence; Cultural Knowledge In Language Learning; Inter-Cultural Connection; Teaching Persian Language To English Speakers

INTRODUCTION

Today, all nations need to have good friends and efficient interested people; by experiencing, they found that providing spiritual ties with other nations is the safest and the best way to find friends in the contemporary world. Earn respect, excellence and typicality and finally empathy and sympathy with all creatures in the world are the fruit of these friendships. This problem is a clear fact that familiarity with language and culture of any nation causes to make friendship and being interested to the people of that nation.

Persian language is a basic foundation of introducing and recognizing the identity of each Iranian. So it's basic, regulated, and exact education is effective especially for non-Persian speakers in being familiar with Iranian culture.

However, each foreign student may learn Persian language to achieve every goal such as economic, political, research and tourism. This learning is his first acquaintance with Iran and Iranian culture that it leads to his direct recognition of native language speakers' culture. In this research, it is tried to criticize some cases of Culture clash and false transmission of Iranian culture in books of teaching Persian language that have been written by the English speakers.

History of teaching culture in the context of teaching foreign language

Dealing with culture in teaching foreign languages is not a new subject; it can be said that this subject has a history about long service of teaching foreign languages. However, the methods and the importance of cultural education in different periods have had different aspects. In the early periods that traditional methods of teaching foreign languages were common, the main goal of teaching language was the familiarity with the literature of the considered language so cultural education was limited to literature and art in this period. Gradually, being familiar with social behaviors and the lifestyle of foreign language people in cultural educations played a more important role.

"In the late sixties, along with the development of the sociology of language and audiolingual method, as well as by discussing communicative competence, cultural aspect of language learning was more prominent. And eighties was a period in which the teaching of culture was proposed as an independent scientific major and language educational system that was fundamentally based on linguistic changes somewhat and the researchers emphasized in a close link between language and culture in teaching." (Tajabadi, Aghagolzadeh, 2011).

Relationship between language and culture

Before dealing with the relationship between language and culture, it had better present a definition for culture as it is similar to study's contents; "culture means general behavioral, verbal, mental, and emotional patterns of people in a specific geographical area that their manner of talking and thinking, arts, technologies, kind of ideals, and etc are fundamentally common." (Keivani, 1994).

Every nation culture constitutes a great part of language and thought of that nation people. It has a direct and efficient effect on content, quality and the way of using language as the most important and useful communicative tool. On the other hand, language is able in growing, developing, and changing its culture. The connection between language and culture shows the fact that in teaching foreign language we cannot ignore the culture role, "so without being familiar with culture, language patterns will not be enough to make communication." (Hajirostamlo, 2008).

So the person should benefit from what culture provides for him and evaluate various positions to communicate, way of communication, content of communication, and word appropriateness with conditions.

Goals of learning culture in books of teaching Persian language to the foreigners

"Culture as the fifth skill" (Firouzabadi, Amiri, 2011) includes the ability to attain cultural themes during learning four skills of reading, writing, speaking, and listening. Of course, these goals are achieved if the transmission of cultural information be in a right, logical, and justly path. Besides teaching language, learning goals and paying attention to culture can be summarized in the following cases:

1. "The ability to recognize, accept, rate and understand current cultural differences in the environment and consequently omitting the obtained barriers of encountering and having relationship with other cultures" (Firouzabadi, Amiri, 2011).
2. Help to have a better understanding of language skills
3. Prevention of creating types of misunderstandings in communicating with native language speakers.
4. Conscious understanding of foreign cultural themes besides maintaining his culture and identity
5. Help to teach word, to increase the learners' vocabularies and the ability to a better selection among them in communicating
6. Help language learners in understanding their culture better

History of teaching Persian language among English speakers

"England domination on India is the preamble of England familiarity with Persian language seriously because the official language of India was Persian in at that time. Date of teaching Persian language in England Universities relates to the late years of the tenth hegira century or sixtieth AD century. During the years 1041 to 1071 hegira, chair of Arabic and Persian language was established in Oxford and Cambridge universities." (Brookshaw, 2002).

