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INTERCULTURAL COMPETENCE OF THE TRANSLATOR AS A GUARANTEE OF EFFECTIVE INTERACTION IN THE MULTIETHNIC SPACE

The article investigates the specifics of intercultural mastery as measured by three crucial requirements for effective communication within a multiethnic environment such as intercultural sensitivity, intercultural awareness, and intercultural abilities providing an empathic potential to accept and adapt to cultural differences, consequently acquiring social support. The topicality of this problem is denoted due to the comprehension that the culture of behavior and cultural specifications significantly affect the quality of translation as it is based on the mental peculiarities of the human and reflects the manner and style of verbal and non-verbal etiquette.

The analysis of intercultural competence peculiarities as a means of achieving effective interaction between foreign and Ukrainian students of translation departments has been carried out. It is found that communication between representatives of divergent cultures and nations in groups with students of different ethnic backgrounds is considered effective presuming it brings mutual benefit to all participants in the interaction situation. It is stated, that graduates of translation departments achieve proficiency in providing the transition from units of the original text to communicatively equivalent units in the target language on the condition of a high level of intercultural knowledge, skills, attitude, and flexibility throughout their professional engagements.

In translation practice, cultural barriers determine the relevance of intercultural learning, which is associated with various pedagogical, psychological, and practical problems. A review of these challenges connected with misunderstanding, standards and norms of behavior, beliefs and pre-established values, consequences of ethnocentrism, stereotyping, prejudice, and finally, discrimination as maintenance of the self-image is provided. The practices to overcome those barriers implied by the curricula such as general language training, cultural training, ways to escape errors or plateau phase, and application of the policy of mutual benefit are outlined.

Key words: *intercultural competence, intercultural sensitivity, translation, ethnocentrism, stereotyping, interaction.*

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МІЖКУЛЬТУРНА КОМПЕТЕНЦІЯ ПЕРЕКЛАДАЧА ЯК ЗАПОРУКА ЕФЕКТИВНОЇ ВЗАЄМОДІЇ В МУЛЬТИЕТНІЧНОМУ ПРОСТОРІ

У статті досліджено специфіку міжкультурної компетенції, що вимірюється трьома ключовими вимогами до ефективної комунікації в поліетнічному середовищі, а саме: ступенем міжкультурної чутливості, міжкультурною обізнаністю й рівнем міжкультурних здібностей, що забезпечують як емпатичний потенціал для адаптації до культурних розбіжностей, так і отримання соціальної підтримки в цілому. Актуальність визначеної проблеми ґрунтується на уявленні, що культура поведінки й культурні особливості суттєво впливають на якість перекладу як такого виду діяльності, що базується на психічних особливостях людини й відображає її стиль вербального й невербального етикету. З огляду на це у науковій розвідці проведено аналіз особливостей міжкультурної компетентності як засобу досягнення ефективної взаємодії між іноземними й українськими студентами перекладацьких факультетів.

Установлено, що випускники факультетів перекладу досягають вміння забезпечувати перехід від одиниць оригінального тексту до комунікативно еквівалентних одиниць цільової мови за наявності високого рівня міжкультурних знань, навичок, культурної адаптивності упродовж професійної діяльності. Виявлено, що у групах зі студентами різного етнічного походження ефективним вважається спілкування представників різних культур і націй, якщо воно приносить взаємну користь для всіх учасників ситуації взаємодії.

У перекладацькій практиці культурні бар'єри визначають актуальність міжкультурної підготовки, що передбачає вміння вирішувати варіативні педагогічні, психологічні й практичні проблеми. У статті визначено і схарактеризовано такі бар'єри, пов'язані з культурним непорозумінням, стандартами й нормами поведінки, упередженими переконаннями й хибними уявленнями про цінності, наслідками етноцентризму, стереотипізації і, нарешті, дискримінацією як засобом підтримки власного Я. У такий спосіб, запропоновано методи запобігання й подолання наслідків культурних розбіжностей, що передбачені навчальними програмами на перекладацьких факультетах: загальний мовний тренінг, культурний тренінг, принципи запобігання фосилізації мовлення, уникнення – повне або часткове – фази плато, застосування політики взаємної вигоди.

