

## THE ROLE OF INTERCULTURAL COMMUNICATIVE COMPETENCE FORMATION IN TEACHING FOREIGN LANGUAGES TO STUDENTS OF HOSPITALITY AND TOURISM SPECIALTIES

### *O PAPEL DA FORMAÇÃO DA COMPETÊNCIA COMUNICATIVA INTERCULTURAL NO ENSINO DE LÍNGUAS ESTRANGEIRAS A ESTUDANTES DAS ESPECIALIDADES DE HOSPITALIDADE E TURISMO*

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**ABSTRACT**

In this article, the authors argue that mastering a foreign language is closely related to acquiring national culture, which involves acquiring cultural knowledge, developing the ability and willingness to understand the mentality of native speakers of the language being studied, as well as the peculiarities of the communicative behavior of the people of the country. Achieving a new, modern quality of education, orientation towards the development of students' foreign language socio-cultural competence, and their cognitive and creative abilities is one of the main tasks of modern education. The socio-cultural component in the content of foreign language teaching allows students

to become familiar with the cultural heritage of the country whose language is being studied to compare it with the cultural values of their own country, which contributes to the formation of students' general culture. In the process of analyzing the methods mentioned above, their influence on the process of organizing and the effectiveness of learning, as well as in the development of a course in tourism, the authors concluded that such forms of work as project work, practical classes in the form of excursions, and the wide application of role-playing games could be called active forms of work in the classroom. They contribute to the most excellent involvement of students in the learning process and, therefore, to its assimilation. Thanks to this approach, students learn the so-called spoken anticipation, i.e., memorize and work out grammatically correct phrases to support conversation (ordering food in a restaurant, shopping in a store, passing through customs, etc.) without delving into grammar. The course also includes practical lessons with native speakers, as they contribute to the formation of correct stress and intonation, teach students to perceive the language by ear, and will be highly relevant for overcoming the language barrier. The authors concluded that using these methods and techniques in English classes contributes to the expansion and deepening of knowledge of the English language at a sufficient level to navigate in the field of tourism and hospitality. The developed methodologies will be effective for teaching project work skills, developing proper pronunciation, assisting students to overcome language barriers, and learning how to confidently and comfortably engage in conversation with foreign guests on various topics (such as the traditions and culture of the country, city landmarks, etc.).

**Keywords:** Intercultural competence. Hospitality and tourism specialty. Educational reforms. Foreign language teaching. National culture.

### RESUMO

Neste artigo, os autores defendem que o domínio de uma língua estrangeira está intimamente relacionado com a aquisição da cultura nacional, que envolve a aquisição de conhecimentos culturais, desenvolvendo a capacidade e a vontade de compreender a mentalidade dos falantes nativos da língua em estudo, bem como as peculiaridades o comportamento comunicativo do povo do país. Alcançar uma nova e moderna qualidade de educação, orientação para o desenvolvimento da competência sociocultural dos alunos em línguas estrangeiras e suas habilidades cognitivas e criativas é uma das principais tarefas da educação moderna. A componente sociocultural no conteúdo do ensino de línguas estrangeiras permite que os alunos se familiarizem com o patrimônio cultural do país cuja língua está a estudar para compará-lo com os valores culturais do seu próprio país, o que contribui para a formação de uma visão geral dos alunos. cultura. No processo de análise dos métodos mencionados acima, sua influência no processo de organização e eficácia da aprendizagem, bem como no desenvolvimento de um curso de turismo, os autores concluíram que formas de trabalho como trabalho de projeto, aulas práticas em a forma de excursões e a ampla aplicação de jogos de representação podem ser chamadas de formas ativas de trabalho em sala de aula. Contribuem para o mais excelente envolvimento dos alunos no processo de aprendizagem e, portanto, para a sua assimilação. Graças a essa abordagem, os alunos aprendem a chamada antecipação falada, ou seja, memorizam e elaboram frases gramaticalmente corretas para apoiar a conversação (pedir comida em um restaurante, fazer compras em uma loja, passar pela alfândega etc.) sem se aprofundar na gramática. O curso também inclui aulas práticas com falantes nativos, pois elas contribuem para a formação do acento e entonação corretos, ensinam o aluno a perceber o idioma de ouvido e serão de grande relevância para a superação da barreira do idioma. Os autores concluíram que a utilização desses métodos e técnicas nas aulas de inglês contribui para a ampliação e aprofundamento do conhecimento da língua inglesa em nível suficiente para navegar no campo do turismo e hotelaria. As metodologias desenvolvidas serão eficazes para ensinar habilidades de trabalho de projeto, desenvolver pronúncia adequada, ajudar os alunos a superar as barreiras linguísticas e aprender a se envolver com confiança e conforto em conversas com convidados estrangeiros sobre vários tópicos (como as tradições e cultura do país, marcos da cidade, etc.).

