РОЗДІЛ ІІ

ТРАДИЦІЇ ТА ІННОВАЦІЇ В ОСВІТІ РІЗНИХ КАТЕГОРІЙ ДОРОСЛИХ

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INTERCULTURAL COMPETENCE: CONCEPTS, STRUCTURE, PRINCIPLES AND METHODS OF DEVELOPMENT

Abstract. *The article deals with the issues of intercultural competence: concepts, structure, principles and methods of development. It reveals the definition of the concept of intercultural communication and reviews international approaches to defining multicultural competence and its components in modern pedagogy. The intercultural communication competence is considered as the ability to communicate effectively and appropriately in various cultural contexts that has numerous components that include motivation, self- and other knowledge, and tolerance for uncertainty. It is noted that effective intercultural communication is essential to preventing and resolving conflict, building networks, and creating a satisfactory work environment for everyone involved. The aim of the article is to clarify the factors influencing the level of mastering these skills. Also there was distinguished the categories of culture needed to be taken into account while conducting intercultural communication and practicing these skills, namely: context, individualism, formality, communication style, and time orientation. The author tries to find the answer to the question how can workplace intercultural competence be improved, enabling individuals and organizations to overcome intercultural communication barriers and achieve their goals within this global virtual space. There was provided some communication tactics and tips to promote effective communication in a culturally diverse environment: to keep an open mind; to have at least some knowledge of people's cultural backgrounds; to practice active listening; to watch your nonverbal communication; to maintain a personal touch, etc. Intercultural communication requires an understanding that different cultures have different values, beliefs, behaviors, customs, attitudes, social mores, and thought patterns, thus, good intercultural*

communication skills require a willingness to accept differences these and adapt to them.

*   **Key words:** intercultural communication; intercultural communication competence; multicultural environment; categories of culture.*

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МІЖКУЛЬТУРНА КОМПЕТЕНТНІСТЬ: ПОНЯТТЯ, СТРУКТУРА, ПРИНЦИПИ ТА МЕТОДИ РОЗВИТКУ

*   **Анотація.** У статті розглядаються питання міжкультурної компетентності: поняття, структура, принципи та методи розвитку. Розкривається поняття міжкультурної комунікації та розглядаються міжнародні підходи до визначення полікультурної компетентності та її складових у сучасній педагогіці. Міжкультурна комунікативна компетентність розглядається як здатність ефективно спілкуватися в різних культурних контекстах, яка має численні компоненти, що включають мотивацію, знання про себе та інших, толерантність до незнайомого тощо. Зазначено, що ефективне міжкультурне спілкування має важливе значення для запобігання та вирішення конфліктів в організації, побудови мереж і створення задовільного робочого середовища для всіх його учасників Метою статті є з'ясування факторів, що впливають на рівень оволодіння навичками міжкультурної комунікації. Було також проаналізовано категорії культури, які слід ураховувати при здійсненні міжкультурної комунікації та формуванні цих навичок, а саме: контекст, індивідуалізм, формальність, стиль спілкування та орієнтація в часі. У статті вирішується питання, як можна покращити міжкультурну комунікативну компетентність на робочому місці, дозволяючи людям та організаціям долати міжкультурні комунікативні бар'єри та досягати своїх цілей у глобальному просторі. Запропоновано комунікативні тактики і поради щодо сприяння ефективній комунікації в культурно різноманітному середовищі: дотримуватись відкритих поглядів; мати певні знання про культуру інших людей; практикувати активне слухання; стежити за своїм невербальним спілкуванням; підтримувати особистий контакт. Міжкультурна комунікація вимагає розуміння того, що різні культури мають різні цінності, вірування, поведінку, соціальні звичаї та моделі мислення, отже, розвинуті навички міжкультурного спілкування передбачають готовність приймати ці відмінності та адаптуватися до них.*

*   **Ключові слова:** міжкультурна комунікація; міжкультурна комунікативна компетентність; багатокультурне середовище; категорії культури.*

        Problem statement and its rationale. Our world is more interconnected than ever before, and this fact has given rise to many changes in the ways that businesses and organizations operate. Although each

organization functions according to the culture of the society in which it functions, nevertheless workplaces are becoming more diverse, remote teams are scattered across the country or around the world, and businesses that once sold products to a single demographic might now sell to a global market, and all of these factors have made intercultural communication a vital part of organizations success nowadays. As effective intercultural communication is central to the prosperity of any organization, regardless of a field of industry, it is important first to understand the different cultural factors that influence the way people interact with one another and the steps that can be taken to overcome cultural barriers and improve communication within an organization, business etc.

