



Intercultural Competence in ELT

Mashkhura Shokhidova

EFL Teacher of English Philology Faculty, Namangan State University, Uzbekistan

Abstract: Language as a social phenomenon enables communication between people, spiritual growth, and socio-economic achievements. Language establishes the interaction of different nationalities living in the same area, different relations and intercultural relations. The concepts of culture and language are inseparable concepts. Learning foreign languages is not only a personal need, but also a phenomenon of universal importance. Knowing a language does not mean that one can fully communicate with the people who speak that language. Research shows that achieving higher levels of language proficiency depends on thinking like a target language speaker and such thinking requires cultural understanding. Extra-linguistic elements such as values, beliefs, norms, rituals, and traditions are also key components of communication exchanges, which should be taught target culture interactively in ELT in order to enhance intercultural competence.

Key words: culture, language, communication, intercultural competence, communicative competence, ELT.

Introduction

Globalization of the information system on a global scale, expansion of the internationalization process requires further optimization of foreign language teaching. The study of didactic and psychological factors of the development of professional and intercultural competence of foreign language specialists in increasing the effectiveness of intercultural strategies, the use of electronic educational resources in the processes of distance education, digital economy and other social exchange of ideas is relevant today in all fields. Despite linguistic competence is sufficient or even at a high level, the effectiveness of communication in a foreign language may decrease due to the lack of knowledge about non-linguistic existence. Therefore, acquiring intercultural competence help foreign language learners to communicate successfully with people from other cultures. Today, English has the status of an international language in the world community, is one of the high-level languages used in the intellectual, economic, commercial and cultural aspects of the world's life. Learning this language is very important in establishing intercultural relations, increasing the potential of international tourism, conveying information through mass media, and finally in developing the education system. Teachers and students who want to communicate effectively in educational settings, regionally and globally, they should learn the language and culture of English speaking countries sufficiently.

Materials and Methods

It is known that language is used as the main tool of culture. In order to understand what intercultural communication is in learning and teaching foreign languages, it is first necessary to consider the pure concept of culture. It also requires knowledge about the meaning of language as the main factor of intercultural communication in learning and teaching foreign languages. Often students are taught

the rules of the language but fail to communicate adequately because they do not know enough about the target culture. In view of this issue, it is very important that students should acquire knowledge about the culture of the target language in ELT.

Scientists interpret the term "culture" from different points of view. Hall (2001) defines culture as the way of life of people, the set of patterns of behavior, attitudes and material objects learned by them". According to Schulz (2003), culture includes the knowledge and beliefs of a group of people who have common habits to help people understand life and themselves. All people have similar knowledge at the same time; people are the owners of knowledge about their own language. Schmitt and Fehr (1999) describe that culture is in a certain environment, in order to behave and act like another person belonging to that environment, a person perceives and is a set of things that should be done.

Newmark (1998) stated that culture "is a way of life specific to society and its manifestation, which is used as a means of expressing a certain language. Thus, culture is a single symbol or complex of characteristics of any country that distinguishes people according to history, traditions and values. Culture plays an important role in human life and the development of society.

- To understand the cultural specificity of human behavior (understanding culture);
- To be aware of the system of stereotypes specific to one's culture (self-awareness);
- To understand the importance of cultural factors in the process of interaction (to be aware of the clash of cultures).

In order to achieve this goal in the process of language learning, situations that can be encountered in everyday life are created through group work, various exercises and role-playing games. In addition, the method of autobiographical narration, which is common in ethnology and cultural anthropology, is also used: teachers and language learners describe their life experiences related to intercultural conflicts, in which they feel isolated from another culture, they even explain that they experienced "culture shock". Because such episodes are real, they are useful for illustrating the problems of intercultural communication. Such methods enter the state and allows them to try to feel themselves in intercultural conflicts. This anthropological method of "restoring a real life situation" was used by Hall (2001) to practice intercultural conflicts in the educational process.

Cultural communication serves to show that each person is unique and at the same time similar to other people, representatives of other nations, and thus a person determines his position and place in society. By learning a language, a person can form his own culture, improve his human qualities, and by understanding other people's culture, he can acquire the qualities of tolerance, which are important in the present era. Research on the positive and negative effects of intercultural communication on a person began in the 60s of the last century by American scientists. In order to have successful communication, one should not only compare one's own culture with the culture of another nation, but also between the similarities and differences, beauty and rudeness, closeness and distance from one's own culture.

