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CROSS-CULTURAL
COMMUNICATION

MINISTRY OF HIGHER EDUCATION, SCIENCE AND
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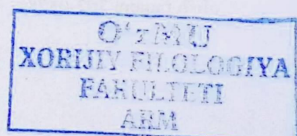DEPARTMENT OF ENGLISH LINGUISTICS

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CROSS-CULTURAL COMMUNICATION

Manual for Bachelor's Degree Course Students
5120100 – Philology and teaching languages (English)

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"Cross-cultural communication" darsligi o'n beshta bobdan iborat bo'lib, har bir bob 5120100 – Filologiya va tillarni o'qitish (ingliz tili) ta'lim yo'nalishi o'quv rejasi va o'quv dasturiga mos mavzularni barchasini qamrab olgan. Har bir mavzuga oid nazariy materiallar berilgan bo'lib, ular talabalarning olgan nazariy bilimlarini mustahkamlashga va amaliy ko'nikmalarni sinovdan o'tkazishga yordam beradi. Shuningdek, mavzuga oid topshiriqlar, mashqlar ham mavzu yuzasidan amaliy ko'nikmalarni shakllantirish va til kompetensiyalarini rivojlantirishga qaratilgan. Darslikning oxirida talabalar o'z bilimlarini sinab ko'rishlari uchun testlar berilgan bo'lib, fanni o'zlashtirishdagi muhim jihatlardan biri bo'lgan madaniyatlararo muloqotga oid terminlar glossariysi barcha termin va tushunchalarning ta'rif xamda izohlarini o'z ichiga olganligi talabalar uchun qulay hisoblanadi.

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UNIT 1. INTRODUCTION. NOTION OF CULTURE

Lecture 1. Introduction. Notion of culture

Cross-cultural communication refers to interpersonal communication and interaction across different cultures. This has become an important issue in our age of globalization and internationalization. Effective cross-cultural communication is concerned with overcoming cultural differences across nationality, religion, borders, culture and behavior. The term *cross-cultural* generally used to describe comparative studies of cultures. Culture is the basic concept of cross-cultural communication. Merriam-Webster's Collegiate Dictionary defines *culture* as *'the integrated pattern of human knowledge, belief and behavior that depends upon man's capacity for learning and transmitting knowledge to succeeding generations'.* Another usage in the same dictionary stresses the social aspect of culture and defines it as *'the customary beliefs, social forms, and material traits of a racial, religious or social group'.* The OED, in a similar vein, states that culture is *' a particular form, stage, or type of intellectual development or civilization in a society; a society or group characterized by its distinctive customs, achievements, products, outlook, etc.'* It almost goes without saying that there can hardly be any learning or transmitting knowledge or intellectual development without language. Nor can a society or a group function without language. Culture not only dictates who talks what, to whom, how, and why, but also helps to determine how communication proceeds, and how messages transmit the intended meanings. Cross-cultural communication-the comparison of communication across cultures. Although cross-cultural communication needs:

✓ *Listening Skills*

Their emphasis usually lies on being a competent speaker, listening is a key skill that many business personnel do not exercise enough. For cross-cultural communication, attentive listening is critical to be able to understand meanings, read between the lines and enable to empathize with the speaker.

✓ *Speaking Skills*

Listening and speaking must work in tandem for effective cross-cultural communication. Speaking well is not about accent, use of grammar and vocabulary or having the gift of the gab. Rather, cross-cultural communication is enhanced through positive speech such as encouragement, affirmation, recognition and phrasing requests clearly or expressing opinions sensitively.

✓*Observation*

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Large amounts of cross-cultural information can be read in people's dress, body language, interaction and behavior. Be aware of differences with your own culture and try to understand the roots of behaviors. Asking questions expands your cross-cultural knowledge.

✓*Patience*

People need to recognize and understand that sometimes cross-cultural differences are annoying and frustrating. In these situations, patience is definitely a virtue. Through patience, respect is won, and cross-cultural understanding is enhanced.

✓*Flexibility*

Flexibility, adaptability and open-mindedness are the route to successful cross-cultural communication. Understanding, embracing and addressing cross-cultural differences leads to the breaking of cultural barriers, which results in better lines of communication, mutual trust and creative thinking.