Culture is the sum total of values, beliefs, behaviors, customs, and attitudes that differentiate one society from another (Smith, 2021). The elements of culture include values and attitudes, religion, communication, language, and society. All these elements interact with each other and cause an impact on the environment in which a business organization functions. As communication is an important part of any business, especially of international one, and any mistake in communication will prove costly for a firm, any person who has to work in a multi-cultural business environment should attain cultural fluency, which is the ability to perform like a person of the native culture.

That is why in today's rapidly changing professional world, it's critical to gain an understanding of how cultural elements influence communication between individuals and groups in the workplace. Developing strong intercultural communication skills is the first step in creating a successful work environment that brings out the best in all of an organization's team members.

Coming from the said, **the purpose of the article** is to reveal the definition of the concept of intercultural communication and to review international approaches to defining multicultural competence and its components in modern pedagogy. The other aim is to clarify the factors influencing the level of mastering these skills, as well as the ways and measures that are crucial for the improving intercultural competence. Also it should be distinguished the categories of culture needed to be considered while conducting intercultural communication and practicing these skills.

Analysis of the recent publications. Multicultural or intercultural communication as a scientific and pedagogical problem is considered by foreign researchers: J. Banks, M. Bennett, P. Gorsky, K. Grant, K. Levi-Strauss, Y. Liman, S. Reid, K. Sleeter, A. Schonhuth, and others. The works of N. Davis, M. Rakotomena, D. Stevens, E. Taylor, A. Thomas, A. Fantini and others are devoted to the issue of the formation of intercultural competence of the individual. Research by Ukrainian scientists V. Vykhrova, L. Golik, O. Hrytsenko, T. Klinchenko, L. Pukhovska, O. Sukhomlynska and others devoted to the study of foreign experience, the prospects of introducing the principles of multiculturalism in the education system of Ukraine. The issue of formation of intercultural competence of an individual in the European educational space is given attention in the works of Ukrainian scientists L. Vorotniak, L. Honcharenko, V. Kuzmenko, M. Simonenko, I. Sokolova, etc.

Presentation of the basic material. To be successful in any industry, organizations need to understand the communication patterns of employees, customers, investors, and other audiences. Awareness and willingness to adjust allow for the exchange of information regardless of cultural values, norms, and behaviors that may vary between audiences. Given the different backgrounds that each audience comes from, it is critical to understand how culture influences communication, and how this can impact organizational processes.

As the study of the Society for Human Resource Management has shown the culture has a significant impact on productivity (Stobierski, 2019). As such, it is important to be cognizant of the fact that employees from different backgrounds are motivated by different incentives and react differently to various management and communication styles. According to P. Goodman and Z. Yan, American researchers for cross-cultural communication, «Effective cross-cultural communication is essential to preventing and resolving conflict, building networks, and creating a satisfactory work environment for everyone involved» (Goodman, & Yan, 2021).

It must be said that there are various terms describing the investigated phenomenon existed in scientific literature, namely: *cross-cultural, multicultural, polycultural, intercultural* communication competence. According our observation, the term «intercultural communication» is the most preferable and frequently used term.

In foreign research literature, there are several definitions of intercultural communication competence (ICC) and its components. For example, E. Taylor considers such competence as a transformative learning process in which the «foreigner» develops the ability to adapt, changing his or her point of view in order to effectively understand and meet the demands of the host country's culture (Taylor, 1994, p. 158). M Schonhuth offers the definition of intercultural competence as the ability «within the intercultural context to establish contact in an appropriate way and create conditions that are acceptable for the free expression and effective exchange of opinions of all participants» (Schonhuth, 2005).

A. Thomas defines intercultural competence as the ability «to help shape the process of intercultural interaction in such a way as to avoid or contextualize misunderstandings, and at the same time create opportunities for solving common problems in such a way that it is acceptable and productive for all participants» (Thomas, 2003, p. 141). The researcher believes that «intercultural competence is manifested in the ability to recognize, respect, appreciate and productively use – in one's own and other cultural conditions and determinants – perception, judgment, feelings and actions in order to create mutual adaptation, tolerance for incompatibility and the development of synergistic forms of cooperation, life together and effective models of orientation in relation to the interpretation and formation of the world» (Thomas, 2003, p. 143).

