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(E-mail: zhankina@mail.ru)***Intercultural competence: subject matter and particular nature**

The article outlines the different approaches of the definition of intercultural competence. In the context of the internationalization of education and science the formation of intercultural competence of future professionals is especially important for high school, which includes the ability to navigate in the phenomena of another way of life, consciousness, system of senses, to perceive and understand the facts of a particular culture, to compare them with their own worldview and cultural experiences and to find the difference and similarity between them.

*Key words:* Language, intercultural competence, high school education, communication, culture, cultural diversity, foreign language teaching, internationalization.

Diversity and globality of links and interactions of a modern person, the need for contacts and mutual exchange between individuals, communities, cultures in the world area caused great interest of various sciences' representatives to the process of interaction and interference of cultures that has led to emergence of a new theory of intercultural communication. The notion of «intercultural communication» was introduced to science with the work of G.Treyger and E.Hall «*Culture and Communication: A Model and an Analysis*».

Generally accepted definitions of intercultural communication are:

- Interpersonal communication in the special context with the cultural differences of its members being revealed;
- Communication between various cultures beams with their differences leading to various problems;
- Complex of relationships between various cultures beams.

Vast variety of interpretations of analyzed notion is embodied in the great number of classifications of its types and forms. For example, on the micro-level only there are:

- Interethnic communication;
- Communication between representatives of generation subcultures;
- Communication between representatives of various social levels, demographic groups (religious, sex and age, etc.), etc. [1].

Thus, even the initial analysis of the phenomenon of intercultural communication gives grounds to judge the complexity, ambiguity of the phenomenon. Therefore, there is occurrence and emergence of various theoretical and methodological concepts expected. In modern science there are following trends in the theory of intercultural communication known:

- Uncertainty Reduction Theory (Initial Interaction Theory);
- Integrative communication theory (theory of cross-cultural adaptation)
- Coordinated Management of Meaning
- Rhetorical Theory
- Constructivist Theory
- Theory of Social Categories
- Conflict Theory (Face Negotiation Theory)

This is the list of main concepts developed in the theory of intercultural communication.

In the most general form intercultural communication is an interaction of individuals, groups or organizations belonging to different cultures. In this context the decisive factor is the question of the importance of cultural differences, the ability to recognize them, understand and properly take them into account in the communication process. In order to achieve mutual understanding in this process there is a need for a certain set of knowledge and skills common to all communicants, which in theory of intercultural communication is called intercultural competence.

Unlike the phenomenon of competence, the concept of intercultural competence does not have such a high degree of scientific elaboration. According to A.P. Sadokhin, intercultural competence has not yet become a subject of special studies.

In foreign literature, the term «intercultural competence» arose during the formation of intercultural communication as an independent scientific discipline. In the context of attitude to a different culture and overcoming ethnic and cultural centrism, intercultural competence started to be regarded as «a set of analytical and strategic skills, expanding interpretational range of the individual in the process of interpersonal interaction with the representatives of other culture».

It should be noted that K. Knapp and A. Knapp-Potthoff are not alone in this interpretation of the concept of intercultural competence. Like them, a number of foreign researchers come to its definition from behaviorist point of view and believe that behavioral qualities of personality make up competence in communication with representatives of other cultures. Among these qualities there are:

- respect and a positive assessment of another person without prejudice;
- positive response to a different behavior;
- accepting interlocutor's point of view, the ability to empathize;
- tolerance for eventuality;
- ability to cope with the unknown and uncertain situation [2].

However in this structure of intercultural competence there are not language and cultural facts included, i.e. the diversity of cultural situations in which a person may be in the process of communication with representatives of other cultures is not taken into account. In fact, the presence of these behavioral qualities only can not ensure the formation of intercultural competence. But this does not mean that they can not be considered as part of a general model intercultural competence.

Later K. Knapp suggested an improved and modern model of intercultural competence, which he defined as «the ability to achieve equally successful understanding with the representatives of other cultures and communication communities and representatives of their culture». He singled out the following features this ability:

- understanding that communicative activity and behavior depends on culturally defined cognitive schemes;
- knowing models and communicative actions, their interpretation in one's own and a explored culture and language;
- willingness to accept intercultural context of communication;
- knowing a variety of communicative behaviors in intercultural interaction;
- general knowledge about the relationship between culture and communication, including dependency of mindset and behavior on the specific features of thinking of the culture, as well as the differences between cultures, which are determined by these features;
- a set of strategies to stabilize the interaction, i.e. to cope with tension and problems emerging in the communication process [2].

The main advantage of this approach is the highlighting such an aspect of intercultural competence as the ability to understand native and other cultures. Establishing connection between thinking and behavior appears to be another positive aspect. In general, K. Knapp's model is basically focused on behaviorist aspect of communication with different culture.

