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**INTERCULTURAL COMMUNICATION STUDIES:
SUBSTANTIATION OF RELEVANCE AND CONTENT**

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Abstract. The study looks into substantiating the relevance and the content of intercultural communication course. The necessity to introduce the intercultural communication studies is based on the analysing the official documents of both international and national (Ukrainian) levels that reveal the issue of social inclusion and culture dialogue. The detailed analysis of literature sources makes it possible to choose the adequate approaches to teaching intercultural communication studies at pedagogical universities, they are social science (functionalist) approach, the interpretive approach, and the critical approach. The syllabi of intercultural communication courses from different universities all over the world are analysed to understand lecturers' concern of what should be taught and how the intercultural communication should be taught. To consider the differences in understanding the intercultural dimension and needs of both the executants and the beneficiaries of the process of teaching and learning intercultural communication course the questionnaire was held among the university lecturers and students. The content of intercultural communication course was developed, based on the methodological choices, documents, findings and research results.

Key words: intercultural communication studies; syllabus; teacher training; course content; approaches to intercultural studies.

Introduction. System of higher education in Ukraine requires the reconceptualisation of language learning at universities and the internationalisation of

curricular of training the future specialists. There are some reasons for these requirements. Firstly, the number of students who participate in exchange programs and study beyond the national boundaries is growing. In particular, since the 24th of February the number of students and teaching staff who go to foreign countries to study and work has dramatically increased. According the official data of the analytical center Cedos, by the 1st of April 2022 about 4 million Ukrainians have left their houses and fled abroad (Nazarenko et al., 2022). A lot of them are students and teachers of Ukrainian educational institutions of different levels who join classes and courses in foreign countries and in foreign languages. Secondly, there is an urgent need for educating students as global citizens who are able to interact with employers and to be competitive in the world job market. Thirdly, some countries and regions are experiencing economic, political and social crisis which can be overcome through gaining the mutual understanding between the people and illuminating barriers in communication.

A growing need in building intercultural dialogue and promoting the cultural diversity is substantiated in European Framework for Action on Cultural Heritage (2018), released by European Commission. The Framework and international conditions of the social inclusion prove that the responsibility for developing intercultural dialogue and enhancing global awareness falls to national governments and higher education institutions (Qiang, 2003). Association between European Union and other countries, its members, proves that national governments, taking into consideration cultural and linguistic diversity, should promote multicultural cooperation in the sphere of education to contribute to foster mutual understanding between representatives of different cultures, to develop intercultural dialogue and deepen knowledge of one's own culture. In Ukraine the governmental level, the Law on Protection of Cultural Heritage was adopted in 2000 and it stresses the importance of respecting cultural diversity and enhancing the intercultural dialogue (2000). In 2016 the Government of Ukraine joined the EU Creative Europe programme, aimed at encouraging the intercultural dialogue in civil society. In response to these documents and programs, higher education institutions all over the Europe have initiated the introduction of intercultural studies courses into the curricular of training specialists in different spheres.

The issue of building the intercultural dialogue and developing intercultural communication competence is crucial in the east of Ukraine where Joint Forces Operation takes place and where there is an urgent need to prepare the young generation for enhancing the interaction diverse society, preserving their own culture and developing tolerant and respectful attitude to representatives of other nations and cultures.

To contribute to the intercultural engagement and interaction, the initiative group of researchers from SHEI “Donbas State Pedagogical University” decided to introduce the course “Intercultural Communication Studies” into the curriculum of future teachers’ training to promote the youth’s integration into the world community and contribute to the solution of the conflict in the eastern regions of Ukraine. Dogancay-Aktuna (2005) stresses the role of teacher in bringing to the class certain norms of behavior that correspond to the intercultural context. So, teacher training plays an important part in fostering the integration of young generation to the world community (Dogancay-Aktuna, 2005). Havrilova, Beskorsa, Ishutina, Kapnina & Topolnik (2021) substantiate four methodological approaches to the intercultural communication studies (competency-based, inductive, social scientific, and interpretive).

The issues of how intercultural communication should be taught and what themes the course should contain is discussed in some directions. Some courses imply the knowledge of foreign languages for development of competencies in intercultural communication. Canale and Swain (1981) considered the intercultural communication studies in the terms of both language learning and developing communicative competence. They asserted that the content of the intercultural communication course should contain social and cultural context of the country whose language is studied. Some researchers think that intercultural communication studies go beyond the language learning. Keshishian (2005) emphasised the historical-materialists approach for intercultural communication and proved that economy influenced all the social aspects of life, including the communication.

Root, Hargrave, Ngampornchai, and Petrunia (2013) included general culture knowledge into the interactive communication course which they think are over specific culture knowledge. They also emphasise the issues of verbal and non-verbal communication, as well as conflict management. From their standpoint, the key factor for selecting out the topics and methods of studying intercultural communication is exploring teachers’ and students’ identities.