Ключові слова: *міжкультурна компетентність, міжкультурна чутливість, переклад, етноцентризм, стереотипність, взаємодія.*

Problem statement. Within the process of interaction and integration among the parties of global society, the rapid development of states generates the emergence of new requirements for communication. In the postwar years, the world demanded the materialization of new ideas, which led to the accelerated expansion of economics and science, revolutionary changes in technology, and global economic activity. This induced, in its turn, the need to establish closer contacts between countries.

The XXI century has given a powerful incitation to the means of communication development because nowadays almost any country can make a significant contribution to the global system of interconnection. Tourism, science, and education have become important components of intercultural information transfer. Many countries cooperate together in the

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field of scientific and technological progress, and even more, countries exchange specialists in certain fields and stimulate students who travel to study abroad or undergo internships in their field of research. All this confirms the relevance of our chosen topic because it is becoming increasingly urgent and is generating new learning strategies.

The concept of intercultural communication first appeared in the 1970s in R. Porter and L. Samovar's «Communication between Cultures» (Samovar & Porter, 1991). Over time, this concept has expanded significantly and began to include such important disciplines as translation theory, the study of foreign languages, comparative culturology, and others. In today's world, intercultural communication is understood as focusing on the behavior of people who deal with a variety of cultural differences. Being a crucial part of higher education discourse, intercultural communication uses primarily the achievements of cultural anthropology and the study of communicative processes in society. The most significant contributions to this academic discipline are made by such branches of science as cognitive and social psychology, sociology, cognitive linguistics, and typology of languages. In the 21st century, there has been a recognition of the value of various world cultures, a rejection of the destruction of many traditional cultures and their languages, and an interest in different nationalities and their interactions. Modern intercultural communication emphasizes the interaction between races, peoples, ethnic groups, and subcultures within larger cultures.

Cultural awareness plays a significant role in shaping behavior that promotes communication at the international level nowadays. At the same time, it is generally accepted that cultural diversity can act as an invisible barrier to understanding. Accepting those differences is one of the most important skills that contribute to the successful flow of communication, that is why today the emphasis is on removing those obstacles that prevent participants from information exchange on different levels of awareness. Particular speech communities introduce their additional individual context accompanied by the danger to make generalized predictions based on previous experiences. Under such conditions, they participate in trade policy, decisions on localization and standardization strategies, advertising, interaction efficiency, business relations, international business management, international marketing, international negotiations and behavior, interpersonal relations, and many other aspects of life. Therefore, intercultural communication mastery is a great opportunity to promote global peace and prosperity. When problems

arise due to the existence of cultural barriers (imposed on interethnic communication and connected with peculiarities of the human brain and cognitive capacity), adequate training is important in removing these limits. Anxiety, uncertainty, stereotypes, and ethnocentrism typically arise within «a symbolic, interpretive, transactional, contextual process, in which people from different cultures try to create shared meanings» (Lustig & Koester, 2007: 46).

Recent research and publications. The topic we have chosen is highly relevant recently, so it has been studied by many researchers, among whom we could single out such names as Shubyna E., Delecta R. J., Raman G. P., Rozkwitalska M., Neuliep J. W., Chen G. M., Starosta W. J., Fein S., Spencer S. J., Lustig M. W., Koester J., Tomozeiu D., Koskinen K., D'Arcangelo A., Kelly D., and many others.

The purpose of the article is to analyze the results obtained through the research on intercultural communication peculiarities between Ukrainian and foreign students in the course of translation classes. The topicality of this problem is denoted due to the comprehension that the culture of behavior and cultural specifications significantly affect the quality of translation as it is based on the mental specifications of the human and reflects the manner and style of verbal and non-verbal etiquette. This type of research is also relevant because it reflects not only the linguistic point of view but also many aspects of sociolinguistics and psycholinguistics.

The outline of the main research material. Intercultural communication involves addressing one's own past, analogies, and connections with other countries. If we take a look at history, we will see that during the period of the Soviet Union, this branch of social and humanitarian discourse was in a state of decline primarily due to the totalitarian political regime, which required strict adherence to certain norms and rules of conduct. There could be no talk of free communication with foreigners, as all spheres of life were under the close control of the authorities. The profession of the translator (interpreter) was also a subject of a strict statute and did not allow a translator (interpreter) any independence because they did not even have the right to ask a foreign guest about some small talk issues like weather or children's well-being or to maintain a sports conversation without the permission of management. It all came down to comprehensive control of all spheres of life as required by the totalitarian state system. The same could be seen in the countries with fascist regimes (Germany, Italy, Spain) when everything was a subject of very strict control and left people without any opportunity to communicate freely with representatives of foreign countries.