Communication arose and developed with the rise of man and the formation of society in the process of labor. Communication is a process, whereby information is enclosed in a package, channeled and imparted by a sender to a receiver via some medium. The receiver then decodes the message and gives the sender a feedback. Communication requires that all parties have an area of communicative commonality. There are auditory means, such as speech, song, and tone of voice, and there are nonverbal means, such as body language, sign language, paralanguage, touch, eye contact, through media, i.e., pictures, graphics and sound, and writing. Communication processes of information transmission are governed by three levels of semiotic rules: syntactic (formal properties of signs and symbols); pragmatic (concerned with the relations between signs/expressions and their users); semantic (study of relationships between signs and symbols and what they represent). Communication is interactive, so an important influence on its effectiveness is our relationship with others. Communication is social interaction where at least two interacting agents share a common set of signs and a common set of semiotic rules. We do most of our communicating using speech and our understanding of speech to greet people and tell them our news, to ask and answer questions, and to use the telephone. Communication is extremely diverse in its forms. Communication as the art of transmitting information, ideas and attitudes from one person to another, may be verbal and nonverbal. Communication types are differentiated according to communication channels. These are means available to communicate with another person or group. They may include direct face-to-face communication, telecommunications (telephone, e-mail, written communications), or indirect communication – through third parties or the media, for example. Direct Communication takes place when people say what they mean, when the idea of saving face is not of major consequence in most situations, when silence in conversations is viewed as uncomfortable and interruptions are common. Direct communicators believe that it is better to say

what needs to be said. Groups that prefer a direct style of communicating focus on the explicit meaning of words, similar to low context cultures. The popular saying, "You can take my words to the bank" conveys a belief that individuals say exactly what they mean. Americans, Germans, and Israelis, are direct communicators, each having varying degrees of directness. People who are direct communicators use clear, definitive statements, participate actively in meetings, make their points with conviction, they are comfortable telling others what to do, using words like "should", "have to". They tell others why their ideas should be adopted. Indirect communication is when meaning is not only in the words, but also mainly in the surrounding context of a conversation. Indirect communication takes place when people imply what they mean; reading into things is the definitive way of communicating, when saving face and maintaining harmony is paramount, when silence in conversations is expected and appreciated and interruptions are to be avoided. Indirect communicators ask many questions. They quietly observe in meetings, offer suggestions for consideration, like to get others involved in discussions, use words like "maybe", "possibly" and ask others to consider their ideas. There is an opinion that "Indirect communicators do not believe everything needs to be said. They are often part of a culture that is more group-focused rather than individual-focused. Because of this, they live within societal norms that are different and less focused on individual needs. An important goal of their conversational style is to maintain harmony, or at least the appearance of harmony. Therefore, not everything is said, but rather, much can be implied.

The concept of language and culture. Thanks to communication the individual's thoughts and aspirations not obliterated by time. They are in words, images; they survive in legend and passed on from century to century. Language is a powerful means of communication. In life, communication does not exist as an isolated process or independent form of activity. It is included in individual or group practical activities realized within intensive and comprehensive dialogue with the help of language. Language is the development of the basic form of communication between human beings, and in a society. Language may refer either to the specifically human capacity for acquiring and using complex systems of communication or to a specific instance of such a system of complex communication. Communication is unmanageable without primary language skills or "the mode or manner in which language is used. Listening, speaking, reading, and writing - the four language skills. Sometimes speaking and writing are called the active/productive skills and reading and listening, the passive/receptive skills." We begin to learn the words when we need to express ourselves, when we are less than a year old and store them in our brains in a „mental dictionary'. In this way, we can understand words when we hear them and say them when we need to. We also learn the rules for putting words together into sentences as well as how to use letters and write them down. According to Britannica Concise Encyclopedia, language is a system of

conventional spoken or written symbols used by people in a shared culture to communicate with each other. A language both reflects and affects a culture's way of thinking, and changes in a culture influence the development of its language. Language is fundamental to a huge range of human activities, whether you're sitting and thinking, interacting with others at a social event, reading a book, working out why an advert is funny - and the rest. When language is used, ideas are shared, and important information is passed between individuals verbally.

Culture not only dictates who talks what, to whom, how, and why, but also helps to determine how communication proceeds and messages are encoded to transmit the intended meanings. *Culture* is 'the integrated pattern of human knowledge, belief and behavior that depends upon man's capacity for learning and transmitting knowledge to succeeding generations.' *Culture* 'the customary beliefs, social forms, and material traits of a racial, religious or social group'. The term *culture* is taken from the technical vocabulary of anthropology, wherein it embraces the entire way of life of members of a community insofar as it is conditioned by that membership. The term *culture* refers to all the learned and not given by nature characteristics common to a particular group of people. It is defined as:

1. Way of life, especially general customs and beliefs of a particular group of people at a particular time (e.g. Youth / working-class / Russian / Roman / mass culture).