The **purpose** of this paper is to substantiate the relevance of intercultural communication studies in teacher training and model the content of the course in intercultural communication. In this paper we paid special attention to such aspects: whether the issue of intercultural communication studies is relevant for teacher training; how the lecturers structure their syllabi; whether the choice of topics should have research-based or practice-based character in teaching intercultural communication; how the course should be designed.

Research methods

Context of the study

For the last decade, the compulsory courses “Cultural Studies”, “Social Studies” and “Higher Education and Bologna process” have been introduced in the curricula of teacher training. They are theory-based courses and partially focus on promoting the students’ integration to the world community. The issue under the study is aimed at pointing out the topics and modelling the syllabus, based on the analysis of data sources and results of the questionnaire, which contribute to building the intercultural dialogue and enhancing intercultural communication.

Participants

In order to define the relevance of the issue of intercultural communication and the list of topics to be studied, the method of online survey was applied among both university teachers (46 persons) from all over the Ukraine and students (104 persons) of Donbas State Pedagogical University. The online survey was developed by the use of Google Forms platform. The links were disseminated online among the students (<https://forms.gle/CuRGGBVzPiS3syfWA>) and university teachers (<https://forms.gle/2jZtVLxZFYnKzbpv9>). There weren’t any selection criteria applied among the university teachers, as we wanted to cover different regions in Ukraine and university teachers who taught different subjects (socio-humanitarian, natural-mathematical, and socio-economical ones) and were concerned about the intercultural communication issues. The students were selected, based on the program they studied. Our target group included pre-service teachers, so the student respondents were from SHEI “Donbas State Pedagogical University” where the initiative group of researchers worked.

The university teachers, involved into the online survey, provided the background information about their sex, age, and what subjects they studied (socio-humanitarian, natural-mathematical, socio-economical). The spread of teacher participants was as follows: 18 taught socio-humanitarian courses, representing 40,9%, 17 taught natural-mathematical subjects, presenting 38,6%, and 9 taught socio-economical subjects, presenting 20,5%. Teachers’ age ranged from 28 to 63 years.

Table 1. Teacher participants

Subject area	Male	Female	Age	PhD	Doctors Hab.	Total participants
Socio-humanitarian	4	15	28-45	12	7	19
Natural-mathematical	13	4	32-63	5	12	17
Socio-economical	7	3	29-55	6	4	10

The students gave the background information on sex, age, and level of study. The spread of student participants was as follows: 73 were undergraduate, presenting 59,8%, 49 were postgraduate, presenting 40,2%. Students' age ranged from 18 to 46 years.

Table 2. Student participants

Male	Female	Age	Bachelors	Masters	Total participants
9	54	18-21	63		63
4	36	22-46		41	41

Procedures

At the first stage we applied the qualitative method to study the national and world official document that proved the relevance of the issue of introducing the intercultural communication studies into the curricula of teacher training. At this stage we analysed in details the literature and research papers for providing theoretical context of the current study. We paid particular attention to the literature that highlighted the context and approaches of teaching intercultural communication with a particular focus on searching for the topics that were included into the course content. At the second stage we examined the syllabi of intercultural communication courses from different universities all over the world (approximately 10 syllabi) as syllabi demonstrated the lecturer's concern of what should be taught and how the intercultural communication should be taught (Yueh & Copeland, 2015). It was also important to define the balance between theory and practice in the intercultural communication course. At the third stage the questionnaire was held among the university teachers and students to understand of how aware of intercultural communication issues they were and what topics should be included in the course content. At the fourth stage we designed the syllabus of the intercultural communication course for teacher training, based on the methodological choices, documents, findings and research results.



Fig.1. Stages of conducting the research

Findings and results. At the first stage we analysed the official documents to get aware of how relevant the issue of the intercultural communication education is and what the key practices and trends in Europe in the sphere of intercultural communication prevail. So, the urgent need to enhance intercultural communication in Europe has several causes. First of all, the society is becoming diverse due to increasing migration. The European Union tries to shape and control migration processes by adopting a number of documents. The European Pact on Immigration and Asylum (Council of European Union, 2008) featured the necessity to build partnership between the countries as it contributes to the development of the society. The initiatives of the Council of European Union on building the common migration policy in the member states of European union draw the special attention to the issue of multiculturalism and intercultural education, in particular integration of the migrant students into the society.

