

Intercultural Communication and Difficulties of Teaching English in ESP Classes



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ABSTRACT: This article discusses intercultural communication and difficulties of teaching English in ESP classes. The main task of teaching foreign languages as a means of communication between people of different nations and cultures is that languages should be studied in enduring unity with the world and culture of the people who speak these languages. A most promising and basic challenge for teachers of foreign languages is achieving maximum development of communication skills.

The question arises, how is this to be solved? Some considerations would be to develop new teaching methods that aim at improving language proficiency. Creating fundamentally new educational materials that could be used to teach people how to communicate effectively. At the same time, of course, it would be wrong to rush from one extreme to another and give up all the old techniques of teaching. Careful selection of the best, most useful, authenticated teaching practice, would be especially necessary for the purposes of specific professional situations.

KEY WORDS: ESP classes, intercultural communication, teaching English

INTRODUCTION

In Uzbekistan, as in other countries, intercultural communication (IC) plays a significant role in communicating effectively. IC is defined as a dialogue, carried out between competent members of differing cultures who understand specific nuances and are thus able to affect the success and/or failure of the communication event [1] This is most evident in the business sector. Successful negotiations often depend on how well the individual parties are familiar with the national characteristics, traditions and mannerisms of their respective cultures [2]. Communicative competence is understood as the knowledge used in the communication of symbolic systems, including their rules of operation and the principles of interaction [3]. Intercultural communication is characterized by the fact that the participants in direct contact will use special language versions, other than those which they would use when communicating within the same culture [4].

Communicative competence is due to the unique and individual experience of each individual. This means that the communication, which is a messaging process, happens to constantly recreate meanings. These may not match, even if the people speak the same language and grew up in the same culture [5]. It goes without saying that in the presence of different cultures and different languages true communication becomes extremely complicated. Moreover, making true comprehension and understanding of what is being communicated semantically, virtually impossible [6]

Communication allows participants, who are relative to one another, to convey some type of information on an external level and to convey some type of internal emotional state and/or status role [7]. From a historical perspective of cross-cultural communication, the term "intercultural communication" in the narrow sense, first appeared in the literature in the early 1970s. By 1972 the construct had taken hold and gained scientific direction. At its core was the study of communication failures and their consequences in situations of intercultural communication [8]. Subsequently, the concept of intercultural communication developed further to include such areas as the theory of translation, foreign language teaching, comparative cultural studies, and others.

SIGNIFICANCE OF INTERCULTURAL COMMUNICATION

To date, research in the field of intercultural communication focuses on the behavior of people involved with facing cultural differences regarding language activity and the consequences of these differences [9]

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The main task of teaching foreign languages as a means of communication between people of different nations and cultures is that languages should be studied in enduring unity with the world and culture of the people who speak these languages. A most promising and basic challenge for teachers of foreign languages is achieving maximum development of communication skills [10]. The question arises, how is this to be solved? Some considerations would be to develop new teaching methods that aim at improving language proficiency. Creating fundamentally new educational materials that could be used to teach people how to communicate effectively. At the same time, of course, it would be wrong to rush from one extreme to another and give up all the old techniques of teaching. Careful selection of the best, most useful, authenticated teaching practice, would be especially necessary for the purposes of specific professional situations.

In this connection, it would take radically changing the view of how to teach a foreign language by taking into account more attention and emphasis on linguistics and intercultural communication. The solution to this opportunity is a pragmatic one. One condition would be to create a fairly strong fundamental research base.

Its creation is necessary for the following reasons: 1) apply the results of theoretical work on philology to the practice of teaching foreign languages; 2) theoretically comprehend and summarize the extensive practical experience of teachers of foreign languages. Modern close cultural communication has returned foreign language teaching methodology to normal. Currently, teachers strive to teach students with little use of the existing linguistic material in stock. At present, the basis of higher education teaching of a foreign language is perceived as a means of everyday communication with other cultures. The aim of higher education – is the formation of a highly educated individual who has in their arsenal of fundamental training, not only a unique specialization, but in broader terms, inclusion of a foreign language. This does not need to be specific to any one profession.

IE technicians must not only possess technical English or another foreign language, but must also be able to use it with similar specialists who may speak other foreign languages. Today, from the higher education perspective, teaching a foreign language is perceived as a means of everyday communication with other cultures. For this communication to occur, one needs to know or be familiar with the culture, its foundations and features. No longer is the Earth as big as it may have seemed 100 years ago!

In today's world unexplored places and unknown peoples are a thing of the past. With the help of modern technology, we are able to not only leave the house and go to the other side of the world (TV), but to also communicate with colleagues and/or to decide questions of business at the other end of the globe (VEB camera and Internet) without ever leaving the comfort of our office and/or home.

