

**KEY ASPECTS OF INTERCULTURAL COMMUNICATION  
AND APPROACHES TO ITS STUDY**

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**Abstract.** The article is devoted to the problems of intercultural communication. Key aspects of intercultural communication are considered. Special attention is paid to main methodological approaches to studying intercultural communication. Examples of applying these approaches to foreign languages teaching are given.

**Keywords:** intercultural communication, methodological approaches, foreign languages teaching.

In the modern world communication in an intercultural environment and the ability to overcome language barriers are extremely important. Effective intercultural communication helps to establish not only personal but also business contacts, promotes the development of political, economic and cultural relationships between participants in the communication process.

It should be remembered that understanding intercultural communication goes beyond just speaking the same language; it includes studying and learning about differences in values, beliefs and communication styles [5].

Many scientific works have been devoted to the problems of intercultural communication, however, language barriers that lead to conflicts and misunderstandings still exist, which determines the relevance of this topic.

In this article, we will attempt to consider the key aspects of intercultural communication and approaches to the study of intercultural communication.

Referring to the definitions proposed by various authors, quite interesting seems the opinion of I.N. Khokhlova, who views intercultural communication as “adequate mutual understanding between two participants in a communicative act belonging to different national cultures” [4].

T.B. Frick offers the following definition: “intercultural communication is a set of various forms of relationships and communication between individuals and groups belonging to different cultures” [3, p.52].

Based on the above definitions we can conclude that intercultural communication implies nothing more than communication between representatives of different cultures and nationalities, the main goal of which is to achieve mutual understanding between the participants of the communication process.

One of the key foundations for successful interaction in these contexts is cultural awareness and sensitivity. Being culturally aware means recognizing that people from different backgrounds have unique beliefs, values, customs, and ways of communicating. This means understanding these differences without judgment or prejudice. By being sensitive to cultural nuances, we can help improve relationships and avoid misunderstandings.

To develop cultural awareness and sensitivity it is important to get to know different cultures. This may include learning about their history, traditions, social norms, and language. In addition active communication with native speakers and people from different countries can improve our understanding of their cultures. Talking to native speakers allows us to gain first-hand insight into their values and beliefs [5].

In order to organize the process of teaching intercultural communication, first of all it is necessary to study the basic approaches to this phenomenon.

The analysis of the works of many authors including Korneeva L. I., Korneeva Yu. V., Krivorot V. V. has shown that scientists have identified three main methodological approaches to studying intercultural communication: functional, explanatory, and critical [2]. Let's consider them in more detail.

Based on the methods of sociology and psychology the *functional approach* allows us to study communication styles in different cultures and describe the culture of any people using various methods. As a result of this approach the theory of communication adaptation was formed according to which "in situations of intercultural communication people often change their models of communicative behavior adapting to the models of their communication partners" [2, p. 89].

It should be noted that each of the presented approaches is implemented in a number of methods. The main method of the functional approach is the modeling of various problematic intercultural situations.

The *explanatory (or interpretive) approach* is based on the methods of anthropology and linguistics, role-playing and included observation. The goal of this approach is to understand and describe but not predict human behavior.

As noted by Korneeva L. I. and Korneeva Yu. V., the main focus of this approach is usually on understanding the communication models within a separate cultural group. Research by scientists based on the explanatory approach led to the conclusion that the communication rules of a particular community of people are based on the cultural values and ideas of this particular group [2, p. 90].

The main focus in studies of intercultural communication conducted on the basis of a *critical approach* is on the study of the conditions of communication: situations, envi-

ronment, etc. The goal of studying intercultural communication within the framework of this approach is to explain human behavior.

The main method of the critical approach is text analysis. Therefore, when teaching students in the classroom much attention is paid to the analysis of various television programs, video materials, publications which according to many researchers make a significant contribution to the formation of intercultural competence [2, p. 90].

Let's take a closer look at the methods of teaching intercultural communication using the approaches discussed above in training specialists in the field of intercultural communications at Polesky State University.

In the process of learning about another culture in regional studies classes, students receive information about national identity, the way of life of nations and peoples of the countries of the studied language, historical facts, natural and geographical features, state structure, economy, etc. However, familiarization with regional studies realities often causes many difficulties. Let's consider some of them using specific examples.

One of the first topics that causes significant difficulties is the topic "Geographical position of Great Britain". When studying this topic, there are a huge number of proper names that have their own specifics, both in terms of pronunciation and in terms of translation into Russian.

Thus, "the English Channel" is translated into Russian by a specific geographical name "Ла-Манш". Other examples:

The Strait of Dover – Па-де-Кале или Дуврский пролив;

The Channel Islands – Нормандские острова;

The Cumbrian Mountains – Камберлендские горы;

The Channel Tunnel – Евротоннель или тоннель под Ла-Маншем [1, p. 338].

As can be seen from the examples given, insufficient work with dictionaries, as well as with geographical maps to obtain background knowledge, can lead to an abundance of errors. Most often, students simply try to translate names without resorting to searching for equivalents that exist in the target language. No less difficult to study is the material on the topic of "Culture and Traditions", which is also replete with cultural realities, the understanding of which sometimes requires not just translation, but interpretation. Let's look at some examples.

Union Jack - a name that is sometimes used to refer to the national flag of the United Kingdom, officially called the Union Flag.

Eisteddfod - a festival of Welsh culture, which is held annually in different parts of Wales and includes prose, poetry and singing competitions.

The Ceremony of the Keys - a ritual of daily locking of the Tower of London at night.

Boxing Day - a public holiday. A day of giving small Christmas gifts / money to employees, postmen, milkmen, etc. A time to visit friends and relatives. Celebrated on December 26.

Shrove Tuesday (Tuesday on Maslenitsa week - the last day of Maslenitsa).

The day before Ash Wednesday (Wednesday in the first week of Lent) in February, which was once considered the last day of merriment before Lent in the Christian year. Many people still traditionally eat pancakes on Shrove Tuesday (the name comes from the rare verb "shrive," meaning "to confess," as in confessing one's sins to a priest before Lent) [1, p. 338-339].

So, to avoid misunderstanding while studying these topics students and lecturers can use a critical approach which involves reading texts, watching films and video materials, surfing the web-sites in order to find additional information.

The explanatory (or interpretive) approach and its method of role-playing can be successfully used at the classes on “Business English”.

Language barriers can often create problems in intercultural communication. However, by applying the approaches to studying intercultural communication and the methods used within them, we can overcome these obstacles and ensure clear understanding, thus, creating stronger connections based on effective communication regardless of our language differences.

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