

## DEVELOPMENT OF INTERCULTURAL COMMUNICATION IN UKRAINIAN MILITARY HIGHER EDUCATION INSTITUTIONS

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In recent years intercultural cooperation has been increasing due to the international integration and globalization. Students play an active role in this process as they have different practices abroad. Today in Ukraine one of the significant tasks is to create the theoretical and practical basis for teaching students to communicate and cooperate on the intercultural level. The knowledge of foreign languages helps the students of different specialties to promote their mobility and international competences. Learning a foreign language in higher education establishments has a cultural sense, because a future specialist who knows a foreign language has to perform professional activities on the international level, adapt to the new means of communication, learn another culture, comprehend own ethno-cultural source, adapt in multicultural space and show tolerance to foreign language and culture.

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**T**he need to consider the issue of forming intercultural communications between students of higher educational establishments of Ukraine on a new theoretical and methodological level is caused by the increasing dynamics of modern society development and the world community as a whole. Various aspects of intercultural communication will always be relevant. Scientists from many countries have always been interested in them. The question of intercultural communications is complex and multifaceted. As the famous explorer of the "Theory of Cultural Dialogue" Mikhail *Bakhtin* once said: the culture reveals itself more fully and deeply only in the eyes of another culture... [1, 21].

Through the dialogue or meeting between the two cultures, they do not merge and mingle, but enrich each other. In the social philosophy these relations of different cultures were named cross-cultural communications, which means an exchange between two or more cultures and products of their activities carried out in different forms. This exchange can take place both in politics and in interpersonal communication between people, at home, in a family, during informal contacts. And this finding suggests that the intercultural communication has a great variety of aspects which covers various sides of this process - not only linguistic, but also social and cultural foundations of intercultural communication. Intercultural Communication means not only direct dialogue of representatives of different cultures, but also pragmatic understanding of this communication.

### Foreign language in intercultural communication

The role of the "Foreign language" discipline in intercultural communication is unique because mastering of foreign language provides functional dialogic interaction of different cultural world outlooks and traditions. Besides, foreign language classes create academic microclimate in which linguistic knowledge and skills of a student are fundamentally combined with intercultural basis. S. Ter-Minasova noted that each foreign language lesson is a crossroads of cultures and practice of intercultural communication, because every word gives an idea of the world depending on the national consciousness [4, 32].

Thus, the mastery of the English language, like any other language, can be confidently classified as a component of the overall culture of the individual by which the individual is attached to the world culture. It also should be noted that intercultural communication affects the development of the Ukrainian society. Not less important is the possession of the local lore, because it is a necessary condition for the interpenetration and interaction of cultures of such a complex and multifaceted process as intercultural communication.

Indeed, in a casual conversation with a foreigner who has arrived in Ukraine it is hardly ever appropriate to turn to description of the charms of the US or the UK capitals, instead of stories about local attractions. Not less important is the role of ethno-cultural components of communicants (traditions, customs,

national ceremonies, national consumer culture elements, national picture of the world, national artistic culture) in the process of intercultural communication which expands proportionally to the intensification of intercultural contacts. It is worth mentioning that over 100 nationalities live in Ukraine. The prominent position in the intercultural communication is occupied by the culture of representatives of different ethnic communities where ethnic tolerance is a determining factor. Student environments are among areas of the most intense inter-ethnic and national contacts. Therefore, the important task of modern higher educational establishment is to form the communication culture and train inter-ethnic tolerance.

In our opinion, a student of the higher educational establishment, regardless of the speciality, requires a complex of knowledge and skills allowing to perceive and produce messages containing local lore information in formal and informal intercultural communicative contacts.

### International cooperation as a part of the educational process

A 2005 study by Kanibolotska Olha concluded that the world community has formulated the main task for the educational system of every country. The task is to educate the citizen with an unbiased view of the world, aware of the cultural differences among the various peoples and being tolerant to them [3,14]. International cooperation as a part of the educational process is important for the personal development and prospects of employment, because it

creates an opportunity for young people to communicate with the representatives of other cultures and respect the variety of their traditions and motives to verbal communication. Every year representatives of higher technical institutions of Ukraine, such as National University of Civil Protection of Ukraine, Kharkiv; Lviv State University of Life Safety, Lviv; Academy of Fire Safety named after Heroes of Chernobyl, Cherkasy exchange their experience and knowledge with representatives of units from Poland, Belarus', Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, Germany, Romania during joint international trainings in the sphere of life safety.

Practically every spring the Main School of Fire Service organizes international trainings in Pionki, where groups of representatives from different countries exchange their knowledge and experience. Trainings consist of four blocks: rescuing and evacuation work, chemical and ecologic rescuing, rescuers' work management and also the work of the staff. It is also worth mentioning that representatives of the Main School of Fire Service of the PPRD EAST (Prevention, Preparedness and Response to natural and man-made disasters) project, within the framework of the Eastern Partnership (EaP) have conducted a series of workshops for representatives of Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus', Moldova and Ukraine.

