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Adaptation Mechanism of Intercultural Communications

Abstract

This article examines the mechanisms of adaptation in intercultural communication and the factors that influence successful interaction between representatives of different cultures. In the modern globalized world, communication among people from diverse linguistic, social, and cultural backgrounds has become increasingly common. Therefore, understanding the processes that shape intercultural interaction is essential for effective communication and cooperation. The study highlights the role of culture as a complex and multifaceted phenomenon that reflects human achievements, values, traditions, and patterns of behavior. It also emphasizes that language functions not only as a tool of communication but also as a carrier of cultural meanings and social norms. The research analyzes how historical, social, cultural, psychological, and political factors affect intercultural contacts and mutual understanding. Particular attention is given to the role of bilingualism, translation, and cultural interpretation in overcoming communication barriers. The article also discusses the importance of cultural awareness, education, and tolerance in fostering successful intercultural dialogue. This study shows that intercultural communication is a dynamic and constantly evolving process. Successful interaction between different cultures requires the development of social skills such as mutual respect and empathy. At the same time, the study of different cultures broadens the individual's worldview and increases his ability to social adapt. Consequently, the formation of intercultural competence acts as one of the main requirements of modern society.

Keywords: *intercultural communication, culture, communication process, cultural interaction, bilingualism, cultural adaptation, language and culture, intercultural competence, cultural tolerance, globalization*

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Mədəniyyətlərarası ünsiyyətin adaptasiya mexanizmi

Xülasə

Bu məqalədə mədəniyyətlərarası ünsiyyətin adaptasiya mexanizmləri və müxtəlif mədəniyyət nümayəndələri arasında qarşılıqlı əlaqəyə təsir edən amillər araşdırılır. Müasir qloballaşan dünyada

fərqli dil, sosial və mədəni mühitlərə malik insanlar arasında ünsiyyət daha da aktuallaşmışdır. Buna görə də mədəniyyətlərarası qarşılıqlı əlaqənin xüsusiyyətlərini anlamaq effektiv ünsiyyət və əməkdaşlıq üçün mühüm əhəmiyyət kəsb edir. Tədqiqatda mədəniyyət insan fəaliyyətinin müxtəlif sahələrini əhatə edən çoxşaxəli bir fenomen kimi təqdim olunur. Eyni zamanda dilin yalnız ünsiyyət vasitəsi deyil, həm də mədəni dəyərlərin və sosial normaların daşıyıcısı olduğu vurğulanır. Məqalədə mədəniyyətlərarası ünsiyyətə təsir edən tarixi, sosial, mədəni, psixoloji və siyasi amillər təhlil edilir. Bundan əlavə, ikidillilik, tərcümə prosesi və mədəni interpretasiya kimi məsələlərin ünsiyyət baryerlərinin aradan qaldırılmasında rolu nəzərdən keçirilir. Tədqiqatın nəticələri göstərir ki, uğurlu mədəniyyətlərarası ünsiyyət üçün yalnız dil bilikləri deyil, həm də mədəni kontekstlərin anlaşılması və tolerant münasibətin formalaşdırılması vacibdir. Bu tədqiqat mədəniyyətlərarası ünsiyyətin dinamik və davamlı inkişaf edən bir proses olduğunu göstərir. Müxtəlif mədəniyyətlər arasında uğurlu qarşılıqlı əlaqə qarşılıqlı hörmət və empatiya kimi sosial bacarıqların inkişafını tələb edir. Eyni zamanda, fərqli mədəniyyətlərin öyrənilməsi fərdin dünyagörüşünü genişləndirərək onun sosial adaptasiya qabiliyyətini artırır. Nəticə etibarilə, mədəniyyətlərarası kompetensiyanın formalaşdırılması müasir cəmiyyətin əsas tələblərindən biri kimi çıxış edir.

