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## The Pragmatics Of Intercultural Communication In English Teaching In University

**Gulnora Gulomovna Niyazova**

EFL Teacher Tashkent State University Of Uzbek Language And Literature, Uzbekistan

**Raupova Laylo Rahimovna**

Supervisor: Doctor Of Philological Sciences, Professor Tashkent State University Of Uzbek Language And Literature, Uzbekistan

### ABSTRACT

In order to learn a foreign language, students have to master the knowledge, skills and also have to understand the language which reflected the foreign culture, so as to overcome cultural barriers, communicate with foreigners decently and effectively and have emotional communication and cross-cultural communication. Intercultural communicative competence plays a vital role for the cultivation of language and communication ability, intercultural communication is a new “edge” subject, which has a close relationship with English teaching.

### KEYWORDS

Communication, language, Familiar, Culture

### INTRODUCTION

Every language has its own unique system which is governed by a set of linguistic and socio-cultural norms. Being inspired by those norms, speakers of a language unconsciously develop a sense of communicative

competence which enables them interpret and

produce comprehensible and appropriate utterances in their communication process. Similarly, speaking a foreign language

appropriately requires learners to be familiar with the cultural norms underlying the linguistic patterns of that language. It is not only a matter of mastering all the grammatical rules but also of acquiring the knowledge of how language is pragmatically used in the target culture (Leech, 1983). Thus, linguistic accuracy cannot be achieved unless speakers are considerate of the choice of utterance appropriateness to the context.

With today's increasing globalization of social and economic activities, people's understanding of English learning has been further enhanced. Today, people's understanding of the language is no longer limited to the narrow concept "communication tool". Language is an inseparable part of culture; it is the carrier of culture. Language reflects the characteristics of a nation; it contains not only the nation's historical and cultural background, but also the nation's views on life, life style and mode of thinking. To learn a foreign language, you have to master the knowledge, skills and also have to understand the language which reflected the foreign culture, so as to overcome cultural barriers, communicate with foreigners decently and effectively and have emotional communication and cross-cultural communication. The primary notions that underlie the conceptual development of intercultural communication are "culture' and "communication." In this context, culture includes values, beliefs, attitudes, roles and role relationships, language and nonverbal codes, social, political, economic and religious institutions and their functions. Communication in the same context includes participants in communicative events; channels and their modes of use; codes shared by various participants; settings in

which communication take place; forms of messages and their genres; the contents of messages and the functions and purposes of communication.

Various scholars have attempted to define Culture. It has proven to be a very complex concept. Kroeber and Kluckhohn reviewed one hundred sixty four definitions of culture. They observed that "culture is a product; is historical; is learned; is selective; is based upon symbols; is an abstraction from behavior and the products of behavior; and it includes ideas, patterns and values." Victor Harrow after reviewing a number of definitions of culture suggests a workable definition:

"A culture is a way of life of a group of people, the configuration of all of the more or less stereotyped patterns of learned behavior which are handed down from one generation to the next through means of language and imitation. A more succinct definition is that provided by James Down:" . . . a culture is a system of symbols shared by a group of humans and transmitted by them to upcoming" generations. Culture provides man with a general cognitive framework for an understanding of, and for functioning in his world. This enables the individual to interact with others. Culture mediates relationships among men and L-tween men and their environment. Culture is a means through which the activities of life can be ranked in terms of importance and immediacy. Culture has a pervasive effect on the functions of society in the sense that it establishes distinctive patterns of adjustment, of adaptation and of interaction.

Culture is a very broad concept, since the beginning of twentieth Century, many philosophers, sociologists, anthropologists,

historians and linguists have tried to define or classify culture from the perspective of their own respective disciplines. According to the characteristics of cultural background and language function of foreign language teaching, culture can be divided into knowledge culture and communication culture. Communication culture refers to two people from different cultural backgrounds when they communicate directly impact on the information transfer, factors that may cause the deviation or error language and non-language culture, including greetings, thanks, addressing, idioms, euphemism and taboo. Foreign language teaching should turn to language education and cultural education, to cultivate students' cross-cultural communicative competence.