The first book that was published with the aim of teaching Persian language for English speakers is named *Persicae Elegantiam Exoscular* that was published in 1646 by Levinus Warner in England (Taleghani, 1999). Of course, The Persian Moonshee book, the work of Francis Gladwin that was published in 1795 in London, is important because it is the first book that contains teaching Persian conversation along with implied pointing to Iranian customs and morals; as if this book had served as an example and its short and humorous anecdotes that have been quoted from literary texts such as Latayef al-tavayef Fakhr al-din Ali Safi, Resaleye Delgosha of Obeid Zakani, and Baharestan e Jami, it is repeated in other books even in written books in the twentieth century; so it can be considered as the first book of teaching Persian language to English speakers that Iranian culture is manifested in it and will be transmitted to other books.

Now Persian language is teaching as a basic or secondary course in five England universities named Oxford, Cambridge, London, Manchester, and Edinburg. "Before world war II, studies related to Iran and Persian language was restricted to a few universities in United States; serious studies and teaching Persian language was begun from 1985 in this vast country." (Checklofesky, 2002). Now in spite of chill relationship between Iran and America, teaching Persian language or administrating affairs related to education in studies' groups of near East of main universities of America are done by the researchers of literary or cultural majors (Talatof, 2003).

Division of books of teaching Persian language to English speakers in terms of dealing with culture

Foreign or second language has cultural features of native language speakers in any way it is taught. Although it may be little information is unconsciously transferred to language learner in education process and this matter relates to the special relationship between culture and language. Anyway, books of teaching Persian language to English speakers can be divided into four groups in terms of teaching culture:

1. Some books that taught Persian language in a traditional method consider taking the fragments of literary texts, in verse or prose, in their book as a way to be familiar with Iran culture. These books were based on Grammar-Translation Method and teaching conversation was either ignored or considered too little. A Grammar

of the Persian Language book of William Jones and Persian Grammar book of A. K. S. Lambton belong to this group.

2. Some books are only dealing with introducing social behaviors of Iranian people in different social positions such as eating and its related customs, visiting, marriage, birth and mourning ceremonies; they introduce historical places of Iran and talk about the prominent Persian poets and writers. However knowing such information is useful, it is not just efficient in direct relationship with native language speakers and it does not cover all details of social connections. More points and cultural information are proposed in the form of conversation in such books. Colloquial Persian of Elwell Sutton and Colloquial Persian of AbdiRafiee belong to this group.

3. Some books have dealt with Iranian culture in a more advanced way and include meaningful behaviors of persons with each other. Being unaware of these social behaviors can cause misunderstanding. These behaviors are totally visible in society so they are named "evident behaviors" (Zia Hosseini, 2006). Behaving with parents, talking with strange man and women, and observing respect are considered as some cases of evident behaviors. Farsi ShirinAst of PoonehShabaniJadidi and Dominic ParvizBrookshaw and Beginner's Persian of A. M Miandji belong to this group.

4. The most advanced kind of teaching culture is in books that introduce hidden points of Iranian life customs that include their social values, cultural beliefs and weaknesses. In these books there are some parts that apart from four main skills in Persian or English language, teach these cultural points and they are intangibly taught in the conversations of that lesson. Reading parts of these books contain some texts of newspapers or modern novels that are helpful for showing invisible parts of Iranian culture. Persian for Foreigners in Iran introductory course of Donald W. West and Alenoush Saroyan and Social and Cultural Selections from Contemporary Persian of Michel M. Mazzaoui and William G. Millward belong to this group.