One of the challenges that Ukrainians face today is also job and study migration, which Faas, Hajisoteriou and Angelides (2014) consider to be mobility because of the length of stay at a foreign country and repetitions of travelling. This mobility became possible after signing the Association between European Union and Ukraine and introducing visa-free regime for Ukrainian citizens, that requires further integration of Ukrainians into European society. Ukrainian government follows the European policy-related documents in the sphere of education to ensure social inclusion, tolerance, preserving the native culture and respectful attitude to the foreign one (Migration and mobility: challenges and opportunities for EU education systems, 2008).

Another important target of this paper is to analyse the recent literature in the field of intercultural communication studies to make the theoretical background of the research and substantiate its content. The issue of intercultural communication has been studied by researchers who regard the intercultural communication as an interaction of individuals with diverse cultural background (Allwood, 1985; Ting-Toomey, 1999; Gudykunst, 2005). Intercultural communication theorists, researchers and educators assert that it implies intercultural understanding that is based on behavior and communication. The communicative strategies in intercultural education are in the focus of Karpati's research (2017) which outlines the necessity to develop the communicative strategies among the students to gain the mutual understanding and avoid inadequacy in linguistic and cultural meanings. The communicative strategies include verbal and non-verbal means that the speaker uses in oral interaction. Missaglia (2015) considers the intercultural aspects of communication in foreign language learning, which includes verbal and non-verbal means. Hou (2017) has made in-depth studies in nonverbal behavior and asserts that non-verbal means of communication are different and depend on social groups and cultural norms, generated by social groups. Nixon and Bull (2006) study cultural communication styles and its influence on the

accuracy of cross-cultural perception that is closely connected with non-verbal communication cues.

Ting-Toomey and Dorjee (2005) consider the intercultural communication to be the process of exchanging meanings among the representatives of different cultural communities in an interactive way. So, the intercultural communication greatly depends on the development of language skills (Canale & Swain, 1981). Except of the language knowledge, Gudykunst (2005), Andersen, Hetch, Hooble and Smallwood (2002), and Ting-Toomey (2005) prove that the communication style is also of great significance, speaking about intercultural communication. Norton (1983) distinguishes communication styles according to the cultural context as they embody cultural differences. Giles & Giles (2012) substantiate the communication accommodation theory which gives the reason on how and why individuals participate in specific communication strategies when they interact with representatives of salient ingroups and outgroups. Watson & Gallois (2016) consider intergroup communication to be a way of looking at communication among members of different social categories or groups (ethnicity, gender, age, health status, organisational membership, etc.). They prove that intergroup communication reflects the ways in which social identities, attitudes, and motivations and are transferred in communication.

Miquel Rodrigo Alsina (2003) argued that intercultural communication can be understood as interpersonal communication in which the intervention of people with cultural references that are sufficiently different produce an important barrier which alters the efficacy of the communication. Lustig and Koester (2010) highlight the difference in culturally-based expectations about the interpersonal communication that causes difficulty in interpersonal relationships between people from different cultural backgrounds.

A rapid development of new media has made the human communication more complex. So the scientists are becoming more and more engaged in investigations that reveal the relationship between digital technologies and intercultural communication. Chen (2012) studies the influence of digital technologies on the emerging of new values in modern society and communication across cultures. After analyzing literature sources, we found that the subject area of this research line mainly includes such topics: universal digital services in intercultural communication (Falch & Henten, 2018), academic and science communication through digital media (Zhu, 2017). Daphne A. Jameson (2007), Syarizan Daliba, Minah Harunb, Norhafezah Yusoffa (2014) argue that it is necessary to reconceptualise cultural identity in order to increase understanding of a communicator's state of mind in an intercultural communication situation. reconceptualising competence in intercultural settings. According to Yep (2014) the issues of reconceptualisation of intercultural communication are associated

with current definitions of culture, ideology, history, and the centrality of culture in competence research.

To gain the understanding of the meaning of intercultural communication and how it facilitates the communication across different cultural boundaries, the theories of intercultural communication are of great importance. The theories of intercultural communication present a new field of study as communication interrelates with a great number of sciences, they are sociology, psychology etc. Judith and Nakayama (2007) classify the theories of intercultural communication, taking into consideration the variations of human behaviour, definitions of culture and communication, and methodologies. The theoretical findings prove that research methodologies play a fundamental role in the classifications. Three basic approaches to conceptualising the intercultural communication are the social science (functionalist) approach (Judith & Nakayama, 2007), the interpretive approach (Branston and Stafford, 2001), and the critical approach (Ferri, 2018).

According to social scientific approach, culture is considered to be the predictable issues that can be practically and effectively resolved. From the standpoint of the interpretive approach, culture is thought to be dynamic community that is characterised by patterns, customs and norms, which the intercultural communication participants should observe, analyse, and follow to comprehend them from the native's position. The critical approach is based on social and political theories and highlights the issues of social injustice, relationships of dominant and minority social communities, and changes of social values (Yueh & Copeland, 2015). These three approaches make the foundation for analyzing intercultural communication studies syllabi and for understanding how they influence the content design and selection of methods.