T. Stobierski, who uses the term «cross-cultural communication» refers to it as «the process of recognizing both differences and similarities among

cultural groups in order to effectively engage within a given context. In other words, cross-cultural communication refers to the ways in which people from different cultural backgrounds adjust to improve communication with one another» (Stobierski, 2019). Researchers K. Sleeter and K. Grant believe that intercultural communication covers five main areas: nationality, language, culture, class, gender and special needs (Sleeter, & Grant, 2003).

Meanwhile, intercultural communication competence is considered as the knowledge, attitudes and skills we need to communicate effectively in intercultural situations. It is vital to effective engagement, productivity, and performance in the hybrid workplace (Developing, 2022) Intercultural communicative competence, or ICC, refers to the ability to understand cultures, including your own, and use this understanding to communicate with people from other cultures successfully (Intercultural,1993).

The American study on intercultural communication competence (Communication, 2013) defines ICC as the ability to communicate effectively and appropriately in various cultural contexts that has *numerous components*. Some key components of ICC include motivation, self- and other knowledge, and tolerance for uncertainty.

Initially, a person's *motivation* for communicating with people from other cultures must be considered. Motivation refers to the root of a person's desire to foster intercultural relationships and can be intrinsic or extrinsic. If a person isn't motivated to communicate with people from different cultures, then other components of ICC don't really matter. But motivation alone cannot create ICC. *Knowledge* supplements motivation and is an important part of building ICC. Knowledge includes self- and other-awareness, mindfulness, and cognitive flexibility. Building knowledge of our own cultures, identities, and communication patterns takes more than passive experience. We learn who we are through our interactions with others. Listening to people who are different from us is a key component of developing self-knowledge. The most effective way to develop other-knowledge is by direct and thoughtful encounters with other cultures. Mindfulness and cognitive complexity will help as we continue to build our ICC. Mindfulness is a state of self- and other-monitoring that informs later reflection on communication interactions. Cognitive flexibility refers to the ability to continually supplement and revise existing knowledge to create new categories rather than forcing new knowledge into old categories. Motivation and knowledge can inform us as we gain new experiences, but how we feel in the moment of intercultural encounters is also important. *Tolerance for uncertainty* refers to an individual's attitude about and level of comfort in uncertain situations. Individuals who are intrinsically motivated toward intercultural communication may have a higher tolerance for uncertainty, in that their curiosity leads them to engage with others who are different because they find the self- and other-knowledge gained rewarding (Communication, 2013).

As Canadian researcher Jordan Smith states: «All communication is intercultural» (Smith, 2021), and continues that we always approach intercultural communication as an opportunity to overcome cultural differences

and achieve the cross-cultural understanding you need to be a better person and do your job effectively in a multicultural environment. Intercultural communication requires openness to difference, patience in overcoming cultural and language barriers, and the desire to learn about other cultures and points of view.

The author says that culture involves beliefs, attitudes, values, and traditions that are shared by a group of people. Thus, we must consider more than the clothes we wear, the movies we watch, or the video games we play as the only representation of a culture. Culture also involves the psychological aspects of our expectations of the communication context. From the choice of words (message), to how we communicate (in person, or by e-mail), to how we acknowledge understanding with a nod or a glance (nonverbal feedback), to the internal and external interference, all aspects of communication are influenced by culture.

J. Smith (Smith, 2021) has examined *five categories of culture* that are essential to be taken into account for successful communicating across cultures and forming intercultural competence. They are following.

1) *Context.* Cultures can be divided into two distinct context categories: low and high context cultures. Low context cultures are said to logical, analytical and action oriented. A direct and straightforward communication style tends to be the communication pattern (North America and many European countries). High context cultures such as Asian, African, Latin American ones are more intuitive in their communication style; non-verbal, indirect communication (voice tone, eye contact, gestures) plays a more important part in communication.

2) *Individualism* refers to a culture's attitude towards independence and control. People in low context cultures tend to be very individualistic and value independence, freedom, initiative, personal responsibility and resist many forms of control. People in high context cultures tend to be group oriented; acceptance of group values, duties, and responsibilities is encouraged. High context cultures resist independence, freedom, and competition.

3) *Formality* is the degree to which a culture places emphasis on tradition, ceremony, and social rules. In low context cultures, tradition is not an important value. This lack of value is exhibited in a more casual business attire, use of informal language to address superiors and the elderly, and lack of rituals. In low context cultures, social mobility is more possible and likely to occur. On the other hand, high context cultures value tradition that is exhibited in wearing of formal business attire, the use of formal greetings with superiors and the elderly, and observance of rituals; social mobility is often difficult and unlikely to occur.

