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ENHANCING INTERCULTURAL COMMUNICATIVE COMPETENCE THROUGH FOREIGN LANGUAGE TEACHING: A COMPREHENSIVE APPROACH

Abstract

In an increasingly interconnected world, the development of intercultural communicative competence (ICC) is not merely an optional enhancement but a vital component for fostering successful engagement across diverse cultural landscapes. This article presents a comprehensive approach to integrating ICC enhancement into foreign language instruction, equipping learners with the tools necessary for effective communication in a globalized society. To achieve truly effective pedagogy, it is imperative to transcend a purely linguistic emphasis and actively cultivate intercultural awareness, attitudes, and skills. We delve into the theoretical foundations of ICC, drawing from fields such as linguistics, cultural studies, and communication theory. This multi-disciplinary perspective allows for a richer understanding of how language and culture intertwine and influence one another. Additionally, we provide actionable strategies that educators can implement in their classrooms. These strategies include using authentic materials that reflect the complexities of real-world communication, engaging students in intercultural tasks that promote collaboration and understanding, encouraging critical cultural analysis to help students deconstruct stereotypes and biases, and fostering metacognitive reflection that enables learners to evaluate their own cultural perceptions and communication styles. By integrating ICC into language instruction, educators can better prepare their students to navigate the challenges of cultural differences and engage respectfully and effectively with diverse communities worldwide.

Keywords: *intercultural communicative competence, effective communication, authentic materials, intercultural tasks, cultural framework, language learning.*

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ШЕТЕЛ ТІЛІН ОҚЫТУ АРҚЫЛЫ МӘДЕНИЕТАРАЛЫҚ КОММУНИКАТИВТІ ҚҰЗЫРЕТТІЛІКТІ ҚАЛЫПТАСТЫРУ: КЕШЕНДІ ТӘСІЛ

Аңдатпа

Өзара байланысты әлемде мәдениетаралық коммуникативті құзыреттілікті дамыту тек факультативті жетілдіру ғана емес, сонымен қатар әртүрлі мәдени ландшафттарда табысты өзара әрекеттесуді ынталандырудың маңызды құрамдас бөлігі болып табылады. Бұл мақалада студенттерді жаһанданған қоғамда тиімді қарым-қатынас жасау үшін қажетті құралдармен жабдықтай отырып, шетел тілін оқытуда мәдениетаралық коммуникативті құзыреттілікті жетілдіруді интеграциялаудың кешенді тәсілі ұсынылған. Нағыз тиімді педагогикаға қол жеткізу үшін таза лингвистикалық екпіннен асып, мәдениетаралық сананы, көзқарас пен дағдыларды белсенді түрде дамыту қажет. Біз тіл білімі, мәдениеттану

және коммуникация теориясы сияқты салаларға сүйене отырып, мәдениетаралық коммуникативті құзыреттіліктің теориялық негіздерін зерттедік. Бұл пәнаралық перспектива тіл мен мәдениеттің бір-бірімен қалай байланысып, бір-біріне әсер ететінін тереңірек түсінуге мүмкіндік береді. Сонымен қатар, біз студенттердің өз сыныптарында жүзеге асыра алатын тиімді стратегияларды ұсынамыз. Бұл стратегияларға нақты әлемдегі қарым-қатынастың күрделілігін көрсететін шынайы материалдарды пайдалану, студенттерді ынтымақтастық пен түсіністікке ықпал ететін мәдениетаралық тапсырмаларға тарту, студенттерге стереотиптер мен көзқарастарды жоюға көмектесу үшін сыни мәдени талдауды ынталандыру және оқушыларға өздерінің мәдени түсініктері мен қарым-қатынас стильдерін бағалауға мүмкіндік беретін метатанымдық рефлексияны дамыту кіреді. Мәдениетаралық коммуникативті құзыреттілікті тілдік оқытуға біріктіру арқылы оқытушылар өз студенттерін мәдени айырмашылықтар мәселелерін шешуге және дүние жүзіндегі әртүрлі қауымдастықтармен құрметпен және тиімді қарым-қатынас жасауға жақсырақ дайындай алады.

Кілт сөздер: мәдениетаралық коммуникативтік құзыреттілік, тиімді қарым-қатынас, теңтүпнұсқалы материалдар, мәдениетаралық міндеттер, мәдени шеңберлер, тілді меңгеру.

