InterAcción y Perspectiva

Revista de Trabajo Social

CENTRO DE INVESTIGACIONES
DE TRABAJO SOCIAL

Universidad del Zulia

Facultad de Ciencias Jurídicas y Políticas
Centro de Investigaciones de Trabajo Social

ARTÍCULO DE INVESTIGACIÓN

Competencia intercultural en la educación universitaria: enfoques prácticos para formar futuros especialistas

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Resumen. En una era marcada por la rápida globalización y desglobalización, la importancia de la competencia intercultural nunca ha sido tan pronunciada. Este estudio aborda la brecha existente entre el conocimiento teórico y la aplicación práctica en el campo de la comunicación intercultural. Mediante el análisis de los modelos clave propuestos por E. T. Hall, G. Hofstede y R. Lewis, y utilizando una metodología comparativa, esta investigación desarrolla tareas prácticas diseñadas para mejorar la competencia intercultural de los futuros especialistas. Estas tareas se integran en los planes de estudios y se centran en situaciones reales con las que los estudiantes probablemente se encuentren en entornos profesionales. Los resultados ponen de relieve la necesidad de mano de obra culturalmente consciente en diversos campos y demuestran la eficacia de la formación práctica para fomentar el entendimiento y la cooperación interculturales. Esta investigación subraya el papel fundamental de la competencia intercultural en contextos profesionales y sociales, y aboga por su inclusión en los programas de enseñanza universitaria a fin de preparar a los estudiantes para las complejidades de las interacciones globales.

Palabras clave: modelos de comunicación intercultural, formación de estudiantes, tareas profesionales, competencia intercultural, enseñanza universitaria.

Intercultural competence in university education: practical approaches to training future specialists

Abstract. In an era marked by rapid globalization and deglobalization, the importance of intercultural competence has never been more pronounced. This study addresses the gap between theoretical knowledge and practical application in the field of intercultural communication. By analyzing key models proposed by E. T. Hall, G. Hofstede, and R. Lewis, and using a comparative methodology, this research develops practical tasks designed to enhance the intercultural competence of future specialists. These tasks are integrated into educational curricula, focusing on real-world scenarios that students are likely to encounter in professional settings. The results highlight the necessity of culturally aware manpower in various fields and demonstrate the effectiveness of practical training in fostering intercultural understanding and cooperation. This research underscores the critical role of intercultural competence in professional and social contexts, advocating for its inclusion in university education programs to prepare students for the complexities of global interactions.

Key words: models of intercultural communication, student training, professional tasks, intercultural competence, university teaching.

INTRODUCTION

Intercultural communication (IC) has been an integral part of human interaction since ancient times (Bogoslovskiy et al., 2022; Flerov, 2015). The emergence of international trade and the development of global transportation systems have significantly accelerated political, cultural, and economic relationships between countries over the last century. This interconnectedness allows us to easily access goods and services from both domestic and international suppliers.

Understanding IC is crucial in the context of globalization, which has deepened economic, cultural, and political ties among countries. Professors Guzikova and Fofanova (2015) define IC as the interaction between representatives of different cultures. A more detailed definition by Bogatikova (2009) describes IC as the direct or indirect exchange of information between representatives of different linguistic cultures, leading to mutual understanding related to various national cultures.

Globalization, which gained momentum at the end of the 19th century, has significantly impacted IC. According to the Cambridge Dictionary (2019), globalization is the development of closer economic, cultural, and political relations among countries, facilitated by advancements in travel and communication. The Industrial Revolution and the advent of railways, airplanes, and cars increased human mobility and expanded economic activities beyond local communities, creating global supply chains that integrated labor and markets worldwide.

Despite its benefits, globalization has also brought cultural consequences. The Internet has created a single global network, leading to changes in cultural views and the borrowing of fashions and trends, which impact the cultural identity of individual nations. This process has unfavorable effects, such as the absorption of smaller cultures by larger ones, leading to the emergence of a global universal culture. This raises concerns about the loss of cultural identity and the erosion of essential cultural values.

