

CROSS-CULTURAL COMMUNICATION CHALLENGES IN ENGLISH LANGUAGE TEACHING

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Annotation. *This article, discusses the issues of intercultural communication in teaching English. In the era of globalization, English language proficiency is becoming not just a tool for linguistic communication, but also a bridge for intercultural interaction. However, when teaching English, serious problems often arise specifically related to intercultural communication. These barriers can hinder not only language progress, but also the formation of full-fledged intercultural competence among students.*

Key words: *cross-cultural communication, intercultural competence, cultural awareness, language barriers, miscommunication, cultural differences, communication styles.*

Introduction. Intercultural communication is the exchange of information between people from different cultures, where cultural values, norms and symbols significantly influence the understanding of the message. In the context of teaching english, it is important to develop intercultural communicative competence - the ability not only to express oneself in the language, but also to understand the cultural context of the interlocutor. It is important to note that mastering intercultural communication is not only a psychological, but also a pedagogical problem.

One of the key difficulties is that English language learners often encounter pronunciation, incorrect use of expressions, and grammatical errors that can cause misunderstandings. In addition, there is the problem of English variability - British, American, and other dialects - which adds to the confusion among students. In addition to words, non-verbal signals (gestures, facial expressions) and pragmatic norms play an important role in intercultural communication. These elements are highly culturally dependent, and teachers often underestimate their role in teaching English as a means of intercultural communication. English language learners may experience anxiety, insecurity, and fear of communicating with representatives of another culture. These emotional barriers prevent effective intercultural interaction. In English-speaking society, there are norms of political correctness, speech etiquette, and expressions of tolerance. For many students, the rules of public speech communication can be unusual and sometimes incomprehensible.

Despite the importance of the intercultural component, many English language courses focus solely on vocabulary, grammar, and listening skills, ignoring cultural aspects. As the research of teachers has shown, teachers need a systematic integration of the cultural component into the content of language training. Not all teachers know the methods of teaching intercultural communication. Some courses do not provide for elective "intercultural" topics or projects, which reduces the effectiveness of the formation of intercultural competence.

In her research, Zernova suggests using elective courses where students can immerse themselves more deeply in intercultural interaction.

Modern English textbooks for universities and schools increasingly contain sections on the culture of English-speaking countries: traditions, customs, etiquette, and political correctness.

Nevertheless, these topics are not always actively presented - it is necessary to focus on intercultural critical competence: to teach not just facts, but to analyze cultural norms, compare them and develop your own communication strategies. This is confirmed in the work on the development of the ICC. These can include cultural studies, exchange projects, role-playing games, and presentations where students analyze cultural differences and learn how to interact in practice.

An example is the elective course developed by Zernova, which is specifically aimed at intercultural communication: students study the cultural characteristics of English-speaking countries, interact in intercultural scenarios, discuss political correctness, norms of politeness and moral topics. Do not limit yourself to vocabulary and grammar, but include topics of culture, traditions, etiquette, and political correctness. Use textbooks where the cultural component is not just added, but organically integrated into the language program. This is confirmed by research on the need for systematic integration. Conduct trainings and seminars for teachers on intercultural communication, where they could master the skills of conducting intercultural lessons, developing projects, using role-playing games, case studies and discussions.

Implement projects in which students explore cultural differences, communicate with native speakers (online or offline), prepare presentations and discuss intercultural dilemmas. This contributes to the development of not only language skills, but also intercultural sensitivity and communication strategies. Introduce courses specifically aimed at intercultural communication: elective modules, clubs, seminars, cultural clubs, debates. Include classes on speech etiquette, norms of politeness, and tolerance in the program, especially in public and academic discourse.

This will help students understand how to properly express themselves in English in different cultural contexts. As shown in research, it also develops intercultural competence. Use forms of assessment of intercultural competence: reflection, essays, diaries, interviews, questionnaires. Teachers and students can analyze their successes and difficulties, thereby monitoring the development of the ICC.

Intercultural communication in the process of teaching English is a key aspect of modern language education. Problems such as language barriers, non-verbal communication, anxiety, political correctness, and lack of systemic cultural integration significantly affect the learning process.

Conclusion. Developing this competence is not only an educational task, but also a social one: in a world where borders are blurring, the ability to understand and interact with people from different cultures is becoming an essential skill. Therefore, teaching English should take into account not only grammar and vocabulary, but also the cultural context, creating real conditions for intercultural dialogue. . However, with the proper organization of the curriculum, the use of project and elective methods, as well as the training of teachers, it is possible to effectively develop intercultural communicative competence among students.

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