INTERCULTURAL COMMUNICATION AND SENSITIVITY: THEORETICAL AND PHILOSOPHICAL FOUNDATIONS

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INTRODUCTION

In the contemporary world marked by globalization, migration, and transnational mobility, educational systems are increasingly characterized by cultural and linguistic diversity. This reality underscores the critical need for teachers to develop intercultural sensitivity and competence to ensure inclusive and effective teaching practices[1]. As future educators prepare to work in classrooms composed of learners from diverse cultural, ethnic, and linguistic backgrounds integrating intercultural communication courses into teacher education programs becomes a strategic imperative[2]. Such courses provide the theoretical knowledge, practical tools, and reflective opportunities necessary to cultivate intercultural sensitivity, a key competence for fostering equity, respect, and effective communication in diverse learning environments. In the context of modern education, where classrooms are increasingly multicultural, fostering **intercultural sensitivity** among future teachers is essential for creating inclusive and supportive learning environments. Teaching **Intercultural Communication** as part of teacher training programs equips future educators with the necessary skills to understand, respect, and effectively interact with students from diverse cultural backgrounds. By introducing concepts such as cultural dimensions, communication styles, cultural adaptation, and strategies for managing cultural misunderstandings, these courses encourage future teachers to reflect on their own cultural biases and develop a more open and empathetic mindset. Through practical activities like case analyses, simulations, and collaborative projects with peers from different cultures, trainee teachers gain first-hand experience in applying intercultural communication strategies. This

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[1] Deardorff, D. K. Implementing intercultural competence assessment. The SAGE handbook of intercultural competence. 2009. P. 477-491.

[2] Byram, M. Conceptualizing intercultural communicative competence and intercultural citizenship. Routledge. 2012.

combination of theory and practice helps future educators not only enhance their **intercultural sensitivity** but also develop pedagogical approaches that promote **cultural awareness**, mutual respect, and effective communication in diverse classrooms. Ultimately, training future teachers in **Intercultural Communication** strengthens their ability to foster a positive learning climate, prevent cultural conflicts, and prepare students for life in a globally interconnected world.

Language plays a crucial role within any culture. Since language and culture are deeply intertwined in any society, it is essential to incorporate cultural elements into the teaching of second or foreign languages. As Byram states, language serves as a tool that reflects a society's way of thinking. Because language evolves within the context of culture, developing the ability to think in the target language is only possible through exposure to the culture associated with that language. Scholars working on improving language teaching methods and approaches increasingly focus on enhancing learners' intercultural communication competence through a variety of activities and exercises. Their first step is to help learners understand and become aware of the target culture, which in turn can support the development of their intercultural communication competence[3].

At the core of this research, it is essential to first clarify the connections between key concepts such as "intercultural communication," "intercultural competence," and "intercultural sensitivity." Throughout history, factors like trade, conflict, migration, and technological advancements have driven interactions between different cultures, and over time, these interactions have grown more complex and inevitable. Intercultural communication refers to the process that emerges when cultures come into contact and interact with one another – a process that is becoming increasingly significant in today's interconnected world. In the 1950s, Edward T. Hall not only introduced the concept of intercultural communication into academic discourse but also made substantial contributions to defining its theoretical and conceptual foundations, helping establish it as a distinct academic field[4].

Both individual and cultural factors influence communication. When cultural identity plays a central and defining role in the communication process, we can speak of intercultural communication. In essence, intercultural communication occurs between individuals who come from

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[3] Stambouli, M. H. B., Hairech, F., & Sarnou, H. Promoting intercultural competence of ESP learners through virtual exchanges: a thematic analysis approach. South Florida Journal of Development. 2025. Vol. 6(1). e4893.

[4] Onorati MG, Bednarz F. Building Intercultural Competences. A Handbook for Professionals in Education. 2010.

different cultural backgrounds[5]. According to Dervin[6], any communication event involving cultural differences or interactions shaped by those differences can be considered a form of intercultural communication.

Intercultural communication competence is a multidimensional construct that emerges from the interaction between several key components: linguistic competence, sociolinguistic competence, discourse competence, and intercultural competence describe intercultural competence as a vital tool enabling effective intercultural communication. This competence is typically understood through three interrelated dimensions: knowledge, skills, and emotional disposition. The knowledge dimension encompasses the ability to recognize and understand one's own cultural identity, develop cultural self-awareness, acquire knowledge about other cultures, identify distinctive cultural characteristics, and recognize similarities across cultures. The skills dimension refers to the ability to listen actively, observe and analyze cultural phenomena, evaluate cultural differences, adapt to new cultural contexts, demonstrate flexibility, communicate effectively and appropriately, and behave in ways that align with the specific intercultural situation. The emotional dimension includes the capacity to respect cultural differences, maintain openness and curiosity, and approach intercultural encounters with a spirit of exploration conceptualize this process by distinguishing between intercultural sensitivity, which reflects the emotional dimension; intercultural awareness, which corresponds to the cognitive dimension; and intercultural adroitness, which pertains to the behavioral dimension – all of which contribute to the development of intercultural communication competence[7].

This study focuses specifically on intercultural sensitivity, which represents the emotional dimension of intercultural communication competence. Intercultural sensitivity refers to the ability to develop positive attitudes and emotions that foster appropriate and effective behavior in intercultural interactions, particularly in understanding and responding to cultural differences. It encompasses an individual's awareness of cultural diversity and their willingness to accept and appreciate these differences, ultimately leading to more positive outcomes in intercultural communication. Individuals with well-developed intercultural sensitivity tend to demonstrate qualities such as self-confidence, self-regulation, open-mindedness, empathy,

[5] Ігнатова, О. Європейський досвід міжкультурної комунікації в освіті і культурі. Modern Information Technologies and Innovation Methodologies of Education in Professional Training Methodology Theory Experience Problems. 2023. № 68. С. 60–67.

[6] Dervin F. Interculturality in education: A theoretical and methodological toolbox. 2016.

[7] Barnhardt R., Brisk, M.E. Language, culture, and identity. Language, Culture, and Community in Teacher Education. Taylor and Francis. 2013. P. 21–45.

strong interpersonal skills, and an absence of prejudice or bias towards individuals from other cultures[8].

The Higher Education Council outlined the national qualifications framework for higher education in Europe as part of the Bologna Process. Among the qualifications highlighted in this framework are competencies related to "understanding national and international cultures" within the domain of knowledge, and "experiencing life in different cultures and adapting to social environments" under communication and social competencies[9]. In addition, a key professional competency for teachers – "individual and professional values and professional development" includes the requirement that teachers consider students' social and cultural backgrounds, interests, and behaviors to help them achieve the highest possible learning outcomes and personal development. Furthermore, under the same professional competency framework, the section entitled "importance of national and universal values" emphasizes that teachers, while embracing children's rights, human rights, constitutional principles, and democracy, should also be able to design learning environments that recognize and respect the unique cultural values of each society[10].

These descriptions and performance indicators closely align with the characteristics and competencies expected of individuals with intercultural competence. In this regard, it can be argued that teacher education programs in Ukraine also aim to equip future teachers with the necessary competencies in intercultural communication and intercultural sensitivity. Teachers in all subject areas are likely to encounter students from diverse cultural backgrounds; therefore, they are expected to possess intercultural communication competence to foster inclusive and effective learning environments. This need is even more pronounced for foreign and second language teachers, who must develop these competencies to communicate effectively and authentically in the target language.

1. The philosophical concept of intercultural communication

Intercultural communication is a key phenomenon in today's globalized world, where cultural interactions are becoming an integral part of everyday life. Its philosophical understanding allows us to better understand the processes of interaction between different cultures, analyzing their principles, values, symbols and ways of knowing the world. Particular attention should

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[8] Chen G. M., & Starosta W. J. Foundations of Intercultural Communication. Boston, MA: Allyn & Bacon. 2005.

[9] The European Qualifications Framework: supporting learning, work and cross-border mobility

[10] Bennett M. J. Basic Concepts of Intercultural Communication: Paradigms, Principles, and Practice. Boston, London: Intercultural Press of Nicholas Brealey Publishing, 2013. 352 p.

be paid to how cultural differences affect mutual understanding, communication strategies, and the creation of a common space for interaction.

Philosophical views on intercultural communication have been shaped over the centuries, from the classical ideas of Aristotle and Immanuel Kant to the modern studies of thinkers such as Jürgen Habermas and Hans-Georg Gadamer. Their works laid the foundation for the analysis of socio-cultural, ethical and hermeneutical aspects of communication. For example, Gadamer's concept of dialogue emphasizes the importance of mutual understanding through interpretation, which is especially relevant in intercultural communication.

The central problems of the philosophy of intercultural communication are the dilemmas of universalism and cultural relativism, which define the boundaries of interaction between cultures. Universalists assert the existence of universal values that unite different cultures, while relativists believe that each culture is unique and requires an autonomous approach.

Postcolonial criticism and the concept of multiculturalism extend these discussions by focusing on overcoming power asymmetries and respecting the identity of each culture.