Deglobalization, a response to the negative consequences of globalization, emerged in the early 2000s with events like the global financial crisis and protectionist measures by major economies such as China and the United States (Knyazev, 2022; Omarbakiyev et al., 2023). The coronavirus crisis of 2020 further deepened deglobalization, highlighting the need for nations to balance global interdependence with cultural and economic sovereignty. Deglobalization involves diminishing nations' connections in commerce, trade, and investment, and it often coincides with a rise in nationalism and protectionist policies (Wallstreetmojo Team, n.d.).

The sociocultural shift towards protectionist policies reflects a desire to maintain and protect distinct traditions, languages, and values. Limiting the influence of foreign cultures is seen as a method to preserve national identity and cultural heritage. This approach promotes domestic production and self-sufficiency, encouraging people to value their national inheritance more highly (Malykh, 2009; Korobova & Balashova, 2016; Alimova et al., 2023).

The focus of intercultural relations has increasingly shifted towards the East, particularly in Russia, which has expanded its cooperation with Arab and Asian countries (Ponarina, 2010; Panibratsev, 2019; Razumnova & Migaleva, 2019). The growing economic power of China and the United Arab Emirates has heightened interest in their cultures and languages, leading to an increase in related educational programs in many European countries (Shamahov & Mezhevich, 2021; Skubenko, 2017; Voskresensky et al., 2024).

This study aims to address the gap between theoretical knowledge and practical application in intercultural communication. By analyzing key models proposed by E. T. Hall, G. Hofstede, and R. Lewis, and implementing these in educational settings, we seek to develop practical tasks that enhance intercultural competence among future specialists. The objectives are to analyze existing literature, compare intercultural communication models using a structured framework, and create professional tasks that reflect cultural differences and can be used in teaching practices.

The relevance of this study lies in the need for culturally aware manpower in various fields. Intercultural competence is crucial not only in professional spheres but also in everyday interactions. However, this study acknowledges limitations related to the chosen methods and models, suggesting that further research could explore additional models and methods to provide a more comprehensive analysis.

METHODS AND MATERIALS

This study employs a mixed-methods research design integrating both qualitative and quantitative approaches. The primary aim was to develop practical tasks that enhance intercultural competence among future specialists by analyzing key intercultural communication models and implementing these in educational settings.

Participants in this study included a diverse group of undergraduate and graduate students from the Financial University under the Government of the Russian Federation and the University of Science and Technology "MISIS". These students were enrolled in courses related to intercultural communication and were selected to provide a broad perspective on the applicability of the developed tasks across different academic disciplines.

The first part of the study reviewed existing literature on intercultural communication, focusing on identifying key models and their applications in various contexts. The models of E. T. Hall,

G. Hofstede, and R. Lewis were compared using a structured framework that categorized their elements into general, specific, and distinct features. The "general" aspect consists of cultural dimensions present in all models, the "specific" aspect includes cultural dimensions inherent to only one model, and the "distinct" aspect captures each author's unique perspective on cultural differences.

This analysis was aimed at understanding the strengths and limitations of each model. This methodology of comparing and finding general, specific and unique features of a phenomena or objects is used as a tool to analyze their similarities and differences (Aliboeva, 2022).

Based on the insights gained from the comparative analysis, a series of professional tasks were developed. These tasks were designed to simulate real-world intercultural communication scenarios and were integrated into the curriculum of relevant courses.

The tasks were implemented in classroom settings, and students were asked to complete them as part of their coursework. Following the implementation, feedback was collected through surveys and focus group discussions to assess the tasks' impact on students' intercultural competence.

The feedback from students was analyzed qualitatively to identify common themes and insights regarding the effectiveness of the tasks. This involved coding responses and categorizing them into key themes related to intercultural competence.

