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**КЫРГЫЗ ЖАНА АМЕРИКА МАДАНИЯТТАРЫН АНГЛИС
ТИЛИ САБАГЫНДА ЧАГЫЛДЫРЫЛЫШЫ**

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**СРАВНЕНИЕ КЫРГЫЗСКОЙ И АМЕРИКАНСКОЙ КУЛЬТУР
НА УРОКАХ АНГЛИЙСКОГО ЯЗЫКА**

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**COMPARISON OF KYRGYZ AMERICAN CULTURES
THROUGH ENGLISH LESSONS**

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Макаланын темасынын максаты эки элдин ортосундагы маданий байланыштарды изилдөө. Макалада Кыргызстанда жашаган америкалыктар жана Америкада жашаган кыргыздардын ортосундагы маданияттагы окшоштуктары жана айрымачылыктары тууралуу баяндалат. Макалада Кыргызстанда жашап жаткан америкалыктар жана Америкада жашап жаткан кыргыздардын изилдөөдө келип чыккан маданий көз караштары изилденген. Изилдөөдөгү келип чыккан жыйынтыктар берилген. Бир элдин маданияттын изилдөөдөн мурда, өз элдин маданияттын жакшы билип аны кастарлап сыйлап сый мамиле кылмайынча, бөтөн элдин маданияттын изилдөө анча деле натыйжа бербестиги белгиленген.

Негизги сөздөр: маданий байланыш, окшоштук, сый мамиле, америкалыктар, кыргыздар, маданият, англис тили сабагы.

Актуальность темы статьи в том, что обмен мнениями о культуре народов происходит в процессе общения студентов, преподавателей и волонтерами носителями английского языка. В статье отражены результаты исследований, схожести и различия культур и традиций в семейной жизни совершенно разных народов, живущих в разных частях мира, но сохраняющих обычаи и традиции своих семей, кланов и племен. В данной статье предоставляется информация и обмен результатами исследования «культурного шока» американцев в Кыргызстане и кыргызского народа в США. В статье будут представлены выводы и результаты исследований. Прежде чем научиться понимать культуру другого, человек должен знать свою собственную культуру, уважать и ценить традиции своих предков. Только после этого, мы можем начать понимать культуру другого народа.

Ключевые слова: культурные связи, идентичность, уважение, американцы, кыргызы, культура, урок английского языка.

In this article will explain the results of research, which includes the comparison of culture and traditions in the family of two quite diverse peoples living in different parts of the world. The research shows that despite the distance between these peoples, they practice very similar customs and traditions in their families, clans, and tribes. The aim of choosing this

topic for symposium is to give information and share the results of the research on culture shock of Americans in Kyrgyzstan and Kyrgyz people in the USA. The actuality of the topic lies on the fact that I notice and see some culture changes with the alumnus, students, teachers, and American volunteers who work as my colleagues today. I want to present my findings and the results of the research in the form of an inquiry project in this symposium. "Before learning to understand the culture of the other, I must become aware of my own culture, of my cultural presuppositions, of the implicit premises that inform my interpretation, of my verities. Only after taking this step, which is in fact the most difficult one, can I begin to understand the cultural presuppositions of the other, the implicit premises which inform a formerly opaque text.

Key words: cultural ties, identity, respect, the Americans, the Kyrgyz people, culture, English lesson.

The cultures in Kyrgyzstan and in America have some aspects in common, but can differ in many ways. How the people from these cultures treat their families, how they dress, how they eat, how they treat guests, and how they speak to one another can vary greatly. It is important for each culture to understand one another, so they can work and learn together.

Both America and Kyrgyzstan have many different nationalities living in the same country, but the concept of nationality and community is very different. Americans only identify themselves as Americans, not as German or English or African. They do identify as race: white, black, Hispanic, for example. Kyrgyz people identify themselves by clan. When difficult times come or families need help, clans come together including elders. The elders make decisions for the whole clan. In Kyrgyz villages, neighbors come together to help a young married couple build a small house. For Americans, people seek help from family, but do not seek help from neighbors or their community. Americans pride themselves for being independent.

Clans carry out a very important role during the wedding. Engagement and wedding traditions of Kyrgyz people are among the most important lifetime events.

Since the family is the highest priority in Kyrgyz culture, a wedding automatically becomes significant not only for a groom and bride, but for the extended family as well. There are two types of weddings in Kyrgyzstan: traditional and modern. The former is simpler and involves less financial spending and guests, but is more concentrated on following rituals and customs. Very often this form of wedding is practiced in rural areas of the country; villages. The latter is more sophisticated with the involvement of more money. Traditional weddings include prearranged marriages and *alakachuu* (bride kidnapping). However, they are not popular today because many believe that they have lost their authenticity. Historically, the former custom was very popular when a future couple had yet to even be born. Specifically, two families in a very good friendship relationship used to agree on marrying their children to each other in order to tie their friendship even better. In this case they usually solemnly vowed to intermarry forever. They did so by performing very traditional customs such as touching the bow arm with teeth, exchanging saliva, and sucking blood from fingers, to name a few. If a future couple is not able to marry due to life circumstances, then they vowed to stay lifetime friends [1]. The latter, *kyzalakachuu* or bride kidnapping was very popular in the past. Two loving people agreed on marrying each other, and a groom always had the consent of a bride before bride kidnapping her. The tradition was also popular in cases where the bride's parents were against the marriage. After the bride is kidnapped, she cannot leave the house of the groom. In this case, the bride's parents had no other choice but to accept the marriage [2]. However, today the tradition is very much distorted and often a lot of women are forcefully kidnapped. Although the practice is illegal and leads to criminal liabilities, it is still practiced.