From the very beginning of philosophical thought to the present day, attention has been paid to the issues of communication, dialog, and communication. These topics have been studied by such philosophers as W. von Humboldt, F. Schleiermacher, S. Kierkegaard, M. de Unamuno, S. Frank, M. Buber, G. Marcel, M. Heidegger, M. Bakhtin, E. Levinas, M. Merleau-Ponty, K. Jaspers, and others. Theoretical problems of the philosophy of communication were studied by V. Vandyshev, M. Kagan, O. Ponomarev, V. Sokovnin; philosophy of education by V. Andrushchenko, S. Goncharenko, I. Zyazyun, V. Ratnikov, M. Fitsula, V. Yagupov; philosophy of management by G. Atamanchuk, S. Zavetny, G. Shchokin; substantiation of communication and communication V. Ilganayeva, M. Kagan, G. Pocheptsov, B. Rodionov, A. Sokolov, O. Kholod, F. Sharkov; ethical aspects and philosophy of creative activity V. Lozovoy, A. Ruchka; intercultural interaction, dialogue of cultures M. Bakhtin, O. Genieva, culture of communication-A. Koval, H. Chaika, T. Chmut and others.

The central object of philosophy has always been a person with his or her various connections. Therefore, scholars seek to consider problems in the ontological, epistemological, axiological, theological, logical, worldview, social and communication, anthropological, and spiritual and cultural directions.

According to O. Ponomarev, the epistemological aspect of communication is "...that it is not only one of the means of cognition of the external world by

a person, including other people and himself, but also an effective tool for organizing relations between people, between society and the environment[11]."

Thus, the ontological and epistemological approaches allow a person to realize his or her perception of reality. When it comes to ontology, it is important to reveal the specifics of the subject of philosophy as reality and gain knowledge about its existence. On the other hand, the epistemological approach involves a person's evaluative attitude to the subject of philosophy as an object of knowledge. With the process of cognition comes the realization of values. Cognition includes the perception of information, dialogic relations with the author, which are primarily perceived and analyzed through communication (in families, kindergartens, schools, and other educational institutions). It is these social contexts that shape human values.

Many domestic and foreign scholars have analyzed the philosophical and ideological problems of culture.

The prominent Ukrainian philosopher M. Popovych in his fundamental work "Outline of the History of Culture of Ukraine" defined culture "as a complex of characteristic material, spiritual, intellectual and emotional features of society, which includes not only various arts, but also a way of life, basic rules of human existence, systems of values, traditions and beliefs", emphasized the importance of dialogue in intercultural communication, claimed that dialogue between cultures is not only a way of exchanging information, but also a process of mutual knowledge and enrichment. Popovych emphasized that true dialogue is possible only on the condition of mutual respect and recognition of the right of each culture to identity[12].

In today's globalized and multiethnic world, the requirement for philosophers to think less self-referentially and ethnocentrically has become an ethical obligation designed to avoid colonizing views. It is forced to offer its universalist goals for discussion in order to redefine the very notion of the universal, which we would define as the universal in a situation or universality in a context. When a philosophy is open to dialogue with other traditions of thought, it demonstrates a multi-voiced and multi-faceted nature that is not limited by overly rigid system parameters. Liminal philosophy, which is on the edge, often in the most literal sense of the word, takes the form of a wide variety of modalities that cannot be encapsulated in a single articulated definition. Different terms can refer to this philosophical expression that is both old and new: "multiculturalist philosophy", 'comparative philosophy', 'intercultural philosophy'.

The choice between the terms is by no means a simple terminological exercise, but reflects different conceptions of the relationship of this kind of

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[11] Пономарьов О. С. Логіка спілкування та його гносеологічні аспекти. Філософія спілкування. 2009. № 2. С. 28–35.

[12] Попович М. В. Нарис історії культури України. АртЕк. 1998. 728 с.

philosophy to "other philosophies" as well as to concepts such as "identity," "culture," "universality," "reason," and "dialogue," to name a few, and certainly does not imply a value judgment. This is a difficult choice in part because the differences between the terms are not clearly defined. The use of a particular definition depends not so much on the preferences of the thinker as on the possibility of a dialogue between "horizons of meaning" belonging to different cultural traditions that have had the opportunity to encounter each other in practice or virtually in our "global" world: it reflects the linguistic and cultural environment in which the debate takes place. While, for example, the term multiculturalism is the most common in the English-speaking world, the Spanish-speaking space refers to interculturalidad. This choice is not only epistemological, but also ethical.

There are several philosophical approaches that can help ensure effective intercultural communication:

Cultural relativism is the understanding that every culture has its own values, customs and beliefs that should be respected. Instead of evaluating other cultures in terms of one's own culture, cultural relativism calls for seeking understanding and compassion for differences.

Empathy. A developed capacity for empathy-the ability to put oneself in another person's shoes and feel what they are feeling-is a key philosophical approach. This allows for better understanding and reduces possible conflicts.

Hermeneutics. This approach focuses on the interpretation and understanding of texts and expressions in their cultural context. In intercultural communication, it is important not only to know other languages, but also to understand the context in which certain statements were made.

Communicative ethics involves a dialog in which all participants act honestly, openly, and with respect for each other in order to find understanding through a sincere exchange of ideas without manipulation or ulterior motives.

Postcolonial critique. This approach draws attention to the historical and political inequalities between cultures that can affect communication. It is important to recognize and analyze how colonial histories and power relations affect the current dialogue between cultures.

Intercultural competence includes the knowledge, skills, and attitudes necessary to communicate effectively and responsibly in intercultural contexts, emphasizing the importance of continuous learning and self-reflection[13].

These approaches emphasize the importance of understanding, respect, and active listening in intercultural communication, help reduce cultural

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[13] Ігнатова О.М. Розвиток навичок ефективної міжкультурної комунікації. Журнал крос-культурної освіти. 2024. № 3. С. 7-14. https://doi.org/10.31652/2786-9083-2024-3-7-13

barriers, and promote a more harmonious and effective exchange of ideas between people from different cultures.

In his research, German philosopher and sociologist Jürgen Habermas draws attention to the theory of dialogic dialogue and communicative action, which develops the ideas of critical rationalism and aims to create a rational and ethical basis for a democratic society. Here are some key aspects of Habermas's theory:

– Communicative activity (the essence of human activity is communicative interaction. Language, discussion and dialog are important factors in the formation of society).

– Four types of dialogue (instrumental (to achieve practical goals), strategic (aimed at influence), communicative (aimed at reaching understanding) and intra-worldly (dialogue with oneself).

– Rationality of communication (rational dialog can lead to the formation of a consensus that ensures the legitimacy of decisions made in society.

– Deliberative democracy implies a decision-making process through free rational dialog between citizens to reach a general consensus.

– Critical rationalism is the use of critical thinking and rational argumentation to analyze socio-political problems[14].

Habermas's theory can serve as an important theoretical framework for understanding intercultural communication by promoting the idea of mutual respect, rational dialogue, and constructive debate between different cultures.

Contemporary Ukrainian philosophers are also actively exploring the field of communication philosophy, offering new approaches and concepts that meet the challenges of the globalized world. The philosophy of communication can be viewed in two dimensions. The first refers to a comprehensive system of philosophical analysis of communication as a special phenomenon, using the appropriate conceptual and categorical apparatus. The second concerns a set of beliefs about communication that a person tries to adhere to in his or her practical communication activities.

The position of R. Dymerets is impressive, who emphasizes that the difference between communication and communication is that communication expresses the intentional nature between the one who (or what) transmits the message and the one to whom (or what) this message is directed; communication indicates a connection that exists in time[15].

Vakhtang Kebuladze, a contemporary Ukrainian philosopher, develops the idea of multiculturalism as the basis of intercultural communication. Kebuladze argues that in the context of globalization, cultural differences

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[14] Габермас Ю. Комунікативна дія і дискурс – дві форми повсякденної комунікації. Першоджерела комунікативної філософії. К. Либідь, 1996. С. 84–91.

[15] Димерець Р. Й. До питання про філософський зміст поняття комунікації. Наукові записки НаУКМА. 1999. Т. 9, ч. 1. С. 96-99.

should become a source of mutual enrichment rather than conflict. He emphasizes the importance of openness to other cultures and the ability to engage in intercultural dialogue based on the principles of equality and justice[16].

Taras Liutyi applies a postcolonial approach to the analysis of intercultural communication. He explores the impact of colonial legacies on contemporary cultural relations and emphasizes the need to decolonize thinking. Liutyi believes that in order to achieve genuine intercultural communication, it is necessary to overcome power asymmetries and stereotypes that have arisen as a result of the colonial past[17].

Natalia Yakovenko, a researcher of Ukrainian culture and history, emphasizes the importance of cultural sensitivity in intercultural communication. She emphasizes that knowledge of the historical context and cultural peculiarities is key to building effective communication between representatives of different cultures. Yakovenko believes that the development of cultural sensitivity contributes to mutual understanding and the reduction of cultural conflicts[18].