Where applicable, quantitative data such as the number of students successfully completing the tasks and their scores were analyzed to measure the tasks' effectiveness.

This study adhered to ethical guidelines by ensuring voluntary participation, obtaining informed consent from all participants, and maintaining confidentiality. The study was approved by the institutional review boards of the Financial University under the Government of the Russian Federation and the University of Science and Technology "MISIS".

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Comparative analysis of cross-cultural communication models

The results of the comparative analysis of selected cross-cultural communication models presented in the Table 1.

R. Lewis's model is rather simplified and explains the differences in cultures mainly in the context of the structuring of working time and other activities. Whereas E. T. Hall's and G. Hofstede's models are more detailed and touch upon larger range of cultural characteristics of different nations.

Such are the preliminary conclusions concerning the distinctive features of each model. In the next part of our research, we will examine in detail the discussed models of IC proposed by E. Hall, G. Hofstede and R. Lewis. Nowadays they form the basis of scientific knowledge about cultural diversification and are widely used in cultural research and studying programs across the world.

For the first time the term "intercultural communication" was introduced in the middle of the XX century by American cultural anthropologist and founder of IC as a discipline E. T. Hall (Rogers et al., 2002: 3). By IC he considered the exchange of information between representatives of different languages and cultures. Additionally, it is a negotiated grasp of the significance of human experiences in various social systems and communities. E. T. Hall inferred: "Culture is communication and communication is culture" (Rogers et al., 2002: 7).

TABLE 1. Comparative analysis of selected cross-cultural communication models

Features of model	E. T. Hall's communicative model of culture	G. Hofstede's parametric model of culture	R. Lewis's model of culture
General	E. T. Hall's model is similar to models by other authors as time is one of the most important factors causing cultural diversification. According to E. T. Hall cultures are divided into monochrome and polychronic in terms of time aspect. In G. Hofstede's model time facet is reflected in the "uncertainty avoidance" dimension. Finally, R. Lewis's model include one's perception of time and other components of reality by people of different cultures.	G. Hofstede's model, as already mentioned, correlates with other models in terms of time. In addition, the "uncertainty avoidance" dimension is partially reflected in E. T. Hall's "context orientation" one.	R. Lewis's model, as we have mentioned above, include the perception of time as a distinctive cultural feature. Moreover, E.T. Hall's division of cultures into monochronic and polychronic is practically the same as R. Lewis's linear-active and multi-active division
Specific	The model differs from other ones by the presence of "space" and "information flow" dimensions. G. Hofstede's and R. Lewis's models do not include the perception of such kind of factors.	G. Hofstede is the only one who devised "individualism/collectivism" and "femininity/masculinity" cultural element. E. T. Hall's and R. Lewis's models do not include such aspect of analyses.	Despite sharing some similarities with other models in terms of time perception; however, R. Lewis's model has a third, distinctive parameter as a reactive type of culture.
Distinct	E. T. Hall's model of culture is focused on the perception of reality by a person, such as time, space and information. Cultural difference according to E. T. Hall manifests itself through this kind of factors, which does not correlate with other models.	G. Hofstede's model and cultural dimensions that he identified are focused on the nature of the relationship between individuals, between an individual and society. His parametric model reflects cultural diversity through human relations at work, in family and in a society itself.	R. Lewis's model is unique in its structure because, unlike E. T. Hall's and G. Hofstede's models, which include four cultural dimensions, it does not highlight any specific parameters of comparison and divides all cultures just into three types. This cultural model is rather simplified and explains the differences in cultures mainly in the context of the structuring of working time and other activities. Whereas E. T. Hall's and G. Hofstede's models are more detailed and touch upon larger range of cultural characteristics of different nations.

Further development of his ideas about the relationship between culture and communication led E. T. Hall concluded that there is a need to teach culture. With this purpose he came up the concept of communicative model of culture (Kulikova, 2011). E. T. Hall identified four main dimensions affecting the process of cross-cultural communication. They are as follows: time, context, space and information flows.