2. Ideas, customs, and art that are produced or shared by a particular society (e.g., He was a fervent admirer of Roman and Greek culture...).

3. A particular society or civilization, especially one considered in relation to its ideas, its art, or its way of life (e.g. the rich history of African civilizations and cultures).

4. ŏ system of communication, which consists of a set of sounds and written symbols used by the people of a particular country or region for talking or writing.

Primary cultural dimensions are:

1. Patterns of thought – common ways of thinking, where thinking includes factual beliefs, values, norms, and emotional attitudes. Patterns of behavior – common ways of behaving, from ways of speaking to ways of conducting commerce and industry, where the behavior can be intentional/unintentional, aware/unaware or individual/interactive. Patterns of artifacts – common ways of manufacturing and using material things, from pens to houses, where artifacts include dwellings, tools, machines or media.

2. The art factual dimension of culture usually given special attention in museums.

3. Imprints in nature – the long lasting imprints left by a group in the natural surroundings, where such imprints include agriculture, trash, roads or intact/ruined human habitations.

Language does not exist apart from culture, that is, from the socially inherited assemblage of practices and beliefs that determines the texture of our lives.

Questions
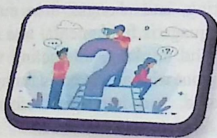
1. What does cross-culutural communication mean?
2. What do you know by the word "culture"?
3. Give definition to the Verbal and Non-Verbal communication?
4. What skills does cross-cultural communication need?
5. What is the connection between language and culture?
6. What is the difference between small C and big C culture?

Activities
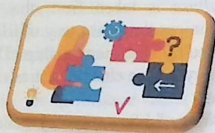
Activity 1. What is Culture?

Tell Students that usually Students believe if a teacher visited a/some foreign countries she knows/speaks language better. Ask them the following questions:

- What do you think about this belief?
- Do you agree? Please comment your answer.
- What do you understand by "… knows language better…"

(… not only grammatical system of the language, rich vocabulary etc. but culture of this or that country…)

Ask Students to finish the metaphor *Culture is* or *Cultures are for me..*

"**Culture**: learned and shared human **patterns** or models for living, day-to-day living patterns. These patterns and models pervade all aspects of human social interaction." *(Damen, L., 1987, p.367)*

"**Culture** is the collective **programming of the mind** which distinguishes the members of one category of people from another." *(Hofstede, G., 1984, p.51)*

Five alternative definitions of culture

Below are five alternative definitions of cultures. Which definition(s) of culture do you prefer? You can choose as many as they wish.

1. Objective visible artefacts such as rituals, superstitions, heroes, myths, symbols and taboos.

2. Basic truths about identity and relationships, time and space, ways of thinking and learning, ways of working and organizing, and ways of communicating.

3. Ideals shared by group members to which strong emotions are attached.

4. The 'right' and 'wrong' ways of doing things. The rules people live by in practice.

5. Subjective behavioural orientations to do things in one way, rather than another. They are most noticeable in relationship styles, thinking and learning styles, organization and work styles and communication styles.

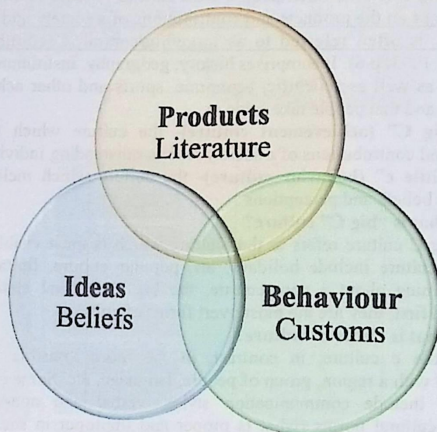### Activity 2

Look at items on the handout 1 and say which of them are related to "culture" and which have nothing to do with "culture":

Activity 3

Fill in the table with the elements of culture (there is one example in each part of the table given for you) and make your own definition of culture.

Elements of culture

Products
Literature

Ideas
Beliefs

Behaviour
Customs

Activity 4

Look at picture of an iceberg on the handout 2 and find out what possible similarities can there be between culture and iceberg. To do this consider the following questions which are meant to give you some prompts:

1) What are some facts you know about icebergs?

2) What percentage of an iceberg is above the water line, and what percentage below?

Activity 5

In pairs or in groups place the following "features of culture" on the handout 3 above or below the water on the cultural iceberg and justify your choice.

Activity 6.