The term communication has been defined in innumerable ways. Nevertheless, three meanings can be singled out. (1) It is a symbolic act. (2) It involves the sharing and the transferring of messages. (3) It is a social process. When we refer to communication as a symbolic act, we are alluding to the various codes that man uses as he interacts with his fellowmen. The codes may take linguistic, paralinguistic, kinesic, spatial, temporal, pictorial, and notational and other forms. They may be verbal or non-verbal. Alone or in combination, the forms are used to transmit messages. Involved in the transfer of messages are the processes of production, transmission and reception of sounds which are imbedded in the symbol system of the communicators. Communication is the result of such transfer.

Communication is intricately woven into the culture. All cultures depend upon symbolic action for the initiation, maintenance, change, and transmission of patterns and guidelines

for behavior. Culture fosters or promotes communication styles. One author has even gone so far as to posit that "culture and communication are the same, not separate concepts. The concept of role is important in the understanding of intercultural communication. It provides insights as to how societies maintain social order and control among their members. Role prescriptions and their concomitant behavioral manifestations vary from culture to culture. For example behaviors that are regarded as masculine or feminine in one culture may be the exact opposite in another culture.

A major goal of intercultural communication education is the attainment of effective intercultural interaction. Some specific objectives are:

1. To create an understanding of a student's own culture.
2. To assist individuals to take on roles different from their own.
3. To identify communication breakdowns which stem from the cross-cultural aspects of an interaction.
4. To define the role of perception on communication in an intercultural setting.
5. To describe the relationship of culture and communication as mutually reciprocal influences

Contemporary USA linguist Klumsky "language teaching is culture teaching". "Culture teaching" refers to the students intercultural (national culture, foreign culture) teaching activities, guiding students to obtain rich cross-cultural knowledge, develop respect, tolerance, equality, open cross cultural attitude and objective, unbiased cross cultural ideas and world consciousness, form effective intercultural

communication ability which are understanding, comparison, reference, uptake, abandon,, cooperation and communication. Culture teaching in English teaching objective is the accumulation of English culture knowledge, cultivating intercultural communicative awareness and competence. From the early 1990s, “culture teaching” concept gradually infiltrated into the university English teaching, more and more teachers and textbook writers recognized the close relationship between language and culture. While the “university English teaching requirements” (2000, hereinafter referred to as the “requirements”) is defined by the English education should include “culture knowledge, culture understanding, intercultural awareness and intercultural communicative competence”, “cultural awareness is also reflected in the social development and economic construction, the requirements of contemporary Uzbek language talents are gradually raised “. Cultural awareness refers to the sensitivity to the similarities and differences between the foreign culture and the native culture, as well as in the use of language in the target language (such as English) cultural awareness to adjust their language comprehension and language production. The sensitivity and awareness can be cultivated, English teaching is not only to impart knowledge, more important is the cultivation of students’ communicative competence, and develop their applications in English intercultural communicative competence. People just learn a foreign language pronunciation, grammar rules and vocabulary does not mean learning the language well and communicate effectively. In intercultural communication, if the

communication between the parties cannot enter the same cultural background, it is easy to produce misunderstanding, so that the communication failed. As Thomas pointed out: “syntax error can be seen from the surface, it is easy to find this error. Once this kind of mistake was found, the listener will think that the speaker lacks sufficient knowledge of the language, so it can be forgive. Pragmatic mistakes will not be treated like the grammatical mistakes, If one can speak the foreign language fluently appears pragmatic failure, he is likely to be considered impolite or unfriendly, his mistakes in communication cannot be attributed to the language ability, but will be attributed to his rudeness or hostility.”

The English name of “Intercultural Communication” is “inter-cultural communication” or “cross-cultural communication”, It refers to native speakers and non-native speakers communication, also refers to any people have differences in language and culture background of communication. Because of the different national ecological, material, social and religious environment, resulting in a different language habits, social culture, local customs and practices and other contextual factors in their own language environment. In different cultures people have different ways of speaking or habits. Therefore, people always like to use their own words to explain the words of each other in communication, which may make inaccurate inference on the other side of the discourse conflict and disorder. Thus, important link which requires teachers take the cross-cultural education as an important link in English teaching.