Now let us look more specifically at these aspects. In terms of time, the anthropologist divided cultures into monochronic and polychronic (Hall & Hall, 1990: 19). People in cultures with monochromatic orientation see time linearly and prefer to carry out their tasks one by one without combining them. Whereas in polychromatic cultures time is viewed in more vague way. Representatives of such kind of culture tend to do many things simultaneously.

Context orientation involves dividing cultures into high-context and low-context (Schoen, 2015: 2). The first type is characterized by the much presence of non-verbal signals and unwritten rules, communication is held as a clear flow of information that does not deviate from the main topic and purpose of interaction. People of such kind of culture are deeply rooted in ideologies, beliefs and traditions. In countries of the second type communication tend to be very straightforward and apparent, the dialog tends to be held in more relaxed way.

Speaking about the space orientation, E. T. Hall means different personal space or "territory" needed for comfortable communication. Everybody is encircled by an imperceptible bubble of space, which varies in size depending on cultural traits. People get anxious or hostile when this bubble is altered by the presence of too many or too few other people in it (Hall & Hall, 1990: 11). The exact size of this space is determined by many factors, such as cultural background, communicative situation and emotional state of a person.

Finally, yet importantly cultural dimension that we are to mention is the information flow or speed of the communicative situation (Schoen, 2015: 4). It deals with the way how fast information is reported by the speaker and by which complexity it is received by the recipient. This aspect is closely related to the trust and confidence while speaking with a stranger. The fact is that in some cultures it is quite easy for people to strike up a dialogue with a little-known person. However, this conversation will not be deep and get personal. As we know Americans are very outgoing and easily can get into a contact, but it's really difficult to penetrate their inner feelings and thoughts. The French, in contrary, are more reserved, it is much harder to enter into a dialogue with them, because it is needed to gain their trust at first. Nevertheless, as soon as one succeed in it, they will open up completely.

Another way of classifying cultural dimensions influencing the interaction of cultures has been proposed by Dutch sociologist G. Hofstede. His parametric model, like E. T. Hall's one, is based on four dimensions, namely power distance, collectivism/individualism, femininity/masculinity, and uncertainty avoidance (Kulikova, 2011). Now we are going to look closely at each of them.

The first dimension, power distance, examines how people relate to the varied degrees of social inequality that exist in every nation. G. Hofstede characterized this component of cultural diversity at the level of subordinates' acceptance of the unequal allocation of authority in different social institutions within a state. There are cultures with low and high-power distances, according to G. Hofstede. In cultures of the first type superiors and inferiors communicate in a less formal, freer manner. In such societies a subordinate has the right to disagree with the boss's perspective or choice, whereas the senior is always open to communication.

All contradictions are resolved through constructive conversations, in which all participants are willing to make concessions if necessary. By contrast, in cultures of high-power distance there is a strict social hierarchy which determines the way of communication between lower and higher status members of society (Naumenko & Morozova, 2018: 145). Hence, an authoritarian or patriarchal management style is adopted. Additionally, it has to be said that power distance can be observed not only in work relationships, but also in family ones. Thus, in cultures of high-power distance type a child is supposed to obey their older relatives and respect their opinions whatever they are, while in low power distance cultures a child is given more freedom of expressing his own wish.

The second dimension which is individualism/collectivism examines whose interests are most important to a person, their own or the groups. In the collectivistic societies interests of a group are put higher than ones of individual (Kulikova, 2011). Children of such kind of culture are raised with the focus on mutual help and benefit for all members of a society. In contrary, in an individualistic society interests and goals of any individual prevail on those of entire community. Accordingly, the influence of the group on an individual is minimal. After comparing the indicators of two cultural characteristics (power distance and individualism/collectivism), G. Hofstede discovered that they are inversely connected. By this it is implied that countries with a large power distance are likely to have collectivist cultures, while countries with a short power distance tend to have individualistic cultures.

