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LEARNING ENVIRONMENT AND CULTURE IN EMI

The article deals with the issues of inter-cultural communication in EMI classroom. There have been retraced cultural dimensions as crucial components of natural programming, which distinguish the possible behavioral patterns of the learners of different cultural background in EMI classroom. It has been proved that the parameters of culture, such as distance of power, individualism – collectivism, masculinity – femininity, acceptance – non-acceptance of uncertainty, pragmatism, restraint (distance, control) predetermine the type of communication style within both academic and social communities. It has been stressed that gender domination as a crucial cultural aspect predetermine social situation and distinguish certain behavioral patterns, which should be taken into account when applying English as a medium of instruction within different gender-core communities. The investigation has been based on the cultural scales, suggested by Edward T. Hall, Geert Hofstede, Richard D. Lewis. It has been highlighted that teacher-learner interaction, task distribution and the modes of interaction in the classroom must be based on cultural types and consider the parameters of cultural dimensions. In the multicultural classroom sensitive language should dominate as well as the cross-cultural bridges should be used. The adequate interaction strategies according to the models of behavior and communication style within multicultural environment have been singled out. The effective intercultural facilitator has to be able to: communicate clearly to speakers from different linguacultural background; facilitate multicultural groups; show flexibility of the “code shift” from one communication style to another; paraphrase circular or indirect statements for linear and direct group members; recognize culture-specific risk factors for trainees; develop multiple frames of reference for interpreting intercultural situations.

Key words: cross-cultural communication, cultural dimensions, power distance, individualism, collectivism, monochronic and polychronic cultures, gender roles.

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НАВЧАЛЬНЕ СЕРЕДОВИЩЕ ТА КУЛЬТУРА ПІД ЧАС ВИКОРИСТАННЯ АНГЛІЙСЬКОЇ МОВИ ЯК ЗАСОБУ ІНСТРУКТУВАННЯ

У статті розглядаються питання міжкультурної комунікації у класі із використанням англійської мови як засобу інструктування. Були простежені культурні виміри як вагомими компонентами природного програмування, що визначають можливі моделі поведінки учнів із різного культурного середовища у класі із використанням англійської мови як засобу інструктування. Доведено, що такі параметри культури, як субординаційна дистанція, індивідуалізм – колективізм, маскулінність – фемінність, прийняття – неприйняття невизначеності, прагматизм, стриманість (дистанція, контроль), зумовлюють тип стилю спілкування як у академічній, так і в позаакадемічній соціальній спільноті. Наголошується, що гендерне домінування як вирішальний культурний аспект зумовлює соціальну ситуацію та виділяє певні поведінкові моделі, які необхідно враховувати при застосуванні англійської мови як механізму інструктування в різних гендерно-домінантних спільнотах. Дослідження базується на культурних класифікаціях, запропонованих Едвардом Т. Холлом, Гертом Хофстедом, Річардом Д. Льюїсом. Наголошується, що взаємодія вчителя та учня, розподіл завдань і визначення способів взаємодії в класі повинні спиратися

на культурні типи з врахуванням параметрів культурних вимірів. У мультикультурному класі має домінувати «чутлива мова», а також застосовуватися «міжкультурні мости». Виокремлено адекватні стратегії взаємодії відповідно до моделей поведінки та стилю спілкування в полікультурному середовищі. Доводиться, що ефективний міжкультурний фасилітатор повинен уміти: чітко спілкуватися з мовцями з різного лінгвокультурного середовища; сприяти кооперації у мультикультурних групах; демонструвати гнучкість щодо «зсуву кодів» від одного стилю спілкування до іншого; вміти перефразувати непрямі твердження для лінійних і прямих членів групи; розпізнавати культурні фактори ризику для стажерів; генерувати множинні фрейми для інтерпретації міжкультурних ситуацій.

Ключові слова: міжкультурна комунікація, культурні виміри, субординаційна дистанція, індивідуалізм, колективізм, монохронні та поліхронні культури, гендерні ролі.

