



THE ROLE OF INTERCULTURAL COMMUNICATION IN
LANGUAGE TEACHING

“Culture is communication and communication is culture”

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Abstract: *This following article presents the role of culture in teaching language and how effectiveness brings to communicate. The aim of this study is that teach potential teachers of new methods and knowledge on how importance link between language and culture on their successful teaching career. Information is provided of this article about pros in learning foreign language (FL) and culture together, easy methods, also results. The findings show that students can get bright attitudes, abilities without any challenges in the meantime having FL. In conclusion, traditions are really important when acquiring a knowledge of language.*

Key words: *Intercultural Communication (IC), language, knowledge, attitude, acquire, ability, FL, difference, teacher, student.*

Аннотация: *В следующей статье представлена роль культуры в преподавании языка и то, как эффективность способствует общению. Цель этого исследования — обучить потенциальных учителей новым методам и узнать о важности связи между языком и культурой для их успешной педагогической карьеры. В этой статье представлена информация о плюсах изучения иностранного языка (FL) и культуры вместе, простые методы, а также результаты. Результаты показывают, что студенты могут без каких-либо трудностей приобретать яркие натуры и способности при*



наличии FL. В заключение, традиции очень важны при освоении языковых знаний.

Ключевые слова: межкультурная коммуникация (IC), язык, знания, отношение, приобретение, способности, FL, различие, учитель, ученик.

Introduction:

What is IC?

Intercultural communication is a form of communication between people with different linguistic, religious, social, ethnic, and educational backgrounds. The term is used to describe the wide spectrum of interactions, conflicts that appear among individuals from different cultures. Additionally, it helps improve relationships by facilitating two-way conversations.

According to Edward T. Hall “*Culture is communication and communication is culture*” (*Beyond culture (1976)*) That is, culture and dialogue are inseparable concepts. When a person speaks, greets and reacts in a way – this indicates his culture. At the same time, a person learns culture through communication. Michael Byram also states “*Intercultural communicative competence is the ability to interact with people from another country and culture in a foreign language*” (*Teaching and Assessing Intercultural Communicative Competence (1997)*). This means that it is not enough for a person to know not only a foreign language, but also be able to understand the culture, customs and communication styles of the speakers and speak with them correctly and effectively.

In much applied linguistics research, the relationship between language and culture is seen as clear, stable, and unproblematic. Culture is viewed as something fixed and connected to a specific place and identity. This structuralist approach supports research that tries to identify practical causes of misunderstanding between people from different cultures and reduce those conflicts. It also supports an educational approach that teaches minority language learners that they have the right to be heard and respected. At the same time, it encourages mainstream learners to understand and accept people from minority or foreign cultures. The concept of



“Third Place” serves this purpose. It is understood as a space where people from two different cultures meet, interact, and negotiate meaning.

➤ **Language expresses culture.** Through language, people share their beliefs, values, traditions, and worldviews. For example, greetings, politeness forms, and idioms reflect cultural norms.

➤ **Culture shapes language.** The way people speak, the words they use, and even grammar patterns are influenced by their cultural environment.

➤ **Language carries identity.** When people speak a language, they also express their cultural identity and social belonging.

➤ **Meaning depends on culture.** The same word or expression can have different meanings in different cultural contexts.

Claire Kramersch believes that language represents cultural reality. People express their experiences, values, and worldviews through language. Language not only conveys information, but also embodies culture. That is, the language itself is full of cultural meanings.

Intercultural communication is not merely a psychological phenomenon; it is fundamentally a pedagogical issue within English language education. While students may acquire grammatical competence and lexical knowledge, they often struggle to use language appropriately in culturally diverse contexts. According to Michael Byram, effective communication requires not only linguistic competence but also intercultural communicative competence (ICC), which includes attitudes, knowledge, skills of interpreting and relating, skills of discovery and interaction, and critical cultural awareness. However, traditional English language instruction frequently prioritizes structural accuracy over communicative appropriateness. As a result, learners may produce grammatically correct sentences that are pragmatically inappropriate in real intercultural interaction.

Despite the recognized importance of intercultural competence, many English language programs still focus predominantly on vocabulary, grammar, reading, and listening skills. Cultural components are often presented superficially



or treated as optional additions rather than integral elements of communicative competence. Moreover, not all teachers are sufficiently prepared to integrate intercultural topics systematically into their teaching practice. Some curricula lack intercultural projects, comparative cultural analysis, or reflective tasks that encourage students to examine their own cultural assumptions. This methodological gap reduces the effectiveness of intercultural competence formation and limits students' readiness for authentic global communication.

Cultural problems

- Misunderstanding in communication
- Ethnocentrism (thinking one's culture is superior)
- Difficulty understanding cultural norms (politeness, humor, body language)

Methodological problems

- Traditional teacher-centered methods
- Overemphasis on grammar, not communication
- Lack of interactive activities
- Inadequate materials

Aim

My goal is to share more information on this topic to all language learners and teachers, to conduct productive lessons using a variety of methods and to get rid of fears and difficulties.