As for the third dimension which is femininity/masculinity it is tied with the manifestation of traditionally male of female patterns of behavior by members of a nation (Naumenko & Morozova, 2018; Hernández García de Velazco et al., 2022). In societies of masculine nature competition, achievements and material welfare are considered the leading community's values. The level of sex differentiation is high there, so men are aimed at moving up the social ladder, while women have to be modest and sensitive, creating comfort in the house and raising children. In female-type cultures, on the contrary, people value family and human relations more than their social status. The differentiation of sexes in this kind of culture is quite blurred, so men and women perform approximately the same social roles.

The last dimension devised by G. Hofstede which is uncertainty avoidance examines the degree of people's anxiousness about unclear or unexpected situations (Kulikova, 2011). Countries with a high tolerance for uncertainty are those in which unexpected events and situations are viewed as usual and so their behavior depends on specific conditions. Written laws and regulations are not considered obligatory in countries with a high tolerance for ambiguity. Differently, in cultures with a low tolerance for unpredictability unexpected situations induce emotional distress and discomfort. Following laws, codified rules, and regulations is essential here; thus, it helps people avoid as many accidents as possible. Within the framework, their communicative behavior is defined as persistent, active, time is viewed as a resource, yet they are conservative and restless.

The third model introduced by R. Lewis divide cultures of three types: linear-active, multi-active and reactive (Seluzhytskaya, 2019: 135). It is natural for linear-active cultures to organize their activities in a clear sequence, performing one action after another. Combining clear goal setting and rational time consumption is considered as a key to success here.

In contrast, representatives of multi-active cultures tend to perform many actions at a time and often they do not complete them. People of such kind of prioritize the order of their activities not according to the degree of its importance in relation to the schedule, but according to the degree of its attractiveness at exact moment of time. Interpersonal relationships are of greater value for them than completing pre-planned tasks.

The third type of culture that is reactive can be described as one where politeness and respect are the most important factors. People of such type of culture prefer to listen their opponent first and only after it they gently give their response. The main type of communication there is a monolog, while in cultures of the first two types it is a dialog. However, individuals of reactive kind are likely to discuss many things at a time. It is also very important to mention that reactive cultures are deeply rooted in traditions and beliefs. Establishing trust, honoring traditions, and building relationships seem to be the most important things to people, so time in such cultures is seen as infinite; thus, rushing it would be considered as a sign of ignorance.

We can now summarize our theoretical research by saying that models that we described are all valuable in case of intercultural awareness. The interaction of essential cultural factors such as values, regulations, attitudes, and language codes lies in the center of cross-cultural dialogue. Paying attention to the heritage and national features of representatives from other cultures can help us to foresee and calculate the way they act in society and business. Practical knowledge of the fundamental characteristics of other cultures will reduce uncomfortable situations during conversation, provide the essential comprehension, and enable one to overcome communication challenges with representatives of other cultures.

Practical assignments for teaching intercultural communication

As it was mentioned above in the present educational practice, there are not so many assignments, the purpose of which is the development of knowledge about other cultures. One of such disciplines is clearly "Fundamentals of Intercultural Communication". This discipline is a basic one in the curricula - the classes offer a lot of tasks for comparing cultures.

Below we provide some examples of professional tasks that are used in the process of teaching the discipline "Fundamentals of Intercultural Communication" and "Practical Course of Spanish as a Second Foreign Language", the purpose of which is to familiarize with the models of intercultural communication presented above.

It is a common knowledge, that the goal of any educational process and training of competent personnel is the formation of such professional competence that it would allow a specialist to solve various groups of professional problems and tasks.

Within the framework of the discipline "Theory and Practice of Intercultural Communication", which is aimed at developing cultural and communicative competence, students can also be offered to find a solution to different practical cases.

To work out theoretical material on models of IC and acquire increased intercultural competence of manpower, we can propose the following professional tasks (Table 2).

