INTERCULTURAL COMMUNICATIVE COMPETENCE IN ENGLISH

LANGUAGE TEACHING

Fatima Zahra Issoulah

School of Foreign Studies, Nantong University, 226019 Nantong City, China

Correspondence: fatima.zahra.issoulah@gmail.com

ABSTRACT

This article discusses cultural icebergs, intercultural communication ability, and how to teach English to students with these skills. It is well-known that students' ability to communicate across cultures is just as crucial as their language proficiency when learning a foreign language. In order to effectively communicate across cultural divides, it is critical to employ culturally appropriate communication techniques (e.g., greetings, politeness, body language, stereotypes, and the role of society in multiculturalism) when learning and teaching a language. These techniques are also known as intercultural communication, international cultural competence, and cultural differences. The purpose of this article is to analyze the relationship between linguistic competence and intercultural communication competence, as well as the roles of English language teaching in developing students' intercultural communication competence. The paper focuses specifically on the connection between linguistic and intercultural communication competency. In conclusion, it investigates how to build the intercultural communication ability of English language learners within the context of English language teaching and offers some helpful ideas, with the goal of actually achieving the ultimate goal of English language teaching. Without an adequate command of the global language of international communication, which is currently English, it is impossible for a state or an individual to successfully function in the context of updated intercultural communication. This is true even if the state or individual is attempting to communicate with people from other cultures. The expansion of prospective interpreters' intercultural skills in the context of business communication is being pursued with the intention of contributing to the ongoing development of educational programs already in place at educational institutions at a higher level. This study is significant because there is a rising need in today's modern corporate environment for translators who are not only highly qualified but also have skills in cross-cultural communication. The primary objective of this research aims to conceptualize and actually apply intercultural communicative competence in the context of English language instruction.

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1. INTRODUCTION

Intercultural Communicative Competence, or "ICC," refers to a person's capacity to speak effectively with people from other cultures by comprehending their own culture. Teaching students to communicate effectively across cultural boundaries has emerged as one of the most important aspects of acquiring a command of the English language. The primary objective of language instruction, which is to impart to students the ability to communicate and interact effectively with people whose cultural backgrounds are varied is increasingly coming to the attention of educators as the teaching profession as a whole. In this regard, Lazar (2003) asserts that one's intercultural communicative competence can be improved through a variety of means, such as engaging in conversation with people hailing from a variety of cultural backgrounds and making use of textbooks, various forms of media, documentaries, and films.[1] Since language and culture are inseparable, culture becomes an important part of language training. Learners of English who aren't familiar with the language's cultural nuances face significant challenges.[2] In order to improve one's ability to communicate across cultures, one must draw on one's own life experiences as well as those of others in order to gain a deeper understanding of one's own cultural assumptions and the world around them. Intercultural communication skills are inextricably linked to language learning, but this has only just begun to be recognized by linguists and methodologists. Nowadays, emphasis is placed on techniques of foreign language instruction that help students become effective communicators. As a result, individuals must not only be able to communicate effectively through the use of a language code, but they must also be able to sustain healthy interpersonal connections. Due to the diversity and variety of speakers' cultural identities, this assignment shows a significant amount of cultural richness and complexity.[3] Although intercultural language teaching and learning are becoming increasingly important in the world of higher education, they are still relatively new concepts in many educational settings. Educators and curriculum designers are to blame for the lack of intercultural teaching in the design of EFL courses and classroom language learning techniques (Sercu, 2005). Because the integration of intercultural teaching in EFL teaching and learning is often overlooked or deemed peripheral, the current study sought to examine the topic more thoroughly