At the second stage of our research, we aimed at deeper studying the content and the methods applied in intercultural communication courses through analysing the syllabi at education institutions in different countries (table 3). We visited the sites of the education institutions in the USA, in eastern countries (Japan, China), in western Europe (Belgium, France), in eastern Europe (Ukraine, Poland). The syllabi that are in an open access were taken into consideration. While reviewing the intercultural communication courses offered to the higher education audience, we found that 10 of the syllabi were two courses for Bachelor students and eight for Master students.

Table 3. Syllabi of Intercultural Communication Studies

Institution, Country	Title of the Course	Brief Description of Content	Methods
Vesalius College, Belgium	Intercultural Communication	Focus on theoretical issues and cultural dimensions, as well as their application in some contexts: social, business, and media-driven	Lectures, class workshops, simulations, movie screening and review, essay, intercultural report
Vanderbilt University, France	Cross Cultural Communication	Aim at theory on the levels of intercultural sensitivity and on verbal and non-verbal communication for managing communication with other cultures representatives.	Discussions, Facebook posts and engagements, cultural self-analysis essay, cross-cultural interviews, projects and portfolio
University of Florida, the USA	Foundations of Intercultural Communication	Focus on the issues of public relations and strategic communications, cultural values and conflicts, identity and language, intercultural transitions and migration	Weekly readings and lectures, quizzes, blog project, video blog, human-interested story, research paper
College of Professional and Continuing Studies, the USA	Seminar in Intercultural Communication	Aim at clarifying the concepts of intercultural communication such as emotion, cultural identity, acculturation, perceptions of power, deception, and persuasion	Lectures, group exercises, simulations, role playing, discussions, writing a post-term paper.
Whatcom Community College, the USA	Introduction to Intercultural Communication	The practice-based program of intercultural communication with the focus on intercultural barriers, cultural values, worldview, etc.	Assignments with course materials (readings, power point slides, video clip links, discussion prompts) available online, written papers and essays
Shanghai International Studies University, China	Intercultural Communication	Focus on the effect of cultural diversity on communication strategies, self-identities, different types of cultural communication context	Discussions, quizzes, case study reports, group research essay
International University of Japan, Japan	Cross Cultural Communication	Focus on concepts, conceptual frameworks, and practical dimensions (conflicts, barriers, and intercultural sensitivity) of cross-cultural communication	Interactive lectures, group discussion, papers, empirical investigation
Jagiellonian University, Poland	Intercultural Communication	Topic variation includes intercultural communication challenges, intercultural communication strategies and models, cultural diversity, etc.	Formal lecture, multimedia presentation, discussion, case study, e-learning

National Technical University of Ukraine "Igor Sikorsky Kyiv Polytechnic Institute", Ukraine	Theory of Intercultural Communication	Introduction to theories of intercultural that clarifies the process of communication in natural conditions between the representatives of different cultures and interpersonal communication in dynamic and static aspects.	Brainstorm, discussions, group activities for developing skills of intercultural business communication.
Ivan Franko National University of Lviv, Ukraine	Intercultural Communication	Focus on the historical and theoretical foundations of intercultural communication, methods of studying intercultural communication, main types, forms, and models of intercultural communication, verbal and non-verbal communication.	Reports at seminars, essays.

The courses of Ukrainian universities focus on the theoretical, historical, and philosophical groundings of intercultural communication that clarifies the process of communication in natural conditions between the representatives of different cultures. Analysis of the syllabi of the university and colleges of the USA proves that some of these courses are aimed at more theoretical intercultural education while other provide enhancing practical skills necessary to implement intercultural communication strategies. Universities of China and Japan present the courses that focus largely on training students to manage cultural diversity by gaining a high-level understanding of people from various identity groups. Study of these syllabi uncovered great attention to practical dimensions (conflicts, barriers, and intercultural sensitivity) of cross-cultural communication.

All the syllabi analysed include the wide range of teaching methods from the low level of cognition (lectures, viewing presentations) through moderate (self-awareness; group discussions or prejudice, racism values; participation in guided encounters; case-study) to the high level (role-playing; simulations of real-life demands). Writing reports, analytical essays or research paper is often required.

The instrument chosen at the third stage of our research was the questionnaire held among the university teachers and students. This target has allowed us to find the existence of differences in understanding the intercultural dimension and how much the development of the intercultural communication competence represents a need of both the executants and the beneficiaries of the process of teaching and learning Intercultural Communication course. The research group of the university teachers includes a number of 46 people and the category distribution of subjects they teach being as follows: 10 teachers (21,7%) of socio-economical courses, 17 teachers (37%)

of natural-mathematical courses, and 19 teachers (41,3%) of socio-humanitarian courses.