At present, the economic development needs more and more university graduates who have a solid professional knowledge and can directly speak English with foreign experts' investors and managers to communicate. Even some students can speak some English; they often use English inappropriately in the foreign communication and make the "cultural mistakes". I'd like to point out that Uzbek students often made four kinds mistakes related to culture and language: (1) From the perspective of sociolinguistics is not appropriate. "Where are you from?"; If they meet foreigners on the road, they will ask "where do you come from?"; They refused foreign friends' proposal with "I will think it over." (2) Not acceptable in the culture and customs. If they invite foreign friends to participate in social activities but do not invite their spouses, use silence to answer foreign teacher's question, expressing gratitude to say many many thanks. (3) The conflict of different value systems. If they meet the foreign friends after being apart a long time, they said "You have got no change at all." And ask foreigners' income etc. (4) Too simple or too general. Such as they think all Americans like to eat McDonald's, all British people are quiet. Through this survey, Many linguists think that the cultural mistakes is more serious than the language errors, because it is easy to cause emotional unpleasant between foreigners and Uzbeks. Therefore, how should we use language correctly and appropriately is an important part of the intercultural communicative competence.

In foreign language teaching, the necessity of language and culture teaching has become the consensus of the people, because the

cultivation of communicative competence includes two aspects: Mastering the language rules and the rules of language use, namely, linguistic competence and pragmatic competence. Here language ability refers to the pronunciation, vocabulary and grammar part, namely English in listening, speaking, reading, writing and translating, the five basic skills of language use, here refers to the language used is appropriate cultural factors and rules. Language and culture are closely linked, some background knowledge of language and culture is helpful to promote the language application ability, three elements of language syllabus (pronunciation, grammar and vocabulary) teaching already had the quite perfect system, but for the intercultural teaching it should include what elements are not clear. Following from teaching and learning perspective and cognitive perspective, we talk about how to cultivate the consciousness and ability of intercultural communication.

During the previous three decades, second language acquisition researchers have shifted their focus from the study of the acquisition of linguistic competence into the acquisition of communicative competence. Canale & Swain (1980) and Hymes (1972) pointed out that grammatical structures and lexicon are not enough tools to understand the intended meaning behind an utterance. Such reforming perspectives propose that a fluent speaker of a language needs to master the communicative competence, the ability to use grammatically correct sentences in appropriate contexts, which involves two types of competencies: linguistic and pragmatic (Bachman,1990). Stemming from communicative competence, pragmatic

competence means that learners have to realize the function of language so as to be able to use appropriate linguistic norms within a given situation or context. Consequently, pragmatics has been widely regarded as an important part in teaching and learning a language, and such an approach has been investigated by many linguists and educationists such as Canale (1983) and Blum-Kulka & Olshtain (1986). As the intra-language pragmatics focus on how native speakers perceive their NL utterance meaning, the inter-language pragmatics investigate how non-native speakers differ in interpreting and producing TL speech acts from their native counterparts. There has been a great consensus among them that a lack of target language pragmatic awareness may cause intercultural miscommunications which is partly due to transferring some native-like sociolinguistic features which is known as pragmatic transfer (Wolfson, 1989). As for the speech act, it is referred to as the functional units of utterances that are governed by a set of socio-cultural norms of the speech community (such as refusals, requests, apologies, compliments and so forth) (Hymes, 1972).

We study intercultural communication not only focus on the definition of culture and characteristics, the definition of communication as well as the relationship between culture and communication, we should focused on the cultural factors which interfere communication. Through the above analysis and research, we can clearly recognize, intercultural communicative competence is just like a bridge, combine the language ability with communicative ability. Intercultural communicative competence plays a vital

role for the cultivation of language and communication ability, intercultural communication is a new “edge” subject, which has a close relationship with English teaching. As the university English teachers in the new era, we should undertake the new mission, combine the language teaching with culture teaching, develop students’ intercultural communicative competence, enable students to become all-round developed students.

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