Read information about types of culture and discuss it in groups

1) Big C and Little c

The classical languages, Latin and Greek, were studied so that learners could read and translate the works of literature in these languages. The aim of education in general was to educate people who were knowledgeable in history, literature and fine arts. Such people were said to possess culture. The culture, which focuses on the products and contributions of a society and its outstanding individuals, is often referred to as large/big/capital 'C culture (Tomalin & Stempleski 1993, p.6). It comprises history, geography, institutions, literature, art and music as well as scientific, economic, sports and other achievements that are valued and that people take pride in.

"Big C" (achievement culture)- the culture which focuses on the products and controbutions of a society and its outstanding individuals

"Little c" (behavior culture)- the culture which includes culturally-influenced beliefs and perceptions

What is "big C" culture?

Big C culture refers to that culture which is most visible. Some visible forms of culture include holidays, art, popular culture, literature, and food. When learning about a new culture, the big C cultural elements would be discovered first; they are the most overt forms of culture.

What is "little c" culture?

Little c culture, in contrast, in the more invisible type of culture associated with a region, group of people, language, etc. Some examples of little c culture include communication styles, verbal and non-verbal language symbols, cultural norms (what is proper and improper in social interactions), how to behave, myths and legends, etc.

Activity 7.

Find out which is Visible C and Invisible C: Fine arts, Drama, Dress, Literature, Games, Music, Cooking, Notions of leadership, Conception of beauty, Conception of "self", Approaches of problem solving, Definition of sign, Relationship to animals, Ideas governing children raising

Activity 8.

Draw as many connections as possible between the visible features of culture and the invisible ones on your iceberg and show how the invisible aspects of culture influence and shape the visible ones. For example, Religious and folk beliefs or beliefs about health can influence national food or table manners.

Seminar questions

1. Primary cultural dimensions.
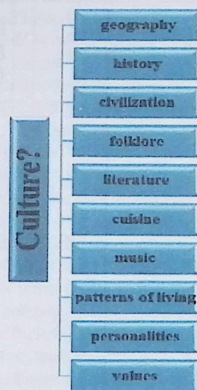2. The role of communication in cross-cultural studies.
3. Skills that cross-cultural communication needs.
4. Direct communication.
5. Components in intercultural competence.
6. The difference between small C and big C culture.

Handouts

Handout 1

Culture?
- geography
- history
- civilization
- folklore
- literature
- cuisine
- music
- patterns of living
- personalities
- values
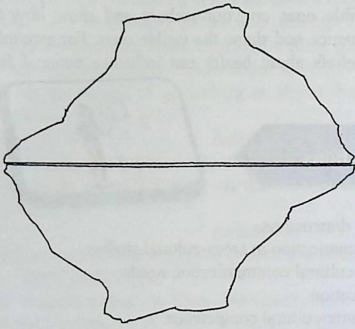
Handout 2

Handout 3

Food	Music	Literature	Soul

Styles of Dress	Celebrations	Concept of Beauty	Beliefs about Health	Religious & Folk Beliefs

Rules of Polite Behavior	A Typical Day of Your Life	Beliefs about Hospitality

UNIT 2. CROSS-CULTURAL AWARENESS

Lecture 2. Cross-cultural awareness

Cultural Awareness is the foundation of communication and it involves the ability of standing back from ourselves and becoming aware of our cultural values, beliefs and perceptions. Why do we do things in that way? How do we see the world? Why do we react in that particular way? Cultural awareness becomes central when we have to interact with people from other cultures. People see, interpret and evaluate things in a different ways. What is considered an appropriate behavior in one culture is frequently inappropriate in another one. Misunderstandings arise when we use our meanings to make sense of your reality. Misinterpretations occur primarily when we lack awareness of our own behavioral rules and project them on others. In absence of better knowledge we tend to assume, instead of finding out what a behavior means to the person involved, e.g. a straight look into your face is regarded as disrespectful in Japan. Becoming aware of our cultural dynamics is a difficult task because culture is not conscious to us. Since we are born we have learned to see and do things at an unconscious level. Our experiences, our values and our cultural background lead us to see and do things in a certain way. Sometimes we have to step outside of our cultural boundaries in order to realize the impact that our culture has on our behavior. It is very helpful to gather feedback from foreign colleagues on our behavior to get more clarity on our cultural traits. Projected similarities could lead to misinterpretation as well. When we assume that people are similar to us, we might incur the risk that they are not. If we project similarities where there are not, we might act inappropriately. It is safer to assume differences until similarity is proven There are several levels of cultural awareness that reflect how people grow to perceive cultural differences.