In structural terms, the concept of intercultural competence is in the range of scientific interests of the British scientist M. Byram, a professor of the University of Durham. Many Western scholars consider as a reference point his model of intercultural competence consisting of five elements (attitudes, knowledge, skills of interpreting and relating, skills of discovering and interaction, critical awareness of culture or political education) [3].

Such definitions are systemic in nature, and to understand them, it is to analyse all components of the theoretical construction of the «intercultural competence» as it combines and accumulates a great many qualities and skills. In this regard, it is necessary to admit that it is impossible to describe this notion in brief.

From the author's point of view, in order to communicate successfully in a different culture it is necessary to know the language, the country's history, art, economy, society, i.e. have comprehensive knowledge about the culture of this country.

By the mid 80s Western science has developed the idea that intercultural competence can be learned by mastering the knowledge gained in the process of intercultural communication. Knowledge of this kind was divided into specific, defined as information about a particular culture in the traditional aspects, and general, which include possessing such communication skills as tolerance, active listening, knowing common cultural universals.

Despite this division, intercultural competence is associated with both types of knowledge. Therefore, in the Western scientific literature, this phenomenon is considered, firstly, as the ability to form a cultural identity of someone else that involves learning much information about a different culture (up to the complete abandonment of the native cultural identity); secondly, as the ability to achieve success in contacts with representatives of different cultural communities, even in dim knowledge of the basic elements of the culture of their partners.

Summing up, it is possible to identify two approaches to the concept of intercultural competence, which have emerged in Western science:

- the first concept contains the idea of practical improvement of intercultural communication, cooperation and coexistence and mutual understanding; and this concept is aimed at mutual understanding of participants in the dialogue of cultures;
- according to the second concept, intercultural competence should be self-sufficient, i.e. it is not just a problem of perception, respect and recognition of other culture's representatives, but also the problem of identifying the differences between people.

In the Russian communication science, intercultural competence is defined as «the ability of some members of cultural community to seek understanding in the process of interaction with other cultures through the use of compensatory strategies for preventing conflicts between familiar and unfamiliar and create a new intercultural communicative community in the process of interaction» [4].

A.P. Sadokhin agrees with this conception of intercultural competence, and makes the following clarification: the notion of «intercultural competence», is primarily associated with amount and quality of information on the events and values of other cultures, which together with the techniques and methods that allow the communicants to achieve their goals, form the basis of intercultural competence, the main features of which are:

- openness to learning a foreign culture and perceiving psychological, social and other cultural differences;
- psychological attitude towards co-operation with other cultures;
- the ability to distinguish between collective and individual in the communicative behavior of other cultures;
- the ability to overcome the social, ethnic and cultural stereotypes;
- working knowledge of a set of communication means and the ability to choose them correctly, depending on the situation of communication;
- observance of etiquette rules in the communication process.

Based on these characteristics, the scientist believes that intercultural competence is a set of knowledge, skills and abilities, by means of which an individual can successfully communicate with partners from other cultures on an ordinary as well as on a professional level.

On the basis of this conception of intercultural competence, its content can be divided into three groups of components: affective, cognitive and procedural.

Affective elements include empathy and tolerance, which are not confined to the trust to a different culture. They form the psychological basis for effective intercultural interaction.

The group of cognitive elements include culture-specific knowledge which form a basis for an adequate interpretation of communicative behavior of representatives of different cultures, in order to prevent misunderstanding and to change their own communicative behavior in the interactive process

Procedural elements of intercultural competence are represented by strategies specifically used in situations of intercultural contacts. There are strategies for successful course of interaction, motivating verbal act, searching for common cultural elements, willingness to understand and identifying signals of misunderstanding, using the experience of previous contacts, strategies aimed at completion of knowledge about the cultural uniqueness of the partner and etc. [5].

It should also be mentioned that the study of the problems of intercultural competence is now carried out in several directions:

- concept of dialogue between cultures in education and in foreign languages teaching (V.S.Bibler, S.Y.Kurganov, V.V.Safonova, E.I.Passov);
- foundations of intercultural and language communication (E.M.Vereshchagin, G.V.Yelizarova, E.P.Shubin);
- formation of sociocultural competence of students (V.G.Vorobyov, A.V.Litvinov);
- formation of intercultural competence (I.A.Zimnyaya, S.V.Mureyeva, I.S.Solovyova, T.V.Parfyonova, T.M.Permyakova, T.A.Tkachenko);
- intercultural communicative competence of students in the process of professional training (I.L.Pluzhnik)

Cumulative analysis of studies in this area leads to the conclusion that a number of scholars interpret intercultural competence as an integrative personal formation that includes: common cultural, socio-cultural, linguistic socio-cultural components that are represented by a certain set of skills and knowledge.