Effective techniques to improve IC

1. **Culture – Comparison Tasks:** students compare their own culture with target-language cultures.

Example activities:

- Compare greeting rituals (Uzbek vs British)
- Compare concepts of politeness or respect
- Compare classroom interaction style.



Improves awareness of cultural relativity, reduces ethnocentrism.

2. **Role-Play and intercultural simulation:** Students act out culturally sensitive scenarios.

Examples:

- Business negotiation between different cultures
- Formal vs informal communication
- Handling disagreement politely

Reduces speaking anxiety, builds empathy.

3. **Critical Incident Analysis:** Students analyze short stories describing intercultural misunderstandings.

they answer:

- What went wrong?
- Why did misunderstanding happen?
- How could it be solved?

Develops interpretation skills, encourages perspective-taking, improves problem-solving ability.

4. **Authentic Materials:**

- Use real-life material:
- Interviews
- Films
- Podcasts
- Social media

Students analyze: tone, politeness strategies, humor, indirectness

5. **Reflective Journaling:** after intercultural activities, students reflect in writing.

- What cultural differences surprised you?
- Did you feel uncomfortable? Why?
- What did you learn about your own culture?



Develops intercultural attitudes, encourages self-awareness, reduces cultural bias.

6. **Project-Based Learning (PBL):** Students conduct research on intercultural topics.

Examples:

- “Non-verbal communication across cultures”
- “Political correction in English-speaking countries”
- “Gender roles in different societies”

Integrates language + culture knowledge, encourages independent learning.

For instance: students compared greetings such as “Hello/Hi” in English with “Assalomu alaykum” in Uzbek (putting his hand to his chest) - they noticed that English greetings are brief and informal, whereas Uzbek greetings often include inquires about family or health. Also, “Handshake” in English is common, Uzbek combine verbal greeting with gesture.

Observing differences in gestures and non-verbal communication reinforced students’ understanding of intercultural norms, as suggested by Claire Kramsch (1998).

Methodology (empirical research) on this topic:

Now, Empirical research will be shared in the following:

Research design and participants

The empirical research was conducted within the framework of the course *Intercultural Communication and English Language Didactics*. The topic of the study was a comparative analysis of English and Uzbek traditions.

The participants of the study were 15 third-year students majoring in English. During the research process, 3 students were absent; therefore, 12 ones actively engaged in the full experimental procedure.

The research employed a mixed-method approach, combining quantitative and qualitative data collection tools.

Research methods



1. **Pre-test** – to determine students’ initial level of intercultural knowledge regarding English and Uzbek traditions.

2. **Post-test** – to measure progress after intercultural instruction and comparative DEMO LESSON with flashcards.

3. **Questionnaire** – to evaluate students’ attitudes toward intercultural learning and cultural comparison tasks.

The questionnaire results showed 101 positive (“Yes”) responses and 19 negative (“No”) responses, indicating generally favorable attitudes toward intercultural learning.

Results

The comparison between pre-test and post-test results demonstrated noticeable improvement in students’ understanding of cultural differences and similarities between English and Uzbek traditions. After the instructional intervention, students showed:

- Better awareness of cultural-specific traditions
- Improved ability to compare cultural practices critically
- Greater sensitivity toward intercultural differences
- Increased confidence in discussing cultural topics in English

Yes – 101

No – 19

Confirm that the majority of student found intercultural tasks useful and engaging.

