INTERCULTURAL COMMUNICATION AND INTERCULTURAL COMMUNICATIVE COMPETENCE OF UNDERGRADUATES LEARNING BUSINESS ENGLISH

Abstract. The article deals with the problem of defining intercultural communication for the successful performance of commercial activities and intercultural communicative competence of economic specialties students learning Business English at Ukrainian universities. The authors state enhancing the quality of higher education encompasses not only the quantity of knowledge in the field of study, but additionally the ability of future graduates to utilize it creatively to the execution of assignments related to their professional competence, the ability to communicate in a foreign language with experts from other countries, and the ability to perform professional activities in foreign-language surroundings. The objective of our research is to examine the features that define intercultural communication in business and to investigate the process of obtaining intercultural communicative competence and its constituent skills in undergraduates while learning Business English. The subject matter of our study is to arrange both the theoretical and methodological components of a course of study on business communication in international business activities. It is suggested that intercultural communication strategies are essential for establishing commercial and mutually beneficial connections with representatives from other nations. The article defines intercultural communicative competence as a complex process of communication between representatives of different cultures, which is based on the ability to navigate in different types of cultures, to implement knowledge within the limits of cultural dialogue, and to
cooperate with representatives of other nationalities, to build a communicative strategy according to communication intentions. The research focuses on incorporating intercultural communication into professional activities and developing intercultural communicative competence in students of economic fields. It is concluded that Business English courses should focus on developing intercultural communicative competence for students to conduct business in English, as it is a vital requirement for performing business in the contemporary global marketplace.

**Keywords:** intercultural communication, intercultural communicative competence, Business English, international business activities, cross-cultural communicative competence.

**Nagachewska Olena Oleksandrivna** kandidat fілологічних наук, доцент кафедри іноземних мов, Національний університет «Львівська політехніка», вул. Степана Бандери, 55, м. Львів, 79013 тел.: (096) 455-75-19, https://orcid.org/0000-0002-5200-8085

**Кушка Беата Густавівна** кандидат філологічних наук, доцент кафедри іноземних мов, Національний університет «Львівська політехніка», вул. Степана Бандери, 55, м. Львів, 79013, тел.: (096) 458-12-12, https://orcid.org/0000-0002-4080-4607

**МІЖКУЛЬТУРНА КОМУНІКАЦІЯ ТА МІЖКУЛЬТУРНА КОМУНІКАТИВНА КОМПЕТЕНЦІЯ МАГІСТРАНТІВ, ЩО ВИВЧАЮТЬ ДІЛОВУ АНГЛІЙСЬКУ МОВУ**

**Анотація.** У статті розглядається проблема визначення міжкультурної комунікації для успішного здійснення комерційної діяльності та формування міжкультурної комунікативної компетенції студентів економічних спеціальностей, які вивчають ділову англійську мову в університетах України. Автори стверджують, що підвищення якості вищої освіти охоплює не лише кількість знань у галузі освіти, але й здатність майбутніх випускників творчо використовувати їх для виконання завдань, пов’язаних із їх професійною компетентністю, умінням спілкуватися іноземною мовою з фахівцями з інших країн, враховуючи національні відмінності а також здатність здійснювати ефективну професійну діяльність в іншомовному середовищі. Метою дослідження є вивчення особливостей, що визначають міжкультурну комунікацію в бізнесі, а також дослідити процес набуття міжкультурної
комунікативної компетенції та її складових навичок у студентів під час вивчення ділової англійської мови. Предметом дослідження є систематизація як теоретичної, так і методологічної основ курсу вивчення ділового спілкування в міжнародній бізнес-діяльності. Стверджується, що стратегії міжкультурної комунікації є важливими для встановлення комерційних і взаємовигідних зв’язків з представниками інших націй. У статті визначено міжкультурну комунікативну компетентність як складний процес спілкування між представниками різних культур, який ґрунтується на здатності орієнтуватися в різних типах культур, реалізовувати знання в рамках культурного діалогу та співпрацювати з представниками інших національностей, будувати комунікативну стратегію відповідно до комунікаційних намірів. Дослідження спрямоване на залучення міжкультурної комунікації у професійну діяльність та формування міжкультурної комунікативної компетентності у студентів економічних спеціальностей. Зроблено висновок, що курси ділової англійської мають зосереджуватися на розвитку міжкультурної комунікативної компетенції студентів для ведення бізнесу англійською мовою, оскільки це є життєво важливою вимогою для ведення бізнесу на сучасному глобальному ринку.

**Ключові слова:** міжкультурна комунікація, міжкультурна комунікативна компетенція, ділова англійська мова, міжнародна підприємницька діяльність, крос-культурна комунікативна компетенція.