Açar sözlər: *mədəniyyətlərarası ünsiyyət, mədəniyyət, ünsiyyət prosesi, mədəni qarşılıqlı əlaqə, ikidillilik, mədəni adaptasiya, dil və mədəniyyət, mədəniyyətlərarası kompetensiya, tolerantlıq, qloballaşma*

Intoduction

Being informationally open systems, the cultures of various ethnic groups invariably interact with each other wherever there is direct or indirect contact between representatives of the societies that bear these cultures. Of course, human history knows examples of cultures that developed for a long time in almost complete isolation, without any external contacts.

Although some of them were able to give rise to fairly developed and distinctive civilizations, most of them were characterized by significant backwardness, prolonged stagnation, and, in all cases, along with development, the loss of a significant portion of the original cultural heritage (polar Eskimos, African tribes, nomads).

Interaction, therefore, is one of the most important conditions for the successful development of any culture and for its full maintenance. The more localized the perception of foreign influences, and the higher the general level of development of the receptor culture, the more often, as a rule, the action of selective mechanisms is more or less directed, consciously controlled by the public.

The very concept of "intercultural communication" is derived from the concepts of "culture" and "communication." By separating these two terms, we can arrive at the following generalizations: the term "culture" is one of the most polysemantic, and this is explained by the fact that culture itself is an extremely complex and multifaceted phenomenon, expressing all aspects of human existence. This is why it is studied by many sciences, each of which singles out one of its aspects as the subject of its study, while forming its own understanding of culture. To date, scholars have identified more than 500 such definitions. We will focus on those that are of interest from the perspective of our article topic.

In the same interpretation, culture appears as the sum of all human achievements, as a world of artifacts, a "second nature" created by man himself, forming a specifically human world in contrast to the world of wild nature.

This is an extremely broad understanding of culture, which can be used to characterize: specific historical eras (ancient, medieval culture); specific societies, peoples, and nations (Russian, Chinese culture); specific spheres of human activity (everyday culture, work culture, monuments, artistic culture).

Let's look at some research on the term "culture".

In English, the word "culture" is most often defined as:

- the way of life, common customs, and beliefs of certain groups of people at a particular time.

- customs, civilizations, and achievements of a particular era or people.

- a particular society or civilization.

As S.G. Ter-Minasova notes, in almost all English definitions of the word culture, the word *cultus* (customs, traditions) is repeated, the word beliefs is used repeatedly, as well as the phrase that way of life (way of life) (Ter-Minasova, 2000, p. 119).

In German, the word "culture" (*kultur*) has the following primary meanings:

- the sum total of all spiritual, artistic, and creative achievements of a society as an expression of a high level of human development;

- a set of characteristic spiritual, artistic, and creative achievements created in a particular society and in a particular era

(Eastern culture, Renaissance culture);

- sophistication and refinement of human behavior and speech (culture of human behavior).

In Azerbaijani, the primary word for "culture" is *mədəniyyət* (pronounced meh-deh-nee-YET), which covers civilization, refinement, arts, and intellectual development, similar to its English meanings; other related terms are *təhsil* (education) and *zövq* (taste) for specific cultural aspects, with "*Azərbaycan mədəniyyəti*" meaning Azerbaijani culture.

The second component of the term is the concept of "communication" (from the Latin "communication" - to make common, to communicate, to interact) - a concept that denotes generalization, the transfer of information from person to person, the exchange of information in society, and also means of communication. In human society, communication occurs between individuals, groups, organizations, states, and cultures through sign systems.

In examining our research topic within the structure of communication, we should highlight the concept of communication, which is primary in the interaction process (Bakhtin, 1981, p.118).

Being an integral part of world culture, each culture interacts as a partner and participant in the creation of universal spiritual values, developing, in the figurative expression of M.M. Bakhtin, on the basis of cultural atoms (Bakhtin, 1981, p.165).

Culture is an effective factor in the formation of a new international type of spiritual production, born in the community of cultures. Universal human values are abstract concepts; they are concretely embodied in each national culture. N. Berdyaev said:

"The quality of a nationality depends on the humanity revealed within it" (Berdyaev, 1936, p. 168).