The participants were asked to define the level of relevance of issues of intercultural communication in education, the analysis of the answers is presented below (fig.2).

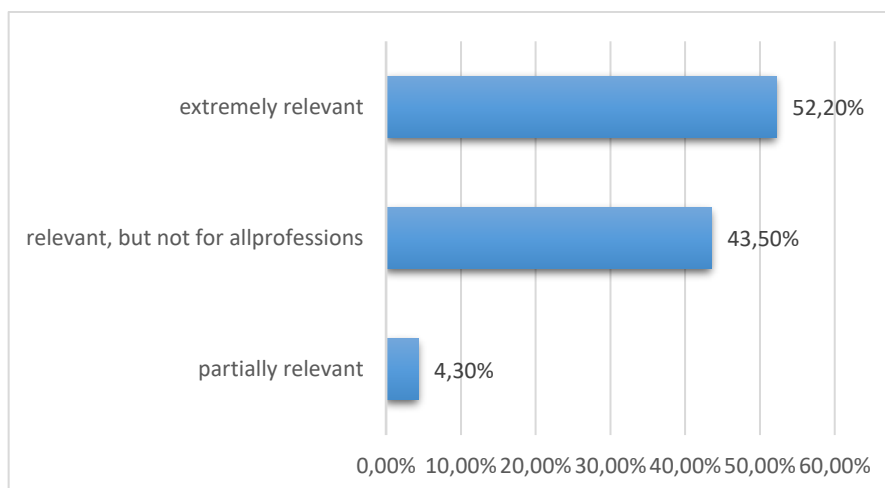


Fig. 2. The relevance of issues of intercultural communication in education

Data analysis has shown that 32 university teachers (69,6%) are not satisfied with the level of intercultural communication competence of students in academic groups. As the effective ways of improving the level of students' intercultural communication competence the respondents have proposed following: to implement educational activities for students – talks, round tables, role plays (21,7%); to introduce the special course “Intercultural Communication in Education” (36,9%); to implement the intercultural communication methods and techniques into the content of different subjects (41,3%).

The respondents were asked to rate the significance of themes suggested in special course “Intercultural Communication in Education” (from 1 to 5 where 5 is the most important). The list of the themes included:

1. Political, social and cultural framework for communication in European society.
2. Communicative strategies of European society.
3. Verbal – non-verbal communication across European cultures.
4. Interpersonal and intergroup communication and relationships in European society.
5. Exploring intercultural communication problems in different spheres of EU society.
6. European cultures: communication and context of intercultural communication.

7. Historic and theoretic aspects of intercultural scientific research in European countries.

8. Multinational identity approaches and cross-cultural communication styles in Europe.

9. Digital communication across European cultures.

10. Ethnocentrism and intercultural communication in European countries.

11. European policy and research on intercultural communication.

12. Approaches to intercultural interaction in EU Studies education.

13. Re-conceptualisation of Ukrainian higher education system: distant future.

14. European integration through intercultural professional communication in education.

The most important themes, according to the questionnaire, which got 5 in the rating, were: “Communicative strategies of European society” (20 respondents); “Verbal – non-verbal communication across European cultures” (20 respondents); “Multinational identity approaches and cross-cultural communication styles in Europe” (20 respondents); “Interpersonal and intergroup communication and relationships in European society” (21 respondents); “European cultures: communication and context of intercultural communication” (21 respondents); “Digital communication across European cultures” (22 respondents); “European integration through intercultural professional communication in education” (23 respondents).

The research group of the students included a number of 104 persons and they were the representatives of the following programs: 19 students (18,2%) of socio-economical program, 22 students (21,1%) of natural-mathematical program, and 63 students (59,7%) of socio-humanitarian program. The participants were asked to define the level of relevance of issues of intercultural communication in education, the analysis of the answers is presented below (fig.3).

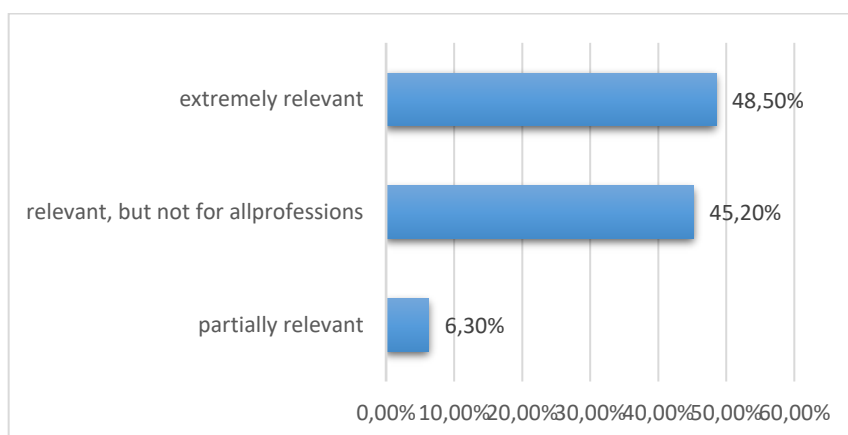


Fig. 3. The level of relevance of issues of intercultural communication in education

Data analysis has shown that 54 students (51,9%) are not satisfied with the level of intercultural communication competence of students in their academic groups.