Serhiy Krymsky, a well-known Ukrainian philosopher, analyzes the problem of ethnocentrism as one of the main obstacles to intercultural communication. He argues that ethnocentrism limits the ability to understand each other and creates barriers to dialogue. Krymsky calls for overcoming ethnocentric prejudices through education and developing openness to other cultures. He interpreted culture as a system of transferring the values of modernity into human existence, into the meaning of human life, taking into account the experience of the past and the prospects for the future, as a way of building human life at the expense of the experience of hundreds of past generations, at the expense of the realized and, most importantly, still unrealized possibilities of historical reality[19].

The philosophical understanding of intercultural communication by Ukrainian philosophers reveals deep aspects of interaction between different cultures. The concepts of dialogism, multiculturalism, postcolonial criticism, as well as practical aspects such as the development of cultural sensitivity and intercultural communication skills, help to understand and overcome barriers to communication. Education, training, and technology play an important role in overcoming the challenges of intercultural communication by promoting greater openness, tolerance, and mutual understanding between cultures.

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[16] Кебуладзе В. Феноменологія досвіду. Dukh i Litera, 2012.

[17] Лютий Т.В. Культура принад і спротиву. Tempora. 2020.

[18] Yakovenko N. and Piskorska G. Strategic communications of the USA. Американська історія та політика. № 4. 2017. P. 198-207.

[19] Кримський С. Культура розкриває внутрішню безмежність людини. Культурологічна думка. 2009. № 1. С. 18-26.

Paul Ricoeur, a famous French philosopher, developed the ideas of hermeneutics, which are central to intercultural communication. Ricoeur emphasized that understanding another culture requires the interpretation of cultural texts, symbols, and practices. He also believed that the process of understanding always involves a dialog in which the interpreter must be open to the other and willing to rethink his or her own presuppositions and prejudices. Ricoeur argued that this process of dialog and interpretation contributes to mutual enrichment and broadening of horizons of understanding[20].

The living environment should be seen as a gradual cultural process of developing the potential for rationality, which is initially embodied in interaction and communication. This means that the theoretical understanding of the world and practical aspects of activity, along with social institutions, are gradually separated from mythological, religious, and traditional foundations and transformed into more consistent ways of achieving unity in common goals, norms, and values. Traditional beliefs associated with an established worldview, as well as conventional forms of activity and institutions, were initially considered unquestionable, but are now subject to reasonable criticism, scrutiny, and argumentation. They are being "eroded" through communication processes. Instead of the normative agreement that existed before, the time has come to reach mutual understanding through reasoned discussion, expressed within the framework of rational communicative interaction or discourse.

According to researchers[21], communicative philosophy reflects:

a) the possibility of discursive justification of ethical norms and values on the basis of the regulatory principle of ideal communication;

b) through the reconstruction of the historical development of communication (phylogeny), as well as the corresponding reconstruction of the formation of moral consciousness (ontogeny)

– the need for universalist (post-conventional) ethics;

c) the possibility and necessity of society's transition to the adoption of moral and value-based forms of social integration and orientation of human activity.

Andrushchenko views culture as a communicative system where information, symbols, and meanings are exchanged between individuals and groups. He emphasizes that culture cannot exist without communication, because it is through communication processes that knowledge, values, and

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[20] Рікер П. Ідеологія та утопія. Київ: Дух і літера. 2012.
[21] Ситниченко Л. Першоджерела комунікативної філософії. К.: Либідь. 1996.

norms of behavior are transmitted. Culture shapes human identity, and communication is a means of maintaining and transmitting cultural heritage[22].

The scientist also draws attention to the role of culture in the processes of social change, noting that communication is a key mechanism through which social transformations are carried out. In particular, changes in culture can be initiated through changes in the means of communication, which leads to a rethinking of social norms and values. This process is two-way: culture influences communication, and communication influences culture. Intercultural communication implies openness, tolerance, and readiness for dialogue.

One of the key themes in Andrushchenko's work is the role of education in intercultural communication. He believes that education should not only provide students with knowledge about other cultures, but also with the skills to communicate effectively with representatives of those cultures. Educational programs should promote the development of intercultural competence, which includes an understanding of cultural differences, empathy, and the ability to engage in constructive dialogue.

We agree with the idea that a modern teacher should be a carrier and translator of the values of multiculturalism, have in-depth knowledge of different cultures and their history, and have and demonstrate a multicultural point of view in the teaching process to clarify the essence of various social phenomena and contradictions in society. As a result of this educational influence, V. Andrushchenko emphasizes that students will develop a holistic multicultural worldview, which is becoming an imperative of our time.

The concept of "cultural literacy" was developed in the early 1980s by the American cultural studies scholar E. D. Hirsch. Literacy, as defined by the scientist, encompasses not only the ability to read, but also the possession of certain knowledge-concepts of the entire civilization in the national culture. Literacy is a certain body of background knowledge (which the reader must possess) that allows for an adequate understanding of the meaning of a statement. Milko N. believes that the first step towards the formation of intercultural literacy should be the realization by the individual that people can have their own view of the world. To achieve this goal, it is necessary to learn to see the world through the eyes of other people; to develop tolerance for different tastes, habits and views; to learn to find a common language with different people, including those of other nationalities and from different countries. It is equally important to understand and accept differences in

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[22] Андрущенко, В.П., Андрущенко, Т.В., Савельєв, В.Л., Ціннісний дискурс в освіті: [у 7 кн.]. Книга 4: Цивілізація культури. 2017.

cultural traditions and customs of other nations. It is necessary to learn to accept people of different nationalities as they are[23].

If a person is ready to accept or at least understand the basic provisions of another culture, then he or she gets the opportunity to communicate adequately on the basis of mutual respect with representatives of other cultures. It is important to educate students to realize that all people, despite their differences, have the right to exist and to freely express their cultural characteristics.

Fostering tolerance for people who do not share our views and beliefs helps us to better understand our place in the world and our culture, to foster national self-respect and self-awareness. This is the basis for the formation of intercultural literacy.

W. Nelson identifies four levels of intercultural literacy:

1) familiarity with the surface features of a culture – common stereotypes that are perceived as something exotic and strange;

2) getting to know the deep features of another culture that contrast with the features of one's own culture – these features of another culture are annoying because of their absurdity and dissimilarity;

3) penetration into the essence of the deep features of another culture that contrast with the features of one's own culture – perception of these features of another culture as something justified and rational;

4) perception of a foreign culture through the eyes of its native speaker – the culture is perceived as something understandable and familiar[24].

Intercultural literacy is acquired as part of national education, which, while preparing an individual to live in his or her own culture, must realize the need to integrate with world cultures while mastering national and universal values. It is not self-reliance but rather the correlation of a people with world culture and the culture of other nations that makes it a nation. At the same time, science and history show that the goal of education and training cannot be to create a universal person. A person always belongs to a particular nation, social stratum, cultural tradition, and historical era.

In view of the above, it is necessary to strive to create an intercultural educational environment in educational institutions. The intercultural educational environment is designed to help more accurately take into account the peculiarities of students in their cultural identification, to promote successful adaptation in a foreign environment through education. The

[23] Мілько Н. Технологія підготовки майбутніх учителів англійської мови до організації міжкультурного діалогу //Наукові записки Національного університету «Острозька академія»: Серія «Філологія». – 2019. – №. 5 (73). – С. 302-305.

[24] Nelson, W., & Luetz, J. M. Towards intercultural literacy: A literature review on immersive cross-cultural experiences and intercultural competency. Innovating Christian education research: Multidisciplinary perspectives. Springer. 2021. P. 395–422. https://doi.org/10.1007/978-981-15-8856-3_22

intercultural educational environment inherently appeals to human nature, common sense, democratic values and priorities of the legal and civil society. It is intended to bring to a dialogue of mentalities and cultures on the basis of harmony, integration and human unity.[24]

Intercultural educational environment is a term that characterizes the educational environment of the 21st century. Let us turn to the earlier concepts – multicultural environment, multicultural environment.

Molnar T. defines multicultural environment as:

– co-organization of all elements of the educational process, which sets the style, spirit, atmosphere of all life in the educational institution, "way of life";

– a space for positive interaction of individuals, groups, cultures representing different ethnicities, cultures, religions, etc;

– an institution with a multicultural contingent, including a multi-age, multi-ethnic and multi-religious faculty and student body, designed to meet the educational, socio-cultural and adaptive needs of students[25].

A multicultural environment is the coexistence and interaction in a specific social space of diverse, equal and equivalent cultures and their representatives, as well as a certain attitude of individuals to this diversity, which aims to achieve a certain attitude[26].

Multicultural and socio-cultural environments are not identical. The socio-cultural environment is understood as a specific social space through which a person is included in the cultural ties of society. This is a set of different conditions of life and social (role) behavior, casual contacts of a person, deep interactions with other people, and a specific natural, tangible environment as a part of society (society) open to interaction[27].

The peculiarity of modern society is the rapprochement of peoples and countries, increased interaction between nations, globalization of the world in general, and multiculturalism. This leads to changes in education, which needs to solve complex problems based on pluralism of opinions, respect for human rights, and the principles of cultural dialogue:

– integration of young people into a multicultural educational environment based on universal values;

– formation of the younger generation's readiness for dialogue and intercultural interaction.