Modern weddings are more popular in Kyrgyzstan today. Even though they are called modern, they still include practicing traditional customs. For example, *nikekyiuu*, Muslim legalization of marriage, takes place sometime before the wedding. Frankly speaking, *moldo* (*mullah*) comes and reads a prayer and asks a couple whether they are certain about their decisions to marry each other. If they need to wait for each other more than three or six months, the groom's parents give the bride earrings to show everyone that they are already engaged. Such a tradition exists in America as well, but in this case a man gives a ring to his beloved partner himself (rather than the parents being involved), and after this act, they are considered to be engaged [3].

Before an actual wedding there is *kuzatuu*, a custom when bride's family and relatives say goodbye to her by holding a *toi* (feast). Most of the times, after the

toi, she is taken to the groom's house to start her new life there. The costs of the wedding festivities are paid for by the groom's parents. In American culture the wedding customs are similar, however the payment is usually given by the bride's parents, rather than the groom's.

The actual wedding consists of two parts: a fun part with friends and younger relatives during the day, then *atoi* in the evening. Young people enjoy driving around a city in a procession of decorated cars, visiting famous sites, and taking pictures and saying toasts. Afterwards, the couple and all of the guests arrive to the restaurant to celebrate. It includes eating, drinking, saying toasts and wishes, and dancing [4].

Kyrgyz people show anyone older than them great respect. They have special names to address people older than them and even have a different way to talk to them in the Kyrgyz language. Even in family names, Kyrgyz people must call their family members by their family title not by their birth name. It is important to show one's place in society and in family by using the correct titles. This shows respect to those who are in a higher position. For example, the daughter-in-law must call her mother-in-law, "Apa," which means mother. She should not call her mother-in-law by her birth name, like "Jazgul."

The concept of respecting others in their communities differs vastly. Americans must earn respect. Respect is shown to people in high government positions. Americans tend to respect people who show them respect, as well as to people they admire or look up to. This could include favorite teachers, actors, sports players, or family members. But anyone (in any position) who often makes mistakes will lose the respect of others very easily. For example, people do not respect an old man because he is old, they respect him for how he lives his life and treats others.

The Kyrgyz daughter-in-law also wears a white scarf her first year of marriage to show the community she is newly married. Clothes are an important way to show status and position within the Kyrgyz community. Older people still wear clothes that were common to wear in Soviet times. Kyrgyz people find it strange for people older than 50 years of age to wear modern clothes, even though the older local Russians and foreigners wear jeans.

Both Americans and Kyrgyz have strict time-management in the workplace. But for Kyrgyz people, social and family events do not have a strict starting time, especially in the villages. The Kyrgyz did not use watches when they were nomadic tribes. They lived by the rising and setting of the sun. During Soviet times, watches were too expensive to buy. Only in recent history have Kyrgyz people started to use watches. Outside of the capital city of Bishkek, it is very common for

weddings to be two hours late. In America, people do not wait for all the guests to arrive to a wedding – it must start on time. Appointments for doctors, beauty salons, dentists, and interviews are scheduled and are usually on time. In Kyrgyzstan, appointments are rarely made. People usually show up to the doctor or salon and have to wait in line, sometimes for hours.

Americans do wait in line for popular restaurants. Some restaurants have a special sitting area for guests to wait for a table. Restaurants in Kyrgyzstan usually have enough sitting area for guests, or customers just go to a similar restaurant nearby if too full. The restaurants are similar, because Kyrgyz prefer to eat traditional food that can be found in most restaurants. Americans love a variety of foods, some of which can be found in only one or two restaurants in their area. Americans and Kyrgyz have a different concept of what “healthy” is. Americans still debate on which diet is the best, but most Kyrgyz believe the fat from sheep (which is used in almost all their food) is healthy, even in medical treatment on their body. Most Americans prefer to not have so much fat in their food. They try to serve healthy yet tasty meals to their guests. They will serve a main dish with a vegetable side, a cold drink, and dessert afterwards. They only serve what is to be eaten on the table. Some serve coffee with dessert, but do not serve hot tea with the meal. Americans usually invite their guests for dinner at 6:00 or 7:00, but not later. Kyrgyz people tend to eat dinner after 7:00, sometimes as late as 10:00. Guests can come without an invitation. When guests arrive, then the preparation of the meal begins, sometimes with the slaughter of a sheep. If the guests arrive at 6:00, it might take four hours to prepare the meal if using the whole sheep. The table gets covered with all types of food, like salads, cookies, candies, bread, fried bread, drinks (including fermented horse milk), and the various parts of the sheep, including the head. Kyrgyz people pride themselves with being a hospitable culture by serving more food than can be eaten. The host will give guests extra food in a bag to take home. Americans, however, prefer to plan meals to be respectful of their guests’ time. Friends who come without an invitation will often be served drinks only.

Our history, culture, and the way of life of our ancestors must be spread through the mass media, television, and should become a priority of state policy in the sphere of ideology. We need a government concept and a program for the development of the spiritual

life of our society. After all, for this we have everything we need, and most importantly - our most ancient history, which, unfortunately, we ourselves, the Kyrgyz, do not really know and revere. We in Kyrgyzstan should publish modern books and textbooks about our ancient history and culture. We must know it, study it, and spread it as our heritage. Our youth and children should be proud that they were born and live in Kyrgyzstan and are citizens of their country, even despite temporary economic problems, which I am sure we will be able to solve in the future, as we are already making progress. After all, people with such an ancient history and spirit deserve a better future.

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