The topicality of the problem. Globalization and massive migration processes, marking the postcolonial and neocolonial reality, have led to a new type of fusion or intersection of cultures. The novel European society is a hybrid society, which demands higher language sensitivity both in the interpersonal communication and teaching. English as a medium of instruction, or EMI, referring to teaching the content of academic subjects in English, covers multiple situations of intercultural bridging within the learning environment that is no more monochromic both in racial and gender terms, all of which raises a wide range of pedagogical issues that need to be resolved.

The analysis of the latest investigations and publication. The theme of cultural differences was fundamentally raised within the framework of cross-cultural training in the sphere of management by Geert Hofstede in the late 1960s and resulted in the publication of his book *Culture's Consequences* (1980). In 2005 together with Gert Jan Hofstede as a coauthor Geert Hofstede issued a rewritten and updated version of *Cultures and Organizations: Software of Mind*. Having majored in biology and taught information systems, in 2002 Gert Jan had already published his personal investigation *Exploring Culture: Exercises, Stories, and Synthetic Cultures*, which contributed experience with the role of culture in international networks and teaching the subject through simulation games.

A number of new concepts, including proxemics, monochronic and polychronic time, high- and low-context cultures were suggested by Edward Twitchell Hall in his massive investigations *The Hidden Dimension* (1966) and *The Silent Language* (1959).

The Model of Cross-Cultural Communication was developed by Richard D. Lewis, who founded the Berlitz School of Languages in Finland in 1955, in Norway in 1958, and in Tokyo in 1966. The model was later extended by Hofstede and was dealing with understanding and communicating with people of other cultures.

The **aim** of the article is to retrace cultural dimensions as crucial components of natural programming, distinguishing the possible behavioral patterns of the learner in EMI classroom, and to work out the adequate interaction strategies according to the models of behavior and communication style within multicultural environment.

The delivery of the main body of the research. In 1950's A. Kroeber and C. Kluckhohn identified more than 160 different definitions of the term "culture". All definitions of culture may be divided into: *historical* – culture is viewed as social heritage passed on from generation to generation; *behavioral* – culture is seen as a way of life, as shared and learned human behavior; *normative* – culture is equated with the ideas, values, or rules for living; *functional* – culture means the way humans solve problems in adapting to the environment; *mental constructs* – culture constitutes a complex of ideas or learned habits that distinguish humans from other animals; *structural* – culture is seen as patterned and interrelated ideas, symbols or behaviors; *symbolic interpretation* – culture is based on arbitrarily assigned meanings that are shared in a society (Kroeber, Kluckhohn, 1952: 5).

In modern terms culture is understood as learned way of living shared with others, it is something which is learned, taught, and shared in groups, something that helps humans to adapt to both the natural environment and the sociocultural environments humans create (Naylor, 1998: 3). The word culture describes everything that makes a large group of people unique (Jandt, 2001: 25).

One way to think about dimensions of culture and how they interact is a tree model. "Like trees, cultures come in a wide variety and are continually growing and changing – adapting to ever-changing environments. A culture has some parts that you can observe through many senses "above ground." At the same time, important foundational aspects of culture are not observable; these roots are "below ground" –

usually primarily out of our awareness – and yet have a profound connection to each part of the whole” (Grove, 1989: 4). Above Ground (primarily in our awareness): Dress, fine arts, literature, drama, classical music, popular music, folk-dancing, games, cooking, social interaction preferences. Invisible aspects of culture – religious beliefs, cultural values, time orientation and general worldview that characterize a certain culture.