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[25] Молнар Т. І. Теорія та практика підготовки майбутніх учителів початкової школи для роботи з учнями в міжкультурному просторі Закарпаття: монографія. – 2022.

[26] Триняк М. В. Інтеркультурна комунікація в освіті: тенденції розгортання у сучасних соціокультурних контекстах [Текст] : дис.... д-ра філос. Наук. Харк. нац. пед. ун-т ім. Г. С. Сковороди. Х. 2011. 431 с.

[27] Василишина Н.М. Теоретичні і методичні засади крос-культурної освіти майбутніх магістрів сфери туризму України та Туреччини в умовах євроінтеграційних процесів. Дис..док. пед. наук. Національний авіаційний університет, Київ. 2021. 655 с.

To solve these problems, it is necessary to pay serious attention to the environment of an educational institution (in our case, a university) so that it becomes a place of possible cultural discussion, allows students to experience personal differences, learn to solve problems and conflicts of intercultural interaction through dialogue, cooperation and compromise, form a system of values related to the reality of the world model; give an idea of the meaning of human existence, the most important life problems of a person and humanity in general, form a worldview, and also

Therefore, in modern conditions, the term "intercultural educational environment" is more appropriate, as it implies not just the coexistence and interaction of cultures, but also the consideration of national and cultural characteristics of participants in the educational process, comparison and mutual enrichment of contacting cultures in the person of students.[27]

To create such an environment, it is necessary to develop empathy in interaction with representatives of other cultures; to form the basic culture of the individual, to focus on national and universal moral values, the best achievements of human civilization and awareness of belonging to the world community; to appeal to national dignity and feelings of people, to stimulate an irreconcilable attitude to such social phenomena as chauvinism, nationalism, racism.[27]

A successfully functioning intercultural educational environment in a pedagogical higher education institution will work for the development of academic mobility of students and teachers, and these two interdependent factors (intercultural educational environment and participation in the process of academic mobility) will make a significant contribution to the formation of intercultural competence of a future teacher who is able to adequately respond to the peculiarities of manifestations of national culture and mentality of students, competently use these peculiarities and mentality, competently use

A group of scientists has proposed a list of global values for a multicultural society, including:

– Justice, which is based on inalienable human dignity, respect for every person, and equality of people. Justice grows where people cultivate deep respect for each other. Fair and equal access to information is a prerequisite for mutual understanding;

– Freedom of access to information, freedom of expression, freedom of religion are at the core of human dignity and human development. Freedom, equality and responsibility balance each other;

– care and compassion create the preconditions for empathy, respect and support for each other, which leads to solidarity;

– Participation, which is the right and opportunity to participate in public life and important decision-making;

– Sustainability as a long-term perspective for green technologies;

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– responsibility as an assessment of one's own actions. The level of responsibility should be correlated with the level of ability. Those who have more resources take on more responsibility.

Philosophy focuses on the key aspects of human existence, in particular on communication, which in the age of the information society should cover various sciences about the basic and most important aspects of human life. In modern philosophy, specialized fields are actively developing, such as the philosophy of education, science, technology, business, etc. A significant place among them is given to the philosophy of human communication.

Intercultural communication occurs at the intersection of two or more cultures when representatives of different cultural traditions interact with each other. The philosophical aspect of this phenomenon deals with deeper, metaphysical and value issues, such as cultural identity, universalism and relativism, as well as the ethical foundations of communication.

One of the central philosophical issues in intercultural communication is the dilemma between universalism and cultural relativism. Universalists argue that there are universal values and principles that can be applied to any culture. In particular, Ridel often uses the concept of "l'homme capable" in his works, explaining it as follows: "The phrase 'I can' means that I am able to speak, act, narrate, and recognize my responsibility for actions. I have expressed the idea of a person's ability or inability to perform certain actions". In this way, he tries to show that human beings are fundamentally capable of many things, endowed with universal capacities. However, he also recognizes that humans are not omnipotent and may be unable to perform some actions, which emphasizes the point of relativism.[28]

The position of M. Starodubska, who emphasizes that it is universalism that motivates us to seek new contacts outside the "circle of trust", to conclude cooperation agreements based on professionalism rather than personal loyalty, and to regulate social processes transparently and systematically, is also impressive. The degree of manifestation of this value cluster is influenced by the efficiency and transparency of formal institutions: the higher the dependence of people's life outcomes on acquaintances and connections, the less manifested the values of universalism will be in society. Therefore, the level of universalism is usually low in developing countries. Universalism is manifested in three key values:

1. Tolerance regulates the awareness and acceptance of other people's differences and opinions, the breadth of worldview, and the ability to interact maturely with people whose opinions are different from one's own.

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[28] Рідель М. Свобода і відповідальність. Першоджерела комунікативної філософії. К.: Либідь, 1996. С. 68-83.

2.   Justice and protection regulates the demand for social justice and equal opportunities, protection of the weak and non-violent way of resolving disputes.

3.   Naturalness regulates the environmental friendliness of interaction with the environment, the willingness to adapt to external conditions (what is more effective in the absence of interest or understanding – to force and explain or to motivate?)[29]

Instead, relativists believe that each culture has its own unique values, norms, and meanings that cannot be compared or evaluated from the perspective of another culture. Cultural relativism is closely related to ethical relativism, which states that truth is relative, not absolute. The concepts of right and wrong are determined solely by the individual or society. Since truth is not objective, it is impossible to establish a single standard that would be suitable for all cultures. No one person can unequivocally state that another is right or wrong; it is a matter of subjective opinion, and no society has the right to condemn another.

The philosopher Hans-Georg Gadamer, developing the concept of hermeneutics, draws attention to the fact that any communication is a process of interpretation. In intercultural communication, this means that each participant in the interaction interprets not only information but also cultural contexts and symbols. Interpreting intercultural messages becomes a complex process because participants must take into account different systems of meaning and cultural codes. Considering language as a medium of hermeneutic experience, Gadamer assumes that the human experience of the world itself is linguistic. The world finds its expression through language. According to Gadamer[30], the philosophical significance of hermeneutic experience is that it comprehends the truth inaccessible to scientific knowledge. In an effort to develop the concept of truth in accordance with hermeneutic experience (manifested through the experience of philosophy, art, and history), Gadamer turns to the concept of play. He emphasizes that the game has its own essence, which attracts players and keeps them, so the subject of the game is not the player, but the game itself. Relying on the fact that understanding is part of the process of comprehending the truth and that hermeneutical accomplishment is not our action but "the action of the thing itself," Gadamer applies the concept of play to the hermeneutical phenomenon, making it the key to understanding the truth. The logical self-consciousness of the humanities that accompanied their formation in the 19th century remained fully influenced by the model of the natural sciences. To

[29] Стародубська М. Як зрозуміти українгців: кроскультурний погляд. Х.: Віват. 2024. 400 с.

[30] Гадамер Г. Істина і метод. Основи філософської герменевтики. Київ: Юніверс. 2000. 459 с.

understand what the other is saying to us means to reach a mutual understanding of the essence of the issue. This whole process takes place through language. Gadamer sees understanding as a universal way of human existence. A person must understand himself, others, events, history, art, etc. From this perspective, human existence can be defined as understanding. Thus, Gadamer's hermeneutics turns into ontology, the science of being. As a follower of the ideas of W. Dilthey, E. Husserl, and M. Heidegger, H.-H. Gadamer reduces hermeneutics as a philosophical doctrine to the foundations of human life, to the very essence of man. In his work Truth and Method, Gadamer sees hermeneutics not as a methodology of the humanities, but as an attempt to understand what these sciences are beyond their methodology and how they are related to our common experience. His hermeneutic is based on Heidegger's understanding of language. Explaining the essence of hermeneutics, Gadamer writes: "Hermeneutics is first and foremost a skillful practice. The art in question is the art of communicating, interpreting, explaining, and teaching, and it naturally includes the art of understanding, which is its foundation and is necessary when the meaning of something is not obvious or ambiguous" (Gadamer, p.86). The main thesis of Gadamer's hermeneutics is that it is based exclusively on language: everything about hermeneutics, including objective and subjective premises, has its origins in language. Since "everything exists in language," language preserves both meaning and the subjective and objective prerequisites for understanding. Language is the world that surrounds a person; without language, neither life, nor consciousness, nor thinking, nor feelings, nor history, nor society are possible. Everything that is connected with a person is reflected in language. In this approach of Gadamer to language and hermeneutics, there is a tendency to ontologize understanding. As for M. Heidegger, for Gadamer, understanding is not a separate activity, but a fundamental way of being human. The actualization of the problem of the process of understanding can be explained by the aggravation of the geopolitical and socio-political situation, the growing contradictions of the modern era, the lack of a common language and the depreciation of traditional key concepts. Understanding is a characteristic of human existence, a "way of being" inherent in each of us, and that is why it unites people.

H.-G. Gadamer defined the task of philosophical hermeneutics as "to discover the hermeneutical dimension in its full scope and basic significance for our worldview, in all its aspects, from human communication to social manipulation, and from the experience of the individual both in and about a given society."