The problem of cross-cultural communication is becoming so acute and so pressing as is the need of cultural studies in the process of teaching a foreign language. The internet is gaining more and more space in our country as is accessing other countries.

Learning a foreign language is an excellent way of acquainting oneself with the culture of other people, and fostering respect and love. The main components include the following elements of a foreign culture and are attributed to bearing the national – specific color – of traditions and rituals, also known as tradition; – consumer culture; – everyday behavior; – national perspective of the world; – art and culture, including ethnography and ethnology.

DISCUSSION AND APPLICATION

Teaching Business English at the Faculty of Business at the State University of Law, in reference to the above, has its own characteristics and application purposes. For example, preparing managers, leaders and organizers of business, who in addition to specific professional knowledge, should also have a common culture, be an enlightened individual, tolerant and therefore, possess a wide range of knowledge of the cultural peculiarities of different peoples. Since language and culture are interrelated, it is impossible to teach the language in isolation from the culture of the country. Language most accurately and vividly illustrates the mentality of the people, especially its culture. There are several ways of simultaneous teaching a language and its culture. Below, the authors share a framework of achieving this goal.

1. **Role plays.** Using role plays is very popular in our time. It is a procedure by which students play scenes on a specific topic by entering into the situation of other nationalities and try to keep the peculiarities of its culture and language. This is a form of theatrical performance and demands the language of the actors, the maximum penetration into the role, and thus serious training, research materials in the books and in the media. The potential for our students is unlimited: excellent specialized bookstores, movies, TV shows, "talk shows", the Internet, personal contact with native speakers of a particular culture and language (in clubs, bars, student gatherings, and so forth). We have successfully used role-playing games in the classroom dedicated to peculiarities of negotiations conducted in different countries, the role of the manager in their organization, centralization and decentralization of large corporations, as well as for strategic planning in large and small firms.

2. **Preparation of the individual.** With this, the individual shares information containing interesting facts on the subject of the lesson. For example, higher education in one of the countries in Europe or in Japan, features cuisine of Europe and Asia, the

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peculiarities of negotiations conducted in the various countries, etc., in accordance with the current lesson theme. Students choose the country and prepare a ten-minute overview of the topic. The rest of the group carefully takes notes on the performance in order to prepare for a reasonable discussion afterwards. At the end of the class, students are developing, for example, the ideal system of higher education in our country, based on the experiences and achievements of other countries. The work of each student is evaluated separately.

3. **Group messages.** With this, the group conducts conversations in which the cultural characteristics of different countries in specific areas of life (according to the theme of the lesson) are compared and analyzed. Two, three or four (but no more) students prepare at home a group discussion for example, about the peculiarities of the national cuisine of the assigned country. The information must be correct, interesting, and colorfully presented at a professional level. Students use a variety of visual media, a computer that shows videos, pictures, elements of folklore. They are welcome to use classroom posters, objects of folk costumes and even a description of unusual recipes of national dishes.

4. **Colorful presentations on a topic.** Most business communication is currently taking place in a variety of presentations. Our goal – to teach students to correctly and efficiently use this kind of work. Any public performance (response to the occupation of a site or at the blackboard, a toast at the table, an anecdote in a circle of friends, and so on.) – This is achieved by a small theatrical performance which has its own rules and specific objectives. Some instances may be common to all, but all should have some of the features of the different countries and cultures. Factors may include; body language, rate of speech, ways to attract and retain the attention of the audience.

5. **Home Reading.** This is a special kind of homework. Students get a job for a month, after which during one of the sessions they are to discuss management features described in a book (such as in the novels of Arthur Hailey's "Hotel" and "Airport", or in the novels of Mr. Grisham's "Company" and "Broker"). During the discussion, the teacher focuses on the specific features of the characters, describing them as representatives of a certain culture, a certain mentality, characteristic of the time described in the novel. Students discuss management issues in comparison with their own time and their own country. This method helps students to work actively in replenishing their vocabulary and learn new realities and characteristic of the country they are studying.

6. **Games.** A fun activity implemented as "Orientation of tourists before traveling to a particular country." Each individual student receives topics distributed by the instructor. During class the "instructor" talks about their chosen country and responds to questions from the audience.

CONCLUSION

The study and understanding of other cultures, notwithstanding our own Uzbek culture is something to be valued. Each culture is unique, profound and beautiful alongside our great Uzbek culture. The beauty of the world – is in its variety and diversity of both nature and people with their cultural past, present and future. Admiring the cultures of other nations, we are able to proudly recognize the place of Uzbek culture, which we hold near and dear. Sharing this feeling with our students, fostering in them a deep love for their country and a great respect for other nations and people will not only serve Uzbekistan, but will contribute to a peaceful cohabitation of all nations.

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