As we can see, modern society brings new demands to professional training of specialists, as they do not only need to use deep professional knowledge being flexible while using it, but they also must be ready to solve professional tasks in foreign language communication conditions. Acquiring professional qualification by students that fully conforms to the common European and world standards includes mastering English within the professional vector. That is why the topicality of the issue of professionally directed technologies for foreign language learning within the system of higher education does not evoke any doubt, since, "...one of the major targets of the university is to provide training of graduates on the basis of implementing new methods and techniques of learning, European integration of educational, scientific and

innovative processes..." [3,12].

At the same time, international cooperation allows the education to be more "alive" and open to new trends, to deepen cooperation and competition among educational institutions, and also to strengthen intercultural communication. The need for effective intercultural communication, and hence the ability to identify cultural differences of peoples, respect them and find common ground, is particularly acute in the period of independent Ukraine when the issue of joining the European Union encourages the establishment of international and intercultural relations.

It should be noted that intercultural communication is not only a science, but a certain set of necessary social skills which are desirable. Therefore, the aim of communication in an intercultural context is the achievement of mutual understanding and solving of common personal or professional problems. The central concept in the field of intercultural communication is a "cross-cultural worldview". It is connected with the rapid changes characterizing the modern society. It requires appropriate grounding of a student for the future life. Therefore, the primary role in providing the mobility and competitiveness of students (future professionals) in the global labor market belongs to culture and education. The development of the intercultural communication in higher educational establishments should be implemented in three main areas which can be achieved through the participation of students in projects and programs of international cooperation: interlingual communication; interdisciplinary communication, communication between educational systems.

### **Interdisciplinary communication**

Educational activities with formation of intercultural communication should be built on the basis of features of the phenomena that occur in real life.

Although in the higher military educational establishments such as National University of Civil Protection of Ukraine, Kharkiv; Lviv State University of Life Safety, Lviv; Academy of Fire Safety named after Heroes of Chernobyl, Cherkasy technical disciplines prevail,

there is a number of disciplines of social vector and humanities which develop practical professional skills in communication and increase the overall level of individual language culture. They include the Ukrainian language (for professional purposes), Culture of business communication, Rhetoric, History of Ukraine, History of Ukrainian culture, The foundations of democracy, Philosophy, Political science, Religion history, Professional ethics and office etiquette, Demography, Sociology, Ethnic psychology, Psychology of creativity, Theory and practice of education, Higher education of Ukraine and the Bologna process and others.

For example, in the courses "History of Ukrainian culture" and "History of Ukrainian and foreign culture" students and cadets get significant supplementary knowledge of the theory and history of culture. The teaching staff of the department of Ukrainian studies has initiated the introduction of optional courses in the Ukrainian language "Improvement of language training" and "Culture of educational and scientific activities of cadets and students" to help freshmen easier adapt to the learning process and improve the quality of education.

Educational programmes, text books, manuals and methodological materials are worked out in the university, in particular: "Ukrainian language for professional purpose" and "Culture of interpersonal interaction" by Maryna Kulchytska and Olha Shelyukh. Adapting courses in rhetoric and culture of business communication to the practical needs of the field and the current requirements for the professional activity and interpersonal communication, cadets and students of the cultural club create the University literary and cultural wall newspaper "The feather of the Firebird". It corresponds with Nataliya Halskova's statement that "the process of the students' acquisition of personal experience in communication with the foreign lingual culture requires the creation of situations of practical use of the language as a tool for intercultural learning and interaction"...The scholar offers to expand the limits of the educational process, i.e., she does not insist on increasing the quantity of hours

for learning a foreign language, but promotes “the way out of your room”. It is clear that *extracurricular activities* in comparison with the educational process provide greater variability and space for many kinds of learning activities of students. It is important, that they provide organization of joint projects and seminars of different educational establishments in contrast to the learning process [2, 8].

*Extracurricular* activities provide the opportunity to communicate with speakers of other languages and cultures in real life. They give the possibility to master methods of: organization of intercultural exchange, as a part of the educational process; carrying out intercultural projects at various levels and content; revealing motivation to study linguistic-cultural and real communications.

Most scholars agree with the opinion that the use of *extracurricular* activities in the process of the formation of the intercultural communication is effective and should be unrestricted. S. Ter-Minasova asserts the need of “development of communications in the extracurricular clubs, groups, public lectures in a foreign language and the scientific society of interests”. In recent years, the department of foreign languages and technical translation of Lviv State University of Life Safety has been organizing the “English Club” focused on skills in communicating with foreigners. The goals of the club meetings are the following: to improve the knowledge of English among the cadets and students; to enrich the level of spoken foreign language for specific purposes; to teach them to share interesting and necessary information; to assist in establishing contacts and facilitate communication in a foreign language. Another equally important part of the formation of intercultural communication is organizing events to mark the famous dates and international holidays: round tables, debates, contests and etc.