Iranian bad moods in books of teaching Persian language to English speakers

Learning another language of west is easier for the westerns who are English speaker than learning another language of east because cultural difference of western societies with each other is less than their cultural difference with eastern people; so westerns should try to learn eastern languages more because cultural factors are not separated from its language and understanding. In this study, some books that were written for teaching Persian language to English speakers, those books that had cultural features and had a picture of Iran and Iranians were separately and exactly investigated. Unfortunately, in reading texts, conversations, or exercise guidelines, some unjust and bad qualities were attributed to Iranians that were away from mutual understanding and respect to society culture of native language speakers. Now these features are proposed categorically and by giving some examples:

Theft

In the second chapter of his book *The Persian Moonshie* with the subject "Pleasant Stories in A easy style", Francis Gladwin has stated seventy six stories that in two third of them, the main characteristics of story are thief; unfortunately these stories are repeated in educational books written after it.

In conversation parts of this book "Modern Persian Colloquial Grammar", it is stated that a master complains about theft of his Iranian servants: "Sheikh Hassan: Bread and cheese praise be to god! Are plentiful, but honest servants are not to be found. All these servants cannot manage to live on their wages, living is also expensive nowadays. They all wish to make an enormous profit by buying and selling. For these reason they did not get the bread and the cheese." (Rozen. 1898) again, on pages 128, 197, and 200 of this book, Iranian robbery has been complained.

In the book "Modern Persian Conversation Grammar", besides three stories that were about theft of Iranian thieves, in the middle of the conversation that was about the Iranian theft from courier of England, it has been stated: "of course Iranian thieves are polite and compassionate but I have no doubt that they ramble even person's pocket before leave him to be sure that nothing worthy being left in his pockets!" (Clair Tisdal, 1902).

Even in contemporary educational books, Iranians' theft has not ignored. In the ninth lesson of this book "Colloquial Persian" from AbdiRafiee with name of emergency conditions, three emergency conditions have been remembered that two cases are about theft and one case is about accident. The first one is a conversation on page 120 that police asks some questions about features of a pickpocket who has attacked to an English passenger, and the second has been written in comprehension part of that lesson as:

"Me and My wife were eating food in restaurant. Around eight o'clock, suddenly the lights were off. Before that, two persons were eating food at the table beside us. After about five minutes, the lights were returned on but those persons had gone. Also, my wallet was disappeared...." (Rafiee, 2001).

In the conversation of the thirtieth lesson of the book named Farsi ShirinAst, a person sees police to report the theft of recorder and reserve tire of his car. Finally, he asks police: "What percentage is likely that the thief be found? / Police: what questions you ask! Is it just your car that is stolen? Each day, hundred thefts like

it are reported to us." (ShabaniJadidi, Brookshaw, 2010). In this conversation, the bad behavior of police with the person is also considerable.

Lie and proving it to oath

Telling lie and beyond it taking a false swear have been ascribed to Iranians in teaching Persian language books to more than other disagreeable characters.

Almost telling lie and lying is theme of all stories of The Persian Moonshee book from Francis Gladwin.

In the book "Modern Persian Colloquial Grammar", Iranian servants tell lie to their English masters more. In conversation (table-cloth), chef is telling lie to his master for several times to providing food: "Cook: Have you any orders, sir? / Master: Where is that food, which you said was ready in the kitchen? / Cook: You said you wished to eat bread and cheese, so I did not get any other food. / Master: Well then, all you said was a lie! / Cook: What petition shall I make? If you order it to be an untruth, it probably is an untruth, but I have been in European service for ten years, and until now no one has seen any dishonesty in me. / Master: (Threatening the cook with a whip) perhaps you have had some arak and are tipsy. / Cook: Forgive me, sir! I have eaten dirt, I have told a lie, I will not do it again. (Rozen. 1898).

From the mentioned book (Modern Persian Colloquial Grammar), an example of false swears from conversation (riding) is quoted that groom hides his betrayed behind false swear: "Master: Well then, why is he so dirty? He is also very lean. Surely you do not give him the whole of his barley. Groom: By God! By your head and by the soul of my mistress I do not steal a single grain of barley. I have not stolen your salt (i.e. I am not ungrateful). If you want to make this horse get fat, you must give it green fodder." (Rozen. 1898).as you see it is not fair to image the people of the language, who are thought, contemptible.