4) *Communication Style* refers to the value place on verbal or non-verbal communication. Low context cultures place a high degree of importance on verbal communication, take words literally and value straightforward communication, words are supposed to mean what they say. High context cultures place more importance on the surrounding context than on the actual

words. Words are only part of the message, and lesser than all the other information connected to the message.

5) *Time Orientation* refers to the degree to which a culture considers time limited. In low context cultures, time is limited and considered a commodity; time is connected to productivity, efficiency, and money. In high context cultures time is unlimited and a resource to be enjoyed: decisions take time, meetings do not always start on time, and it is not considered rude to keep someone waiting.

It is crucial for anyone working with people from other cultures to avoid misunderstandings and even offence. Good intercultural communication fundamentally requires intercultural awareness, an understanding that different cultures have different standards and norms. Those encountering issues of intercultural communication have to acquire knowledge for intercultural communication worked out by researches.

Key areas of knowledge for those wanting to improve their intercultural communication were developed by the scientists, they are:

- Some knowledge of the cultures, organizations and institutions, history and general way of living of different communities and nations.

- Recognition that these aspects affect behavioural norms. For example, there is considerable «history» between the Greeks and Turks, and therefore it may be considered potentially a problem to serve Turkish food to a Greek person.

- An understanding of how culture can affect communication and language. For example, people from Nordic countries are often said to speak more directly than native English speakers who tend to use more «polite» language. Scandinavians in the UK have reported causing offence to the English by failing to say «please» and «thank you» enough.

- Some understanding of the conventions that may govern behavior in certain specific intercultural environments, such as views on the role of women, or the license (or otherwise) permitted to children.

- Crucially, awareness of your own and other people's beliefs and values, and a willingness to recognize when these may clash.

- Sensitivity towards cultural stereotypes that may affect and interfere with intercultural communication (Multi-cultural, 2018).

There are many resources that provide *communication tactics* in a culturally diverse organization. Thus, an article in AG Professional, «Multicultural Communication Tips for Today's World», gives tips to promote effective communication to keep in mind when interacting and communicating with others in the organization: to keep an open mind; to have at least some knowledge of people's cultural backgrounds; to practice active listening; to watch your nonverbal communication; to maintain a personal touch (Strategies, 2015).

In order to develop the knowledge and understanding intercultural competence and start to apply it to communications some useful starting points may be considered:

- demonstrate your willingness to meet others at least halfway by learning a few phrases in their language;

- talk to people who know the culture about common traps and problems;

- adapt your behavior, and don't always expect others to adapt to you;

- check your understanding and that of others;

- don't be afraid to apologize;

- use both local television, social nets to learn about behavioral issues and norms;

- reflect on your experience. (Multi-cultural, 2018).

The success of the formation of ICC among students of higher education is ensured by a set of such pedagogical conditions as: the creation of a multicultural environment, the use of active and interactive learning methods and technologies in the educational process (projects, business games, brainstorming, trainings, modeling situations of intercultural interaction with their subsequent analysis, etc.). In order to activate the theoretical and practical training of students for professional activities, it is necessary to apply creative teaching methods, as well as to involve students in scientific activities, which will allow them to independently determine the problems that arise in the conditions of a multicultural society, look for ways to solve them, carry out self-identification, which encourages the self-development of the intercultural communication.

The ways to develop this competence also include learners producing a written or online guide to their own country and culture for visitors, reading and discussing guides written by visitors, researching aspects of a target culture in various media including cinema, literature and television, giving presentations on aspects of the target culture, and exploiting the teacher's own expertise of their own culture (Wiseman, 1993).

Conclusions and prospects for further research. With the increased globalization in everything we do, it is essential to establish and maintain effective cross-cultural communication. Workplace diversity can clearly create more opportunities than challenges. That said, it should be placed a strong emphasis on developing consciously awareness of cultural differences and how to embrace to surface those opportunities.

Effective intercultural communication is a vital skill for anyone working across countries or continents, including those working for multinational companies either in their home country or abroad, so, developing intercultural communication skills is that required to communicate, or share information, with people from other cultures and social groups. Intercultural communication also requires an understanding that different cultures have different customs, standards, social mores, and even thought patterns. Finally, good intercultural communication skills require a willingness to accept differences these and adapt to them.

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