**Palavras-chave:** Competência intercultural. Especialidade hoteleira e turística. Reformas educativas. Ensino de línguas estrangeiras. Cultura nacional.

## Introduction

With the help of a foreign language that can describe everything, we learn about the structure of consciousness. Therefore, language always reveals gaps in the knowledge of a foreign country and its culture. With the help of a foreign language that can describe everything, we learn about the structure of consciousness. Therefore, language always reveals gaps in the knowledge of a foreign country and its culture. As a rule, due to time constraints, students are deprived of the opportunity to immerse themselves in the atmosphere of the culture, traditions, customs, and social norms of the country of the language they are learning. And it is not surprising that students do not understand native speakers well, and their speech is full of both grammatical and behavioral errors. The culture of the language will help to avoid this. Socio-cultural competence is a complex phenomenon of linguistic and country studies, sociolinguistic, socio-psychological, and cultural components. It implies that a student is familiar with the national and cultural specifics of linguistic behavior and the ability to use topics and elements of the socio-cultural context that are relevant to the generation and perception of language from the point of view of native speakers: it is about customs, norms, rules, social conventions, knowledge of countries, etc.

The development of foreign language socio-cultural competence plays a unique role in the modern world, where international relations are often aggravated and patriotic, and international education is important. Moreover, foreign language socio-cultural competence implies the readiness and ability to live and interact in the modern multicultural world.

This research aims to study the role of intercultural communicative competence formation in teaching foreign languages to students of hospitality and tourism specialties.

## Methods

In this research, the authors used general scientific methods, namely comparative, analytical, comparative, inductive, deductive, and the method of definitions. The comparative method is employed to compare different approaches and strategies in teaching foreign languages to students of hospitality and tourism specialties. By examining various methods and techniques, there was identifying the strengths and weaknesses of each approach, enabling them to determine the most effective ways to develop intercultural communicative competence.

The analytical method is used to break down the different components of intercultural communicative competence. By dissecting and analyzing its elements, such as language proficiency, cultural awareness, and communication skills, there was gain a comprehensive understanding of how these aspects contribute to effective language learning in the context of hospitality and tourism.

The inductive method is utilized to observe and analyze specific instances and examples of intercultural communication in the hospitality and tourism industry. By studying real-life scenarios, there was identify patterns and draw general conclusions about the necessary competencies and skills that students of hospitality and tourism specialties need to develop.

Conversely, the deductive method is employed to establish general principles and theories regarding intercultural communicative competence. By starting with overarching concepts and theories, there was derive specific implications and recommendations for teaching foreign languages to students in the field of hospitality and tourism.

The method of definitions is used to clarify and establish clear conceptual boundaries and terminology. By defining key terms and concepts related to intercultural communicative competence, there was ensure a common understanding and a solid foundation for their study.

## Literature Review

The problem analysis proves that the tradition of language and culture learning originated in the depths of the direct method among the representatives of the "Movement" (Sweet, 1906; Vietor, 1902; Byrne, 1994). They first pointed out that each language reflects a different worldview, and each nation has its own system of concepts and values that need to be introduced to students. Later, the ideas of language and culture co-teaching were reflected in the works of foreign scholars of the first half of the twentieth century by Schweitzer and E. Simonet (1921), O. Espersen (1925), and C. Handscin (1940). Many scholars, such as A. L. Berdichevsky, R. K. Mignard-Beloruchoy, S. G. Ter-Minasova, and N. V. Baryshnikov, are searching for ways to interconnect language and culture teaching.

The second half of the XXth century is characterized by increased attention to language as a particular world knowledge. It contributes to the unification of such scientific disciplines as linguistics, methodology, cultural studies, and ethnopsychology, the object of study of intercultural communication, conditions, and patterns of formation of a secondary linguistic personality. Within the framework of this issue, the search is on for ways to organize interrelated language and culture teaching in foreign language teaching (Cañas, J., Pérez, L., 2014), (Huang, J., Morgan, G., 2003), (Hutchinson, 2006), (Hymes, 1972), (Martin, 2005).