However, with the fall of totalitarian systems, communication systems also had tremendous changes. In 1991 our country gained independence, which marked the beginning of a period of adaptation and communicative development in our country. With the advent of a large number of international students, intercultural communication in our country is beginning to develop rapidly. Consequently, the current society tries to adapt to the influence of other cultures and cooperate with these cultures.

According to American scientists R. Porter and L. Samovar, «communication is what happens every time someone reacts to the behavior and consequences of another person's behavior» (Samovar & Porter, 2006). This is exactly what we can see in translation classes in groups where students of different nationalities participate. They face some difficult tasks of adapting not only to each other but also to a learning process in general. Interaction in a multicultural space is associated with many challenges, differences, and conflicts that affect the condition and work of individuals, as well as the general atmosphere. These linguistic and ethnic barriers is an obstacle that prevents a native speaker from perceiving the text of the original. Researchers state four important components of the linguistic and ethnic barriers: the distinction between the two language systems, the norm of the language, the use and the difference between the extralinguistic knowledge of the representatives of the two languages (Neuliep, 2012).

In a situation of intercultural communication, where people from different cultures interact, to be effective, participants must be oriented toward achieving a common goal. In a multicultural environment, the first step is to find the true reasons for those boundaries occurrence since it will help to identify ways of overcoming them. In translation practice, those barriers determine the urgency for intercultural training with various pedagogical, psychological, and practical challenges involved. Among the most common ones, we outline the following:

1. Misunderstandings

It emphasizes the importance of the cognitive and linguistic experiences that students go through in their native culture. This is determined by the awareness of the fact that misunderstanding raises students' awareness that «knowledge of their own culture is always limited and that intercultural communication may require them to get a much broader and deeper knowledge base of their own culture than they would normally need within their 'domestic' discourses» (Olk, 2009: 9). Thus, misunderstanding is considered

the most common barrier to communication in a multicultural environment where individuals, whose values have different backgrounds, interact within the space of their native culture and foreign cultural beliefs. Such differences often lead to high levels of anxiety and uncertainty, consequently leading to the multiplication of all the misunderstandings that arise.

2. Standards and norms of behavior. The danger of social roles with predetermined attitudes

Norms are culturally determined rules for the identification of acceptable and appropriate behavior. Often individuals create frameworks for themselves and expect others to behave accordingly. Every culture has its own norms, consequently, representatives of a particular culture have their own fixed framework of acceptable behavior that corresponds to a certain situation. People in a multicultural environment often do not understand the norms of another culture, which is why they are unable to act according to the context circumstances.

Roles are implied to define the rules that must be applied to specific groups. In particular, different cultures often assign different roles to men and women, children and parents, husbands and wives. These roles vary in different countries and ethnic or corporate minorities, which can lead to a certain disruption of roles in a multicultural space, which in turn leads to anxiety, as a result of which the communication process is interrupted.

3. Beliefs and predetermined values as barriers to effective communication

Beliefs and values differ both at the level of culture and at the personal level. The centrality of the interlocutor denotes means of reflexivity toward one's culture. In a globalized space, transferring values should be acknowledged by the professional community, the academic community, the national community, etc. This is why adaptability has been recognized as a key intercultural sub-competence.

4. Ethnocentrism on a scale between "low" and "high" ethnocentricity

Since all humans are to some extent ethnocentric, falling somewhere on a scale between "low" and "high" ethnocentricity (Neuliep, 2012), participants in the international arena are taught how to regulate their levels of ethnocentricity that influence an individual's ability to successfully communicate interculturally. Ethnocentrism in its purest form implies that culture and behavior models, norms, way of thinking, and way of life of one's own group are considered by the individual as the only acceptable and true ones. This leads to the idea that the culture, behavior, norms, way of thinking, and way of life of a different group are wrong, unacceptable, and must be changed. Those

beliefs result in a barrier that prevents the possibility of considering another point of view as worthy of attention, which in no way contributes to success in communication.

