

**IMPROVING THE METHODOLOGY OF DEVELOPING INTERCULTURAL
COMMUNICATION AMONG PROSPECTIVE ENGLISH LANGUAGE TEACHERS**

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Annotation. *This research article provides an in-depth analysis of the development of intercultural communication competence among prospective English language teachers. It explores the theoretical foundations of intercultural interaction, the interrelationship between language and culture, and the relevance of internationally recognized scholarly models within the pedagogical context. The article also examines comparative aspects of international practices and national educational approaches, identifying effective methodological strategies and innovative technologies aimed at enhancing intercultural competence in teacher education.*

The study emphasizes the importance of fostering global awareness, communicative adaptability, tolerance, empathy, and intercultural understanding among future teachers. The findings and recommendations presented in the article contribute to improving the training process of English language teachers in accordance with current global educational standards and demands.

Keywords: *intercultural communication, English language teacher education, linguocultural competence, communicative skills, pedagogical technologies, innovative teaching methods, global education.*

Introduction

In the context of rapidly growing globalization processes in modern society, the expansion of international cooperation in the fields of science, culture, and education has become a natural phenomenon. In particular, the significant role of the English language as a global means of communication in international relations, business, education, and technology places great responsibility on future English language teachers. They are required not only to possess strong linguistic knowledge but also to deeply understand the essence of intercultural communication and effectively interact with representatives of various cultures and worldviews.

Intercultural communication is a socio-psychological process aimed at mutual exchange of information, mutual understanding, and accurate interpretation of oneself and others between individuals belonging to different cultural backgrounds. In the process of English language teaching, this concept holds significant importance, as language and culture are inseparably interconnected. Language reflects the identity of a culture, while culture reveals the essence of language. Therefore, an English language teacher should act not only as a specialist in grammar and vocabulary but also as a cultural mediator.

Enhancing the methodology for developing intercultural communication among prospective English language teachers requires the integration of several fundamental approaches in the teaching process.

First of all, the basic principles of intercultural communication—mutual respect, empathy, cultural sensitivity, correct interpretation of context, and communicative adaptability—must be strengthened through practical activities.

The use of interactive methods greatly increases the effectiveness of the educational process. Methods such as *Cultural Comparison*, *Role-play*, *Case Study*, *Intercultural Scenarios*, *Virtual Exchange* expose learners to various cultural situations and help them choose appropriate intercultural communication strategies in real-life contexts.

Another important aspect is the extensive use of digital tools in the educational process.

International platforms, cultural forums conducted in English, podcasts, and documentaries provide students with deeper insight into the values of different nations. For future teachers, such experience contributes not only to mastering linguistic knowledge but also to developing global thinking and broadening their worldview.

One of the key methodological directions in developing intercultural communication is the analytical and reflective approach. Students should reflect on their behaviors, communication strategies, and the cultural differences they encounter after each lesson. This fosters critical thinking, self-evaluation, and the ability to communicate effectively in multicultural environments.

Today, the demand for high-quality foreign language education, particularly for developing strong English language skills, is rapidly increasing in Uzbekistan. National reforms, new curricula aligned with international standards, and joint educational projects all aim to strengthen the training of future teachers. Developing intercultural communication competencies is one of the most essential elements of this process.

In this regard, the present scientific article thoroughly examines the theoretical, practical, and methodological aspects of developing intercultural communication among prospective English language teachers. The main objective of the article is to analyze existing scientific ideas and methods, integrate them with the national educational context, and propose methodological recommendations that meet modern requirements.

Theoretical Foundations of Intercultural Communication

1. The Concept of Intercultural Communication and Its Components

Intercultural communication refers to the process of information exchange between individuals belonging to different cultural backgrounds. It encompasses linguistic proficiency as well as cultural codes, customs, values, worldviews, and communicative behaviors. Since the second half of the 20th century, intercultural communication has emerged as a distinct scientific field.

Its key components include:

- Linguistic competence – knowledge of grammar, vocabulary, and pronunciation norms;
- Paralinguistic features – gestures, facial expressions, voice tone, pauses, and tempo;
- Linguocultural competence – understanding cultural codes reflected in language, realia, idioms, and cultural similarities/differences;
- Pragmatic competence – choosing speech acts appropriate to the situation;
- Empathy and tolerance – understanding others' feelings and respecting cultural differences.

Unlike ordinary communication, intercultural communication is more complex due to implicit cultural rules. For example, in Anglo-Saxon culture, directness and personal responsibility are valued, while Eastern cultures prioritize politeness, respect expressions, and social distance.

2. Major Theories of Intercultural Communication

E. Hall's High- and Low-Context Cultures Theory

- High-context cultures (Japan, China, Arab countries): meaning is largely conveyed through context and nonverbal cues.

- Low-context cultures (USA, Germany, UK): meaning is conveyed directly and explicitly.

- G.Hofstede's Cultural Dimensions Hofstede classifies cultures based on:

1. Individualism–Collectivism

2. Power Distance

3. Masculinity–Femininity

4. Uncertainty Avoidance

5. Long-term Orientation

6. Indulgence–Restraint

Bennett's Developmental Model of Intercultural Sensitivity (DMIS) Six stages of intercultural development:

- Denial
- Defense
- Minimization
- Acceptance
- Adaptation
- Integration

These models help assess and develop intercultural awareness among prospective teachers.

The Importance of Learning Culture in Foreign Language Teaching

While learning a foreign language, individuals also acquire the worldview, customs, and communication norms of that language's speakers. Culture contributes to foreign language teaching by:

1. Developing full communicative competence;

2. Reducing stereotypes and cultural misunderstandings (e.g., interpreting "How are you?" in Britain as a politeness formula rather than an inquiry about health).

Research Findings

This study thoroughly analyzed the theoretical foundations, methodological approaches, and practical mechanisms for developing intercultural communication competence among prospective English language teachers. It was revealed that, in conditions of globalization, international integration, and the rapid expansion of digital space, the role of English teachers expands beyond language teaching to include preparing globally competent individuals capable of effective intercultural communication.

Models such as

- M. Byram's *Intercultural Communicative Competence*,

- B. Bennett's *Developmental Model of Intercultural Sensitivity*, and
- D. Deardorff's *Pyramidal Model*

were utilized to identify modern requirements for teacher training. Opportunities for adapting these models to the context of Uzbekistan's education system were also discussed.

Practical Recommendations

The study proposes a methodological system for enhancing intercultural competence based on the use of:

- linguocultural instruction;
- authentic materials (interviews, podcasts, films, cultural samples);
- project-based and research activities;
- virtual exchange and online communication;
- role-plays, debates, and intercultural simulations;
- reflection and self-assessment practices.

To further improve university-level teacher education, the following recommendations were developed:

1. Expanding modules on intercultural communication in the curriculum;
2. Enriching pedagogical practice with real intercultural communication scenarios;
3. Developing courses based on digital cultural resources;
4. Enhancing professional development of instructors in this field;
5. Creating diagnostic tools for assessing students' global competence.

Conclusion

In conclusion, the results of the study demonstrate that developing intercultural communication competence among prospective English language teachers is a fundamental requirement of modern education. It deepens teachers' professional competence, improves teaching effectiveness, and contributes to shaping students' global awareness. The proposed methodological approaches help future educators become competitive at the international level and support the promotion of cultural openness and tolerance within Uzbekistan's education system.

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