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ПОВЫШЕНИЕ МЕЖКУЛЬТУРНОЙ КОММУНИКАТИВНОЙ КОМПЕТЕНТНОСТИ ПОСРЕДСТВОМ ПРЕПОДАВАНИЯ ИНОСТРАННЫХ ЯЗЫКОВ: КОМПЛЕКСНЫЙ ПОДХОД

Аннотация

В мире, который становится все более взаимосвязанным, развитие межкультурной коммуникативной компетенции (ИСС) является не просто необязательным повышением квалификации, но жизненно важным компонентом, способствующим успешному взаимодействию в различных культурных ландшафтах. В этой статье представлен комплексный подход к интеграции повышения квалификации ИСС в обучение иностранному языку, оснащению учащихся инструментами, необходимыми для эффективного общения в глобализованном обществе. Чтобы добиться по-настоящему эффективной педагогики, необходимо выйти за рамки чисто лингвистического подхода и активно развивать межкультурную осведомленность, отношения и навыки. Мы углубляемся в теоретические основы ИСС, опираясь на такие области, как лингвистика, культурология и теория коммуникации. Такой междисциплинарный подход позволяет глубже понять, как язык и культура переплетаются и влияют друг на друга. Кроме того, мы предлагаем эффективные стратегии, которые преподаватели могут применять в своих классах. Эти стратегии включают использование аутентичных материалов, отражающих сложности общения в реальном мире, вовлечение учащихся в выполнение межкультурных заданий, способствующих сотрудничеству и взаимопониманию, поощрение критического культурного анализа, помогающего студентам разрушить стереотипы и предубеждения, а также развитие метакогнитивной рефлексии, позволяющей учащимся оценить свои собственные культурные представления и стили общения. Интегрируя ИСС в языковое обучение, преподаватели могут лучше подготовить своих студентов к преодолению трудностей, связанных с культурными различиями, и уважительному и эффективному взаимодействию с различными сообществами по всему миру.

Ключевые слова: межкультурная коммуникативная компетентность, эффективная коммуникация, аутентичные материалы, межкультурные задачи, культурные рамки, изучение языка.

Introduction

In contemporary society, intercultural communicative competence has emerged as a fundamental component of adequate education and professional practice. The instruction of a foreign language serves a crucial role in fostering this competence, as it facilitates not only the development of linguistic skills but also the enhancement of cultural awareness, cross-cultural understanding, and respect for cultural diversity [1, p. 11]. Fundamentally, intercultural communicative competence is the ability to establish relationships and promote mutual understanding with individuals from diverse cultural backgrounds. Intercultural communicative competence involves the ability to build relationships with individuals from different cultures and to foster mutual understanding by recognizing their cultural values and embracing a tolerant attitude towards their diverse communication styles, behaviors, clothing, lifestyles, traditions, and customs within the international labor market. The success of communication between people from different cultures largely depends on their ability to understand and communicate effectively. This process involves not just sharing information but also recognizing and respecting the diverse beliefs, values, and ways of life that each culture brings to the conversation. To communicate effectively in intercultural settings, individuals should practice active listening, which means fully concentrating on what is being said rather than just passively hearing the words. This includes paying attention to nonverbal cues, such as body language and facial expressions, which can vary widely across cultures. Empathy is another crucial component; it involves putting oneself in the other person's shoes and trying to understand their feelings and perspectives. This can help to bridge gaps that might arise from cultural misunderstandings. Moreover, being adaptable is essential. Individuals should be open to changing their speaking or behavior to accommodate the communication style of the person they are speaking with. Creating a friendly and respectful environment is also essential. When people feel safe and valued during conversations, they are more likely to express themselves openly and honestly. This atmosphere fosters trust, allowing for deeper connections and more productive discussions. Ultimately, by improving their communication skills and actively working to understand one another, individuals from various cultures can achieve outcomes that benefit everyone involved. This not only helps to build strong, positive relationships across cultural boundaries but also encourages collaboration and learning in a globalized world.

The term "intercultural communicative competence" encompasses two fundamental components essential to effective foreign language instruction: communicative competence and intercultural competence. Communicative competence refers to the ability to accurately express, interpret, and discuss meanings across different contexts, including verbal, non-verbal, written, and spoken forms. Intercultural competence involves understanding, respecting, and appropriately responding to cultural differences that influence communication behaviors. By integrating these two, individuals can achieve meaningful interaction and dialogue between two or more individuals who may belong to the same or different speech communities. Such interactions can occur across various settings, including face-to-face conversations, virtual exchanges, and written communication, underscoring the importance of both language skills and cultural awareness in mastering a foreign language [2, p. 54].