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through the incorporation of explicit intercultural teaching in an actual classroom. Teachers, according to Gay and Kirkland (2003), must acquire critical cultural awareness in order to aid students in acquiring necessary intercultural competencies and attitudes. According to Banks (1979), taking part in official training programs for intercultural teacher education can help teachers develop their intercultural sensitivity and subsequently incorporate it into their teaching practices.[4] Because of the proliferation of global communication, English has become increasingly prevalent in multilingual and multicultural settings. In the 21st century, the concept of communicative competence is a sought-after talent in communication. The ability to communicate and connect effectively with people from a variety of different languages and cultures is the primary benefit of learning a second language (Savignon, 2018). However, how to incorporate communicative competence into language testing and instruction is a critical issue that has to be addressed. English spoken by its native speakers has been challenged by existing and emerging English varieties in the real-life setting while this is taking place as an indicator of standardized language tests (Edwards & Fuchs, 2019; Laitinen, 2018; Tickoo,2020). After years of expansion in the field of language instruction, culture has emerged as a critical component of language curriculums and teacher education programs. According to Damen (1987), learning a language and understanding a culture go hand in hand. As a result, teachers of foreign languages should have a firm grasp of the nuances of both language and culture in order to better serve their students. Foreign or second language teachers may put their students at risk if they don't recognize the teaching culture in the classroom. As a result, learners may be unable to discriminate between extensive cultural knowledge of the target language. In today's global world, this might lead to undesirable experiences such as misinterpretation or miscommunication. To avoid this problem, students should learn the foreign language and the culture of the country they are studying in. This would allow them to be more tolerant of cultural differences. Teaching pupils to be interculturally competent individuals is one method to open their eyes and minds. Teachers can use some of Zhou (2018)'s tactics, such as comparing Eastern culture with Western culture, tracing its origins, role play, and the subject teaching approach, all of which are all important. ICC has long been regarded as a major player in the English language teaching field (Byram, 1997; Deardoff, 2009). Teachers of English play a major role in facilitating the discussion of the subject. They are expected to think broadly and develop

compassion for those from other cultures who are different from themselves (Jan, 2017). Therefore, educators play a critical role in the quality of education and place great emphasis on programs. As a result, it will be problematic if teachers in language classrooms are not aware of cultural differences. Researchers in this study are looking into how teachers teach English in their classrooms in order to see if there are any common patterns of ICC neglect.[5]

This article will not provide a description of a particular curriculum or approach that may be used in the classroom to teach a foreign language; rather, it will focus on describing a mindset that teachers and students of the language ought to adopt. Understanding the cognitive patterns that are associated with the transition from communicative competence to intercultural communicative competence will be facilitated by the provision of a framework. However, unexpected challenges may arise as a result of the problems that most language teachers must encounter, such as ambiguity about which cultural components to teach and how to use and adapt actual materials to incorporate into course books. The teaching of culture is attracting a lot of interest among those who teach foreign languages. However, despite the fact that it is generally accepted that in order to be able to speak a language fluently, one must be familiar with and understand the fundamental aspects of the culture that shaped that language, the vast majority of course books teach students to focus on linguistic structures and forms while ignoring cultural aspects. Furthermore, it is not uncommon for teachers to "do it on their own." Corbett (2003) notes that the incorporation of culture into language instruction has been gaining ground over the past three decades, but despite this, it is still a small component of the overall curriculum.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

As contact with representatives of other linguistic cultures in business, public, and sociopolitical sectors have become an integral part of modern reality, the challenges of intercultural communication have taken on new significance in this era of globalization. As a consequence of this, the questions regarding the efficiency of the process of intercultural communication are at the forefront of the efforts of a few contemporary researchers. Intercultural communicative competence (ICC) comprises five components: cultural awareness, knowledge, the ability to comprehend and relate to others, the ability to explore and connect with others, and

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communication skills. These are the signs that point to the existence of the ICC. Learners are assisted by ICC in being cognizant of their own culture on a global scale and the existence of differences between themselves and other cultures, as well as in elevating the value of and looking up to other cultures. In addition, students of the English language should be provided with an understanding of intercultural communication and the capacity to apply it practically. This can serve the purpose of bridging cultural gaps and forming associations that are more harmonious and fruitful (Samovar, Porter, McDaniel, & Roy, 2015). However, according to Gonen and Saglam (2012), there are times when teachers in other classrooms in different countries are at a standstill and fail to recognize the need to incorporate culture into language acquisition. Teachers are more focused on communication skills used in real-world situations (Nalan, 2005). Due to the demanding national curriculum, teachers feel they have little time to discuss cultural topics in their lesson plans (Gonen & Saglam, 2012). Additionally, teachers only have a limited amount of expertise in teaching about culture and intercultural communication. These are the explanations for why teachers are ignorant of the role that culture and cross-cultural communication play in English language instruction (Sercu,2005). One of the most crucial objectives of language instruction programs is to train students to become intercultural speakers who can cope with linguistic and cultural barriers and engage in multicultural contexts, as the ICC is regarded as one of the most crucial abilities for the 21st century (Deardorff, 2009).[6] It's impossible to overestimate the value of both knowledge and practice when studying a foreign language. It is argued in this study that the knowledge and abilities gained via language education can be put to good use in order to improve communication. It is the ability to adapt one's language use to suit different interlocutors, or the concept of plurilingualism, that lies at the heart of the CEFR's language learning framework. This is known as acquiring communicative competence (Common European Framework). In addition, the CEFR describes learners as social agents who interact with one another in a variety of overlapping social clusters in order to develop a sense of self. People with even a little knowledge can use it to mediate between others who have no language in order to help those without it communicate. This is in keeping with Vygotsky's Zone of Proximal Development. Aside from the fact that each student is responsible for his or her own speech, the teacher and one other person will be providing feedback.[7] When researchers realized that linguistic competence alone could not assist learners in achieving the