Common cultural component involves awareness in common cultural knowledge and value systems that exist in different countries; sociocultural one refers to working knowledge of skills of interpersonal verbal communication with representatives of other countries, observing relevant ethical norms and etiquette of speech; linguistic socio-cultural one involves knowledge of the lexical and grammatical units inherent in the language of different countries, their proper use in the communicative process.

Other structural elements of intercultural competence were mentioned by I.S.Solovyova who denoted them as spheres: cognitive, pragmatic and motivational. Information about other cultures accumulates in cognitive sphere, with studying the culture of a country of learned language as well as the other cultures; pragmatic sphere involves acquisition of practical skills necessary for intercultural communication; motivational sphere includes formation of tolerance.

Of course, content and structural composition are reflected in the names of areas or components of intercultural competence. Nevertheless, we believe that in both situations there is no fundamental difference from each other. On the other hand, defining the concept of intercultural competence in the second case focuses on the psychological aspects of it: author argues that intercultural competence is a willingness to communicate (interests, motives, absence of fear of the language barrier), a certain level of verbal skills, language material and the necessary amount of socio-cultural knowledge about the country of target language. Therefore, intercultural competence can be represented as an integrative characteristic of the individual, which is specified by the presence of a tolerant and open attitude to representatives of different language communities, the ability to work creatively and general ability to mobilize their cultural and linguistic experience, intercultural knowledge to solve problems in a situation of intercultural communication [6].

Basing on the definition given by the German explorer Alexander Knapp-Pottohoff and taking into account the views of N.D.Galskova, I.F.Ptitsyna highlights the pragmatic, cognitive, emotional and behavioral components in the structure of intercultural competence.

Pragmatic component generates knowledge about the system of the target language, grammatical and syntactical constructions in accordance with the rules of a particular language, knowledge of reality,

knowledge of the country, and skills that contribute to ethnic and linguo-cultural values of the country of the target language and the practical use of a foreign language.

Cognitive component creates forms basic cognitive structures that provide perception and understanding of language and the world of other socio-cultural community, perception and understanding of the phenomena of another culture.

Emotional component generates positive attitude to the target language, the culture of the native speakers, cultural sensitivity and interest to the phenomena of different mentality

Behavioral component involves knowledge of norms of communication etiquette, reflecting the peculiarities of speech behavior and mentality of the native speaker, knowledge of non-verbal means of communication adopted in this cultural society [7].

Characteristics of components of intercultural competence, cited above, may seem vague, as a pragmatic and behavioral components overlap in some positions (the key idea is related to the knowledge). In addition, while listing criteria of formation of intercultural competence — knowledge, skills, abilities — the author does not specify the characteristics of emotional and partially cognitive components, and in the definition of the concept of intercultural competence — the ability to perceive, understand and interpret the phenomena of another culture, the ability to compare them with the phenomena of their own culture, embed them in their world — knowledge is not mentioned even implicitly.

Nevertheless, the experience of the selection criteria of intercultural competence formation is of interest to solve the problems of diagnosing desired phenomenon.

The same characteristics of intercultural competence are emphasized by N.P. Vasilyeva, who defines this notion as knowledge of habits, disposition, customs, attitudes of the society, forming individual and group attitudes; individual motivations, forms of behavior, nonverbal components (gestures, facial expressions), traditions, values. However, it must be noted that this definition is directed to individual-oriented context [8].

Emphasizing national aspects of cultural interaction is useful in the context of our study. In addition, considering that this definition of intercultural competence was given by the author in the framework of the scientific article «Intercultural competence, strategies and techniques to achieve it», it is easy to conclude that the concepts of «competence» and «competency» used by the author are synonymic. But in this formulation (intercultural competence), this definition coincides with our point of view. The main disadvantage of the proposed definition, in our opinion, is that intercultural competence in this approach is reduced to knowledge.

The following definitions of intercultural competence are approximately in the same framework:

- the ability to interpret the behavior of the other culture representatives;
- strategic ability to smooth out conflicts between «insiders» and «outsiders» and generate a new model of intercultural interaction.

The first approach requires that individual has information about a particular culture, and the second – the presence of skills empathy, tolerance, reflection.

