

THE AXIOLOGICAL CONTEXTS AND PERSPECTIVES IN LANGUAGE STUDYING

CONTEXTELE ȘI PERSPECTIVELE AXIOLOGICE ÎN STUDIUL LIMBII

GUO Binghua, PhD student, China,
“Ion Creanga” State Pedagogical University of Chisinau,
ORCID ID: 0009-0009-8941-0383

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Abstract. *The paper explores the axiological dimensions of language studying, focusing on how values, convictions, and ethical considerations influence both language learning and teaching. Axiology, as the philosophical study of values, plays a crucial role in shaping learners' motivations, behaviors, and attitudes toward language acquisition. This research highlights the impact of cultural, moral, and social values in the language classroom, examining the role of educators in promoting or challenging these values. By analyzing the axiological contexts that underlie curriculum design, pedagogical approaches, and intercultural communication, the paper offers insights into the ethical and cultural implications of language education. Through theoretical perspectives, it emphasizes the importance of value-driven approaches in fostering ethical awareness and intercultural understanding in multilingual settings. The findings aim to contribute to the ongoing discourse in applied linguistics, advocating for a deeper integration of axiological considerations in language education policy and practice.*

Keywords: *axiology, axiological linguistics, values, language studying; university students*

Introduction

The study of language, as a complex and multidimensional field of research, has always been accompanied by numerous theoretical and methodological debates regarding the values it promotes and the context in which they are developed. In a dynamic society, language is not just a simple means of communication, but a carrier of cultural, moral and educational values. Thus, the axiological dimension of language becomes an essential aspect in the correct understanding and interpretation of the meanings conveyed through it.

In this context, the study of values reflected and transmitted through language requires an interdisciplinary approach that includes linguistic, cultural, sociological and philosophical aspects. Each language reflects not only the objective reality, but also an axiological reality, constructed according to the dominant values of a society at a given time.

In frame of this paper, we will analyze the multiple contexts and axiological perspectives associated with the study of language, identifying both the social and cultural context in which they appear, as well as the influences on the way language is perceived, used and valued. It will also analyze how different axiological values contribute to the formation of cultural and national identity, as well as their impact on education and continuing learning.

The paper presents diversity definitions of value. Values are conceived as models that guide human thought and action (Cívico-Arizaetal, 2021), and are usually defined as “objectives that we aim to achieve, in different situations, as individuals and/or society” (Gervilla, 1997, p. 72). They are “guiding principles in life” (Schwartz, 2012, p. 17). They are preferences that we choose, or principles that govern our decision-making (Colomo & Gabarda, 2021; Arthur. 2017; Schwartz & Bardi, 2001).

Modern linguistics engages in a robust discourse surrounding the concept of values, their oppositions, representation in language, and their interrelation, particularly in the context of foreign language education. In this framework, language transcends its function as a mere tool of communication and becomes a vehicle for conveying cultural values, serving as a means of fostering intercultural awareness and preventing cultural conflicts. Effective comprehension of a foreign

language is essential for understanding the nuances of its underlying values. Even without full proficiency in a foreign language, individuals may recognize certain international terms or proper nouns, and may form subjective attitudes toward the language based on its phonetic characteristics, as interpreted through the lens of their native language.

Linguistic axiology, the study of language from the perspective of value systems, examines how language functions as a crucial source of information about cultural values. Research within this field explores “the language of values” in both diachronic and synchronic contexts, focusing on how values are conveyed through text, including the study of occasional and habitual word collocations. This research contributes to a deeper understanding of how languages reflect and shape cultural values across time.

The relationship between axiological education and axiological linguistics

P.Andrei emphasizes the centrality of the value concept in philosophy, highlighting its educational significance. The author argues that philosophy not only interprets the world through logical values but also reshapes it based on ethical ideals. P. Andrei explains that value is neither a property of the subject nor the object but a functional relationship between the two. In this relationship, the subject is the individual, and the object is the entity. He concludes by stating that value is derived through the process of acquiring knowledge [1]. The promotion of values in the educational system is a complex and holistic process, which represents a main element connecting social and personality systems. The constructivist paradigm becomes an opportune and flexible one for the formation of values. Among the constructivist principles that can be the foundation of a pedagogical model of forming value orientation, we highlight the following principles: autonomy and personalization; inter-conditioning and integrity; efficiency by improving the social-affective climate; cognitive confrontation through cooperation; reassessment and awareness; and learning through collaboration [2].