Intercultural communicative competence is a complex, multifaceted skill set that enables individuals to effectively comprehend, communicate with, and engage people from diverse cultural backgrounds. This competence is fundamentally grounded in an acute awareness of one's own cultural identity, coupled with a thorough understanding of the values, beliefs, and practices that characterize other cultures. The development of intercultural competence requires adapting one's communication styles and behaviors to different cultural contexts, thereby demonstrating both flexibility and sensitivity in interpersonal interactions. Furthermore, this competence highlights the importance of openness and receptivity towards diverse worldviews and cognitive frameworks. Consequently, this deepens the understanding needed for practical evaluation and program design, where the incorporation of diverse perspectives is particularly salient, as it enhances the educational experience by fostering inclusivity. By recognizing and valuing multiple

viewpoints, educators can judiciously select content, reading materials, and learning activities that reflect cultural diversity, thereby promoting a richer educational environment. Ultimately, cultivating intercultural competence is imperative for fostering mutual respect and understanding in an increasingly globalized society. This skill set enables individuals to navigate cultural complexities effectively and contribute positively to collaborative environments, thereby enhancing both personal and collective engagement in diverse settings.

Methods and materials

Language learning does not follow a straightforward linear progression; however, one foundational element of foreign language acquisition is vocabulary acquisition. This is frequently approached by memorizing extensive lists of word pairs, one from the native language and its counterpart in the target language. It is important to note that not all lexical items have direct equivalents in the native language. In such instances, learners often consult dictionaries for definitions. Nevertheless, words encompass more than mere denotative meanings; they also possess connotative meanings that may diverge from their dictionary definitions. A nuanced understanding of these connotative implications requires cultural awareness to inform proper interpretation. By integrating cultural knowledge with linguistic study, learners can transcend basic "classroom" competencies and engage in more authentic and contextually appropriate language use.

The concept of "communicative competence," introduced by Dell Hymes, encompasses a language user's ability to engage effectively within various communicative contexts. Hymes posited that communicative competence extends beyond mere grammatical accuracy to include the contextual appropriateness and social acceptability of language use. In essence, while an individual may possess linguistic competence and generate grammatically correct utterances, effective communication necessitates an understanding of the pragmatic rules governing language interaction: "There are rules of use without which the rules of grammar would be useless" [3, p.278]. Notably, Hymes' framework recognizes non-verbal components, such as attitudes, values, and motivations related to language and its speakers, which can further differentiate communicative competence among native speakers. This integrative approach highlights the intricate interplay between linguistic, social, and cultural dimensions in effective communication.

In the 1980s, Canale and Swain offered an expanded framework for understanding communicative competence, delineating its components as follows:

- Grammatical Competence: This encompasses a speaker's knowledge of lexical items and the applicable grammatical rules, which form the foundation of language structure.
- Sociolinguistic Competence: This reflects the capacity to communicate appropriately across diverse contexts, integrating both verbal and non-verbal forms of communication, and thereby ensuring context-sensitive interactions.
- Discourse Competence: This pertains to the ability to construct coherent and cohesive discourse, which requires an understanding of structural and semantic ties that unify a text, ensuring that the language used functions effectively within a discourse context.
- Strategic Competence: This involves the adept application of communication strategies to address and mitigate communication breakdowns. Such breakdowns may arise from insufficient linguistic competence or inadequate cultural knowledge of communication norms and social taboos.

These components collectively contribute to a more nuanced understanding of effective communication across varied linguistic and cultural landscapes [4, p.47].

The concept of communicative competence, particularly in its emphasis on sociolinguistic and sociocultural dimensions, has emerged as a pivotal aspect in the intersection of language and culture within contemporary theories of language education. This focus concerns the essential skills required for effective language use in authentic communicative contexts, underscoring the importance of understanding the interplay between language and cultural norms in fostering effective communication.