In modern foreign language teaching methods, cultures are increasingly described regarding socio-cultural competence. The concept of socio-cultural competence is firmly established in the theory and practice of foreign language teaching. The lack of socio-cultural competence skills can significantly complicate the communication process (Tziora, 2016), (Wood, 2003), (Styfanyshyn, 2019), (Starynets, 2016), (Sarnovska, 2018), (Rezvan, 2016), (Pradivliannyi, 2017), (Ortynskyi, 2009), (Nahayev, 2007), (Medynska, 2016), (Lihum, 2011), (Kuksa, 2019), (Kudryk, 2015), (Kozak, 2014), (Kovalenko, 1996), (Kan, 2019), (Ivasiv, 2020), (Vasylyshyna, 2020), (Bondar, 2019).

## Results and discussion

Currently, the problem of teaching foreign languages in secondary schools is relevant. It is known that the goal of learning a foreign language is to develop communicative competence, which includes both language and sociocultural competence. Learning a foreign language is intended to shape individuals who are capable and willing to participate in intercultural communication. The education system is undergoing a radical transformation. Personal qualities such as mobility, determination, decisiveness, responsibility, the ability to acquire and apply knowledge in unfamiliar situations, and the ability to build successful communication with others are becoming in demand. Scientists and educators strive to address the challenges of these new changes.

The evolution of the competency-based approach in education can be divided into three distinct stages, each marked by significant developments and contributions to the understanding and application of competencies. The first stage, which took place during the 1960s and 1970s, introduced the concept of "competence" into the educational discourse and laid the foundation for differentiating between competence and competency. This period saw the emergence of discussions and debates regarding the nature of competence and its role in education. Scholars and researchers began exploring the notion of competence as a holistic integration of knowledge, skills, and attitudes necessary for effective performance in a specific domain.

The second stage, spanning the 1970s to the 1990s, witnessed the widespread adoption of the concepts of competence and competency in both theoretical frameworks and practical applications of foreign language learning, as well as in the fields of management and communication teaching. During this period, scholars focused on studying and categorizing various competencies, leading to the identification of different types of competencies ranging from a modest number to a more extensive list. This stage was characterized by a deeper understanding of competencies as specific, observable, and measurable attributes that could be acquired and developed through deliberate learning and practice.

The third stage, which began in the 1990s and continues to the present day, is characterized by the significant development and implementation of the competency-based approach in education. Notably, UNESCO documents and educational materials have played a crucial role in outlining a comprehensive set of competencies that are considered desirable outcomes of education. This stage emphasizes the integration of various competencies across disciplines and focuses on preparing learners to meet the challenges of the contemporary world. The competency-based approach aims to equip individuals with a broad range of skills, knowledge, and attitudes, enabling them to adapt, thrive, and contribute meaningfully to society.

Overall, the three stages of the competency-based approach in education have contributed to our understanding of competencies as multifaceted constructs and have guided the development of educational curricula and assessments. By recognizing the importance of competencies and incorporating them into educational frameworks, institutions can better prepare learners to navigate a rapidly changing and complex world, fostering their ability to succeed and make significant contributions in their chosen fields.

The competency-based approach is a set of general principles for determining educational goals, selecting educational content, organizing the educational process, and assessing educational outcomes. These principles include:

- The meaning of education is to develop in students the ability to independently solve problems in various fields and types of activity, using social experience, of which students' own experience is a part.
- Education content is a didactically adapted social experience of solving cognitive, moral, worldview, political, and other problems.
- The sense of organizing the educational process is to create conditions for the formation of students' experience in independently solving cognitive, organizational, communicative, moral, and other problems that make up the content of education.
- The assessment of educational outcomes is based on the analysis of the levels of education students achieve at a certain stage of learning.

From the perspective of a competency-based approach to developing key competencies, students become the main result of educational activity. The term "competence" (translated from Latin as correspondence, proportionality) has two meanings:

- the range of possibilities of any institution or individual;
- the range of issues in which this individual has knowledge and experience.
- In one of the pedagogical discussions regarding the issue of the competency-based approach, the following definition was proposed:
- competence is the ability to act in a situation of uncertainty.

Higher education cannot form the level of competence in students that is sufficient for successful problem-solving in all areas of activity. Therefore, the goal of higher education is to develop key competencies. Key competencies refer to the ability of students to act independently in situations of uncertainty when solving relevant tasks.

Foreign language classes are fertile ground for developing all key competencies, not just subject-communicative ones. Therefore, it is necessary to provide opportunities for self-education, self-development, and self-expression during each lesson to form an independent personality who can operate with the information received. At the same time, the educational material must be organized in such a way that each student has the opportunity to choose when completing tasks.