**Statement of the problem.** The integration processes provide for the emergence of an integrated European ‘territory’ of higher education and scientific research to ensure the mobility of Ukrainian students, the competitiveness of Ukrainian specialists in the global labor market, and the integration of Ukraine's higher education system into the Bologna process. Enhancing the quality of higher education encompasses not only the quantity of knowledge in the field of study, but additionally the ability of future graduates to utilize it creatively to the execution of assignments related to their field of study, the ability to communicate in a foreign language with experts from other countries, and the ability to perform professional activities in a foreign-language surroundings.

The nature of communication has altered as globalization expands, international business relations propagate, and society as a whole internationalizes. Establishing commercial and mutually beneficial connections with representatives from other nations require knowledge of several languages and, as a result, the implementation of intercultural communication strategies. However, ignorance of a foreign country's ethnic
and cultural differences is a significant barrier to effective communication with their representatives. Intercultural communication studies the most efficient ways of preventing cultural misconceptions when communicating with foreign partners. Thus, we should research productive methods of incorporating intercultural communication into the professional activities of future economists, as well as methods of developing intercultural communicative competence in students of economic fields of study.

In relation to the foregoing, it is worth noting that the aim of Business English courses is to meet students' demands in order for them to conduct business not in their native language but in English. This implies that Business English is about operating internationally, i.e. *interculturally* or *cross-culturally*. As a result, we consider that, in addition to improving language abilities in English in a commercial environment, business-related English courses ought to additionally concentrate on developing intercultural communicative competence in students, since this has become a vital requirement for performing business in the contemporary global marketplace.

**Analysis of recent research and publications.** The academic literature review reveals that numerous scholars have delved into developing intercultural communication competence when learning a foreign language.

Theoretical issues of intercultural communication formation are explored in the papers of O. Bystrai, T. Bilous, T. Hrushevitska, A. Knapp-Potthof, Yu. Passov, and O. Sadokhin; the connection between culture and communication has been highlighted in the research of Z. Bakum, E. Vereshchagin, M. Kagan, V. Kostomarov, and O. Leontiev. D. Atay, L. Mukharlyamova, and R. Cloue conducted research on the role of intercultural communication during foreign language learning, and the scientific foundations of the formation of communicative culture of future specialists in various fields of professional training are discussed in the works of O. Baglai (in the field of tourism), A. Feschuk (in the field of applied mechanics), L. Rebukh (social workers), and K. Klymov (in the field of public management and administration. Besides, the projects of the Council of Europe are devoted to the issue of the formation of intercultural communicative competence [1-14].

A clarified explication of intercultural communicative competence in the structure of professional and general competencies of undergraduates learning Business English will contribute to an improved socio-linguistic approach to carrying out the educational program in the discipline "Business English," which will influence the improvement of teaching techniques and the learning process for future economic professionals in order for them to
obtain knowledge and skills which are required at the contemporary international employment market.

Consequently, the goal of our research is to examine the features that define intercultural communication in business and to investigate the process of obtaining intercultural communicative competence and its constituent skills in undergraduates while learning Business English. The subject matter of our study is to arrange both the theoretical and methodological components of a course of study on business communication in international business activities.

We include the study "Personal Reflection Development as a Means of Forming a Culture of Scientific Text Perception" done by Romanivska L., Kravchyna T., and Nagachevska O. (2020) in our research. Furthermore, we agree with the conclusions of Koval N., Kushka B., and Nagachevska O.'s research "Changing Nature of English Tourism Discourse" [19]. The findings reported in these publications aided us in the construction of a curriculum for teaching Business English that took into account the intercultural communication element as well as the specifics of developing students' intercultural communicative ability [17].

**Results and Discussion.** The publication of Hall and Trager's book "The Analysis of Culture" in 1953 is regarded as the beginning of the exploration of intercultural communication as an academic field. The authors initially proposed the term "intercultural communication" for widespread usage, indicating, in their opinion, a distinct field of interpersonal relationships. Then in the crucial book "The Silent Language" (1959) by Edward Twitchell Hall the term "intercultural communication" gave a detailed definition of the term. So, Hall and others at the Foreign Service Institute in the early 1950s are widely regarded as the field's pioneers and founders of the original paradigm for intercultural communication conceptualizations [12].

"Difficulties in intercultural communication are rarely seen for what they are," Hall said in the book's preface. When individuals from various nations realize they do not understand one another, they prefer to blame it on 'those foreigners,' on their incompetence, deception, or madness." In addition, he pushed his readers to learn about themselves "by taking seriously the cultures of others." [12].

Knapp in 1990 argues that “Intercultural competence is now defined as "a complex of analytical and strategic abilities that expand the interpretative spectrum of an individual in the process of interpersonal interaction with representatives of other culture" [15, p. 66].

