

Cultural Aspects of Multilingual Communication

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ABSTRACT

Today multilingual communication is increasing as the context of globalization and therefore, contact between different cultures is being practiced in non-western communities in political, business and art meetings. Culture as a critical part of multilingual communication performs several functions in community, has several categories according to different culturologists. The students of translation studies faculty must be aware of constituent parts of multilingual communication, its theoretical basis, basic terms and the role of intercultural competency in translation process. In this paper, cultural aspects of multilingual communication, its concepts and terms, types of culture are discussed. We also provide the definition of the terms of culturology that each Bachelor student of translation studies department must know.

KEYWORDS: multilingual communication, intercultural communication, culture, functions of culture, native, strange, categorization of culture, value, axiology, eastern culture, western culture, traditional culture, innovative culture, material and spiritual culture, ordinary and specialized culture.

Introduction

The term “multilingual communication” first appeared in 1954, in the work of G.Traiger and E.Hall “Culture and Communication. Analysis of the model”. This concept was revealed by the authors as an ideal goal to which a person should strive in his desire to adapt as effectively as possible to the surrounding world. The language presents different models of the worldview of the people, which is why language seems to us one of the main means of expressing thoughts and transferring knowledge. Language is also the center of all human life, it is language that helps to establish a connection between an object or phenomenon and their understanding and the sign means chosen for their name, which will help determine how the world is formed in the consciousness of an individual. The language does not only reflect the material aspect of a man, but also the spiritual one as well, including morals, system of values and mentality [2;54]. We believe that it is impossible to improve the culture without improving the language, which is why language is a very interesting subject for people engaged in cultural research. Language records objects important for the bearers of this culture. The picture of the world in a language reflects the characteristic features and reality [3;78].

“Intercultural communication” presupposes a situation in which participants of this process, representing different cultures, recognize what does not belong to their culture as a phenomenon of “alien.” Obviously, for full and effective contact between the two sides it is necessary to take into account the entire body of

knowledge and ideas about the “alien” culture, its civilizational and historical-cultural identity, religious experience and traditions, value orientations and cultural codes.

A positive solution to this problem requires the knowledge of the basic aspects of the theory of cultural studies. The theory of culture is understood as a system of interrelated concepts, principles, judgements that reveal the essence, structure, genesis of culture as a whole or of any cultural phenomenon. In this regard, a bachelor who performs academic research in the profile “Theory and Practice of Intercultural Communication” should be focused on basic cultural concepts.

Materials and Methods

The term culture (from the Latin “colere”, cultura - tillage, care, cultivation) appeared in the era of antiquity. Its original meaning was associated with soil cultivation. Gradually, this term became synonymous with the concept of *upbringing, education and personal development* [6;72-73]. In the modern understanding, “culture” is a historically determined level of development of society, creative powers and abilities of a person, expressed in the types and forms of organization of his life activity; This is a world created by a man, his artificial habitat, different from the natural environment, a set of material and spiritual values, life ideas, patterns of behavior, norms, methods and techniques of human life.

Culture performs numerous functions in society. The most important one is *humanistic*. It is designed to help a person to adapt to the environment and defines other functions as particular ways of solving this general problem. The *cognitive*, epistemological function is associated with the ability of culture to reflect the social experience of many generations of people. *Informative* function closely intertwined with the function of historical continuity, transmission of social experience. The *regulatory* (normative) function establishes norms and regulates people's behavior. The *value* (axiological) function forms values and orientations. The function of *socialization* performs the task of a person's entry into society. *Adaptive* - helps him adapt to the environment. *Creative* – develops a person's creative potential. The *communicative-integrative* function acts as a means of communication and unification of people. In this sense, intercultural communication will be as successful as its participants deeply understand models of each other's cultural code [5;3-4].

For a correct understanding of the categories “*native*” - “*strange*” in intercultural communication, it is important to know what type a particular culture belongs to. Using various classification criteria, cultural scientists distinguish different types of culture. The most general approach is to divide culture into *material and spiritual*. The field of material culture includes the results of human activity that have a material embodiment (buildings, tools, household items, etc.). Spiritual culture reflects the results of his activities aimed at the formation of spiritual and artistic values (ethical, aesthetic norms, legal, political, religious, scientific knowledge). Some researchers (M. S. Kagan) distinguish the spiritual sphere as an independent artistic culture.

Results

According to the degree of specialization, culturologists distinguish between **ordinary and specialized culture** (E. A. Orlova, A. Ya. Flier). Everyday culture presupposes a person's mastery of the customs of everyday life in their living environment. The process of mastering this culture is called socialization and enculturation of the individual. A specialized culture presupposes special, usually professional training related to a person's professional status.

Ethnic, national, regional, social, religious and other criteria may be used in the classification of culture. For intercultural communication, deep penetration into the national culture of a particular people is of particular importance. It develops under the influence of numerous factors (natural and climatic, geographical, historical, sociocultural) and is manifested in the characteristics of the material, spiritual life and mentality

of each people. The most striking manifestation of national identity is language, literature, art, folklore, religion, way of life, and methods of farming.