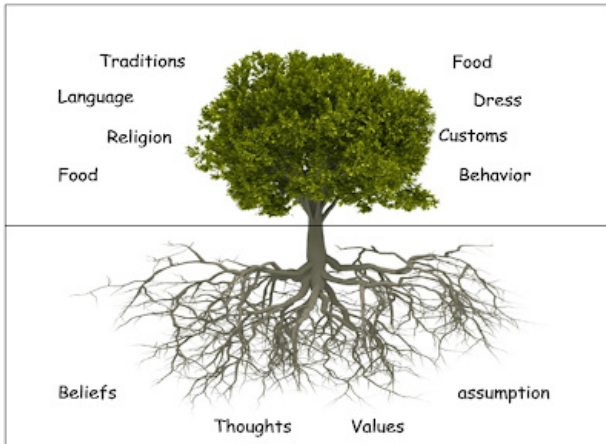


Fig. 1. The organic nature of culture

Dutch sociologist G. Hofstede’s classification developed in the early 1980s has 6 parameters for each culture (country) based on: distance of power, individualism–collectivism, masculinity–femininity, acceptance – non-acceptance of uncertainty, pragmatism, restraint (distance, control).

In individualist cultures the interests of the individual prevail over those of the group. Ties between individuals are rather loose; everyone is expected to look after him/herself. Individualism cultures value obligations first, they ensure fairness in the examinations, hiring for job and the like. Individualism is expressed in the values about the importance of doing your best, reward for achievement and chance for success. It is also important to solve the problem for yourself, not waiting for the others to do so. Countries high on individualism include: USA, Australia, Great Britain, Canada, the Netherlands, New Zealand, Italy, Belgium, Denmark and Sweden.

Connections of individualism / collectivism can be predetermined by the following dimensions: a) *Wealth*. People from wealthier countries tend to be more individualistic. b) *Geography*. Counties with moderate and cold climates tend to show more individualism. c) *Birth rates*. Countries with higher birth rates tend to be collectivist. d) *History*. Asian countries tend to be collectivist.

Migrants from Europe who settled America, New Zealand and Australia were more individualistic to leave their countries. e) *The inheritance practice*. The countries where the inheritance is usually divided equally between all heirs tend to be more collectivist, and those where parents decide who inherits the property tend to be individualist.

The two types of cultures tend to produce different self-concepts – independent self-concept and interdependent self-concept. Representatives of individualist cultures also tend to be universalists – they treat everyone alike regardless of circumstances (no exception is made for family, friends, or members of the in-group). Collectivist cultures often show articularism, when people’s behavior depends on the situation and circumstances (family, friends, and in-group are treated the best and the rest of the world can take care of itself). Exceptions can be made for certain people.

In order to make teaching-learning process efficient, the outlined patterns require corresponding educational models. The learning peculiarities based on collectivism-individualism are represented in table 1.

Table 1
Collectivism and individualism in teaching and learning

COLLECTIVIST SOCIETIES	INDIVIDUALIST SOCIETIES
Positive association in society with whatever rooted in tradition.	Positive association in society with whatever is “new”.
The young should learn, adults can’t accept student role.	One is never too old to learn.
Students expect to learn how to do.	Students expect to learn how to learn.
Individual students will only speak up in class when called by a teacher.	Individual students will speak up in large groups.
Neither the teacher or the student should ever be made to lose face.	Face-consciousness is weak.
Diploma certificates are important and displayed on the walls.	Diploma certificates have little symbolic value.
Acquiring certificates, even through illegal means (cheating, corruption) is more important than acquiring competence.	Acquiring competence is more important than acquiring certificates.

Another parameter that define communication patterns is the Power Distance (PD). The Power Distance dimension measures the way cultures are

accustomed to deal with inequalities among people. It describes the emotional distance that separates superiors from subordinates (bosses and employees, parents and children, teachers and students). It also measures how people react to the power of other people and how they expect their subordinates to treat them. In cultures of high power distance people with power should be deferred, not argued with, especially in public. In cultures with lower power distance power is based on knowledge and expertise rather than on status or position alone. Individuals in cultures demonstrating a high power distance are very deferential to figures of authority and generally accept an unequal distribution of power. Individuals in cultures demonstrating a low power distance readily question authority and expect to participate in decisions that affect them. Among the top 10 High Power Distance countries can be mentioned Malaysia, Guatemala, Panama, Philippines, Mexico, Venezuela, Arab countries, Ecuador, Indonesia, India, and West Africa. To Low Power Distance (LPD) cultures belong such countries as Austria, Israel, Denmark, New Zealand, Sweden, Norway, Finland, Switzerland, Great Britain, Germany, Costa Rica, Australia, Netherlands, Canada, and USA (Lane, 2002).