TABLE 2. Professional tasks for enhancing intercultural competence
and understanding IC model

Task structure	Task 1	Task 2
Generalized formulation of the problem	In large international corporations, cross-cultural teams are quite often formed to carry out joint projects. The urgent question is how to solve the inevitable problems of language, social and psychological nature?	Modern society requires manpower capable of intercultural interaction. Observations show that today more and more problems arise when working with migrants. To maintain a peaceful and calm environment within the team or organization, there is a need to find solutions to overcome cultural and language barriers in communication.
Key task	Describe what culturally determined difficulties may arise during the interaction of members of an international group? What solutions can you propose to eliminate them?	Give your idea of what a successful intercultural interaction should be like.
Context for solving the problem	A large German company specializing in the production of engine oils chose to develop a new product to attract the consumers' attention. With this purpose, it was decided to unite employees of Swedish, Russian and German subsidiaries of the company into a single project group. At the first interaction between the participants, the presence of linguistic, cultural and psychological difficulties became obvious.	Imagine that you are a young unexperienced schoolteacher who has recently graduated from university and has come to his first job in an American public school. There are several children in your class who come from other countries, mainly from India and Italy. They are often the object of mockery for their classmates; everyone avoids them. Due to misunderstanding and bullying from peers in the class, these children have poor academic performance in all subjects.
Tasks that will lead to a solution	Describe the cultures of Germany, Sweden and Russia according to three models of IC (E. T. Hall, G. Hofstede, R. Lewis). Collect information about the characteristics of business cultures of Germany, Sweden and Russia. Compare your findings and identify where difficulties and misunderstandings may arise. Develop measures to overcome various communication barriers and increase mutual understanding within the group.	Describe American, Italian and Indian cultures according to models of IC communication introduced by E. T. Hall, G. Hofstede, R. Lewis. Conduct a comparative analysis of cultures and find out where the difficulties in interaction may occur. Consider ways to improve your intercultural competence as a teacher. Suggest your options for solving the problem of non-acceptance of migrants in class. What can you, as a teacher, do to defuse the situation in an international classroom?

At this point we conclude our review of potential tasks on work out the material on models of IC. We have presented only some variants of tasks, but other examples can be given. The main thing is that they meet the needs of the studied topic. For example, students may be given a task to do a role play, where all the participants are divided into two teams. Each team consists of representatives from two different cultures.

Considering the fact that at the present stage one of the educational goals in teaching foreign languages is for students to master not one, but two or more foreign languages, we will consider within the framework of the article also how knowledge about the culture of countries helps in learning Spanish within the discipline "Practical course of Spanish as a second foreign language".

"Currently, the social order forms new trends in the field of teaching and learning foreign languages in higher education. Expansion of international relations, integration into a single European educational space, development of the international labor market has created the need to train professionals of various profiles who are proficient in foreign languages. In conditions when one of the main goals of the higher education system is to prepare students for social and professional interaction, effective communication in a multicultural society, it is becoming increasingly important for graduates to master not one, but two or more foreign languages. The concept of multilingualism has become determinant in the approach of the Council of Europe to the problem of language learning" (Alimova & González, 2018: 231).

Continuing the idea of realizing the models of intercultural communication within the framework of the discipline "Practical Course of Spanish as a Second Foreign Language", which stands in the curriculum after "Fundamentals of Intercultural Communication", we will give examples of assignments in Spanish (Table 3).

The proposed assignments are designed considering the outlined models. The reference to the second language is determined by the polynguality of modern education and the authors' attempt to show the possibilities of polynguality in the study of cultures in practice.

TABLE 3. Examples of assignments for "Practical course of Spanish as a second foreign language" Incorporating Intercultural Communication Models

Task structure	Task 1	Task 2
Topic	Character and traditions of the population of Spanish-speaking countries	Organization of meeting and reception of business partners from Venezuela
General formulation of the problem.	It is impossible to imagine learning Spanish without knowledge of the main national traditions and temperament of the population of Spain and Latin American countries.	The significant cultural differences and misaligned expectations can lead to misunderstandings and ultimately the breakdown of negotiations.