Intercultural competence, as is widely believed, equips people to engage effectively with other interlocutors from other cultures (Sinicrope, Norris, & Watanabe, 2012). Bennett (2009) explores the internal process of students'
movement from ethnocentrism to ethnorelativism in the development model of the intercultural component of background knowledge [9].

Vovchasta, N., Kozlovskia, I., Opachko, M., Paikush, M., & Stechkevych state that “According to many scientists (Hanafizadeh et al., 2017; Nikolaev & Koval), the training of a competent specialist should be carried out on the basis of an activity approach with the obligatory modeling of the features of his functional production actions, the implementation of professional tasks aimed at solving real problems and situations. Being competent means being able to apply your knowledge and experience in a given situation” [20].

Scientists V. Antroshchenko, Z. Bakum, I. Dyrd, V. Zagorodnova, V. Manakin, and O. Palchikova [1; 2; 8] specialize in intercultural communication challenges. Intercultural communication, according to O. Nezhiva (2017), is a process of communication that occurs under situations that are considerably different from those employed in one's culture and that greatly affects the success or failure of a communicative event [5]. As a result, the objective of intercultural communication is to develop intercultural and communicative competencies [5].

The components of the model of intercultural communication competences vary according to the choices of the researcher. Byram (1997) suggests a multidimensional model of intercultural communicative competence in which knowledge, values, and skills are viewed as crucial components of effective intercultural interaction. As a result, he recognizes five major components that constitute this model [10]:

1) attitudes (for instance, curiosity, open-mindedness);
2) knowledge (for instance, knowledge about social groups in the business partner’s country);
3) skills of interpreting and relating (for instance, the ability to interpret documents of representatives of other cultures);
4) skills of discovering and interacting (for instance, the ability to acquire new knowledge about the culture of another country);
5) critical cultural awareness / political education (for instance, the ability to critically assess the attitudes, models and results of own and foreign culture) (Byram, 1997) [10].

F. Trompenaars, G. Hofstede, and E. Hall defined the component structure of culture, differentiating the following levels within it: a) external - language, artifacts (cultural items), myths, symbols, rituals, traditions; b) hidden - norms, values that influence communication, behaviors, basic concepts, life attitudes, and experience. Thus, intercultural communication is a
behavioral pattern aimed at exchanging messages based on cultural and language conventions [11; 12; 13].

O. Topchiy [7] argues that the linguistic code is an important component of culture and that it helps to the creation of a person's worldview and mentality. Being aware of and considering cultural typologies will allow us to form other communicators and lessen the possibility of misunderstanding during communication. Low-context communication predominates in English-speaking nations, and it is characterized by responsiveness, expressiveness, and the importance of language on idea correctness. Emotionality and collective awareness are important in Eastern Europe, Asia, and the East [7].

According to O. Topchiy [7], there are five major models of intercultural communication interaction in the process of inculturation: integration (entering another culture by gradually mastering its norms, values, and behavior patterns); assimilation (the group and its members lose their personal culture, but assimilate another); separatism (while preserving their culture, group members refuse contact with another group); marginalization (the group and its members lose their culture, but assimilate another).

T. Branitska [2] concludes that intercultural competence is "a necessary condition for their competitiveness; a mechanism for harmonizing social relations between different groups, between representatives of different ethnic groups and cultural traditions, as well as for harmonizing interpersonal relations in a multicultural professional environment." The scientist identifies value-cognitive, motivational, and action components as intercultural competence [2].

Intercultural competence is formed by three factors: knowledge (people's values and norms that influence communicative behavior), skills (observing, listening, analyzing, evaluating, and interpreting), and attitude (respect, openness, and curiosity) - as a result, the individual acquires the ability to respond to another person based on his expectations (Ilie, 2019) [14].

According to Byram, when learning a foreign language, the individual involves understanding and knowledge of the native language and culture; thus, it is vital to teach students to live and work in two cultures and to act as a mediator between the cultural and linguistic contexts, using the intercultural skills that have been developed [10]. Intercultural communicative competence, according to higher education standards, is one of the conditions for a specialist's competitiveness on the international labor market and self-realization, which must be taken into account during the professional training of students for participation in international cooperation [Standards].

We can assert that intercultural communicative competence is a quality formed as a result of an individual's training and socialization, which is
achieved through communication, information exchange, productive interaction, and involves a conscious choice of behavior model and demonstration of the culture of the communication participants [14].

Thus, in our opinion, future specialists in the economic sphere's intercultural communicative competence is a complex process of communication between representatives of different cultures, which is based on the ability to navigate in different types of cultures, to implement knowledge within the limits of cultural dialogue, and to cooperate with representatives of other nationalities, to build a communicative strategy according to communication intentions.