In this context, the concepts of *value and culture* are inseparable. The science of values is called **axiology** (from the Greek *axios* - value). Value is an unshakable life orientation, something that is sacred for a particular person, a group of people or for all of humanity [5;6]. Values underlie human behavior and intercultural communication. The category of moral values, for example, can include such concepts as dignity and freedom. The category of aesthetic values includes the beautiful, the sublime, the tragic and the comic. The category of religious values includes the concepts of faith and divine grace.

In the process of intercultural communication, it is important to be aware of the *customs and traditions* characteristic of a representative of a particular culture. Customs are the historically established order of social life, expressing patterns of behavior in education, communication, work and everyday life. They perform both permissive and prohibitive functions, blocking the manifestations of individual words, actions and deeds. Customs include a set of traditions (from the Latin tradition - gratitude). Customs and traditions also largely determine the norms and rules of human behavior.

In intercultural communication, ethnic culture plays a special role (for example, in the study of folklore). It lies at the origins of national culture and preserves its most archaic, local features. It is characterized by a relationship with the natural environment and the centuries-old experience of folk life, the traditions of the ethnic group.

For bachelors completing graduate research within the framework of their chosen topic, it is important to understand what distinguishes the civilizations of the West and the East, the Eastern and Western types of culture [5;8]. **The eastern type of culture** is associated with the most ancient centers of human activity. The first civilizations were born here: cities, writing, state institutions of power and management, class structures of society, and legal norms appeared. In essence, these were “closed”, agrarian, river civilizations. They were based on an irrigation farming system (Ancient Egypt, Mesopotamia, India, China). The specificity of individual cultures (for example, Arab culture) did not exclude general patterns. Constant wars or threats of invasion, a large territory of the state, along with a unified irrigation system, temple economy and communal property, required a powerful centralized bureaucratic system of government, strong religious doctrine and despotic power. Therefore, the eastern type of culture developed under the influence of the sacralization of power and authoritarian forms of government; the prevalence of state, collective interest over the personal rights of citizens.

The East has always been a region of mixing different ethnic cultures. Intercultural communication of ancient peoples was reflected in the broad development of philological knowledge. In Mesopotamia, the world's first bilinguals appeared - bilingual inscriptions and texts; scribes and translators who knew foreign languages. Grammar manuals were created in Sumerian and Akkadian; numerous dictionaries - Sumerian-Akkadian, Sumerian-Huritic, Sumerian-Akkado-Huritic, Akkado-Hittite, Sumerian-Akkado-Hittite, Akkado-Kassite.

In Ancient India, linguistics and its branches such as phonetics, etymology, and grammar developed by the middle of the 1st millennium BC. The greatest achievement of linguistics of the ancient world was the Sanskrit grammar of Pa-Nini (V - IV centuries BC). Some of his ideas were assessed and developed only in structural linguistics of the 20th century. The peoples of the Eastern Mediterranean enriched world culture with the creation of the alphabet. Modern alphabets either directly go back to the Phoenician analogue (Greek, Latin), or were created taking into account the system adopted in it.

Time in the East was subordinated to eternity. The economic structure preserved archaic features in various spheres of life. Social experience was passed on from generation to generation with strict adherence to the customs, norms and traditions of previous generations. Religion permeated the entire life of the social

organism, filling every action of an individual with meaning. Great religious doctrines were born in the East. The East gave the world Brahmanism and Hinduism, Confucianism and Taoism. Monotheism appeared in Ancient Judea. World religions were also formed in the eastern area: Buddhism, Christianity, Islam.

Religious traditions still determine many aspects of life in the East, which should be taken into account by bachelors within the framework of their chosen topic. For a deeper understanding of this problem, you can turn to the works of the German sociologist M. Weber. He was one of the first to explore the organic relationship between religion and economic life. In his works (“Protestant ethics and the spirit of capitalism”, “Religion of China: Confucianism and Taoism”, “Religion of India: the sociology of Hinduism and Buddhism”), he showed the difference in the religious experience of the East and the West. The religious ethics of the East directed spiritual energy outside the material world: towards the reconstruction of the soul and the mystical experience of man. The specifics of social stratification (the caste system in India and the strict social hierarchy in China) limited social mobility and preserved the dominant position of the elites. These factors, according to Weber, restrained the development of capitalism, preserving traditional economic structures.

On the contrary, the Protestant ethic reflected the spirit of capitalism, accelerating its development in the cultural arena of the reform movements of the European West.

The Western type of culture was formed in different natural, climatic, geographical, cultural, historical and political conditions. Its origins lay in the culture of the ancient world, which represented a new model of development. It was an “open” maritime civilization, which, not having the richest resources, initially followed the path of specialization, division of labor, commodity-money relations and colonization. Unlike the East, in Greece there were no large river arteries and threats of external invasions. The life of the Greeks took place within small isolated territories (city-states - polis), protected by mountain ranges and coastlines. They built their economic activities on the basis of an individual family, and not within the framework of a large temple or palace economy, as in the East.