Taking into account the factors listed above, we can say that learning foreign languages helps to eliminate existing obstacles and borders between people and different nationalities, to help all people living on the earth to understand each other correctly, to achieve harmony and serves to live in harmony with each other. Therefore, it is important to remember that the cultures of people living in all English-speaking countries are different, for example, the culture in Great Britain and the United States is not the same, and in learning French, the culture of France, Canada and it is necessary to recognize that the cultures of African countries are very different from each other.

Applying a socio-cultural approach to foreign language teaching leads to the activation of students in learning a foreign language. In the process of mastering the national culture and values of a foreign nation, the student also strengthens knowledge about the country of the target language. So, getting acquainted with the lifestyle, customs, national culture and nature of the people of the country where the language is being studied is a two-way complex integrated process, in which not only the people of the country where the language is being studied, but also the customs of the host country and the

national culture of its own people are also studied in comparison and presented to the people of the foreign country in necessary cases. That is why it is a common phenomenon among peoples who have different languages and cultures to take models from each other. During the comparison, students distinguish many common and specific signs and characteristics. This helps to get closer to that country, to understand it and to have a good relationship with it, its people, and its traditions.

To help students to develop their intercultural competence as much as possible and to prepare them to deal with problems, change and cope with changes during the educational period of their life, to plan, manage and it is necessary to teach to think in the target language. Understanding the role of students in creativity and their experiences can include a complex of activities, experiences and relationships that are interconnected with the creative process:

- a) thinking in advance and planning what to do - analyzing tasks, defining goals, creating a strategy for achieving them;
- b) performing work in accordance with the planned intentions;
- c) reflection on what was done and what was achieved for learning (reflection, review and evaluation; feeling of experience);
- d) self-observation and recording - analysis of thoughts, ideas, experiences, actions and their effects, experimentation;
- e) participation in events (formation of personal intelligence);
- f) constant communication (development of communication skills).

The process of learning an international language is carried out in two directions:

- 1) analysis and interpretation of other cultural materials;
- 2) reflect their own culture by comparing the similarities and types of both events. This double action is very important. In teaching a foreign language, the competence of intercultural communication is formed on the basis of knowledge about the customs and traditions of the country that includes knowledge and skills of communicative behavior in speech communication actions; Verbal and non-verbal behavior skills and competencies form the content of national culture. Formation of socio-cultural knowledge and skills means expanding the scope of knowledge in linguistic and country studies based on the characteristics of the chosen profession at the expense of new topics and problems of speech communication.

Thus, intercultural competence helps to form a sociological component based on knowledge of culture, philosophy, ethnolinguistics, history, literature, geography and country studies. Therefore, this component is based on the generalization of the knowledge obtained from the fields of sociology, linguistics, country studies, and introduction to ethnocultural universal culture.

Conclusion

To conclude, we might define intercultural competence as the learner's ability to perceive, analyze, and relate different cultures to their native language and nationality. No matter how much the modern man lives in a globalized world, I believe that people now need to know their family, region, nation, country, or cultural information messages first. A person cannot understand the culture of another nation without being constantly aware of his cultural roots.

References:

1. Alimova, M. (2018). Cultural Bridges, Course book on Intercultural Competence. p.16
2. Hall, E. T., & Hall, M. R. (2001). Key concepts: Underlying structures of culture. *International HRM: Managing diversity in the workplace*, 24.
3. Schultz, S. (2003). Managing corporate communication: a cross-cultural approach.
4. Fehr, E., & Schmidt, K. M. (1999). A theory of fairness, competition, and cooperation. *The quarterly journal of economics*, 114(3), 817-868.

5. Newmark, P. (1998). Multilingual matters. *Language arts and disciplines*, 8.
6. Shokhidova, M. (2023). Using Case Study to Develop Students' Intercultural Competence in EFL Classrooms. *Central Asian Journal of Literature, Philosophy and Culture*, 4(5), 327-331.