Learners from different power-distance-environments may expect different models of interaction in the classroom, and get frustrated when not receiving the accustomed ones.

Table 2

Power distance in teaching and learning

SMALL POWER DISTANCE	LARGE POWER DISTANCE
A teacher should respect the independence of the students.	A teacher merits the respect of the students.
Student-centered education.	Teacher-centered education.
Teachers expect students to initiate communication.	Students expect teachers to initiate communication.
Teachers expect students to find their own paths.	Students expect teachers to outline the paths to follow.
Students may speak up spontaneously in class.	Students speak up in class when invited by the teacher.
Students are allowed to contradict or criticize the teacher.	Teachers are never contradicted or publicly criticized.
Effectiveness of learning is related to amount of two-way communication in class.	Effectiveness of learning is related to the excellence of the teacher.
Outside class teachers are treated as equals.	Respect for teachers is also shown outside the class.
Younger teachers are more liked than older teachers.	Older teachers are more respected than younger teachers.

Besides power distance scale a crucial role in the interpersonal communication in the classroom can be played by the gender-dominant type of the society. In masculine society emotional gender roles are distinct: men are supposed to be assertive, tough and focused on material success, women on the quality of life (Japan, Ireland, Mexico, Austria). In feminine society emotional gender roles overlap: both men and women are supposed to be modest, tender, and focused on the quality of life (Norway, Finland, Sweden, Denmark). The perception of the personality of a teacher will be more gender-related within masculine communities.

Table 3

Masculinity scale within world community

MASCULINITY SCORES (OUT OF 76)	
<i>High</i>	<i>Low</i>
95 Japan	53 Arab ctrs
70 Italy	43 France
69 Mexico	36 Russia
66 China	34 Thailand
66 Britain	21 Costa Rica
66 Germany	16 Denmark
62 USA	14 Netherlands

Gender domination predetermine social situation and distinguish certain behavioral patterns, which should be taken into account when applying English as a medium of instruction within different gender-core communities.

Table 4

General tendencies in societies

FEMININE SOCIETIES	MASCULINE SOCIETIES
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fewer functional illiterates • Fewer people living in poverty • More aid to poorer countries • Poverty blamed on bad luck • Both genders shop for food • More leisure, longer vacations • Social media used for rapport building • Balance family and work • Father and mother should both deal with facts and feelings • Jealousy of high-flyers • Sympathy for the weak • Boys and girls may cry but neither should fight • Religion focuses on fellow human beings 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • More functional illiterates • More people living in poverty • Less aid to poorer countries • Poverty blamed on laziness • Women are food shoppers • Salary preferred over leisure • Social media used for fact gathering • Work prevails over family • Father should deal with facts, mother with feelings • Admiration for the strong • Disdain of the weak • Girls cry, boys don't; boys fight, girls shouldn't • Religion focuses on powerful God or gods

Teaching approaches and their efficacy will fluctuate within feminine-nuclear and masculine-nuclear societies.

Table 5

Masculinity and femininity in teaching and learning

FEMININE SOCIETIES	MASCULINE SOCIETIES
Teachers avoid openly praising students.	Teachers openly praise good students.
Teachers use average students as the norm.	Teachers use best students as the norm.
Social adaptation of students is more important than academic performance.	Academic performance stands above social adaptation.
Students admire friendliness in teachers.	Students admire excellence in teachers.
Students practice mutual solidarity.	Students compete with each other in class.
Students try to behave modestly.	Students try to make themselves visible.
Male students may choose traditionally female subjects.	Male students avoid traditionally feminine academic subjects.

