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# CROSS-CULTURAL COMPETENCE AND ITS SIGNIFICANCE
# IN THE MODERN SYSTEM OF HIGHER EDUCATION

*У статті розкривається сутність таких понять, як «культура», «кросс-культура», «кросс-культурна компетентність». Визначені основні складові кросс-культурної компетентності та її значення в сучасній системі вищої освіти.*

*Ключові слова: культура, кросс-культура, кросс-культурна компетентність, міжнародне спілкування, сучасна вища освіта.*

*В статье раскрывается суть таких понятий, как «культура», «кросс-культура», «кросс-культурная компетентность». Описаны основные составляющие кросс-культурной компетентности и их место в современной системе высшего образования.*

*Ключевые слова: культура, кросс-культура, кросс-культурная компетентность, международное общение, современное высшее образование.*

*The article is devoted to the issue of cross-cultural competence. It is described the main components of cross-cultural competence and necessity of its developing as a top priority of comprehensive higher education.*

*Key words: culture, cross-culture, cross-cultural competence, international communication, modern higher education.*

**Statement of the problem.** The modern era, characterized by the formation of the global world community, certainly leads to the development of new priorities and values based on cooperation and internationalization. These values are being implemented in all areas of social life, but their appearance is especially true in the field of education on which the society lays great hopes of educating the young generation in the spirit of democracy and dialogism.

Changes in the social, political and economic life of Ukraine in the last decade have caused changes in various social spheres, including the higher education system. Internationalization of all spheres of public life, the expansion of international contacts and cooperation, policy of integration into the European and world community, the entry of Ukraine into the European education system have set the national higher education system the task of producing a competitive specialist with well-formed cross-cultural competence.

**The purpose of this article** is to consider the essence of the concept "cross-cultural competence" and its importance for the modern system of higher education.

**The main material.** Considering the concept "cross-cultural competence", one needs to separately analyze such concepts as "culture", "cross-culture" and "competence". First of all, it should be noted that because of its deep meaning the concept "culture" has about 300 definitions. Today, the following interpretations of the concept "culture" are popular among the scientists and researchers. Culture is viewed as:

1) information program of activities, the system of "archetypes", according to which the whole process of life is re-created and organized;

2) scenario of activities, behavior and communication, represented by a variety of knowledge, norms, skills, ideals, patterns of activity and behavior, ideas, hypotheses, beliefs, goals, values, and so on;

3) the picture of the world and a way of perceiving reality.

According to the philosopher George Simmel, culture is a path from the closed unity to the developed unity through the developed diversity [1].

The phrase "cross-culture" consists of two words: "cross" and "culture". It is translated from the English language as "the crossing of cultures". Today, social psychologists, sociologists, marketers, specialists in the management of TNK, experts in a variety of inter-ethnic communication interpret the phrase "cross-culture" in different ways, such as: communication, interaction of different cultures, cooperation and communication "at the intersection of cultures", "at the crossroads of cultures", "on the clash of cultures".

This diversity shows the delicacy, the difficulty of the topic. The complexity of cross-cultural interactions is often driven by people's unawareness of their own cultural identity. The axioms of cross-cultural interaction say: culture is seen in comparison; there are no bad cultures, they are just different; all cultures are different, but they are equal.

In connection with the affiliation of our education system to the Bologna Declaration the key concepts in teaching science today are "competence" and "competency". The Council of Europe highlights the key

competencies that graduates should have [2].

Pedagogy began to address competence later than other sciences, focusing on the research results in the fields of sociology, psychology, philosophy, mathematics, cybernetics, etc. On the one hand, the expansion of terminology, introduction of new categories is an integral part of the development of pedagogy, which should not only meet the needs of modern society, but should move ahead. On the other hand, the new terms often cause inaccuracy and ambiguity of interpretation.

At the present stage of its development, pedagogy doesn't provide a precise definition of the terms "competence" and "competency". Researchers identify the problems of this issue in different ways.

A.V. Khutorskiy believes that the concept "competence involves a set of interrelated abilities of a person (knowledge, skills, ways of life), defined in relation to a particular range of subjects and processes which are necessary for high-quality productive activities in relation to them. Competency – is the possession, the possession of certain competences by a person, including his personal attitude to it and to the subject of activity" [3, p. 141]. In accordance with this definition, competence is a set of personal characteristics needed for functioning in a society, and competency is an expertise in a particular area.

I.A Zimnyaya defines "competency" as a knowledge-based, intellectually and personally determined experience of man's social and professional life activity. In contrast, "competence" is considered by her as a reserve of "hidden" potential" that hasn't been "used" by a person yet [4, p. 34]. The author examines competency as a combination of knowledge and practically adopted skills, the fact that can't be argued. Competence is interpreted as a passive element of abstract entity but this is an arguable issue.