Cultural pluralism is another key concept that states that there is a multiplicity of cultures that have a right to exist and should interact on equal terms. This means that intercultural communication should be based on the

principles of tolerance, mutual respect and equality. The contemporary European thinker Ricoeur notes the original universalism and heterogeneity of European culture, suggesting that European universality should be viewed as a set of its various elements that reflect cultural pluralism. It is worth noting that the problem of cultural diversity is caused by specific socio-cultural processes taking place in the world. Cultural pluralism is a real consequence of the complication of intercultural and civilizational ties, as well as a creative dialogue between cultural traditions in the context of global civilization, which stimulates the search for theoretical strategies and practical solutions. In this context, it is important to implement a policy of tolerance, which is necessary in the context of deep cultural diversity.

The philosophy of intercultural communication also includes an ethical dimension. In his philosophy, Ricoeur addresses the issue of responsibility in the communication process. According to his conception, intercultural communication should be based on the principles of the ethics of mutual respect and dialogue, where each participant in communication is responsible for the correct interpretation and preservation of the cultural context of his interlocutor.

According to Kuznetsova I. and Rubanets O., the development of communication ethics and rational discourse, along with the establishment of scientific rationality, rational procedures, arguments and conclusions, contributes to the formation of professional ethics, the foundations of tolerance, respect for others and compliance with the ethics of discussing scientific problems and scientific debates[31]. In the context of the implementation of general ethical principles based on the interaction of the Self and the Other, taking into account the experience of the Other and communication in the educational process are components of universal communications based on the ideas of respect for the individual and the autonomy of human consciousness and thinking.

Contemporary philosopher Gofron is trying to bring Western philosophy back to the ethical and communicative themes. In his communicative philosophy, he emphasizes the basic concepts of freedom and responsibility. For the scientist, real freedom is manifested as freedom of action, which is limited by the laws of nature. Human desires should be analyzed through the prism of natural laws. Ethical issues play an important role in communication theory. Reason is no longer considered the only authoritative basis for finding general moral norms and values[32]. According to Yermolenko, it is necessary

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[31] Кузнецова І., Рубанець О. Етичний складник комунікацій у мережевому освітньому середовищі. Вища освіта України. 2023. № 1. с. 80-86. https://doi.org/10.32782/NPU-VOU.2023.1(88).10

[32] Гофрон А. Філософсько-комунікативні аспекти освіти. Філософія освіти. 2006. № 1(3). С. 45.

to create a new ethics that will be responsible for human activity and its consequences. This ethics implies a common solidarity of responsibility of people for their actions and problem solving through mutual understanding and intersubjective agreement on basic ethical norms and principles, as well as ensuring the equality of all members of the communication community[33].

Globalization opens up new opportunities for intercultural communication, but at the same time poses new challenges. Standardization and mass culture can level the unique features of individual cultures, reducing the diversity of cultural models. In this context, the philosophy of intercultural communication should take into account the threats of cultural homogenization and promote the preservation of cultural diversity. On the other hand, globalization contributes to the development of hybrid cultures, where elements of different cultural traditions are mixed. This raises new philosophical questions about identity and selfhood in a postmodern culture where the boundaries between cultures are becoming less and less clear.

Globalization and the various means of mass communication brought about by the electronic age have brought cultures closer together in ways that were not possible before. This indicates that the differences between peoples and cultures are diminishing. Globalization, understood as a conscious interconnection between different peoples and the result of the internationalization of business and trade, as well as social, cultural, religious and political forces operating across regions and borders, has a significant impact on our perceptions of ourselves as members of a particular cultural community. Intercultural philosophy takes on a global dimension, as every philosopher is faced with a large number of global issues that he or she must address not only as a philosopher but also as a human being[34]. Unless we live in some remote corner of the world where we have little or no contact with other people, we are faced with the results of other people's activities, with problems that we did not create, and with the need to respond to them. For example, climate change and global warming, whether we believe it is happening or not, requires us to respond because it raises questions about how we should use resources and what kind of resources they should be. Questions about the common good, about equity of distribution, and about the fair distribution of resources require a global response, especially in the face of the current global crises[35].

These are essentially philosophical questions, and since no single culture can authoritatively answer them on behalf of all of us, they are questions

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[33] Єрмоленко А. М. Комунікативна практична філософія. К.:Лібра, 1999. 488 с.

[34] В. Кремень, Д. Мазоренко, С. Завєтний, С. Пазинич, О. Пономарьов. Філософія спілкування: монографія. Х. : ХНТУСГ ім. П. Василенка. 2011. 440 с.

[35] Грабар Н. Г. Філософія людського спілкування: теоретично-практичні засади. Вісник Харківської державної академії культури. 2013. Вип. 39. С. 123-130.

addressed to everyone. The fact that there are no easy answers to these questions makes the need for intercultural dialogue about them all the more urgent, and philosophers, above all, have an important role to play in critically responding to them. The pressure on individuals to respond to global issues and problems forces us to think of ourselves in a global context and beyond our normal roles as citizens and members of a particular cultural community or nation. Although we have listed a number of global issues that we believe philosophers from different cultures and backgrounds can contribute to, only a brave philosopher or fool would dare to speak with any degree of authority about the tasks of philosophy, as if there were a certain number of these tasks that are preordained for philosophers. Intercultural philosophy will contribute to solving those problems that are universal in nature, and perhaps it is a feature of philosophy that it addresses universal questions, albeit with a local cultural flavor. However, if we find it difficult to answer the question of what philosophy is, then the question of its general tasks will not be any easier, and different cultures will emphasize different problems. For some, the issue of distributive justice may be important, for others, the purpose and meaning of life.

Nevertheless, differences in emphasis do not affect the number of universal issues in which philosophers of all orientations will be interested. Some of the major problems of philosophy that everyone can contribute to can be reduced to a few fundamental questions. MacIntyre, for example, points out that one of the main tasks of philosophy is to formulate and find answers to questions that ordinary people, not just professional philosophers, ask[36].

Each philosophical perspective suggests different ways in which philosophical questions – which are rooted in real-world problems, not just idealized problems of interest to philosophers alone – can be addressed. Different perspectives are an important creative resource because they provide us with different ways of not only framing problems but also solving them. It is therefore important that we ensure that these different perspectives are preserved. This is certainly not an easy task, given the tendency, since philosophy has become global, for philosophical thinking to be mostly done in one language, English. This has its advantages, but we should not forget that different languages provide different perspectives on the world because they arise in different cultures.

Franz Martin Wimmer presents the concept of philosophy in two aspects. First of all, it is a case study consisting of ontology, epistemology, and ethics. It is a broader understanding of philosophy that supports the theory that there are different origins and ways of philosophizing based on different cultures. Second, it is based on certain forms of thinking and argumentation. This

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[36] MacIntyre, A. Philosophy Recalled to Its Tasks: a Thomistic Reading of Fides et Ratio in The Tasks of Philosophy. Selected Essays. Vol. 1. Cambridge University Press, 2000. P. 180.

theory holds that everything that is philosophical is rooted in Greek and European traditions and history. The former view has many intercultural aspects, while the latter reflects "westernization" or "occidentalization"[37]. The latter view has no future, as it does not promote globalization and cross-cultural aspects of philosophy. Thus, we see that culture and philosophy are inextricably linked.

Intercultural philosophy, according to contemporary philosophers, should not be simply the dominance of one culture over a number of other cultures. That is, intercultural philosophy is not represented by a single culture or philosophical tradition, such as the Anglo-American culture, which determines the nature of philosophical interaction with other, less dominant philosophical traditions that emerge in other cultures, traditions, and languages. A conceptual space should provide room for more than one culture, language, and tradition. Globalization provides an opportunity to create such a shared conceptual space. However, globalization is a double-edged sword. On the one hand, it can be a means of transmitting a dominant monoculture that colonizes ways of thinking in different parts of the world. On the other hand, it can be a way of bringing cultures and traditions together in a common space to show that there are common problems that all people face and that philosophers from everywhere can illuminate.

Given the fact that addressing the essence of intercultural philosophy will not tell us how to philosophize interculturally, we must ask who is asking the question, or ask how philosophers can philosophize interculturally. In order to engage in intercultural philosophy, philosophers must themselves be intercultural. Unlike other philosophical questions, the question of intercultural philosophy corresponds to the philosopher's internal cultural mapping. In order to philosophize interculturally, philosophers must be able to de– and re-territorialize their cultural territories or deconstruct their views of interculturality over and over again. Philosophizing interculturally cannot be an engagement with static, systematic philosophy, as this would limit or tie philosophy to a particular cultural scheme. Another important aspect is that intercultural philosophy cannot be approached by a single philosopher. Interculturally oriented philosophers need philosophers from other cultures in order to re– and de-territorialize their cultural territories. To philosophize interculturally means to philosophize with other people from other cultures in multiple forms, without abandoning one's own singularity. Philosophy is not solely a representation of the philosopher's mind. Their internal cultural territories are reflected in their way of thinking. Without intercultural engagement and without constant hybridization, philosophers will not be able to philosophize interculturally at all.