The ways of interaction in the classroom can be predetermined by another parameter, which is connected with by the degree of activity within the ethnic community. Thus, *doing* cultures stress achieving goals and improving standards of living. Individuals define themselves by what they do for a living (the USA, Germany, Belgium, Great Britain, Japan, Canada, New Zealand, Russia, Ukraine). Education is important, but not the mere fact of it; individuals have to have done something with their knowledge, status is not automatic but the result of the achievements. Together with this, *being* cultures stress people's affiliations and personal qualities; greater value is placed on quality of life and relationships than on task accomplishment (Latin America, the Middle East, Israel, France, Finland, Denmark, Sweden and many Southeast Asian countries). The school/university people went to and the amount of education they received confer status, whether or not they did well in school or have done anything with their education. Titles are important and should always be used.

The type of teaching strategy within various cultural backgrounds will be predetermined by the factors distinguished by Hall. Edward T. Hall suggested to divide cultures depending on high-context and low-context, monochronic or polychronic use of time. High-context cultures

are characterized by density of social connections, personal life is not separated from professional life (France, Spain, Italy, the countries of the Middle East, Japan, Russia and Ukraine). Representatives of low-context type of culture do not only distinguish private and public life, but also consider each sector of your life separately (USA, Canada, Holland, Scandinavian countries, Germany) (Hall, 1990: 173).

In high-context cultures words are not so important as context, which might include the speaker's tone of voice, facial expression, gestures, posture-and even the person's family history and status, which should be kept in mind when teaching. People in these cultures are less governed by reason than by intuition or feelings, prefer group harmony and consensus to individual achievement (the Middle East, Asia, Africa, and South America). Low-context cultures (North America and much of Western Europe) are logical, linear, individualistic, and action-oriented. People from low-context cultures value logic, facts, and directness. In discussions, people strive to use precise words and intend them to be taken literally).

Direct communication style dominates in cultures where speaker expresses their intention (need and desire) openly and directly (United States, England, Australia, Germany). Direct styles are often used in low-context, individualistic cultures. Indirect communication style, which is often seen in high-context and collectivistic cultures (China, Japan), speakers usually hide or hint their intentions during interaction. The use of ambiguity and vagueness is the characteristic of an indirect style. The use of the improper style should be avoided in the class since the improper approach may be viewed as offensive or disrespectful.

In monochronic cultures interpersonal relationships are less important, than completing a task. The USA, England, Germany, Scandinavian countries are considered monochronic. Representatives of polychronic cultures are more likely to do many things at the same time. Friendships are more important than intended terms, interpersonal relationships can be put above the interests of the business. E. Hall classified the cultures of the Latin American and Arab countries, as well as Slavic, as polychronic cultures (Hall, 1990: 173).

Richard D. Lewis classification is based on the organization of human activity in time. Cultures are divided into: monoactive (Linear-active):

Table 6

CULTURAL CATEGORIES: Lewis Model: Dimensions of behavior

LINEAR-ACTIVE	MULTI-ACTIVE	REACTIVE
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Talks half the time • Does one thing at a time • Plans ahead step by step • Polite but direct • Partly conceals feelings • Confronts with logic • Dislikes loosing face • Rarely interrupts • Job oriented • Sticks to facts • Truth before diplomacy • Sometimes impatient • Limited body language • Respects officialdom • Separates the social and professional 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Talks most of the time • Does several things at once • Plans grand outline only • Emotional • Confronts emotionally • Has good excuses • Often interrupts • People-orientated • Feelings before facts • Flexible truth • Impatient • Unlimited body language • Seeks out key person • Interweaves the social and professional 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Listens most of the time • Reacts to partner's actions • Looks at general principles • Polite and indirect • Conceals feelings • Never confronts • Must not loose face • Doesn't interrupt • Very people-oriented • Statements are promises • Diplomacy over truth • Patient • Subtle body language • Uses connections • Connects the social and professional