In thebook "A Grammar of The Three Principal Oriental Languages", there is a conversation named "talking man with servant"; on page 157, English master has credit from goldsmith master, he sends servant to take credit from goldsmith master, but goldsmith denies debt. By master's order, servant takes him to court. The judge requests the accuser to show his witness because they didn't have two more witnesses, the judge didn't accept their claim and he asks them four witnesses; finally fight ends up in behalf of goldsmith by swearing to Quran. Below, some examples of false swear and their references are presented:

Taking false swear for two times by the seller to the buyer for selling horse on pages 199 and 203 in the book "A Grammar of The Persian Language" from Meerza Mohammad Ibrahim.

Permanent lying of Iranian driver and false swear of the worker for attracting pathos of English employer on pages 38 and 97 in the book "Colloquial Persian" from Elwell Sutton.

Telling lie by the owner of hotel to English tourist for hiring room on page 90 in the book "Colloquial Persian" from Rafiee.

Iranians' lying becomes a pervasive feature for them that one chapter named "lies of Iranian man caused that Austrian girl decides to end her life" in the book "Social and Cultural Selections from Contemporary Persian" has been allocated to Iranians' lying. The first text of chapter is a report derived from Keyhan newspaper written by AnoshiravanKeyhanizadeh. In this story an Austrian girl fall in love with an Iranian man by his deception and lies, then she left her country; in Iran she found his deception and then she committed suicide. Two other stories about this subject are deceiving girls by Iranian boys with trickery that have been stated in the next parts of chapter. Finally, according to Iranian writer's view, it is found that "telling lie is common in Iran as people's beliefs have been taken away from exact realities; this morals' weakness that leads to weaken personality and social distrust include a great danger for our social life." (Millvard, Mazzaoui, 1973).

Bargain on buying and selling

None of the conversations and reading texts of teaching Persian language books for English speakers that are about buying and selling something, are not empty of bargain problem. Unfortunately,bargain is introduced as a characteristic of Iranians in these books that it is the symbol of their dishonesty; in all conversations, Iranian seller introduces his goods better and more precious than what it is by telling lie and he is not ashamed of taking a false swear. Some examples of bargain are introduced.

In a conversation in the "Modern Persian Colloquial Grammar" book from Rozen, page 105; buying a carpet.

In a conversation in the "A Concise Grammar of the Persian Language" book from Bleeck; buying a book.

In a conversation in the "Modern Persian Conversation Grammar" book from Clair Tisdal; buying jewelry.

In a conversation in the "Colloquial Persian" book from Elwell Sutton; buying cloth.

In the "Farsi ShirinAst" book one chapter with title "Do you bargain?" deals with this feature. In this chapter we read: "Buying and selling customs are different in various countries. In Iran, bargain is so common. Bargain means that the buyer tries to take discount from the seller. Sometimes, the buyer can take discount more than half of the price. In small stores, there is no price tag on the goods and it is problematic. Of course, taking discount is a kind of pleasure for some people. You should have a good power of reasoning to take discount and don't easily leave the field." (ShabaniJadidi, Brookshaw, 2010).

Iranian compliments

Many English speakers familiar with Iranian culture have known compliment; sometimes they have surprised and sometimes condemned it; also they emphasized on Iranians' lying. Primarily, compliment with its forms, aspects, and different appearing is individual or collective behavior of Iranians.