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[37] Wimmer Franz M. Intercultural Philosophy – An Overview, In Satya Nilayam Chennai Journal of Intercultural Philosophy. 2002. Vol. 1. P. 5.

Thus, intercultural philosophy is a "new movement" in philosophy that argues that although philosophy is universal and ideal by nature, it still has an element of particularity and, therefore, cultural. In other words, every philosophy has a cultural background. According to Raoul Forné-Betancourt, the task of intercultural philosophy is "to reflect on the culturality or religiosity of each type of thinking at each level, to search for universal arguments and concepts, and to pay tribute to the respective regional philosophical traditions[38]". Intercultural philosophy points to a conflict combined with a demand. The conflict between the arrogant and monopolizing dominance of "European philosophy" on the one hand, and "non-European" philosophy, which has long been pushed to the margins, on the other. Thus, the demand or claim means that non-European philosophies want to free themselves from the shackles of Eurocentrism and demand equal rights to contribute their own vision to solving world problems. Intercultural philosophy aims to search for genuine philosophical truths that can be found in different philosophical traditions and argues that difference itself can be a freedom that should be mutually recognized. Thus, intercultural philosophy prevents the tendency of many philosophies, cultures, religions, and political views to proliferate globally. Intercultural philosophy advocates unity without uniformity. The transcultural nature of the formal, technological, and scientific conceptual apparatus should not be confused with the spirit of interculturalism.

The interculturalism of philosophy should be established not in global or universal interests, but in various specific cultures. In this regard, there are four contradictory proposals or hypotheses that are central to the discussion of intercultural philosophy:

1. The historiography of cultures and philosophy is usually Eurocentric.

2. Every philosophical position that claims to be universally true is culturally conditioned.

3. The history of philosophy should expand its horizon by including new sources, traditions and texts.

4. It is necessary to criticize the presumption and claims to the superiority of Western philosophical traditions.

We agree with F. Wimmer that it is important to clarify and argue these points in order to define the subject of intercultural philosophy. Accordingly, interculturally oriented philosophy "should develop a concept of philosophy, both materially and formally defined".

The uniqueness of intercultural philosophy lies in the fact that, according to R. Moll, it has the following four perspectives:

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[38] Fornet-Betancourt R. Intercultural Dialogue and Philosophy. Frónesis [online]. 2004. Vol.11, n.3. P.9-39.

1. Philosophical: from this perspective, no philosophical system can claim to be universal. It is worth emphasizing that the origins of philosophy lie not in one culture, but in three or more. It is wrong to assume that philosophy favors any one language, tradition, or culture.

2. Theological: in this context, interculturalism means interreligiousness. Thus, no one religion can claim or proclaim full ownership of religion or its truths.

3. Political: accordingly, interculturalism supports pluralistic democratic attitudes. Political wisdom cannot be the property of one party, group or ideology. If such exclusivist claims are made in the political arena, it leads to dangerous fundamentalism.

4. Pedagogical: which is the most important, as it is responsible for introducing the spirit of interculturalism in all its aspects.

Intercultural communication has become a key aspect of the modern world, where globalization and the growing mobility of people facilitate active interaction between different cultures. In such conditions, the philosophy of intercultural communication plays a crucial role in the development of mutual understanding, tolerance and effective communication between representatives of different cultures. The study of this topic allows us to focus on the philosophical aspects that contribute to a deeper understanding of the processes of intercultural interaction and overcoming barriers that arise in communication.

The study of the philosophy of human communication is interdisciplinary and is important not only in theoretical terms, but also in practical use. The practical aspects of the philosophy of human communication include several levels:

– Academic communication (the work of scientific schools, publications, monographs, educational literature, etc.).

– Scientific communication (activities of international organizations, international and regional congresses, summer schools, conferences, forums, symposia, round tables, etc.)

– Internet communication (development of global communication, virtual forms of communication, Internet conferences, teleconferences and other technological tools).

It is noted that the philosophy of communication helps to broaden the horizons of understanding, contributes to building mutual understanding and reducing cultural barriers.

The chapter also highlights the role of scientists and philosophers in the study of intercultural communication, as well as their approaches to this issue. Important aspects, such as cultural relativism, empathy, hermeneutics, communication ethics, and postcolonial criticism, are highlighted, which contribute to improving communication between different cultures.

The philosophical concept of intercultural communication is a multidimensional phenomenon that combines ontological, epistemological, axiological, ethical, and political aspects. Its study allows not only a deeper understanding of the mechanisms of interaction between cultures, but also contributes to the formation of effective approaches to solving modern global challenges. The philosophy of intercultural communication emphasizes the importance of dialogue, tolerance and mutual respect as the basic principles of building harmonious relations between cultures. Given the growing role of globalization and digitalization, this concept is becoming increasingly important for preserving cultural diversity, overcoming barriers to communication, and creating conditions for cooperation in a dynamic global environment.

2. Theoretical Frameworks for Intercultural Sensitivity Development

The Developmental Model of Intercultural Sensitivity (DMIS)

One of the most widely applied frameworks for understanding intercultural sensitivity development is Bennett's Developmental Model of Intercultural Sensitivity (DMIS)[39]. This model outlines a continuum of attitudes and skills, progressing from ethnocentrism to ethnorelativism. The ethnocentric stages–denial, defense, and minimization–reflect limited awareness of and adaptability to cultural differences. In contrast, the ethnorelative stages–acceptance, adaptation, and integration–indicate increasing cultural self-awareness, cognitive flexibility, and cross-cultural empathy. Integrating DMIS into intercultural communication courses helps future educators assess their own cultural orientations and track their development as they engage with culturally diverse peers and scenarios.

Byram's model of Intercultural Communicative Competence (ICC) provides another essential framework. It emphasizes not only linguistic skills but also intercultural attitudes, knowledge, skills of discovery and interaction, and critical cultural awareness. For future teachers, ICC provides a holistic approach that bridges language proficiency with cultural understanding and the ability to mediate between different cultural perspectives in educational contexts.

Critical approaches to intercultural communication, such as Critical Intercultural Pedagogy, emphasize power dynamics, social justice, and the importance of critical reflection. This perspective is particularly relevant for future teachers, encouraging them to examine how cultural biases, systemic inequalities, and ethnocentric assumptions shape educational experiences. By integrating critical intercultural perspectives into teacher training, educators

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[39] Bennett, J. M., & Bennett, M. J. Developing intercultural sensitivity. In J. M. Bennett, M. J. Bennett & D. Landis (Eds.), Handbook of intercultural training. 2004. 3rd ed. P. 147–165.

develop not only interpersonal communication skills but also the critical awareness necessary to foster inclusive, socially just learning environments[40].

In the European Union, intercultural competence is explicitly recognized as a core dimension of teacher education policy. The Council of Europe's Reference Framework of Competences for Democratic Culture highlights intercultural dialogue, empathy, and cultural awareness as essential competencies for educators working in pluralistic societies. Similarly, the Erasmus+ Programme promotes intercultural competence development through mobility programs, cross-border collaborative projects, and professional development opportunities for teachers and teacher educators.

Erasmus+ projects such as Intercultural Learning for Pupils and Teachers and Developing Intercultural Competence through Education demonstrate how EU-funded initiatives foster intercultural sensitivity by encouraging future teachers to engage in cross-cultural collaboration, critical reflection, and experiential learning. These projects provide practical models for integrating intercultural communication into pre-service teacher training, aligning with EU policies promoting social cohesion, diversity, and inclusion.

Effective intercultural communication training for future teachers combines theoretical instruction with experiential learning. Experiential methods, including role-playing, cultural simulations, and critical incidents analysis, immerse students in culturally unfamiliar contexts, prompting them to practice adaptive communication strategies and reflect on their emotional and cognitive responses[41].

Case studies drawn from real-life educational contexts provide another valuable teaching methodology. By analyzing intercultural dilemmas encountered by practicing teachers, students develop practical problem-solving skills, enhancing their ability to mediate cultural misunderstandings in classroom settings. These case studies can be drawn from Erasmus+ mobility experiences, international field placements, or local multicultural classrooms, enriching future teachers' intercultural repertoires.

COIL projects, which connect pre-service teachers across different countries through virtual exchange platforms, provide opportunities for intercultural dialogue, collaborative problem-solving, and peer learning. Such projects mirror the intercultural interactions future teachers will navigate in globalized classrooms, fostering digital intercultural competence alongside face-to-face communication skills[42].

[40] Ігнатова О. Педагогічна ідентичність: мотивація вибору вчителя. Наукові інновації та передові технології. 2024. № 3 (31). P. 1006-1016. DOI: https://doi.org/10.52058/2786-5274-2024-3(31)-1006-1016

[41] AlTaher, B. B. The necessity of teaching Intercultural Communication in higher education. Journal of Applied Research in Higher Education. 2020. Vol. 2(3). P. 506-516.

[42] Жовнич О. Приоритети професійної підготовки майбутніх учителів початкових класів: аналіз європейського досвіду. Сучасні інформаційні технології та інноваційні методики навчання в підготовці фахівців: методологія, теорія, досвід, проблеми. 2023. Вип. 68. С. 50–60.