5. Stereotypes as a wrong way of interacting in a multicultural community

Stereotypes as a fixed, over-generalized image or idea of a particular object, developed from both negative or positive experiences, determine our language behavior and tend to bring a lack of empathy, including disregard for the interlocutor`s emotional and psychological well-being. Inadequate information about people leads to miscommunication in the process of intercultural dialogue. Cultural stereotypes also exaggerate and oversimplify information, leading to fallacious perceptions of each other, which in turn increases anxiety. Most often, stereotypes are born out of fear of the unknown or little known and are the main causes of bias and misunderstanding.

6. Prejudice as the affirming the self through derogating others

Prejudice is a negative attitude towards a cultural group, which is based on an insufficient level of communication experience, or on the absence of such communication itself. The difference between stereotype and prejudice is that prejudice arises from the existence of a stereotype and is its practical embodiment. That is, prejudice disappears or changes due to a change in stereotype.

7. Discrimination as self-image maintenance

Discrimination is an intended action aimed at avoiding, distancing, or excluding an individual from a group. Discrimination is the practical application of stereotypes and prejudices, overt or covert. It can occur at different levels and have different manifestations, for example, someone can be discriminated against simply by turning away during the conversation and avoiding eye contact, using reduced vocabulary to the interlocutor, using physical violence, or systematically excluding the individual from his group. Discrimination can be interpersonal (one person discriminates against another), collective (a number of individuals or groups discriminate), or institutional (business, industry, any institution or structure decides not to serve a particular group of people) (Rozkwitalska, 2010). To researchers` minds, discriminatory behavior follows a threat to one's self-image. The monitoring presented by Fein and Spencer shows that increased stereotyping and prejudice can, in part, be explained by the need to restore a threatened positive self-perception (Fein and Spencer, 1997).

At the same time, certain measures should be taken to help overcome barriers to intercultural communication. Competence in this field arises when participants convey information correctly and skillfully so that it makes it possible to achieve the goals of communication, however, taking into account respect for the values, norms, and beliefs of individuals who are involved in the language exchange. At the present stage of social development, such actions are not only desirable but necessary to achieve successful interaction and mutual understanding, given the globalization processes and the unification of a large proportion of world processes.

The essence of the concept of intercultural competence is defined as an indicator of the formation of a person's ability to effectively participate in the process of sharing information between people with differing cultural identities. This ability is formed on the basis of knowledge, skills, and attitudes. R. Delecta Jenifer and G. P. Raman argue that the development of intercultural competence is based on three pillars. Those ones that contribute to the acquisition of the appropriate level of cross-cultural communication skills are intercultural sensitivity, intercultural awareness, and intercultural abilities (Delecta Jenifer, Raman, 2015). Intercultural sensitivity is identified as the aspect of intercultural communication related to emotions. To be interculturally sensitive means to have an empathic ability to accept and adapt to cultural differences as pointed out by Chen & Starosta (Chen & Starosta, 2000: 4). This aspect should be designed to provide the ability to assess the differences between different cultures. The cognitive aspect of intercultural communication is known as intercultural awareness. Intercultural awareness leads to the deepening not only of cultural consciousness but also the self-consciousness of the individual.

From our experience with Ukrainian and foreign students, we state that to achieve the goal of effective feedback within international groups, participants should be taught how to apply different skills obtained through various approaches aimed to promote intercultural competence. Tomozeiu, Koskinen, D'Arcangelo accent 4 stages of the process of translation as the interaction between the translator`s cognition and the origin source of the message and define the skills that must be obtained for its implementation:

Stage 1. Translation job acceptance. Skills: competence in initial interpersonal engagement with a potential client.

Stage 2. The contrastive and comparative textual analysis. Skills: intercultural knowledge awareness, self-awareness.

Stage 3. The flexible negotiating of the translation decisions and strategies to be applied on a textual

level. Skills: theoretical consideration and awareness of the consequences of the decisions made.

Stage 4. The interpersonal engagement with the end-users (through the translated text or direct contact). Skills: adaptability, clear consciousness towards the mediating activity, intercultural communicative competence (Tomozeiu, Koskinen, D'Arcangelo, 2016:256).