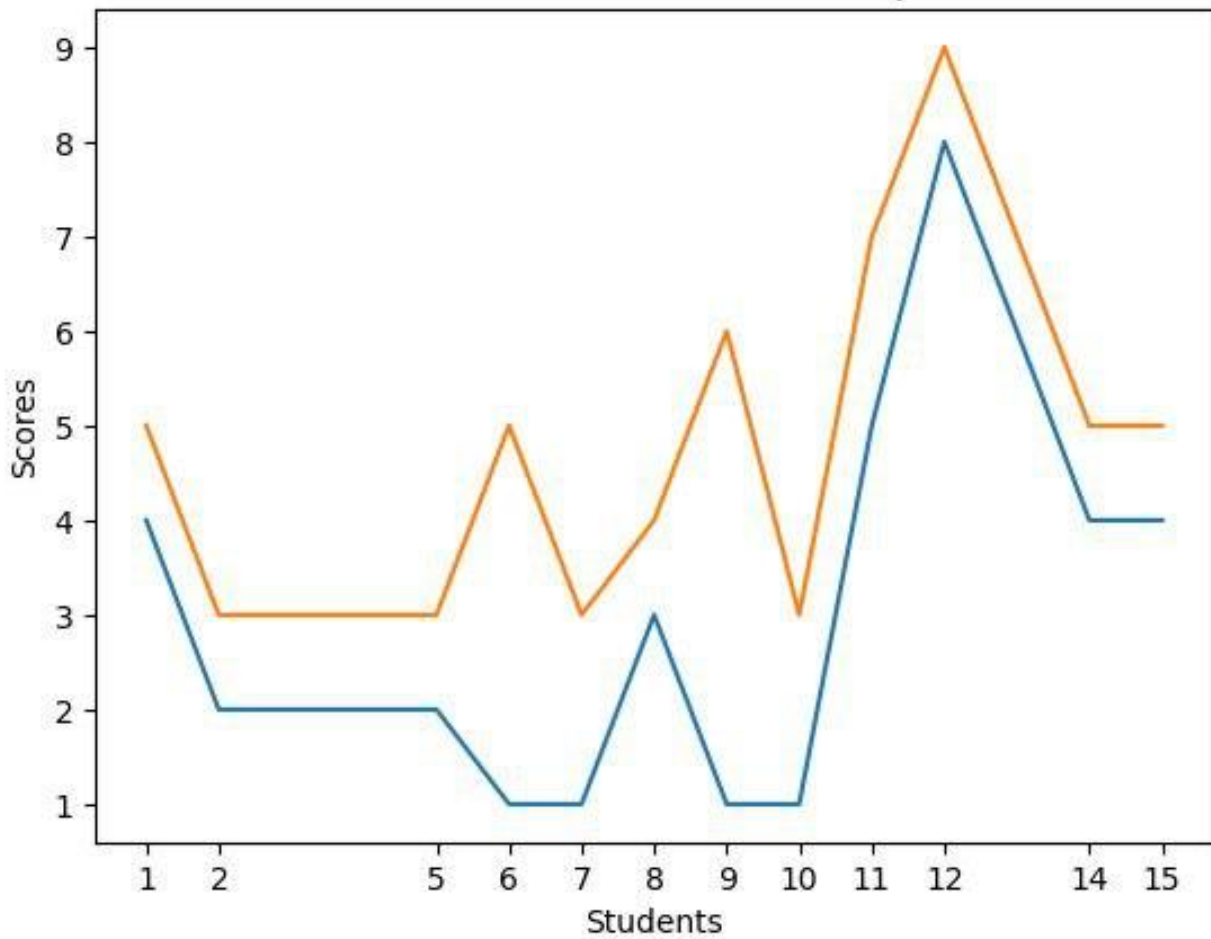
Empirical Research results table

Student	Pre-test	Post-test	Pre %	Post %	Improvement
1	4	5	40 %	50%	+10 %
2	2	3	20 %	30 %	+10 %
3	Absent	Absent	-	-	-
4	Absent	Absent	-	-	-
5	2	3	20%	30 %	+10 %



6	1	5	10 %	50 %	+40 %
7	1	3	10%	30 %	+20 %
8	3	4	30 %	40 %	+10 %
9	1	6	10 %	60 %	+50 %
10	1	3	10 %	30 %	+20 %
11	5	7	50 %	70%	+20 %
12	8	9	80 %	90 %	+10 %
13	Absent	absent	-	-	-
14	4	5	40 %	50 %	+10 %
15	4	5	40 %	50 %	+10 %

Pre-test and Post-test Score Comparison



Discussion



The findings suggest that integrating comparative cultural analysis into English language (EL) teaching positively influences the development of intercultural communicative competence. The improvement observed in post-test results can be explained through Byram's (1997) model of Intercultural communicative competence which supports the idea that intercultural instruction enhances not only linguistic knowledge but also cultural awareness and interpretative skills.

The study demonstrates that systematic inclusion of intercultural components in EL didactics can effectively reduce cultural misunderstandings with average score increasing from 3.0 to 4.83(18% grown up) and promote tolerance and critical thinking. The questionnaire results also revealed predominantly positive attitudes toward intercultural learning.

Practical recommendations

- ✓ Cultural comparison tasks should be integrated into curriculum.
- ✓ Teachers need ICC training.
- ✓ Authentic materials must be used.

Empirical research conclusion: this research examined the role of comparative analysis of English and Uzbek traditions in developing Intercultural Communicative Competence among third-year students. The empirical results revealed a positive shift in students' performance, with an average improvement of 18 % between pre-test and post-test. Moreover, the questionnaire findings indicated strong student engagement and positive attitudes toward intercultural learning. As stated above, integrating cultural comparison tasks into English language teaching enhances not only linguistic skills but also cultural awareness and communicative effectiveness.

To sum up, IC plays a crucial role in language teaching. The results illustrate that understanding culture improves learners effective communication skills. Teachers ought to use interactive methods, such as role-play and discussion to develop intercultural competence in classroom atmosphere among students.



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