The Intercultural Development Inventory provides a validated instrument for measuring students' progression along the DMIS continuum. Administering the IDI at the beginning and end of intercultural communication courses allows teacher educators to assess changes in students' intercultural sensitivity and ethnorelative orientation[43].

Complementing quantitative assessments, reflective journals, e-portfolios, and structured self-assessment tools provide richer insights into future teachers' evolving intercultural awareness, attitudes, and strategies. These qualitative tools encourage future teachers to document their experiences, challenges, and growth throughout the course, fostering metacognitive awareness and lifelong learning.

Structured peer feedback sessions and mentor observations further enhance assessment practices by providing external perspectives on students' intercultural communication skills and classroom behaviors[44]. Peer reviews of intercultural teaching demonstrations encourage collaborative reflection and shared learning, reinforcing the communal nature of intercultural competence development.

The effectiveness of **structured intercultural communication training** in teacher education can be further demonstrated through **practical case studies**. The following examples from **Finland, the Erasmus+ INTERACT Project, and Germany** illustrate how different educational contexts implement **intercultural training programs** to enhance pre-service teachers' cultural awareness, adaptability, and teaching strategies.

Case Studies: Practical Applications of Intercultural Communication Training in Teacher Education

Case Study 1: Finland – Integrating Intercultural Training into Teacher Education Curricula

In Finland, the integration of intercultural communication training into teacher education programs aligns with the country's commitment to inclusive, multicultural education. At the University of Helsinki, pre-service teachers participate in a mandatory course on intercultural education, blending theoretical frameworks like Byram's ICC with practical activities such as cultural autobiography projects, reflective journaling, and intercultural simulations. Students work in multicultural teams, designing lesson plans for culturally diverse classrooms while receiving peer feedback from international exchange students, fostering cultural empathy and adaptive communication strategies.

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[43] Tuncel, İ., T. Paker Effects of an intercultural communication course in developing intercultural sensitivity. International Journal of Higher Education. 2018. Vol. 7 (6). P. 198-211.

[44] Fantini A. and Tirmizi A. Exploring and Assessing Intercultural Competence World Learning Publications. Paper 1. 2006. http://digitalcollections.sit.edu/worldlearning_publications/1

Assessment methods include reflective essays, case study analyses, and teaching demonstrations, where students apply intercultural communication principles in simulated classroom scenarios. Graduates of the program report enhanced cultural awareness, greater confidence in navigating culturally diverse classrooms, and improved conflict resolution skills, demonstrating the impact of structured intercultural communication training.

Case Study 2: Erasmus+ Project – INTERACT (Intercultural Learning for Pupils and Teachers)

The INTERACT Project, funded by Erasmus+, aimed to develop intercultural learning materials for both students and teachers across seven European countries. The project combined teacher training workshops, online modules, and peer-to-peer mentoring to enhance intercultural competence among educators (European Commission,). Pre-service teachers engaged in virtual exchanges with peers from partner countries, collaboratively creating lesson plans addressing intercultural issues such as stereotypes, cultural identity, and intercultural conflict resolution.

A key outcome of INTERACT was the creation of an Intercultural Learning Toolkit, now used in several European universities to support teacher educators in embedding intercultural communication training into curricula. Longitudinal evaluations showed that pre-service teachers who participated in INTERACT demonstrated significantly higher intercultural sensitivity scores (measured by IDI) and greater self-efficacy in addressing cultural conflicts in classrooms.

Case Study 3: Germany – University-School Partnerships for Intercultural Learning

At Ludwig Maximilian University of Munich, teacher education programs emphasize school-university partnerships to foster intercultural competence. Pre-service teachers participate in practicum placements in culturally diverse schools, where they observe and co-teach under the guidance of mentors trained in intercultural education. Through structured reflection workshops, students analyze real-life intercultural communication incidents, applying theoretical frameworks like DMIS and ICC to assess and improve their responses.

These community-embedded approaches ensure that future teachers apply intercultural communication skills in authentic settings, fostering contextual adaptability and intercultural mediation skills essential for effective teaching in diverse European classrooms.

European Policies and EU Frameworks Supporting Intercultural Communication in Teacher Education

Reference Framework of Competences for Democratic Culture (RFCDC)

The Council of Europe's RFCDC provides a structured framework for developing democratic and intercultural competences among educators

(Council of Europe). The framework outlines 20 key competences, including empathy, cultural awareness, and critical thinking, directly aligning with intercultural communication goals. Teacher education programs across Europe are encouraged to embed RFCDC competences into curricula, ensuring future teachers are equipped to promote inclusive dialogue and democratic participation in diverse classrooms.

Erasmus+ projects such as Capacity Building for Higher Education support the development of intercultural curricula across partner countries, particularly in regions experiencing high levels of migration. These projects fund the co-creation of intercultural communication modules, train-the-trainer workshops, and cross-border collaborative teaching initiatives, enriching teacher education programs with European intercultural dialogue perspectives.

A well-structured **curriculum for intercultural communication** in teacher education is essential for equipping future educators with the skills needed to navigate diverse classrooms effectively. Below is a **sample curriculum** that integrates **theoretical foundations, experiential learning, and assessment strategies** to foster intercultural competence among pre-service teachers.

Sample Curriculum for Intercultural Communication Course in Teacher Education (table 1):

Course Title: Intercultural Communication for Future Educators

Learning Outcomes

By the end of the course, students will:

– Demonstrate intercultural awareness and self-reflection regarding their cultural biases.

– Apply intercultural communication models to educational contexts.

– Develop lesson plans promoting intercultural dialogue and inclusion.

– Demonstrate intercultural mediation skills in classroom scenarios.

– Evaluate their intercultural sensitivity using qualitative and quantitative tools.

Table 1

Course Structure

Module	Topic	Activities	Assessment
1	Introduction to Culture & Communication	Cultural iceberg model, personal cultural maps	Reflective journal
2	Theories of Intercultural Competence	DMIS, ICC, RFCDC	Quiz & concept map

Module	Topic	Activities	Assessment
3	Stereotypes & Bias in Education	Implicit bias tests, role plays	Case study analysis
4	Intercultural Mediation	Conflict resolution simulations	Peer-evaluated teaching demo
5	Global & EU Intercultural Policies	Erasmus+ case studies	Policy analysis essay
6	Assessment & Self-Reflection	IDI pre– & post-test, portfolio	Final reflective portfolio

Teaching Strategies and Methodologies for Intercultural Communication

Simulations such as Barnga (a card game simulating cultural misunderstanding) or BaFa BaFa (a cultural immersion simulation) allow future teachers to experience cultural disorientation firsthand, fostering empathy and cognitive flexibility[45]. Such simulations provide debriefing sessions, linking experiences to intercultural communication theories.

Critical Incident Analysis

Students analyze authentic intercultural dilemmas faced by educators (e.g., conflicts over religious holidays or language policies). Applying frameworks like DMIS, students propose culturally responsive solutions, practicing intercultural mediation.

Co-Teaching with International Peers

Partnering pre-service teachers from different cultural backgrounds for collaborative lesson planning and teaching demonstrations promotes intercultural dialogue and exposes future educators to multiple teaching styles and cultural perspectives.

Assessment Strategies and Reflective Practice

Combining quantitative tools (e.g., IDI) with qualitative reflections (e.g., cultural autobiographies, digital storytelling) ensures holistic assessment of intercultural sensitivity. Students track their cultural learning journeys, documenting challenges, critical incidents, and evolving communication strategies.

Peer Feedback and Learning Circles

Structured peer feedback sessions, where students assess each other's intercultural teaching demonstrations, foster collaborative reflection and highlight diverse interpretations of intercultural competence in teaching.

Specific Teaching Strategies for Online Intercultural Education

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[45] Fowler Sandra M., and Margaret D. Pusch. Intercultural Simulation Games: A Review (of the United States and beyond). Simulation & Gaming. 2010. Vol. 41(1). P. 94–115.

The COVID-19 pandemic accelerated the digital transformation of education, including intercultural communication training. Online platforms offer opportunities for virtual exchanges, asynchronous intercultural discussions, and digital storytelling projects, but also present challenges such as miscommunication due to lack of non-verbal cues and technological barriers[46]. Designing effective online intercultural education for future teachers requires intentional pedagogy, combining synchronous interaction, self-paced learning, and collaborative project work.

Digital Cultural Autobiographies

As part of online intercultural communication courses, students can create digital cultural autobiographies, using multimedia tools (video, audio, photos) to reflect on their cultural heritage, intercultural encounters, and personal growth. These autobiographies foster self-awareness and encourage future teachers to explore how their cultural assumptions may influence their teaching styles and classroom management approaches.

Virtual Role Plays and Simulations

Intercultural simulations, which are effective in face-to-face courses, can be adapted for online platforms. Tools like Miro, Padlet, and Zoom breakout rooms enable the creation of interactive cultural scenarios where students practice conflict resolution, language mediation, and cultural decoding. For example, in one online scenario, students might play the roles of parents, teachers, and students from diverse cultural backgrounds negotiating holiday celebrations in a multicultural school.