Different complexities of words and expressions, insistence in forcing the audience to do something, repeating some word and the meaningless of some sentences and phrases, not applying words correctly in their exact meaning, and finally complex, repetitive, and long compliments are some cases that show Iranian compliments well. Iranian compliment is evident in all books of teaching Persian language to English speakers and at least it is available in educating hello and greeting in all books. Following examples belong to this type:

-In the conversation (going to market) of a book, it has been said: "Master: What is the price of this carpet? / Merchant: What petition shall the slave make? Whatever your heart wishes, you can give me, by your kindness. I make you a present of it, take it. / Master: Say the price in one word; I have not too much time for discussions. I have work to do." (Rozen, 1898)

Harsh and unkind behavior of English man shows the lack of writer's interest of this book about this kind of Iranian behavior. In the book "Persian For Foreigners in Iran Introductory Course" it has been stated about Iranian greeting: "In General, Greetings in Iranian culture are lengthier and more elaborate than in anglo-saxon culture. In money situations where a hello-how-are-you?-fine-thanks would be sufficient for a westerner, Iranians will go over and over the same expressions, each time with a small variation. For example, you may be asked several times over a period of several minutes how you are. Even in business situations, you will be expected to spend more time breaking into the subject of the meeting than you would in anglo-saxon culture." (West, Saroyan, 1976)

In the last chapter of the book "Farsi ShirinAst" with title (why are you saying so?), there is a conversation with themes of Iranian compliments:

"Reza: hello Mrs. Shahla, I am Reza / Shahla: Wow! Thanks! Now I was thinking about you and your father. / Reza: It was kind of you. How is Dr.? What about our troubles? How much efforts you tolerated last night. / Shahla: You're welcome dear Reza. Don't say these things. What a trouble? / Thanks for your coming. We are not satisfied to see you and the engineer. Reza: It is kind of you. The engineer wants to talk with Dr., is he at home? / Shahla: Yeah, hold the line please. / Reza: Thanks. Bye" (ShabaniJadidi, Brookshaw, 2010).

However, "compliment is a part of Iranians' behavioral culture; based on it they shouldn't be understood as the external meaning in routine talks and words. For its better understanding, it is enough to say that compliment is used to respect the audience." (Daneshgar, 2002).

The importance that Iranians give to titles and observing them in written and orally addressing is sign of social respect towards each other. This feature is obvious for the writers of Persian educational books to English and they have advised their audiences to observe it in order to prevent misunderstanding. In a conversation (order of epistle) from the book "Modern Persian Conversation Grammar", an Iranian is teaching letter writing to a European.

Firstly, Iranian says to European:"firstly you should know well all titles of that person you are writing him, otherwise, he will be offended." Then European says to Iranian:"also I found I shouldn't use the word "I" but I should write *Bandeh*, the lover who prays for you, your devoted friend, your devoted servant in terms of position instead of writing it. Iranian's answer is:"you are right; if you want to write honorably, you should write pronouns in absent model for yourself..." (Clair Tisdall, 1902).

Irregularity, laziness, and worthless time

Irregularity in giving services, breaking promise, irresponsibility, and wasting time due to laziness from Iranians has made English speakers complain in many cases and sometimes have harassed them.

In one conversation named (table-cloth), the English man complains about laziness and irregularity of Iranian servants to an Iranian named Sheikh Hassan: "Master: Why do they have an excuse for anything I tell them to do? / Sheikh Hassan. That is their nature. A lazy man will give a thousand excuses instead of doing one thing. If you wish to remain in Persian, you must have much patience." (Rozen, 1898)

In the book "Modern Persian Conversation Grammar", there is a conversation that the writer mentions intentionally to Iranians' irregularity and Europeans' regularity: "Bureau chief: you are a little late today. I am waiting for you for some time. You promised to be here before 5 but now it is nearly 7. / Mirza: I am sorry; I had problem; but now is early morning, only two hours have passed. / Bureau chief: Ok. But do you know we Europeans divide our time to do a special work for every hour. So if we don't do anything in its appropriate time, it will be totally finished; because we don't have opportunity to do them in next times." (Clair Tisdall, 1902).