The respondents were given the same list of the themes and asked to rate the significance of themes suggested in special course “Intercultural Communication in Education” (from 1 to 5 where 5 is the most important). The most important themes, according to the questionnaire, which got 5 in the rating, were: “Communicative strategies of European society” (43 respondents); “Interpersonal and intergroup communication and relationships in European society” (43 respondents); “European integration through intercultural professional communication in education” (45 respondents); “Verbal – non-verbal communication across European cultures” (51 respondents); “Multinational identity approaches and cross-cultural communication styles in Europe” (53 respondents); “Interpersonal and intergroup communication and relationships in European society” (53 respondents); “Digital communication across European cultures” (53 respondents).

However, the teacher respondents considered the integrated implementation of the intercultural communication methods and techniques into the content of different subjects to be more effective than the introduction of the special course “Intercultural Communication in Education”, there is an urgent need to train students within the course for developing their knowledge and skills to use these methods and techniques in their professional activities.

Based on the literature review and analysis of the online survey results among student and teacher respondents, the topic variations and content were developed. The in-depth study of the intercultural communication courses syllabi allowed to make the reasonable choice of the content and methods.

The structure of the course includes the following themes:

1. Communicative strategies of European society.

4-hour live lecture that is aimed at defining communication and explaining the relation between the communication and self-awareness. During the lecture students will identify global problems in European society that could be solved by the intercultural communication. The lecturer presents the situation of academic and job migration of both Ukrainian and European society, its pros and cons, as well as describes how intercultural communications is linked to teacher professional activities and strategic communications.

2. Strategies for effective communication in European Union.

Contributes to making the plan of a person’s language and communicative actions that are focused on achieving the purposes of communication. Helps to work out strategies for effective communication. The seminar targets Bachelor students (specialty ‘Primary education’) who are non-native English language speakers and use

English as a second, foreign or international language to improve communication in European society. Students' assignments are presenting a personal introduction that can be understood by diverse audiences.

3. Language and intercultural communication.

The main purposes of the seminar are to obtain the knowledge of how to identify cultural variations in communication styles and to develop skills to choose the verbal means for effective oral and written communication

4. Foundations of interpersonal communication.

Presents an overview of psychological, communicative, relational, contextual, and discourse strategies to conduct interpersonal relationships. Demonstrates how interpersonal relationships influence understanding of intercultural communication. 4-hour live lecture provides Master students with knowledge about interpersonal communication and interpersonal processes: interpersonal communication principles and competencies; the role of culture and the self in interpersonal communication; the importance of listening and social perception processes.

5. The self and interpersonal communication.

The seminar is aimed at practicing interpersonal communication skills: to reflect upon your own interpersonal communication patterns and their implications for behaviour and relationships, and to strategise how you might improve; to think critically about how interpersonal messages may influence others; and to practice communication skills. In-class activities include reading blogs and articles, watching videos where interpersonal patterns are presented for their further discussion; participating in role plays and simulations; quizzes.

6. Culture communication and ethnic identity.

The topic covers 2-hour lecture and 2-hour seminar. The lecture delineates the scopes of up-to-date development of intercultural communication as a field of study and identifies the main issues with related subfields in intercultural communication. The seminar ensures the development of skills to both research and critically evaluate historical, present, and future social issues associated with intergroup relations. The activities in the topic include dialogical lecture and workshop

7. Interpersonal and intergroup conflict management.

The seminar is aimed at examining the importance of understanding cultural differences, investigating the concept of intercultural sensitivity and conflict management styles in a hypothetical cross-cultural situation in educational process; evaluating information gathered about a culture in light of its being valid or stereotypical in nature. The activities include reviewing movies; role plays and simulations.

8. Universal digital services in intercultural communication.

The activity is an introductory webinar that reveals the need to effectively communicate in our globalised world. The lecturer considers digital, mobile, and IC technology to be the tools for connecting people from different part of the world. The webinar shows how to communicate successfully with an international audience using digital tools and online texts in English, including Blogs, Corporate Videos, Fanvids, Websites, and Video-Chats, social services. Also, the lecturer stresses the role of these technologies for effectively conducting research and professional activities of educators, as well as their role in development of European science.