We suggest that intercultural communication competence can thus be demonstrated by a combination of the subsequent components:

- valuable (awareness of the importance of communication as a means of transmitting or exchanging information in establishing interaction between people and achieving a specific goal (professional formation and personal development, emotional impact on communication partners' actions, identification, and prevention of difficulties)
- cognitive (knowledge of communication strategies, social and cultural knowledge, interpersonal interaction abilities and skills) (observance of communication norms, peculiarities of verbal and nonverbal behavior, analysis and prevention of stereotyping about another culture and its speakers)
- effective (complex of abilities and skills to use means of communication in accordance with the communication situation, the ability to build a strategy taking into account the interlocutors' characteristics (regulate and improve communicative activity, model expressions taking into account the cultural characteristics of representatives of other nationalities)
- cultural (comprehending of the universal components of other cultures, as manifested in speech and behavior patterns (moral and ethical norms, psychological and social, socio-cultural aspects).

Based on the identified components, the level of formation of intercultural communicative competence of future specialists in the economic sphere is determined according to the following criteria: motivational-value, cognitive, professional-communicative, linguistic and cultural.

Taking into consideration the foregoing analysis, we suggest that it is vital to modify the Business English course in accordance with the demand for students' intercultural communicative ability to develop and improve.

Business English is categorized under English for Specific Purposes (ESP). The origins of ESP might be studied early in the 1960s, and it stems from the assumption that language usage is context-dependent.
As Hutchinson et al. (1987) defined ESP as "an approach to language teaching in which all content and method decisions are based on the learner's reason for learning." Dudley-Evans (1998) also characterized ESP in terms of 'absolute' and 'variable' characteristics [11].

As stated by Dudley-Evans [11], the following are the absolute features of ESP: ESP is defined to satisfy the unique requirements of the learners; ESP employs the underlying methodology and activities of the discipline it serves; ESP is centered on the language appropriate to these activities in terms of grammar, lexis, register, and so on; and ESP is centered on the language appropriate to these activities in terms of grammar, lexis, register, study skills, discourse and genre.

"At the core of ESP, I believe, is a learner-centered pedagogy," writes Koay (2016). This implies that an ESP course is tailored to fulfill the special needs of learners while they are learning English." Business English, on the other hand, is defined by Merriam-Webster as [23; 24]:

1. English employed in the business. Specifically, the study and practice of composition, with an emphasis on accuracy, propriety, spelling, punctuation, and business communication forms.

2. English as taught in non-English-speaking nations in courses that emphasize commercial rather than cultural significance and are often geared to create conversational proficiency within a limited vocabulary.

The outcomes of the study of the Business English course presented in the syllabus make just a brief reference to international communication notions such as etiquette and body language, both of which are significant components of intercultural communication. Nevertheless, intercultural communication competence and skills are still not highlighted, and these factors are not directly related to business intercultural communication. Furthermore, the final learning outcomes, which should be "accepted and taken seriously by international companies," make little reference to intercultural aspects and instead concentrates on employing "correct business English terms and concepts." [24]

Students are required to "gain more insight into the role of English as a lingua franca" as one of the learning objectives they are expected to attain. However, the word employed is "gain insight," which means "to see, understand, and learn a fact," rather than "develop skills and competencies to use English as a lingua franca."

Conclusions. In conclusion, it should be mentioned that intercultural communicative skill is the primary component of future economic professionals' professional growth. It contains formed skills that allow the individual to freely perceive, analyze, and transmit information, evaluate the
interlocutor's verbal and nonverbal behavior, choose his own communication strategy, understand and perceive the differences of another culture, prevent misunderstandings, and cause a positive perception in the interlocutor, which allows the future specialist to integrate into the global professional society, to achieve professional and perceptual success.

The development of future specialists in marketing, management, or finance's intercultural communicative competence is based on the use of textual material, a system of tasks and exercises aimed at clarifying information about the linguistic and cultural differences of the peoples whose languages are studied, which creates favorable conditions for mastering the ability and skills of recognizing culturally marked units, and teaches to use so-called national words-realias in accordance with communication situations, contributes to the formation of defined competence, understanding and learning of a foreign language, development of intercultural dialogue, education of a personality capable of effective intercultural interaction.

**Prospects for further research.** We anticipate more detailed scientific study into the extensively researched topics of enhancing the methods and techniques of developing intercultural communicative competence, as well as the development of an electronic didactic complex to improve the process of learning a foreign language.

**References:**


Література:
4. Моцар М.М. Формування полікультурної компетентності майбутніх перекладачів з використанням технологій дистанційного навчання: дис. ... канд. пед. наук. К., 2018. 4.
7. Топчій О.В. Теоретичні основи формування професійної комунікативної компетентності в майбутніх слідчих органах внутрішніх справ // www.nbuvg.gov.ua/portal/socgum/nvkuw/2011_2 /kopchii.hftp