Within the current higher education discourse and in translator training curricula, the mentioned skills are developed through:

a) General language training

The language barrier is usually the biggest challenge that arises in a multicultural environment so training and language training classes should involve ones who come into contact with native speakers of a different language and culture. It prevents learners from fossilized errors and the prevalence of interlanguage mistakes in their spoken/written performance. It also will help them to pass the stage of foreign language plateau when they achieve the intermediate or upper-intermediate level of language mastery.

b) Escaping errors and plateau consequences

Both notions (foreign language plateau and interlanguage) are mutually interconnected since the lack of success and consequently, lack of motivation increase the level of errors and mistakes made both not intentionally or due to the absence of knowledge. At the same time, the maximum extent of language faults leads to discouragement even with persevering, stubborn, and diligent learners. Learners should be aware of how to start and finish conversation not badly affecting their multicultural space participants, they should master interruption means and turn-taking techniques. One of the most crucial abilities is a talent to ask open-ended questions which is a sign of politeness and gives the interlocutors the right and space to be fully involved in the discussion.

c) Cultural training

Individuals who interact within the framework of cross-cultural communication must recognize and know about the existence of differences between values, beliefs, ways of interpersonal exchange, and principles of perception in different communities. Students should be provided with intensive cultural training to help them understand the above differences. Within university academic society, this experience is obtained through varied webinars, conferences, and meetings where learners develop a tolerance for ambiguity. Lustig and Koester state the importance of tolerance for ambiguity as one of the eight dimensions needed in order to become culturally competent (Lustig and Koester, 2010: 76). «Understanding and defining what exactly should be assessed still needs to be properly discussed to avoid, for instance, assessing curiosity and adaptability as personality traits rather than as potential individual competencies to be developed and on which to build an intercultural approach» (Tomozeiu, Koskinen and D'Arcangelo, 2016: 253–254).

d) Application of the policy of mutual benefit

Communication between representatives of different cultures and nations should bring mutual benefits to all participants in the situation of interaction. It makes the conversation between all the parties possible. Kelly deems it critical that in university courses, stress is sometimes not placed on the danger of that students` communities that are more acquainted with their own culture than interculturally oriented. Moreover, this element is often overlooked thought implicated in training curricula (Kelly, 2005).

However, the features that characterize intercultural interaction are manifested not only at the level of interpersonal communication, but also at the level of practical use of language by representatives of different ethnic and cultural communities. Thus, we conducted a study aimed at identifying the peculiarities of the use of tools and methods of translation during English classes with second-year students in groups with foreign learners (Arabic and Asian). It was found that in the process of translation, cultural values and behavior significantly affect the quality of translation. Among the males of the Arab countries, the translation was marked by a significant emphasis on their personalization, in contrast to the women, who tried to translate the texts as impersonally as possible, without focusing on their gender. This confirms the theory of the influence of cultural characteristics on the manner and quality of translation, as it is known that women in Arab countries try to remain invisible, which is due to law, religious and cultural requirements for norms of behavior in society.

The manner and quality of the translation of representatives of Asian countries was also greatly influenced by the cultural specifics of their countries of origin. Their translation was characterized by an attempt to avoid the personification as much as by the impersonality of the translation, a clear organization of the translation material, and the use of neutral vocabulary. Ukrainian students also tried to abstract as much as possible from any personification, but this was not always possible, although in general the translation could be characterized as impersonal using more or less neutral vocabulary.

Conclusion. Today`s global processes significantly affect the development of intercultural communication. Behavioral culture and the ability to

have the right dialogue skills with people from other cultures not only contribute to professional growth but also form a broader worldview and the opportunity to work with colleagues around the world. Firstly, in a multicultural environment, you should be able to find the right solutions which will help you to overcome barriers. In translation practice, cultural barriers determine the relevance of intercultural learning, which is associated with various pedagogical, psychological, and practical problems. These challenges are connected with misunderstanding, standards and norms of behavior, beliefs and pre-established values, consequences of ethnocentrism, stereotyping, prejudice, and finally, discrimination as the maintenance of the self-image itself. The practices to overcome those barriers implied by the curricula include general language training, cultural training, and ways to escape errors or plateau phase. Secondly, in a situation of intercultural communication, when people from different cultures interact with each other, a dialogue must be effective in order to achieve a common goal which implies an application of the policy of mutual benefit. Therefore, it is extremely important not only to adapt to the influence of other cultures but also cooperate with them in a productive and professional way.

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