Both fields emphasize the importance of integrating values into their respective areas — whether through teaching ethical conduct in classrooms or promoting cultural sensitivity in language use. **The axiological education** guide decisions on classroom management, teaching styles, and student interactions. Educators are often tasked with imparting societal values, critical thinking, and ethical reasoning. In educational research, methods may include value analysis, classroom observations, and surveys to assess the impact of values on teaching. **The axiological linguistics** guides how language instruction can reflect cultural norms and values, influencing students’ attitudes toward language and communication. In linguistics, discourse analysis, content analysis, and qualitative research can reveal how values are embedded in language materials and instruction.

Axiological Perspectives in Language Learning

When exploring the values learners bring to the classroom, it's essential to recognize that students do not arrive in educational settings as blank slates. Instead, they come with a rich variety of personal, cultural, moral, and social values that influence their behavior, engagement, and learning outcomes. Here’s a breakdown of these values:

Cultural Values are shaped by a learner’s cultural background, including beliefs, customs, languages, and practices passed down through generations. In a multilingual and multicultural classroom, cultural values can influence how students interact, their communication styles, attitudes toward authority, and even their preferred learning methods. Culturally responsive teaching helps in addressing these differences and ensures inclusive and mutual respect in diverse classrooms [2].

Moral Values refer to learners’ sense of right and wrong, often shaped by family, religion, and societal norms. These values influence how students interact with peers, respect authority, and engage in classroom discussions. Instructors can foster moral reasoning through activities that encourage critical thinking and ethical discussions, which also promote personal growth and empathy [1].

Social Values revolve around how students perceive social relationships, such as teamwork, collaboration, competition, and leadership. Social values are developed through interactions within

families, communities, and educational environments. Teachers can foster positive social values by promoting cooperative learning, group projects, and opportunities for peer interaction, thus preparing students for socially responsible roles in society [1].

Axiological perspectives have influenced language learning or teaching

Axiological perspectives—related to the study of values—play a significant role in shaping language learning and teaching practices. Here are some specific examples and case studies where axiological perspectives have influenced language education:

1. Byram's Model of Intercultural Competence (1997)

Michael Byram's research focuses on developing intercultural competence through language learning, emphasizing understanding others' values and viewpoints. His framework has been influential in language teaching, where educators use activities like role-playing or cultural comparisons to teach students how to navigate different value systems [2].

Impact: This helps students not only learn the language but also appreciate the values embedded in different cultures, fostering tolerance and preventing cultural conflicts.

2. Culturally Responsive Teaching (CRT)

In the study fulfilled by Gloria Ladson-Billings (1995) [3] regarding Culturally Responsive Teaching, is explored how educators can affirm students' cultural values while teaching. In language classes, CRT means recognizing students' cultural backgrounds and using them as a tool for better engagement and understanding. For instance, students' native languages, cultural expressions, and experiences are acknowledged in teaching materials and classroom discussions, which helps them connect with the target language on a deeper level.

Impact: By aligning learning with students' cultural values, CRT reduces cultural dissonance and promotes inclusivity, making language learning more relatable and meaningful.

3. Moral Education in Japan's EFL Classrooms

In Japan, English as a Foreign Language (EFL) [4] classes incorporate moral education that aligns with societal values. Teachers use language lessons as an opportunity to promote moral values like respect, responsibility, and empathy, linking them with culturally significant texts or scenarios.

Impact: language lessons become not just about grammar and vocabulary but also about promoting ethical values, which is essential in a collectivist culture like Japan. This practice fosters ethical awareness and moral development through language.

4. Multiculturalism in Language Education

In Canada, language education policies support multiculturalism by integrating multiple languages and values into the curriculum. Bilingual programs (e.g., French-English) are designed to respect and promote linguistic diversity while teaching language skills [4].