My way is the only way - At the first level, people are aware of their way of doing things, and their way is the only way. At this stage, they ignore the impact of cultural differences. (Parochial stage)

I know their way, but my way is better - At the second level, people are aware of other ways of doing things, but still consider their way as the best one. In this stage, cultural differences are perceived as source of problems and people tend to ignore them or reduce their significance. (Ethnocentric stage)

My Way and Their Way - At this level people are aware of their own way of doing things and others' ways of doing things, and they chose the best way according to the situation. At this stage people realize that cultural

differences can lead both to problems and benefits and are willing to use cultural diversity to create new solutions and alternatives. (Synergistic stage)

Our Way - This fourth and final stage brings people from different cultural background together for the creation of a culture of shared meanings. People dialogue repeatedly with others, create new meanings, new rules to meet the needs of a particular situation. (Participatory Third culture stage) Increasing cultural awareness means to see both the positive and negative aspects of cultural differences. Cultural diversity could be a source of problems, in particular when the organization needs people to think or act in a similar way. Diversity increases the level of complexity and confusion and makes agreement difficult to reach. On the other hand, cultural diversity becomes an advantage when the organization expands its solutions and its sense of identity, and begins to take different approaches to problem solving. Diversity in this case creates valuable new skills and behaviors.

In becoming culturally aware, people realize that: ! We are not all the same ! Similarities and differences are both important ! There are multiple ways to reach the same goal and to live life ! The best way depends on the cultural contingency. Each situation is different and may require a different solution.

How Do I Manage Cultural Diversity? We are generally aware that the first step in managing diversity is recognize it and learning not to fear it. Since everyone is the product of their own culture, we need to increase both self-awareness and cross-cultural awareness. There is no book of instructions to deal with cultural diversity, no recipe to follow. But certain attitudes help to bridge cultures:

✓ Admit that you do not know. Knowing that we do not know everything, that a situation does not make sense, that our assumptions may be wrong is part of the process of becoming culturally aware. Assume differences, not similarities.

✓ Suspend judgments. Collect as much information as possible so you can describe the situation accurately before evaluating it.

✓ Empathy. In order to understand another person, we need to try standing in his/her shoes. Through empathy we learn of how other people would like to be treated by us.

✓ Systematically check your assumptions. Ask your colleagues for feedback and constantly check your assumptions to make sure that you clearly understand the situation. Become comfortable with ambiguity. The more complicated and uncertain life is, the more we tend to seek control. Assume that other people are as resourceful as we are and that their way will add to what we know. "If we always do, what we've always done, we will always get, what we always got."

✓ Celebrate diversity. As a company find ways of sharing the cultures of your diverse workforce, i.e., in 2002 Deutsche Bank carried out multiple initiatives around the theme of "tolerance: diversity, identity, recognition" which

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they called "Initiative Plus 2002." They encouraged employee projects and organized an annual colloquium of global experts.

   ✓   The components of intercultural competence may be broken down into attitudes, knowledge and understanding, skills and actions.

The **attitudes** involved include:
   ~   valuing cultural diversity and pluralism of views and practices;
   ~   respecting people who have different cultural affiliations from one's own;
   ~   being open to, curious about and willing to learn from and about people who have different cultural orientations and perspectives from one's own;
   ~   being willing to empathize with people who have different cultural affiliations from one's own;
   ~   being willing to question what is usually taken for granted as 'normal' according to one's previously acquired knowledge and experience;
   ~   being willing to tolerate ambiguity and uncertainty;
   ~   being willing to seek out opportunities to engage and cooperate with individual who have different cultural orientations and perspectives from one's own.

The **knowledge** and **understanding** which contribute to intercultural competence include:
   ~   understanding the internal diversity and heterogeneity of all cultural groups;
   ~   awareness and understanding of one's own and other people's assumptions, preconceptions, stereotypes, prejudices, and overt and covert discrimination;
   ~   understanding the influence of one's own language and cultural affiliations on one's experience of the world and of other people;
   ~   communicative awareness, including awareness of the fact that other peoples' languages may express shared ideas in a unique way or express unique ideas difficult to access through one's own language(s), and awareness of the fact that people of other cultural affiliations may follow different verbal and non-verbal communicative conventions which are meaningful from their perspective;
   ~   knowledge of the beliefs, values, practices, discourses and products that may be used by people who have particular cultural orientations;
   ~   understanding of processes of cultural, societal and individual interaction, and of the socially constructed nature of knowledge.

The **skills** involved in intercultural competence include skills such as:
   ~   multi perspectives – the ability to decenter from one's own perspective and to take other people's perspectives into consideration in addition to one's own.