There are definitions of intercultural competence, where key positions are focused on the ability phenomenon:

- the ability to form a different cultural identity, which implies knowledge of the language, values, norms, patterns of behavior of other communicative community; within this approach learning maximum amount of information and an adequate knowledge of another culture is the main goal of mastering intercultural competence; this task can be formulated to achieve acculturation, until the complete rejection of native cultural identity;
- the ability to achieve success in contacts with representatives of other cultural community, even when there is insufficient knowledge of the basic elements of partners' culture (this variant of intercultural competence is encountered more often in intercultural communication practice);
- the ability of members of some cultural communities to seek understanding in the process of interaction with other cultures with the use of compensatory strategies for preventing conflicts between familiar and unfamiliar and create a new intercultural communicative community in the process of interaction [9];
- the ability to interact, the ability to navigate and assess the situation, the ability to take into account the norms and values in the cultures on the basis of a certain knowledge, skills, personal qualities, formed in the process of acquiring practical experience in situations of intercultural contacts [10].

G.A.Ivankina also includes the category of abilities (ability to adequately orient and behave in situations of crossing cultures) in the definition of intercultural competence. But for revealing the essence of the ability it is necessary to build a number of specific competencies, distributing them at the following levels:

- at the level of business competency — knowledge of own and others' cultural values and attitudes, knowledge of possible relativity of these values;
- at the level of social competency — the ability to cope with stress, overcome the contradictions and conflicts in the contacts, the ability of empathy to the representative of another culture;
- at the level of personal competence — the ability understand that «self-concept» is influenced by cultural values and attitudes;
- at the level of the activity-related competence - the ability to analyze their own and others' culture, consciously build relations with unfamiliar [11].

A.Y.Muratov believes that the structure of intercultural competency reflects the nature of educational competency and is represented by a complex personality formation, including knowledge of the native and a different culture and skills of practical application of their knowledge, as well as a set of personality traits that contribute to the realization of the knowledge, skills, and finally, the practical experience of their use in the course of interaction with representatives of other cultures.

We value the scientist's consideration about that intercultural competence is an educational competence when learning a foreign language and foreign language culture, with the object of reality in the formation of intercultural competence is a process of communication between representatives of different cultures [12].

G.V.Elizarova considers the intercultural competency as a competency of a «special nature, based on knowledge and skills, the ability to implement intercultural communication through the creation of a common meaning of events for the communicants and eventually reach a positive outcome for both parties to communicate». We consider to be important scientist's statement that intercultural competency is not the same as communicative competency. The purpose of formation of intercultural competency is to achieve that quality of linguistic personality, which «will allow to go beyond their own culture and to get the characteristics of cultures mediator (transmitter) without losing their cultural identity» [13].

The characteristics of the intercultural competency given by researchers in different terms include the following abilities:

- to navigate in the phenomena of other way of life, consciousness, and the senses system, the hierarchy of values;
- to enter into dialogue with others, to think critically about others and thus enrich their own view of the world.

In general, there are several approaches to the interpretation of the concept of «intercultural competence» in modern science:

- cognitive approach, in this framework intercultural competence is regarded as cognitive knowledge embodied in behavioral skills, this approach aims to improve understanding and level of tolerance, acceptance of other cultures;
- behavioral approach, that declares the possibility of adapting the general behavioral skills to the conditions of intercultural communication;
- «pragmatic» approach, according to which «cultural competency can be regarded as an action that corresponds to and is effectively used to determine the cultural identity of any particular situation» [14].

Summing up the above, we understand intercultural competence as the integrated set of knowledge and skills that lead to the experience the individual in the field of intercultural communication.

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## Мәдениетаралық құзыреттілік: мазмұны және ерекшеліктері

Мақалада «мәдениетаралық құзыреттілік» ұғымына байланысты әр түрлі көзқарастарға шолу жасалып отыр. Қазіргі таңда жоғары мектеп алдында тұрған көкейкесті мәселелердің бірі жас мамандардың мәдениетаралық құзыреттілігін қалыптастыру болып табылады. Бұл ғылым мен білімнің халықаралық деңгейде дамуының кепілі болып табылады. Мәдениетаралық құзыреттілік дегеніміз — басқа мәдениетті түсіне білу, өзге мәдениетке тән құбылыстарды өз мәдениетіңмен салыстыра білу, олардың ерекшеліктері мен өзгешеліктерін тани білу.

Б.Ж.Жанкина, Х.К.Жанкина

## Межкультурная компетентность: сущность и специфика

В статье изложены различные подходы к определению понятия межкультурной компетенции. Авторы отмечают, что в условиях интернационализации образования и науки для высшей школы особую актуальность приобретает формирование межкультурной компетенции будущих специалистов, что включает умение ориентироваться в феноменах иного образа жизни, сознания и системы чувств, воспринимать и понимать факты иной культуры, сравнивать их с собственным мировидением и культурным опытом, находить между ними различие и общность.

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