

ACCULTURATION IN CROSS-CULTURAL COMMUNICATION

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The process of intercultural interaction is diverse; it comprises linguistic, cultural and social aspects. One of them is adaptation of a person to a new cultural environment. Travellers, international companies' staff, foreign students, diplomats, emigrants and refugees form a partial list of those who are involved in acculturation. According to Cambridge Dictionary definition the term "acculturation" means the process of changing so that you become more like people from a different culture, or of making someone change in this way [1]. Acculturation is a process in which an individual adopts, acquires and adjusts to a new cultural environment.

In the process of acculturation an individual tries to preserve their own culture and to incorporate themselves into a new one. Scholars have distinguished four types of acculturation strategies on the basis of two factors. The first factor is the preservation or rejection of a person's native culture, and the second one is the adoption or disregard for the prevailing culture. These four types are assimilation, separation, marginalization and integration.

Assimilation takes place when an individual accepts the norms and values of a different culture, rejecting the norms and values of their culture.

Separation is a turn-down of a dominant culture and maintenance of the native culture identity.

Marginalization occurs when a person loses their cultural identity, and at the same time does not try to adjust to new cultural surrounding.

Integration is adoption of a new culture and preservation of a host one [2, c. 64].

Researches discovered that immigrants who seek permanent residency choose assimilation strategy. Moreover, if they hunt for education or have some economic incentives, their adaptation is easier. Quite the opposite, refugees forced to leave their homeland for various

reasons, resist losing former ties, and the process of assimilation is harder and longer.

Nowadays the aim of acculturation is defined as cultural integration, modeling a bicultural or multicultural personality. The result of acculturation is adaptation to a new way of life. There are several kinds of it: psychological, social, cultural and economic one. Psychological adaptation is aimed at psychological comfort within the framework of a new culture. Social and cultural adaptation means successful adjustment to a new culture and society. Recently, economic adaptation has been distinguished: the availability of work and high living standards is an important indicator of successful adaptation of an individual to a new culture [3, с. 589].

Acculturation is based on the process of intercultural communication. An individual has to improve their intercultural communication skills.

Intercultural communication skills are those required to communicate, or share information, with people from other cultures and social groups.

Language skills are considered to be an important part, but they are not the only requirement. Intercultural communication comprises understanding that different cultures have different traditions, standards, social norms, thought and behavior samples, that are followed by readiness to accept cultural diversity and contrast and adapt to them.

Intercultural communication skills are integral skills of those who work across countries or in multicultural environment. Effective cross-cultural communication skills include the ability to establish a contact with an interlocutor, to keep a conversation, to apply different communication strategies and tactics and to overcome communication barriers, e.g. to avoid misunderstanding or offence.

Intercultural communication knowledge areas include:

- awareness of cultures, etiquette, organizations and institutions, history of nations, communities and minorities;
- acknowledgement of the cultural and historical context of behavioral patterns;
- understanding of the connection between culture, language and communication;
- understanding of behavior conventions in different intercultural communities;
- recognition of peoples' values and beliefs;
- careful usage of stereotypes, that may influence the whole process of communication.

Any communication has three interrelated aspects: cognitive, affective and behavioral. So, the more a person learns about a foreign culture, the more their ability to learn develops. The more developed cognition a person has, the better they understand a foreign culture.

To establish and keep a contact with a someone of a different culture, an individual must not only understand their culture, but also be able to share feelings with other people, i.e. perceive someone else's culture at an affective level. A person needs to know how emotional statements and reactions can effect a conversation, because each society has certain rules of expressing feelings and emotions.

Behavioral skills are basic in adapting a person to a foreign culture. They are divided into technical (e.g. shopping, paying taxes, etc.) and social. Social skills are patterns of human behavior that reveal various social roles.

The full adaptation of a person to a foreign culture means that all three aspects of communication have been realized simultaneously, carefully orchestrated and well balanced. In the process of adapting to a new culture, intercultural communication skills play a key part in successful integration [4, с. 105].

Список цитированных источников

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