9. Academic communication through digital media.

The course is delivered online via the Moodle platform of SHEI “Donbas State Pedagogical University”. Assessments will include project-based work, discussions, and quizzes. Students are expected to follow a weekly outline that is found on the page of the course. The outline provides materials and opportunities to engage and practice the information learned in sequential steps that ultimately lead to the goals and objectives of the course. Within each week’s outline, student can find the week’s topic, learning objectives, lecture, readings, and assignments.

10. European higher education internationalisation policy: multicultural aspects.

The 4-hour lecture aims at analysing and interpreting the historical, philosophical, economic, legal and sociocultural foundations of multicultural education in EU; providing the Master students with knowledge of new models and approaches to internationalisation in higher education institutions as a means of positioning themselves beyond their borders.

11. Activities include analyzing EU documents and reviewing scientific papers.

Studying EU experience of higher education internationalisation based on communication processes provides knowledge about conceptual principles of communication activities of the modern university in the context of internationalisation of higher education: development of a system of concepts about the process of this activity, the definition of theoretical and methodological guidelines for its implementation, goals and objectives, ways of their implementation, subjects of interaction, content, forms of implementation, and criteria for evaluating the results obtained. An overview of multicultural/multilingual curricula with a special focus on culturally / linguistically responsive instruction and assessment techniques.

Discussion. The necessity to introduce the intercultural communication studies into pre-service teacher training is consistent with the research of AlTaher (2020) who asserts that it’s essential for modern youth, especially in the East, to be taught how to interact in multicultural society following tolerant and polite manner for eliminating the communication barriers and the psychological abuse based on cultural context.

These statements are crucial for our research as our target group includes the pedagogical university students from the eastern part of Ukraine who suffer from ethnocentric attitude because of cultural and paradigm differences.

To build the theoretical framework for substantiating the course content, Martin & Nakayama (2013) distinguish three main approaches: critical, interpretive, and social science ones. These approaches are based on both theory and practice whereas Gorski (2009) identifies three approaches for multicultural teacher training which are clearly theoretical: conservative, liberal, and critical. However, we share the view of Yueh & Copeland (2015) who suggest that there are no courses centered around only one approach, most of them are developed on the mixed approach taking into account communication theories and practices. The developed course content in this research is consistent with the standpoint highlighted above and is designed combining the mixed features as it's essential for preservice teachers to have knowledge of cultural diversity and its influence on interacting in professional activities and different life spheres, as well as skills to build strategies of intercultural communication.

The analysis of syllabi, made in the researches of Gorski (2009), Khatoon, Shafkat & Muhammad (2011), proves that these approaches are the main factors in designing the content for the intercultural communication courses. They also assume that most of the courses have theory-based background. However, Khatoon, Shafkat & Muhammad (2011) claim that teacher training requires developing practical skills for working in multicultural classes. In this way we agree with Yueh & Copeland (2015) that the content must be both theory and practice based. Speaking about the course content, we address to the research of Webb and Vaughn (2018) who consider intercultural communication to be practice oriented at initial level and theorised at the further stage. So, starting teaching the course, instructors should concentrate on developing students' practical skills that imply values, beliefs, norms, social practices, and strategies of effective communication, and only then proceed to theoretical issues including intercultural communication history and reconceptualisation.

Building the content of the intercultural communication course, a large number of researchers Canale & Swain (1981), Wu & Marek (2018), Escudero (2013) emphasise the role of language learning for enhancing intercultural communication competence. The reviewed studies confirm the interdependence between foreign language skills and intercultural communication competence. The globalisation processes in all the life spheres, including education, has resulted in growing number of people who use the English language as international communication language. According to Dörnyei (2014), to be successful in modern world and to effectively function in professional communication, it's essential to have advanced English language skills and understanding of other cultures. Whereas Wu & Marek (2018) say

that intercultural communication course is more effective for intermediate to advanced language learners. However, language learning is often referred as mastery of vocabulary, grammar, and syntax, paying little attention to learning culture (Rao, 2002).

In our course we base on the viewpoint that language learning and culture learning can't be separated, the previous role is given to cultural interaction while a foreign language is considered to be a means of showing the cultural diversity of the modern world and getting communication experience Chen & McConachy (2020), reducing difficulties and frustration in communicative environment Wu & Marek (2018). We also support the findings of Chen & McConachy (2020) and Kim (2020) who highlight the idea that educating a person in the modern society requires involving them in cultural ways of life and creating a vision for life in a plurilingual world.