1 unit of time = 1 task. Punctuality and diligence are important; task completion is above all. Examples: German, American, English culture; polyactive (Multi-active). They are characterized by emotionality, flexibility, orientation towards interpersonal relationships. Examples: Italian, Spanish, Brazilian cultures; reactive (Reactive). Focused on maintaining reputation. They are characterized by politeness, non-conflict, patience. Examples: Japanese, Chinese, Korean cultures (Lewis, 2020: 81-82).

Lewis also distinguished between M-time culture and P-time culture. Thus, within M-time culture time dominates the culture, social and business life. Time determines and coordinates everything people do; it also molds relations. Scheduling allows people do one thing at a time, but it also denies context. The systems set priorities for both people and functions. Monochronic time is a result of the industrial revolution in England. Factory life required the labor force to be on hand and in place at the appointed hour. Monochronic time now appears to be natural and logical because the residents of Western European countries (Switzerland, Germany, Scandinavia) and Americans are accustomed to it. Monochronic time is not natural time; in fact, it seems to violate many of humanity's innate rhythms.

On the other hand, P-time culture presupposes multitasking. Involvement of people and completion of transactions is more significant than adherence to present schedules. Interaction with several people at once. People's activities are considered as a part of a larger whole.

Table 7

Typical monochronic vs polychronic traits

MONOCHRONIC PEOPLE	POLYCHRONIC PEOPLE
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tend to do one thing at a time • Are not easily distracted • Commit to work • Place importance on deadlines • Stick to plans • Value and respect privacy • Relate punctuality to reputation • Accept short-term relationships 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Do several things at the same time • Are susceptible to distractions • Commit to relationships • Place less importance on deadlines • Change plans often and easily • Value connection • Relate punctuality to the relationships • Lean towards life-time relationships

Monochronic style makes planning usually easier, since it is a linear model. Monochronic people can usually better predict how long it will take to finish a task and can more easily reject a request for additional work. Polychronic people can be more productive since they use their time to work on more than one task. A polychronic person can more easily adapt to jobs such as interpreters (listening in one language while speaking in another), or as a receptionist who acts as telephone operator and secretary simultaneously.

Efficient polychronic people can quickly become extremely valuable at work, because what they do would take more than one person. However, these people are usually so efficient that they become unpromotable. This creates a "ceiling effect" for many efficient polychronic people, who, while being appreciated in their companies, see their efficiency as a block to a quicker promotion.

Monochronic people are more easily promoted because another person can easily fill their job.

The conclusion and the perspectives of the further research. The task distribution and the modes of interaction in EMI classroom must be based on cultural types and take into account the parameters of cultural dimensions. In the multicultural classroom sensitive language should dominate as well as the cross-cultural bridges should be used. Thus, the effective intercultural facilitator should have the ability to: communicate clearly to speakers from different linguacultural background; facilitate multicultural groups (including take turns, participation, use of silence); “code shift” from one communication style to another; paraphrase circular or indirect statements for linear and direct group members; express enthusiasm for the topic in culturally

appropriate ways; suspend judgement of alternative cultural norms; recognize culture-specific risk factors for trainees (e.g. loss of face, group identity); develop multiple frames of reference for interpreting intercultural situations; demonstrate good judgement in selecting the most appropriate interaction in a transcultural situation; ask sensitivity phrased questions; avoid ethnocentric norms in goals, objectives, content, course materials, as well as group interaction; motivate learners based on their own values; interpret nonverbal behavior in culturally appropriate ways; monitor the use of humour for cultural appropriateness; encourage students to set their own communicative goals.

The further investigation can be practice-oriented and suggest a set of practical tasks and preferable modes of interaction depending on culture-dimension type.

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