Despite substantial evidence of a strong correlation between cultural knowledge and language proficiency, cultural studies remain marginalized mainly in foreign language pedagogy. Several factors contribute to this oversight in culture-focused instruction. Primarily, educators often encounter constraints imposed by a tightly packed curriculum or rigidly defined lesson plans that leave little room for additional content. Consequently, many instructors find it challenging to allocate time for cultural instruction, believing it necessary to prioritize foundational vocabulary and grammatical structures first. There exists a widespread assumption that students will receive adequate cultural exposure as they progress in their language studies. However, the unfortunate reality is that, for most learners, such exposure is seldom realized, leading to a gap in their overall linguistic competence and intercultural understanding [5, p.37]. One significant challenge faced by language educators is the apprehension many teachers feel about their own knowledge of the target culture, particularly when they are non-native speakers of the language they teach. This insecurity often leads educators to default to a rote teaching approach, where they primarily convey cultural information through facts or brief culture capsules commonly found in textbooks. Such an approach can limit students' exposure to the richness and nuances of the culture, which is essential for fostering genuine understanding and appreciation. Another critical issue arises from students' negative attitudes toward the target culture. When individuals are confronted with unfamiliar cultural situations, it is natural for them to interpret these experiences through the lens of their own cultural background and understanding. As Isik points out, this tendency can present considerable challenges in foreign language education. Specifically, students may use their personal cultural frameworks to assess the target culture, leading them to view certain cultural practices or values negatively [6, p.259]. This biased perspective can lead to the rejection of the target culture's values, thereby creating a barrier to effective language learning and cultural integration [7, p.35]. Furthermore, many teachers may find themselves unprepared to adequately address cultural instruction due to a lack of explicit training on how to teach culture effectively. This shortfall in professional development leaves educators without the tools and skills to present cultural information meaningfully or facilitate informed discussions about cultural differences. Without proper training, teachers might struggle to engage students in critical dialogue about culture, hindering students' ability to develop a more comprehensive understanding of the language within its cultural context. Ultimately, addressing these challenges is vital to creating a more enriching language-learning environment that promotes cultural awareness and sensitivity.

Conclusion

The instruction of these intercultural communication competence (ICC) skills can take various forms, constrained only by the teacher's creativity and available resources. Activities should be tailored to meet students' needs and, to maximize their effectiveness, align with their linguistic proficiency levels. For instance, if a student is a beginner, the cultural activities should be designed for beginners. These activities can target any of the language skills, such as reading, speaking, listening, or writing, and may be conducted in either the students' first or second language. Initially, these activities often use students' first language, which should not be viewed as a limitation, given the aim of enhancing intercultural awareness. As students advance, the activities can increasingly incorporate their second language, reflecting their growing linguistic abilities. The key point is that we aim to enhance intercultural awareness alongside linguistic skills.

In this educational strategy, teachers step away from their traditional role as the primary experts on culture. Instead, their function shifts to that of facilitators or guides who support and enrich the learning process. This approach emphasizes that practical learning activities often lack clear-cut right-or-wrong answers. Instead, these activities are carefully crafted to encourage critical thinking, reflection, and a heightened awareness of cultural nuances. Consequently, teachers do not evaluate students based on the correctness of their responses; instead, they assess how well students engage with the task and whether they fulfill its requirements. The focus for teachers, therefore, lies in curating relevant and engaging materials and designing meaningful tasks that resonate with students' experiences. Such tasks aim to spark interest and promote a deep understanding of intercultural perspectives, allowing students to explore diverse viewpoints and

challenge their assumptions. This method not only fosters an enriching learning environment but also empowers students to take ownership of their learning journey, cultivating essential skills for engaging with an increasingly interconnected world. Through this approach, the goal is to nurture not just knowledge, but a genuine appreciation and respect for cultural diversity.

To promote fluency in the target language among students, it is essential that classroom activities be closely aligned with their real-life concerns, needs, interests, and daily routines [8, p. 231]. This pedagogical approach requires designing activities that are highly relevant to each student, thereby facilitating clear connections between the material and their individual experiences. Such personal relevance is instrumental in fostering deeper engagement among students during discussions and collaborative tasks, as they can contribute insights drawn from their own lived experiences. When learners can relate new information to their personal narratives, they tend to exhibit greater engagement in the learning process. This engagement not only enhances comprehension but also encourages students to explore the intersections between the target language and cultural themes and practices pertinent to their own lives. As students engage in the analysis and evaluation of these relationships, they are more inclined to uncover their own underlying beliefs and to understand how their cultural backgrounds shape their daily interactions and perceptions [9, p.179]. In conclusion, by situating classroom activities within students' realities, educators can cultivate a more dynamic and responsive learning environment that promotes active participation, deepens cultural awareness, and ultimately supports students in achieving greater proficiency in the target language.

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