Intercultural communication involves interaction between representatives of different cultures, during which at least one of the participants may speak a non-native language. In the modern world, where English has firmly established itself as the language of international communication, both participants in a communication often speak a non-native language, bringing their own cultural nuances to it.

The main problem here is one of understanding. To address it, it's important to remember that language is only a tool for conveying forms of verbal behavior; it merely creates an environment for intercultural communication.

Understanding in intercultural communication is a complex process of interpretation that depends on a range of linguistic and non-linguistic factors. The effectiveness of intercultural communication depends not only on language proficiency but also on a deep understanding of cultural context (Kramsch, 1998).

To achieve understanding in intercultural communication, participants must not only master the grammar and vocabulary of a particular language, but also understand the cultural component of word meaning and the realities of the foreign culture. Misunderstandings that arise in intercultural interactions can be reduced through the development of empathy and adaptation skills (Ting-Toomey, 1999).

Thus, mastering a foreign language code that enables successful intercultural interaction requires studying the cultural characteristics that determine the specifics of a partner's social and business behavior, which are determined by the influence of historical traditions and customs, lifestyle, etc. Therefore, foreign languages, as a means of communication between representatives of different peoples and cultures, must be studied in an inseparable unity with the world and culture of the peoples who speak these languages (previously, in our country, a foreign language was studied in isolation from its sociocultural context as an end in itself and carried virtually no functional load). Proper management of cultural differences enhances the quality of intergroup communication and helps prevent conflicts (Gudykunst, 2004).

A comprehensive approach, combining linguistic training and knowledge of the sociocultural context of the target language, ensures adequate translation from a foreign language into the native language. The development of intercultural communicative competence is considered one of the key objectives of modern education (Byram, 1997).

Translation of texts is a specific process of intercultural interaction, a process of explaining one cultural code to another. Often, in translation, subtleties and nuances of meaning, the peculiarities and nuances of a foreign language are lost; the text is simplified and sometimes distorted, becoming ambiguous.

It's no coincidence that the phrase "untranslatable wordplay" has become ingrained in the language. A creative translator, with a deep understanding of both cultures, personal experience, and a perfect command of both languages (a bilingual), is able to enrich the language with their translations, organically selecting semantic equivalents.

Thus, any translation is an interpretation, a deciphering of the meaning behind the obvious meaning, a conscious or unconscious attempt to bridge the distance between the cultures of the communicants.

The greater the cultural differences between communication partners, the greater the differences in the interpretation of words, behavior, and symbols. In modern science, there is a noticeable tendency to abandon the search for a single, correct meaning of a text.

Text is increasingly viewed as defining a range of possibilities for its own interpretation, possessing a plurality of meanings. With this approach, the idea of a "correct" interpretation of a text becomes meaningless. Since language and culture are closely interconnected, the process of language learning also involves the acquisition of cultural knowledge (Kramsch, 1998).

A child socialized in a bicultural (multicultural) environment has an attitude toward the

presence of an alternative symbolic system in the cultural space, which is not perceived as alien or threatening to the destruction of one's own cultural system, but rather as facilitating the acquisition of another culture. Thus, a focus on cultural tolerance is formed. "With the increase in the material well-being of society and its cultural level, such states of cultural and linguistic bi- and multilingualism tend to grow quantitatively and become qualitatively stable" (Arutyunov S.A. *Peoples and Cultures: Development and Interaction* (Arutyunov, p. 39).

Cultures that have been under foreign cultural influence for a long time, as well as marginal cultures, exhibit the phenomenon of bilingualism and combine alternative signaling systems. Languages can undergo synthetic mixing (if they belong to a related branch) or coexist segregationally (one language is used in everyday life, and another in social society). Cultural norms and politeness principles play a crucial role in shaping participants' behavior in communication (Spencer-Oatey, 2008).

