

INTERCULTURAL COMMUNICATIVE COMPETENCE IN LANGUAGE TRAINING

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Abstract

The paper describes the impact of intercultural context on communication competencies in English language teaching, as perceptions of other cultures are currently viewed as an integral part of effective intercultural communication, especially in the corporate sector. The paper also identifies the components of intercultural competence, such as attitudes, knowledge and understanding; it also analyses different aspects of perception in other cultures, including stereotyping, attitude toward time, negotiations and some critical issues and their influence on intercultural communication in international teams and workplaces. It compares polychronic and monochronic cultures and also considers explicitness in communication and attitudes to hierarchy and individualism. It outlines the main types of intercultural training and scenarios applicable to language learning, especially in business and management study programmes. As it is essential to search for educationally relevant ways to link the language and culture, the paper tries to categorize mistakes and misunderstandings to demonstrate typical symptoms of cultural clashing and to recognize potential *faux pas* ensuing from little cultural or social awareness. Finally the paper considers European language policies and national curricula and the influence of the target language on students' cultural identities and the way they formulate their ideas. It looks at some aspects of conventional language teaching which have been the center of attention and focuses on new elements, which have often been held back, e.g. the role of polite discourse, degrees of formality or registers of language styles, which can bring along a shift in the goals of second language acquisition in the direction of avoiding conflict, minimising misunderstanding or checking comprehension.

Key words: Culture, Competences, Context, Lingua Franca, Interpretation

Biographic note

Monika Hrebackova is the Director of Language Studies at the Czech Technical University in Prague. She teaches English for Specific Purposes and Intercultural Communication to BA and MA students and is the coordinator of life long learning programmes at the Masaryk Institute of the Czech Technical University. She holds MA and PhD degrees from Charles University in Prague. She received a TEB certificate from the London Chamber of Commerce and Industry and her Certificate in Management

and Coach Specific Training from Czech Technical University. She is a member of IATEFL. She translates books into Czech and publishes papers in various journals and periodicals. Her research interests include intercultural communicative competences in language training, language assessment and teacher re-training. She is the co-author of *In Class Language Assessment Strategies and the Process of Certification* (2011) and *Games and Activities in ESL Teacher Training* (2013)