The economic self-sufficiency of families, the military organization of the polis (people's militia), its political structure (people's assembly) became the basis of polis democracy. Evolution of the polis: monarchy - aristocratic republic - democratic republic (Athens) - the most important political heritage of antiquity. Democratic forms of government; system of legal guarantees for citizens of the policy; their ownership of the land; the absence of an official-bureaucratic apparatus - all this, among other things, was the result of the fierce struggle of the demos for its rights, which so distinguished the West from the East.

There were also significant differences in the religious life of the polis. There was no closed caste of priests here; they did not play an independent role, like the priests in Egypt or India. Their positions were elected and filled by civilians. The simplicity of religion, which was in the stage of polytheism, and the lack of deep and original religious doctrines led to some “desacralization” of the political and spiritual life of the polis. Therefore, ancient culture, along with religious experience, gave the world a philosophical system of knowledge. Philosophical schools (natural philosophy, Epicureanism, skepticism, stoicism) posed the most complex problems of existence. The sophists turned their attention to man and developed the art of rhetoric. Protagoras formulated the thesis that man is the measure of all things. Socrates, Plato and Aristotle laid the foundations of modern philosophy.

Ancient civilization quickly adopted and accumulated the experience of ancient Eastern cultures. The synthesis of cultural heritage manifested itself most clearly in the Hellenistic era. The spiritual revolution was reflected in the formation of new values. Humanism, the sense of duty of a citizen of the polis, his civil liberties, the harmonious development of the individual, the search for the balance of personal and public interest were supplemented in the Hellenistic era with the ideas of cosmopolitanism and human community. Artistic culture reflected these values in architecture, sculpture, theater and literature.

Ancient culture became a standard that was adopted and reworked by Roman society. Roman culture, born on the basis of a synthesis of Etruscan, Italian, Greek origins, and later of the Eastern world, received powerful impulses of cultural development. The Romans were characterized by a spirit of practicality, expediency, statehood, internal severity and religious restraint. The most important values in Roman society were patriotism, dignity, loyalty to civic duty, military valor and respect for the law. These values of ancient culture became the basis of Western European civilization. In the modern world, they are the basis for understanding contradictory processes in the context of globalization.

Discussion

Considering the Eastern and Western types of culture, the bachelor, within the framework of the chosen topic, must also understand such basic concepts as stability and variability, “cultural statics” and “cultural dynamics”. Cultural statics reflects the type of cultural phenomena that are characterized by repetition and immutability. This type includes those examples of material and spiritual culture that have stood the test of time. They are perceived by new generations as a valuable cultural heritage that should be reproduced without any significant changes. Cultural dynamics reflect the types of cultural phenomena that are in the process of movement and change.

As a rule, culture simultaneously reflects both stable and changeable aspects. The relationship between tradition and innovation allows us to classify the culture of various societies as traditional and modern.

Traditional culture is characterized by:

- Preservation and transfer of social experience from generation to generation; strict adherence to established patterns of behavior.
- High level of normativity, covering all aspects of life; the presence of numerous prohibitions - taboos; collectivism and conformism in the consciousness and behavior of people.
- Intolerance towards foreign culture, up to xenophobia (from the Greek *xenos* - stranger, *phobos* - fear; intolerance towards the alien, alien; antonym of “tolerance”).
- Condemnation of attempts at innovation (from the Latin *change*) of traditional norms, stability of psychology, everyday life, way of life, social structure.

This type of culture was characteristic of primitive society, the Ancient World (Egypt, China, India, Asia Minor), and the Middle Ages. In the countries of the East and a number of Muslim states it persists to this day [5;11].

An innovative culture is characterized by:

- Flexible scale of life values.
- Weakening of normative culture, up to the decline of morals and weakening of morality. Tolerance for deviations (deviations) in people's behavior.
- Individualism instead of collectivism. Freedom of the individual.
- Criticality and independent thinking. Belief in the power of the human mind. Social significance of intellectual work [5; 12].

The general trend in the development of history is the movement from traditional to innovative culture. However, it should be borne in mind that with all innovations, the most important point is maintaining stability in society. American sociologist and political scientist S. Huntington defined stability as “order plus continuity.”

The problem of cultural dynamics is organically connected with “cultural integration” (the interconnection of various parts or elements of culture when they are combined into a certain integrity); “cultural expansion” (expansion of the sphere of influence of the dominant, national culture beyond the original limits or state borders) and “cultural diffusion” (spontaneous, uncontrolled borrowing of cultural values). These problems have become most pressing in the context of globalization.

Conclusion

Nowadays, contacts with different cultures are very frequent, as a consequence of globalization. As a result, we need cultural awareness and cultural competence in order to relate with empathy to different cultures, with different values and mindsets, rituals and traditions, as well as with different ways of communication [1;1-2]. Students of translation studies may find the old textbooks about culture of the people whose language they are learning not actual in the modern world as the mindset of world population is changing rapidly day by day. Therefore, we have to create new informative materials about multilingual and multicultural communication for them. This paper explains the theoretical basis of culture and multilingual communication. It is directed for the Bachelor students of translation studies department and discusses the history of the term “culture”, its types and categories according to different approaches.

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