The process of mastering a foreign language is based on the same skills acquired in mastering one's native language. It's not surprising that someone who has mastered one foreign language can more easily master a second or third, thus becoming a polyglot. However, the described interference process cannot be assessed unambiguously. While at the linguistic level, interference often facilitates intercultural communication, at the psychological level, it often hinders adequate understanding.

Of course, in intercultural communication there are areas of meaning common to all humanity and meanings that are the same for speakers of different languages. Thus, in business communication, understanding is facilitated by the fact that the subject matter is familiar to all participants and the same for all of them. However, barriers of content and meaning that arise in intercultural communication are the rule rather than the exception, since each participant in the communication brings to it their own system of meanings, inherent to them as individuals and as representatives of the respective culture. It is the latter that come to the fore in intercultural communication.

Interethnic communication processes are determined by the following groups of interdependent factors: historical, social, cultural, psychological, situational, and political.

Of the historical factors, three classes of phenomena are undoubtedly of great importance: the course of historical events that resulted in the formation of relations between peoples; historical events that acquire symbolic significance in interethnic contacts; and the characteristics of the historical and social development of the people involved in the contact.

Among the social factors influencing interethnic relations, the most significant are the relationship between social and economic stratification, the influence of socio-structural changes, and the ethnic factor in social mobility.

The ideal situation in interethnic relations is one in which the ethnic groups in contact have the same status. However, this type of relationship is very rare; discriminatory relations are more common (Arutyunov, 1990, p. 40).

Cultural factors determining interethnic relations are divided into two groups: education and awareness; and traditional norms of ethnic culture. The fact that education and enlightenment can break down interethnic boundaries and remove interethnic prejudices has been established by numerous studies. Since negative heterostereotypes and ethnic prejudices are most often generated by the cultural isolation of ethnic groups, ethnic communities with a high level of education are more inclined to engage in ethnocultural contacts, especially in business.

The essence of the situational factor can be defined by the fact that a confluence of circumstances in the economic, political and social spheres influences the perception of the surrounding environment, strengthening or weakening interethnic solidarity and ethnocultural contacts (Bakhtin, 1981, p. 70).

Finally, political factors of interethnic relations include the principles and forms of government, the nature of the political system, and the type of state national policy.

Taking all these factors into account, it is clear that the results of interethnic interaction will most often differ for the different ethnic groups involved. Contact may be limited to a simple quantitative change in an ethnic group's culture, but it can also lead to profound structural shifts. In this regard, four types of contacts can be distinguished:

1) Addition - an ethnic group, encountering another culture, assimilates some of its achievements (for example, the influence of Indian America gave Europe a whole range of cultivated plants and skills);

2) Complexity – a qualitative change in the culture of an ethnic group under the influence of a more mature culture (such as the influence of Chinese culture on Japanese culture);

3) Diminution – the loss of one's own skills as a result of encounter with a more developed culture (the loss of the Ainu's ceramic-making skills due to the import of finished products);

4) Impoverishment (erosion) - destruction of culture (gradual disappearance of the Ainu culture under the influence of the Japanese from the end of the 19th century). The higher the cultural level of an ethnic group, the more beneficial it is to acquaint itself with another culture. Here, a selective mechanism usually operates, selecting only what is useful and determining the depth of penetration of one culture into another.

Intercultural communication is characterized by the fact that when representatives of different cultures meet, each of them acts in accordance with their own cultural norms.

The classic definition is given in the book "Language and Culture" by I.I. Vereshchagin and V.G. Kostomarov, where intercultural communication is defined as adequate mutual understanding between two participants in a communicative act who belong to different national cultures (Hofstede, 2001, p. 240).

The behavior of people belonging to another culture is not at all unpredictable; it can be studied and predicted, but it requires special educational programs aimed at preparing for intercultural communication (Samovar, 2010, p. 186).

Studying other ethnic cultures, their characteristics, patterns, their functioning and development, enriches a person, transforms their attitude toward the world and other people, and can radically change their approach to life situations.

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