Asynchronous Intercultural Discussion Forums

Online discussion forums provide safe, reflective spaces where pre-service teachers can process and respond to intercultural scenarios at their own pace. Structured forums prompt students to analyze cultural misunderstandings, apply theoretical frameworks (such as DMIS), and propose culturally sensitive solutions. Faculty facilitators can guide discussions, providing critical feedback and theoretical grounding to deepen learning.

Digital Intercultural Story Circles

Adapted from the Council of Europe's Autobiography of Intercultural Encounters, Digital Intercultural Story Circles bring students together in small online groups to share and analyze intercultural experiences. Using structured prompts, students describe intercultural situations they have experienced, explore their emotional and cognitive responses, and compare cultural

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[46] Lazarenko, N., & Ihnatova, O. Pandemia a transformacja cyfrowa. Wyzwania dla szkolnictwa wyższego. Annales Universitatis Mariae Curie-Skłodowska, sectio J–Paedagogia-Psychologia. 2022. Vol. 35(1). P. 7-17. DOI: http://dx.doi.org/10.17951/j.2022.35.1.7-17

interpretations. These story circles foster empathy, active listening, and perspective-taking–all essential for intercultural sensitivity[47].

Assessment Rubrics and Sample Reflective Prompts

Assessing intercultural competence development requires a combination of formative and summative assessments, using both qualitative reflections and quantitative tools. Below is a proposed rubric for evaluating future teachers' intercultural competence in a teacher education context, along with sample reflective prompts to guide deeper self-assessment.

Table 2

Sample Rubric for Assessing Intercultural Competence in Teacher Education

Criterion	Excellent (4)	Good (3)	Developing (2)	Emerging (1)
Cultural Self-Awareness	Consistently reflects on own cultural biases and assumptions, and actively works to suspend judgment	Demonstrates growing awareness of own biases and cultural positioning	Occasionally reflects on cultural biases but lacks depth	Little or no reflection on own cultural influences
Perspective-Taking	Consistently demonstrates ability to see issues from multiple cultural viewpoints and adjust communication accordingly	Often considers different cultural viewpoints and shows empathy	Shows some awareness of alternative perspectives but struggles to integrate them	Rarely considers perspectives beyond own cultural lens
Application of Theories	Effectively applies DMIS, ICC, and other	Uses theoretical frameworks appropriately	Shows basic understanding of theories	Minimal or incorrect use of theoretical models

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[47] Barrett, M., Byram, M., Lázár, I., Gaillard, M., Philippou, S. Developing Intercultural Competence through Education. Council of Europe Publishing: Strasbourg. 2014.

Criterion	Excellent (4)	Good (3)	Developing (2)	Emerging (1)
	models to analyze and respond to intercultural scenarios	with occasional support	but limited application	
Communication Strategies	Adapts communication style effectively to diverse cultural contexts; demonstrates strong mediation skills	Usually adapts communication but may revert to familiar styles under stress	Attempts adaptation but often defaults to ethnocentric communication	Primarily uses culturally insensitive or ethnocentric communication
Critical Reflection	Demonstrates deep reflection, linking personal experiences to broader social and cultural systems	Shows meaningful reflection but with limited connection to larger cultural systems	Reflects at surface level, focusing on personal feelings rather than systemic factors	Reflection is minimal or absent
Classroom Application	Designs innovative lesson plans promoting intercultural dialogue and inclusion	Develops culturally responsive lesson plans with minor gaps	Designs plans with some attention to cultural diversity, but lacks depth	Shows little awareness of intercultural teaching strategies

Reflective practice is essential for developing intercultural competence. Below are sample prompts that encourage deep self-reflection and application of intercultural communication theories to educational contexts:

1. Cultural Self-Awareness: Reflect on a situation where your cultural assumptions influenced your communication with a student, parent, or colleague from a different cultural background. How would you approach this situation differently now?

2. Intercultural Dilemmas: Describe an intercultural misunderstanding you witnessed (in a school, community, or personal setting). What cultural values, communication styles, or assumptions contributed to the misunderstanding? How could intercultural mediation strategies have helped resolve the conflict?

3. Critical Incident Analysis: Select a critical incident from your teaching practice (real or hypothetical) where cultural differences created tension or confusion. Apply a theoretical framework (e.g., DMIS or ICC) to analyze the incident and propose a culturally responsive resolution.

4. Intercultural Teaching Planning: Design a lesson plan for a multicultural classroom that explicitly incorporates intercultural dialogue, multilingual perspectives, and inclusive communication strategies. Explain how your plan addresses potential cultural misunderstandings.

5. Personal Growth Narrative: How has your understanding of your own culture and cultural identity evolved through this course? How will this evolving understanding shape your future teaching practices?

6. Comparative Reflection: If you have participated in an Erasmus+ mobility program, compare the educational culture of the host country to your home country. What communication adaptations did you make, and what insights did you gain about cultural relativity?

7. Virtual Exchange Reflections: If you engaged in a COIL project, reflect on how you navigated intercultural communication challenges in an online environment. How did the virtual nature of the interaction affect your perception of cultural cues and your ability to build rapport?

8. Intercultural Sensitivity Growth Chart: Using Bennett's DMIS stages, plot your intercultural sensitivity development across this course. Provide specific examples that illustrate your movement along the ethnocentric-ethnorelative continuum.

The ultimate goal of intercultural communication courses in teacher education is for students to compile a comprehensive reflective portfolio, demonstrating:

–   Their evolving cultural self-awareness.

–   Their application of intercultural communication frameworks to classroom scenarios.

–   Their ability to design culturally inclusive curricula.

–   Their capacity for intercultural mediation and conflict resolution.

–   Their reflections on future professional development goals in the area of intercultural competence.

These portfolios not only serve as assessment tools but also become professional resources, showcasing students' readiness to work effectively in diverse educational environments.

CONCLUSIONS

As education systems across the globe and particularly in Europe become increasingly diverse, preparing future teachers for intercultural communication has become a critical priority. The development of intercultural sensitivity equips future educators with the skills, knowledge, and attitudes necessary to foster inclusive classrooms, promote cultural dialogue, and contribute to social cohesion in diverse societies. By embedding intercultural communication training into teacher education, higher education institutions not only prepare teachers for the complex realities of modern classrooms but also contribute to the broader goal of democratic citizenship education as envisioned in European policies.

The integration of theoretical frameworks, including Bennett's Developmental Model of Intercultural Sensitivity and Byram's Intercultural Communicative Competence Model, ensures that training is conceptually grounded. Experiential methodologies, including case-based learning, simulations, reflective journals, and collaborative online international learning (COIL), enable future teachers to develop their intercultural skills through practice and reflection. Assessment tools, ranging from quantitative inventories to qualitative portfolios, support educators in tracking their progress and identifying areas for continued growth.

European initiatives, such as Erasmus+ mobility programs and the Council of Europe's Reference Framework of Competences for Democratic Culture (RFCDC), offer important policy support and practical resources for embedding intercultural communication into teacher education. Case studies from Finland, Germany, the Netherlands, and other EU states illustrate best practices that can be adapted to different national contexts.

Ultimately, the successful integration of intercultural communication training into teacher education does not merely enhance individual competence; it contributes to broader educational goals of inclusion, equity, and democratic citizenship. By equipping future teachers with the tools to mediate across cultures, we lay the foundation for more just and culturally responsive educational systems.

SUMMARY

As contemporary education systems become increasingly multicultural, fostering intercultural sensitivity among future teachers is a vital step toward creating inclusive and equitable learning environments. This chapter has explored both theoretical frameworks and philosophical perspectives that

underpin the development of intercultural communication competence in teacher education. The application of models such as the Developmental Model of Intercultural Sensitivity (DMIS) and Byram's Intercultural Communicative Competence (ICC) ensures that educators acquire the necessary skills, attitudes, and knowledge to navigate diverse cultural landscapes effectively.

The philosophical discourse on intercultural communication has further emphasized the importance of ethical considerations, critical reflection, and dialogue in cross-cultural interactions. The works of philosophers such as Habermas, Gadamer, and Ricoeur provide valuable insights into the processes of meaning-making, cultural interpretation, and the role of empathy in fostering mutual understanding. Additionally, discussions on cultural relativism, postcolonial perspectives, and globalization highlight the complexities of intercultural communication in an interconnected world.

From a practical standpoint, this chapter underscores the need for experiential learning strategies–such as case studies, role-playing, and collaborative online international learning (COIL)–to enhance intercultural competence among future educators. European policies, including the Council of Europe's Reference Framework of Competences for Democratic Culture (RFCDC) and Erasmus+ initiatives, provide a strong foundation for embedding intercultural communication training into teacher education curricula.

Ultimately, developing intercultural sensitivity is not merely an academic exercise but a fundamental aspect of preparing teachers to engage with students from diverse cultural backgrounds. By integrating theoretical models, philosophical insights, and practical training, teacher education programs can equip future educators with the tools to promote cultural awareness, mitigate biases, and foster meaningful intercultural dialogue. This, in turn, contributes to broader educational goals of social inclusion, democratic participation, and global citizenship.

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