According to the curriculum, the teacher is responsible for planning the educational process and lesson topics based on the requirements and tasks outlined in the curriculum. The changes are necessary for educational programs to achieve a new level of education quality. As a result, some approaches to curriculum development are distinguished, including subject-based programs developed independently and presented at the level of general concepts and competency-based programs that perceive subjects as elements of the school's educational program. Two main concepts can be identified within the competency-based approach: "competence" and "competency". In analyzing works on the problems of competency analysis, a disappointing conclusion can be drawn that there is

currently no clear definition of "competence" and "competency," which are often used in the same context. Thus, competence is a systemic unity that integrates its components' personal, subject-specific, and instrumental characteristics. Competency is not simply the possession of knowledge, but the constant striving for its renewal and use in specific conditions. It is also worth noting that competency is the readiness of a specialist to engage in a particular activity, an attribute of preparation for future professional activity, the ability to act in a situation of uncertainty based on knowledge and intellectually and personally conditioned experience of a person's socio-professional life.

Let us try to differentiate the concepts of "competence" and "competency":

- competence includes a set of interdependent qualities of a person (knowledge, skills, abilities, ways of activity), which are set concerning a specific range of subjects and processes necessary for high-quality, productive activity concerning them.
- competency – the possession and mastery of a person's relevant competence, including their personal attitude towards it and the subject of activity.

One of the main goals of modern education is to achieve a new, contemporary quality of education, which is understood as an orientation towards developing the student's personality, cognitive, and creative abilities. Therefore, the key competencies should include universal competencies that students need to master for further education, personal development, and life self-realization, regardless of their level of education, development, and profession of choice. The list of competencies reproduces a particular list of main types of activity. One of the central problems for updating education content with universal competencies is the theoretical model of a person's communicative competence developed by Jan van Ek, which has the following components: linguistic, sociolinguistic, discourse, social, and sociocultural competencies (Van Ek, 1992).

According to the analysis of foreign linguistic and didactic studies, communicative competence is a complex, multifunctional human property that has the basic ability to communicate orally and in writing with a native speaker of a

particular language in a real-life situation and involves a whole range of components:

- linguistic (correct use of linguistic forms in a foreign language)
- sociolinguistic (ability to interact with the interlocutor),
- sociocultural (ability to organize communication taking into account the rules, norms, and traditions of behavior in the country of the target language), discursive (ability to connect one statement with another in a situation of oral/written expression of thought),
- strategic (ability to overcome linguistic difficulties in communication, using compensating means (periphrasis, gestures, facial expressions),
- social (ability and willingness to communicate with others) (Bachmanet Palmer, 1987; Germen, 1982; Lussier 1992).

Knowledge is an important issue in the formation of competencies. Competencies can extend beyond factual knowledge or practical skills. The question arises as to what minimum all young people need to know and what technologies should be included in education to ensure that they understand the current situation, the realities of life, and the ability to perform adequately in today's demanding workplace. Knowledge cannot remain academic; this issue should be addressed through the development of key competencies.

The current stage of development of foreign language linguistics as an exceptional knowledge of the world has led to the unification of research in such scientific disciplines as methodology, cultural studies, linguistics, and ethnopsychology, the object of study of which is intercultural communication, conditions, and patterns of formation of a secondary language personality. Within the framework of this issue, the search for ways to organize interrelated language and culture teaching is carried out. With the help of a foreign language, which can describe everything, we learn about the structure of consciousness. Therefore, it is in the language that gaps in knowledge of a foreign country and its culture always appear. As a rule, due to time constraints, students are deprived of the opportunity to immerse themselves in the atmosphere of the culture, customs, traditions, and social norms of the country of the language being studied. As a result, it is difficult

for students to understand native speakers, and both grammatical and behavioral errors characterize their speech.

The status of a foreign language as an educational subject is gradually changing in society. The modern methodology aims to achieve significant results, i.e., emphasizes the need to strengthen the linguistic and country studies aspects of language learning. The demand for a foreign language in society raises the status of a foreign language as an academic subject in the student training system. It stimulates the search for new technologies and teaching models that introduce students to foreign language culture in all its manifestations. The problem of forming students' sociocultural competence is exciting in practice.

Many methodologists pay special attention to the current state of the theory and practice of teaching foreign languages with a pronounced communicative orientation, which contributes to the comprehensive development of the individual and the development of students' spiritual values. Foreign language teaching methods only constitute the content of English language teaching with including a socio-cultural component in the learning process. In light of modern requirements for the goals of foreign language teaching, the status and role of country information are changing, presented in such a way as to meet the experience, needs, and interests of students and to be compared with the similar experience of their peers in the country of the target language.