Impact: these programs reinforce the value of multiculturalism and linguistic diversity, showing how language learning can support the coexistence of different cultural values within a single nation.

These examples illustrate how axiological perspectives in education can deeply influence the objectives, methods, and outcomes of language teaching.

How axiological theories can be applied to topics

Axiological theories, which are concerned with the study of values, can be applied to several areas within language studies, such as translation, bilingualism, language policy, and language rights. Below is an examination of how these theories can be applied in each of these areas, followed by academic references to support the discussion.

1. Translation

Application of Axiological Theories: Translation is not merely about converting words from one language to another; it involves the transfer of cultural and ethical values embedded in the original text. Axiological theories come into play in how translators interpret and prioritize certain values in the target text. For example, a translator must decide whether to maintain the original cultural context, which reflects certain values, or to adapt the text to align with the cultural values of the target audience [1]. For example: In translating religious or philosophical texts, such as the

Bible or the works of Confucius, axiological considerations are vital. Translators must convey not only the literal meaning but also the ethical and cultural values that underpin these texts.

2. Bilingualism

Application of Axiological Theories. Bilingualism often involves navigating two sets of cultural values. Axiological theories can be applied to explore how individuals manage these sometimes competing values. For instance, bilingual individuals may develop a hybrid value system that draws from both languages and cultures they interact with. This also raises questions about how societies value bilingualism itself—whether it is seen as a cognitive or cultural asset, or as a threat to national unity [2]. For example: In Canadian bilingualism policies, there is a clear valuing of both English and French languages, promoting a sense of equality between the two linguistic communities. This reflects an axiological commitment to cultural and linguistic diversity.

3. Language Policy

Application of Axiological Theories. Language policies are deeply embedded with value judgments regarding which languages are deemed important or worthy of preservation and promotion. Axiological theories help analyze the value-laden decisions made by governments when they establish official languages or support minority language rights. The decision to promote certain languages over others often reflects broader values such as national identity, cultural heritage, and social integration [12]. For example: the European Union's language policies emphasize multilingualism as a core value, reflecting a commitment to cultural diversity. These policies encourage the learning of multiple languages to promote intercultural understanding and social cohesion.

4. Language Rights

Application of Axiological Theories: language rights concern the value attributed to linguistic diversity and the recognition of individuals' rights to use their native languages in public and private settings. Axiological theories are crucial in understanding the ethical dimensions of advocating for language rights, especially for minority groups whose languages may be marginalized. Questions of fairness, equality, and cultural preservation are central to debates about language rights [2]. For example: the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP) emphasizes the importance of language rights as part of cultural heritage. This reflects a value-based commitment to preserving linguistic diversity and ensuring that indigenous languages continue to thrive.

Conclusion and Reflection

This paper has illustrated the crucial role of axiological perspectives in the domain of language learning and teaching, emphasizing the interconnections between values, ethics, and cultural beliefs in shaping educational practices. Language, far from being merely a tool for communication, serves as a medium for the transmission of values and cultural norms. It plays a pivotal role in developing intercultural competence, fostering ethical awareness, and influencing learners' attitudes toward both their native and target cultures. By engaging with the cultural, moral, and social values that learners bring into the classroom, educators occupy a central position in either reinforcing or questioning the prevailing value systems. The integration of axiological considerations into curriculum design, pedagogy, and intercultural communication strategies promotes an educational environment that is more ethical, inclusive, and culturally responsive.

Reflecting on the practical application of axiological theories in language education, it is clear that a value-driven approach significantly enhances the educational experience. This includes not only linguistic competence but also broader intercultural understanding and ethical sensitivity. Educators, as facilitators of value systems, must engage in ongoing critical reflection on the values they promote – both implicitly and explicitly – in their teaching. This demands a conscious effort to create learning environments that are equitable, culturally sensitive, and morally engaged, while fostering respect for diverse perspectives. In this context, language education transcends its functional role to become a transformative tool for shaping more inclusive, ethically aware global citizens.

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