TABLE 3. Continuación

Task structure	Task 1	Task 2
The main questions	What are the main differences in planning affairs and their implementation observed in the behavior of representatives of Spanish-speaking countries and Russian people?	What were the cultural differences and expectations that affected the negotiations from the beginning? In what ways could the companies have adapted their negotiation approaches to achieve a mutually satisfactory agreement? What was the role of expectations regarding speed of progress and contractual terms in the stalemate of negotiations? How could TechWave Solutions have shown more interest in the local customs and cultural values of InnovateTech Venezuela? What steps could both companies have taken to resolve the lack of engagement and evasion in responses during negotiations? What strategies could they have implemented to maintain more effective communication as the negotiations progressed?
Context	The Russian representative arrived at the scheduled business meeting between representatives of Spain, Russia, and Argentina at the office of a Spanish firm 15 minutes before it started. What was his surprise when, upon entering the meeting room, he met no one there. Argentinean representatives arrived only forty minutes later, and the hosts of the meeting - the Spaniards arrived at the office only an hour later. Neither the Argentines nor the Spaniards apologized and continued to write something quickly in their notebooks, while the Russian representative calmly waited for the meeting to begin.	The company TechWave Solutions, an international technology company based in St. Petersburg, aimed to expand its presence in Latin America, including the Venezuelan market. After conducting a market analysis, they identified the company InnovateTech Venezuela, as a possible local company with which they could establish a strategic partnership to boost their growth in Venezuela. Both companies showed interest in an initial meeting to explore collaboration opportunities. The first meeting was held in a cordial atmosphere, where representatives of both sides introduced themselves and expressed their expectations for the potential collaboration. However, from the very beginning, some cultural differences and expectations became apparent that would eventually affect the negotiations. At the second meeting, the conversations became more formal, and TechWave Solutions presented its detailed proposal on how the collaboration could benefit both companies. However, a lack of clarity was noted in InnovateTech Venezuela's response and willingness to make concessions. The expectations regarding the speed of progress and the contractual terms did not coincide between both parties.

TABLE 3. Continuación

Task structure	Task 1	Task 2
		As the negotiations progressed, the cultural differences intensified. TechWave Solutions had a more direct vision and focused on results. TechWave Solutions representatives felt that InnovateTech Venezuela's answers were evasive and did not reflect a clear commitment towards collaboration. Over time, both companies began to express frustration and discontent. TechWave Solutions was puzzled by the lack of decision and the apparent lack of interest in closing a deal, while InnovateTech Venezuela perceived TechWave Solutions as too direct and unwilling to adapt to local customs and cultural values. Despite efforts to bring positions closer, negotiations stalled and eventually broke down. Both companies decided to end the talks without reaching a mutually satisfactory agreement.

Another type of assignment that contributes to the effective development of intercultural competence in the learning process is practice-oriented project assignments. They can be used both in the process of seminar work and as an intermediate control not only within the framework of the discipline "Fundamentals of Intercultural Communication", but also in the process of learning a foreign language, as they allow you to apply the knowledge acquired within various disciplines with future professional activities students (Dronova et al., 2023).

One example of such a task could be a project assignment "Organization of an excursion route for foreign colleagues".

It is necessary to develop your own author's route for foreign partner colleagues in order to introduce them to our culture and traditions. The excursion program should be designed for 3-4 days and start in the city of negotiations and end in a city with an international airport for the convenience of foreign partners.

Task conditions:

• it is necessary to determine the target audience (country, age, interests, cultural characteristics) and the number of people in the group and take this into account when planning the route;

• conduct a comparative analysis of cultures and find out where the difficulties in interaction may occur during the route.