In modern higher education, teaching a foreign language in an inseparable connection with the national culture is necessary. The foreign language culture contains factors contributing to forming a communicative personality and increasing learning motivation. The socio-cultural component acts as an incentive to improve the effectiveness of student learning at all stages of higher education.

For our study, it is interesting to study the peculiarities of English for Specific Purposes in the field of tourism and hospitality, as well as the specifics of its teaching. At the moment, the tourism industry is one of the most popular. Many graduates choose to work in the tourism industry after graduation or obtain a second degree in this field. A school English course does not provide such specific

knowledge, so this course is designed for students who want to expand their knowledge of English in a specialty such as tourism.

Only twenty years ago, any teaching was based on the classical methodology, with most of the time devoted to foreign language theory. In class, students studied syntactic structures, and new vocabulary, discussed grammatical rules, read and translated texts, did written assignments, and sometimes listened to audio recordings. However, only ten percent of the lesson time was spent developing conversational skills. As a result, the student understood the texts in English and knew the grammatical rules but could not express their thoughts. That is why the developed English for tourism courses have a radically different approach, in which the maximum amount of time is devoted to developing communication skills, namely listening and speaking.

Thus, the following methods are used in the developed courses:

- Communicative – its main principle is using lexical items and grammatical structures in the language studied in the classroom, both oral and written. All classes are developed and conducted in a foreign language or with minimal inclusion of the native language. The teacher only guides the students, asks them questions, and creates a communicative situation, while the students speak 70% of the time during the class.
- Project-based – initially, this English teaching method was intended for children. Still, it has become very relevant for adults with a beginner level of English, especially those who want to master it for work in the tourism industry. It is based on using the studied material in practice and is optimal for organizing knowledge control after completing an entire module.
- Intensive – this method has become especially popular among those who want to learn to speak English in the shortest possible time.

This seemingly unrealistic goal can be achieved due to the high level of patterned language and a good basic level of knowledge of the student. By learning many stable expressions, memorizing them, and practicing them, students can learn

to explain themselves in a foreign language and understand the interlocutor reasonably quickly.

In addition, in the course, we developed, we used some techniques that are also aimed at improving the quality of lessons, the perception of information, and, as a result, increasing student motivation.

Examples of some of them are given below:

- Community circle. The teacher formulates a problem on a given topic and offers students a task: assess the significance of the problem, demonstrate all the pros and cons, determine a possible outcome, etc. The students have to speak out on the issue, argue their position, and eventually make a joint decision.
- Brainstorming. This technique is also aimed at discussing and solving any problem. However, according to this technique, the audience is divided into two groups - "idea generators" who actually propose ideas, and "experts" who, after the "storm" is over, evaluate the position of each "generator".
- Game methodology (Games). Its main advantages are the absence of a mechanism of coercion to attend classes and great interest on the part of the student. The teacher conducts a variety of games, including role-playing games. They aim to practice old or learn new vocabulary and/or grammatical structures. During the games, students quickly memorize them and learn how to use them in their speech.
- Speaking lessons with native speakers. The main difference in this course is that you have classes directly with native speakers. Most often, these are university students who have come to study in an exchange program. Communication between students and foreigners in English is indispensable in learning to speak and listen, especially in the field of tourism and hospitality. Such lessons are usually characterized by liveliness and genuine interest on the part of the students, which invariably leads to the best results.

## Conclusions

During the analyzing various methods and techniques for teaching English in the context of tourism and hospitality, it is evident that active forms of classroom work, such as project-based learning, practical excursions, and role-playing games, have a significant impact on the organization and effectiveness of language learning. These methods actively engage students in the learning process, promoting better assimilation of the language. Through these approaches, students acquire what is known as oral proficiency, which involves memorizing and practicing grammatically correct phrases for specific situations encountered in the tourism industry, without focusing extensively on grammar rules.

Additionally, practical lessons with native speakers play a crucial role in developing correct pronunciation, improving listening skills, and overcoming the language barrier. Implementing these methods and techniques in English classes not only enhances students' language proficiency but also equips them with essential skills for project work, effective communication with foreign guests, and engaging in discussions on various topics related to the culture, traditions, and attractions of a country. These skills are highly relevant and beneficial for individuals planning to pursue careers in the tourism and hospitality industry. Mastering a professional language is particularly relevant in the field of tourism, as it fosters international contacts and expands intercultural relations. Considering the significant growth and importance of the tourism sector, developing a solid command of the English language has become a valuable asset for individuals seeking to navigate and succeed in this industry. Incorporating these methods and techniques in English language classes for tourism and hospitality students not only broadens and deepens their language knowledge but also prepares them adequately to meet the demands and challenges of the evolving global tourism landscape.

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