Since the students from different parts of Ukraine, as well as close and distant foreign countries study in Ukrainian universities there are actively carried out measures, through which the knowledge of different cultures is

widened, some communicative and cultural assumptions are changed and people’s behavior in the situations of intercultural communication is affected. For example, in our University there is the *culturological* circle of cadets and students at the Department of Ukrainian studies which organizes scientific workshops, international competitions, anniversary parties, lectures, discussions, masterclasses, film shows with comments and discussions during the year.

At the same time, the pedagogical staff of the University regularly organizes and conducts scientific and practical seminars for cadets and students, academic readings about important figures of the Ukrainian and foreign culture, dates and events. The International Competition of Ukrainian language named after Petro Jacyk and all-Ukrainian Student Olympiads of Ukrainian language are also held every year.

The staff of the department of Ukrainian studies conducts a variety of educational activities through which our youth understands the philosophical meaning of life and sees the world in its best.

This idea has been realized through the following projects: parties, lectures, talks devoted to outstanding Ukrainians and citizens of Lviv; annual anniversary memorial party dedicated to T. Shevchenko; annual workshop for Easter eggs painting; performances with staff and students of the University participating in the annual amateur theatre competition.

In the University a new kind of education was introduced - a cinema circle opening the horizons of the Ukrainian poetic cinema for cadets and students. Before films are shown, there is always a pre-lecture on the important issues raised in the films, about directors who made the film. The participation of cadets and students in the work of the theatre circle helps to develop their moral and ethical values and aesthetic tastes. The University theatre circle participants do not aim to show the historical events, but through artistic word, songs, music, dance they evoke empathy, because this is what makes us concerned about something, and this is the main trait of a true rescuer. They

say, the story tells about the events by means of the language of figures, and art, literature – by the language of human destinies. The human destiny and a Man are the most important things in this world. The rescue of people was the main thing which courageous heroes, namely fire fighters, liquidators did at Chernobyl Nuclear Power station. Every year our students commemorate this tragic event through dramatizing. Every two years the International scientific conference for cadets and students “Culture as a phenomenon of the human spirit” is held. It highlights the traditional conceptual principles and priorities of the modern Ukrainian and world cultural paradigm. The participants (155 people) were the cadets and students not only from our University, but also from the National Ivan Franko University, National University of Lviv Polytechnic, Lviv State University of Internal Affairs, Lviv University of Business and Law, Dnipropetrovsk National University of Railway Transport, Ukrainian Academy of Printing, Academy of Fire Safety named after Heroes of Chernobyl, Cherkasy, The Main Fire School of Republic of Poland and the Institute for Command Engineers of the Ministry for Emergency Situations of the Republic of Belarus.

### **Communications between the educational systems**

Today the communicative process is a necessary condition for formation, development and functioning of educational social system because through it the connection between generations becomes possible, as well as accumulation and transmission of social experience, its enrichment, the division of labor and exchange of its products and also organization of social activities.

Due to the modern means of communication there is a possibility to get information and knowledge from different sources, in particular at a distance.

A good example is the creation of the first academic Internet-television in Ukraine. The idea of creating a media resource belongs to the doctor of pedagogical sciences, professor, rector of Lviv State University of Life Safety

Mykhaylo Kozyar. "The level of safety culture of our citizens as compared with the European countries is rather low. Getting in extreme situations, people do not know how to act. Teaching safety culture should be started from childhood. As the educational establishment providing a range of issues in the field of safety, we would like to improve the situation. Taking into account the increasing role of information technologies in the human life, we decided to use the online environment for training aims," – said the rector. Our Safety TV Channel started its work and functioning on the base of Internet technologies. IPTV is a new technology which will effectively transmit a TV channel via public Internet. The information environment has a very large impact on people's minds, but not everything that is announced in the mass media is reliable, objective and useful. Therefore, the task of the educator and tutor is to teach a young person to perceive and evaluate media information reasonably. The media culture is around us, so its application in the educational process will be quite natural.

## Conclusion

Thus, the intercultural communication is a significant factor in the quality of education which contributes to students' communicative competence and directs them to the foreign language intercultural communication in the context of the dialogue of cultures. So, in order to train the students in foreign language communication, help them to see the world and at the same time realize themselves as an integral part of intercultural interaction, it is necessary to change approaches to the educational process: to turn from the theoretical knowledge to practical international trainings, projects, programs; to raise the level of teaching foreign languages and foreign literature. The development and implementation of the acquired knowledge and skills by means of the international cooperation will improve the quality of education of young people.

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