While designing the course "Intercultural Communication in Education", we took into account digital aspects of communication, which are relevant in current conditions of transferring the system of higher education to distance learning due to Covid-19 pandemic, spreading online events for academic communication, developing NewMedia and social networks. These positions correspond to European trends of informatisation and digitalisation, as the main form of communication is the digital one, which implies electronic exchange of text data, images, video, sound information by using e-mails, videoclips, audio and video online-broadcasts, digital events, podcasts, messages in blogs, announcements, forums, web-pages, social networks and platforms for messaging. Aho (2005) and Englander (2015) rightly point out that knowledge and skills how to communicate in digital environment, how communication forms are changing and which forms become the key ones, entering the list of soft skills necessary for a successful specialist.

We agree with McKee & Porter (2017) that digital communication on the Internet are global in the respect that they spread widely, crossing national boundaries – which means that they potentially encounter difference to a greater extent, meaning difference in terms of identity as well as culture. So, we can say that digital communication influences intercultural interaction, that's why topics "Universal Digital Services in Intercultural Communication" and "Academic Communication Through Digital Media" are included in the content of the course "Intercultural Communication in Education".

Shuter (2012) and Marcoccia (2012) say that tools of digital communication (so-called New Media) transform intercultural communication. The Internet provides its users with an unprecedented level of contacts with representatives of other cultures and social groups. The following questions are crucial:

– if computer communication tools (anonymity, lack of visual signals, etc.) facilitate intercultural communication and reduce distance and misunderstandings or they increase cultural disparities and reinforce cultural stereotypes?

– what the Internet greatly affects: cultural globalisation, standardisation (for example, by using netiquette – a number of communication rules that reflect North American communication style) or cultural diversity? (Marcoccia, (2012).

New Media, particularly social networks (Facebook, Blogs, MySpace, YouTube, Twitter, etc), influences people's ability to present themselves and stay connected in cyberspace. It is obvious that the flexibility of information, presented and disseminated in new media, can influence the development of intercultural relations in virtual environment either positively or negatively due to creating the network of personal relations. It is clear that publishing a great amount of personal information in blogs, as well as information about friends, employers and others, has a negative influence on intercultural communication and can result in problems of establishing constructive human relations.

Indirect computer communication can promote and develop virtual cosmopolitanism and virtual third cultures when a new hybrid culture emerges, Internet communities are built, intercultural relations are formed. Thus, we can assert that studying digital intercultural communication the special attention should be paid to certain problem issues, which concern Internet safety, disseminating personal data, etc.

Conclusion. Based on theoretical findings and research results, it can be concluded that introducing intercultural communication studies is essential for training pre-service teachers as the competences developed contribute to their integration into the world community. The structure of the course syllabus and its content are developed on the analysis of syllabi of intercultural communication courses, taking into consideration theoretical, historical, and philosophical aspects of courses and the methods applied. The national needs and preferences are also considered due to questionnaire, conducted among university teachers and students all over Ukraine.

So, we concluded that the course should be built on the basis of the new trends in intercultural communication, practice-based studies for enhancing intercultural communication skills, digital aspects of intercultural communication, as well as theoretical foundation of social communication and education internationalization. All the aspects, highlighted in the course content, are relevant and essential for pre-service teachers' professional training, that is why the proposed course content was approved for implementing by Education, Audiovisual and Culture Executive Agency within the Jean Monnet Activities of Erasmus+ Programme.

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МІЖКУЛЬТУРНІ КОМУНІКАЦІЙНІ СТУДІЇ: ОБҐРУНТУВАННЯ АКТУАЛЬНОСТІ ТА ЗМІСТУ

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Анотація. Дослідження спрямоване на обґрунтування актуальності та змісту курсу з міжкультурної комунікації. Необхідність запровадження вивчення міжкультурної комунікації ґрунтується на аналізі офіційних документів як міжнародного, так і національного (українського) рівнів, які розкривають питання соціальної інклюзії та культурного діалогу. Детальний аналіз літературних джерел дає змогу обрати адекватні підходи до викладання предметів міжкультурної комунікації в педагогічних університетах: суспільствознавчий (функціоналістичний), інтерпретаційний, критичний. Проаналізовано навчальні плани курсів міжкультурної комунікації в різних університетах по всьому світу з метою усвідомлення, що поглядів викладачів на те, що потрібно викладати та як слід викладати міжкультурну комунікацію. Для врахування відмінностей у розумінні міжкультурного виміру та потреб як виконавців, так і бенефіціарів процесу викладання та вивчення курсу міжкультурної комунікації було проведено анкетування викладачів і студентів університету. Розроблено зміст курсу міжкультурної комунікації на основі методологічного вибору, документів, теоретичних і практичних результатів досліджень.

Ключові слова: вивчення міжкультурної комунікації; навчальний план; підготовка вчителів; зміст курсу; підходи до міжкультурних досліджень.

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