The last lesson of the book "Social and Cultural Selections from Contemporary Persian" is totally allocated to Iranians' irregularity. Lesson's text is derived from a telephonic conversation from Keyhan newspaper named (hopefully it will be corrected), Iranians' irregularity has been severely criticized. In this conversation, they talked about the unfinished projects of government in Yazd; and it is said that administrating

projects have been postponed for a long time. At the end of conversation, because responsible person has no logical answer to present, he ends talking as: "hopefully it will be corrected." (Millward, Mazzaoui, 1973).

In the part of "an introduction to culture" of this book "Persian for Foreigners in Iran Introductory Course", this Iranian feature has been introduced as: "Iranians tend to be somewhat less exacting about the time than many westerns are. If you ask someone the time, he may say that it is 7:30 when, in fact, it is 7:40. If you suspect that you have not been given the exact time, you can ask a question similar to those you have practiced in this lesson preceded by the word 'dorost' ("exactly"). Is it exactly 7:30?

Iranians also tend to value punctuality less than many westerns do. Even a business appointment made for a certain hour may not begin on time. If you are visiting a business contact in his office, you would be wise to anticipate that the meeting may not begin at the appointed time and bring along reading material to keep yourself entertained while you wait." (West, Saroyan, 1976)

Bribe

Bribe is another bad feature that unfortunately it has been stated as a feature of Iranians in books of teaching Persian language to English speakers.

In the book "The Persian Moonshee" in the conversation (sea excursion), English consider the pirate problem in Iran insoluble; because others who are beside the judge and due to bribe they are received, they don't allow to arrest these pirates: "The magistrate is endeavouring to discover the thieves; but the officers are very corrupt. / The magistrate is not apprized of the practices of his officers, or he would punish them properly. / The poor plaintiff, what power has he, that he should draw on himself the ill-will of all the magistrate's officers? / Then, according to this way, a thief will never be discovered, and the property of the subject will be always consumed." (Gladwin, 1800)

- In the book "Modern Persian Conversation Grammar", the English passenger who wants to release his goods quickly and he talks about it with customs chief, he hears: "it is difficult because we are busy today. / Well, but if you show your generosity and divide this tip among your servants, maybe you can do everything soon. / Thanks. Of course it is possible. I have no doubt that everything is right." (Clair Tisdall, 1902).

Of course, cultural negative points of Iranians in these educational books don't terminate here. Flattering, sabotaged, barratry, being influenced by the West, superstitions, and praising man are other characteristics that are ascribed to Iranians in these books; due to little time, just high-frequency cases were pointed in this study. It should be mentioned that the aim of this study is not proving the correctness or incorrectness of these cultural abominable characteristics about Iranians but the aim is the criticism of mentioning to these cultural negative points in books that their aim is teaching one language for connecting two nations that have two different languages.

CONCLUSION

As we should be cared in teaching foreign language process that cultural reaction of praising foreign culture and humiliating their culture don't overcome the learners' unconscious; vice versa it should be prohibited to praise their culture and humiliate the foreign culture in their mind; they should be led to mutual understanding and increasing useful connections and solving cultural barriers. In cultural communications, our head encounters usually with the stone of invisible walls. These invisible walls have broken many human relationships before and these relationships are so important in our era that should be seriously considered. So considering following points is necessary to teach the fifth skill i.e. culture:

1. Avoiding value judgments between Iranian and English culture
2. Truly understanding of Iranian society culture by the teachers and writers of Persian language
3. Considering and describing cultural differences and preventing learners' surprise when they are encountering with cultural misunderstandings to keep learning motivation
4. Avoiding to point personal and unidirectional cultural comments and experiences in books of teaching Persian language
5. Benefiting from cultural and social patterns that are similar and homological with grammatical patterns
6. Truly logical selection of cultural content of language to guide learners in research in two cultures and finding the third position between both of them
7. Avoiding special trends of cultural denial (considering their culture as having no fault and considering the foreign language faulty), cultural avoidance (considering their culture away from the problems of foreign culture), and cultural arrogance (humiliating foreign culture and praising their culture)

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