Let's consider the main theoretical approaches to the definition of "cross-cultural competence." It should be noted that there are a few definitions and approaches based on the concept of "culture" that require clarification in order to avoid possible disputes and sameness.

The analysis of relevant scientific literature confirms that such terms as "cross-cultural», «intercultural», «trans-cultural», "multicultural» and "ethno-cultural" are identical in most European countries. [5].

T.V. Poshtareva defines in her study the ethno-cultural competence as a property of an individual, which is expressed in a set of objective representations and knowledge of a particular ethnic culture, realized through the skills, abilities and behaviors that contribute to the effective inter-ethnic understanding and cooperation. If the educational process does not take into account national and psychological characteristics of children, the specific socio-cultural context in which the child is growing and developing, the originality of the region, the environment in which the given institution is functioning, the problem of identity formation, able to function effectively in a multicultural environment, will not be solved positively [6].

A.S. Kupavskaya defines ethno-cultural competence as a combination of knowledge, understanding of other cultures, realized through the skills and behaviors that ensure effective communication with the representatives of these cultures. A.S. Kupavskaya emphasizes that in Western literature the term "intercultural competence" is mostly used [7].

T.N. Lisitsyna defines intercultural competence as the "understanding of differences, respect for each other, the ability to live with people of other cultures, languages, religions" [8, p. 50].

T.V. Zhukova understands cross-cultural competence as the scope of communicative activity of an individual, which, because of its cross-cultural conditioning, is perceived as natural. The criteria for cross-cultural competence, in her opinion, are cross-cultural awareness ( the totality of knowledge of cultural artifacts, behaviors, and understanding of the need for compliance with the modes of behavior in native culture or other cultures, or subcultures); cultural identity (the result of cultural identification, i.e., identification and correlation with cultural norms and patterns of behavior); regulatory identity (knowledge, understanding and acceptance of social norms) [9].

The concept "cross-cultural competence" is more often used in marketing than in pedagogy. According to I.G. Kratko, cross-cultural competence is the ability to identify marketing opportunities in the context of national culture. The absence of such competence not only leads to serious errors in the use of various marketing tools, but also to a significant loss of the profits and punishing the company by fines. As world practice shows, there are quite a lot of examples of marketing mistakes that occurred due to a simple lack of competence in matters of cultural differences or cross-cultural marketing incompetence [10].

Thus, summarizing various approaches to the definition of "cross-cultural competence", we can conclude that its main structural components are the ways of responding to situations of intercultural interaction; cross-cultural literacy; types of ethnic identity; the value sphere, verbal and nonverbal communication; religion, customs and traditions, etc.

The constituting units of cross-cultural competence are: mastering the riches of global and domestic traditions, values of the past as they relate to the present, the formation of a coherent picture of the world and historical consciousness [11].

Effective intercultural communication is unlikely to happen if the parties that are communicating don't have cross-cultural competence. A native speaker with a cross-cultural competence has the following skills and abilities:

- knowledge about the diversity of ideas and types of activities characteristic of different human societies around the world; the knowledge of how these ideas and activities are related; understanding of the ways ideas and activities related to one's own culture can be considered from a different, more objective point of view;
- the ability to understand and interpret manners and behaviors different from one's own, to understand modes of behavior in order to establish communication adequate to the target culture, and participate effectively in it [12].

According to P.V. Sysoev, the formation and development of cross-cultural competence reflects certain stages of person's cultural self-identity in the process of intercultural communication:

- the stage of ethnocentrism ("value judgments of "good" or "bad" with respect to the target culture");
- the stage of cultural self-determination (determination of one's own place "in the spectrum of cultures, awareness of themselves as cultural objects");
- the stage of the dialogue of cultures (students are willing to "put themselves in the shoes of others; to take the initiative in establishing cross-cultural contacts; to anticipate and recognize the socio-cultural gaps leading to confusion, creating false stereotypes, misinterpretation of the facts of culture, intercultural conflicts; to take up the responsibility for the elimination of all kinds of cross-cultural misunderstandings; to act as full-fledged members of their native culture; educate themselves and to function independently in the multicultural world") [13].

**Thus,** multiculturalism is intensively growing in the world. This determines the objectives of higher education – to produce professionals capable of dealing successfully with diverse operational problems and interact with colleagues and clients belonging to different cultures.

Graduates, endowed with cross-cultural competence, will take up their place in the modern society and contribute to the effective functioning of their employer.

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