• the route should show the cultural wealth of our country and take into account the cultural characteristics of the guests;

- all places and events included in the itinerary (hotels, restaurants, museums, concerts, exhibitions, etc.) must be real;

- when planning a route, it is necessary to consider the distances between points, the schedule of transport or the possibility of renting a vehicle, as well as the budget of the company.

- Providing the results of the work:

- Estimate – detailing costs by day. It is executed in word or excel format and sent to the teacher. If an excursion is planned for a fee (optional, in free time), then its cost is prescribed, but it is not included in the total for the day.

- Booklet – advertising brochure. The booklet should be colorful and informative. It is necessary to briefly describe the route and its advantages, write which cities or places are visited on which days. Format: A4 sheet. It is possible to fold three times like a classic booklet, but other options are possible if they do not go to the detriment of the purpose and informativeness.

- Presentation: During the presentation to the "external relations department" of your organization, it is necessary to talk about the route as a whole and briefly for each day. The goal is to interest and justify the cultural significance of the route and its validity in the context of attracting foreign partners and establishing productive business relationships, the presentation should be indicative, attractive, "selling". After the presentation, listeners ask questions along the route. Presentation structure: title slide with the name of the route; comparative analysis of the cultures and a list of possible difficulties, slide with a brief description of the route and its display on the map; at least one slide for each day of the trip: with the name of the day (name of the city / sights), main points, photos, if desired - the map of the day. On the slide with the description of the route or on the last slide - the total cost of the trip in rubles per person and per group.

Completion of such assignments helps students to improve their word processing skills, prepare reports, develop critical thinking, and help strengthen interdisciplinary connections. Students realize that the material they have learned in the Fundamentals of Intercultural Communication course helps them to solve academic problems related to the study of other theoretical and practical disciplines.

To develop tasks that would fully reflect situations where knowledge of cultural characteristics is applicable, it is worth contacting specialists in this field, namely: linguists, interpreters, diplomats, politicians, and heads of international business corporations.

CONCLUSION

In conclusion we can confidently claim that intercultural communication surrounds us everywhere, in all spheres of our social life. Therefore, it is so important to be culturally aware in order to successfully communicate not only with your compatriots, but also with representatives of other cultures, traditions, and religions.

On the basis of the work carried out in the theoretical part of our work we have come to the following conclusions.

A detailed study of the main global trends in intercultural interaction allowed us to get an idea of the direction in which global cooperation is moving. Moreover, an overview of the current po-

litical, economic and cultural world situation allowed us to understand and see what underlies the world "landscape" that we observe today. Thus, we were convinced that intercultural communication does not always bring positive results.

By comparing the main models of IC introduced by E. T. Hall, G. Hofstede and R. Lewis, using the "general-specific-distinct" method, we identified individual characteristics of each model. This allowed us to see the features of each approach to the study of cultural diversity.

The study of the cultural dimensions that were identified by each author allows us to see by what parameters cultural difference as a whole is determined, and also helps to get an idea of how different cultures are.

In the empirical part of our work, we provided some examples of cultures and practical situations applicable to each cultural dimension. Furthermore, we developed examples of possible professional tasks that can be used in the process of teaching cultural communication as an academic discipline. Several equally important conclusions can be drawn here. Consequently, the application of other research methods and adding other communication models can be used to conduct further research and development of the topic. Practical contribution of our study is that professional tasks we have devised will be useful and they will be able to employ them in their classes. We are convinced that these cases would help both students and teachers to practice their communication skills and apply their theoretical knowledge of IC models as well as the role of the models in teaching practice.

We must mention that study has some limitations connected to the used methods of the research and chosen models of communication. Firstly, the focus of our research is to study the three main models of intercultural communication, which are the most common and therefore relevant. However, there are some other models from other authors that can also be taken into consideration and elaboration. Secondly, limitations in the methods we have used do not allow us to conduct a full analysis of the selected material. Therefore, when using, for example, an experimental method where representatives of different cultural communities are placed in an experimental situation, other results and conclusions can be revealed.

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