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goals of efficient and effective communication in culturally diverse encounters, they came up with the idea of intercultural communicative competence. This led to the development of the concept of intercultural communicative competence. As a result, intercultural competence (ICC) arose as an integral component of linguistic and communicative competence, with the objective of providing students with the relevant mindsets and abilities necessary to participate more successfully in international exchanges. In spite of the fact that numerous researchers from various fields have attempted to conceptualize and define the construct, they have not been able to arrive at a consensus regarding the definition and conceptualization of the construct because of the intricacy of the topic. However, the ability to interact successfully and appropriately in intercultural exchanges and the ability to mediate between different languages and cultures is the definition of ICC that has received the most credence in the body of academic research. An overview of the literature reveals that various studies have sought to include cultural teaching in language education, largely focused on media such as the internet, movies, and other technologies (e.g. O'Neil, 2008; Garretts-Rucks, 2010). Research on intercultural communication has already been done (e.g., Gómez, 2012). It's noteworthy to note that research has looked at the impact of educational tasks and activities on the development of ICC and, more specifically, on distinct elements associated with the construct. The goal of this research was to shed light on the nature of the construct and how it has evolved in educational settings.

3. METHODOLOGY

This analysis included articles from English-language publications that had been through the process of peer review and reported on empirical research on classroom practice. The articles that were chosen for this study investigated the growth of EFL/ESL students' ICC in response to the use of text as a stimulus. To facilitate the use of inductive content analysis methodologies, this stage focused on the design of an intercultural communication skill assessment framework that was tailored to the research purpose and as simple as possible. Because Byram and Morgan's ICC assessment was specifically intended for foreign language learning environments and because it was more compact and simplified than the other models considered, it was selected. Due to its widespread use in the social sciences to examine written and unstructured qualitative material, such as that gathered from students' responses to an open-ended composition question,

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inductive content analysis was chosen for data analysis. Codes are used to uncover patterns and gain insight by ordering and simplifying the patterns found, thus increasing our understanding of the material under study. As part of the inductive content analysis, the codes used to classify the patterns and data seen during this stage were identified and defined. As a last step, a content analysis of student compositions was conducted using the framework of analysis in mind. The final step was to categorize and tabulate the findings to make it easier to discuss the results and make concluding remarks.[8]

4. COMMENTARY

In the field of English as a second language education, communicative competency has gained a lot of attention from both academic and professional language teachers. When students learn English as a second language, one of the most important skills they can develop is called "communicative competence." This refers to students' ability to communicate effectively, which is the primary purpose of language. When it comes to communicative competence, the most important thing to take into account is how language is utilized—not just the structure of the language, but also how it operates in everyday situations. Students are required to take into consideration the communicative aspects of language use in order to demonstrate their communicative competence, which is a component of language competence. To put it another way, it is expected of the students that they will produce language that not only focuses on the linguistics element but also considers how well it fits into the environment in which it is used. In a nutshell, those who use a language, in this case, students of English as a Foreign Language, ought to incorporate both linguistic and functional considerations into their approach to language use. To begin the process of cultivating communicative competence, it was first established that the production of language should not be limited to the simple application of adequate linguistic competence alone. Even if students are very knowledgeable about the linguistics component of the language or the grammar rules, this does not mean that they are able to utilize the language effectively in their everyday lives. It guides the attention to take a step, moving from linguistic competence solely into a new competency that deals with the genuine use of language, as is more commonly recognized these days as communicative competence. At this point, Martin emphasizes how crucial it is to place an emphasis on the communicative and functional aspects

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of language formation. He asserts that "to communicate functionally and interactively" is something that language users absolutely need to be able to do. In addition to this, he states that- "it is a dynamic idea based on the negotiation of meanings among the users of the language, which may be applied either to written or spoken modes of communication." This statement highlights the significance of negotiating meaning during communication as an integral aspect of a relationship that takes place through language. It might be stated more succinctly that the meaning of negotiation is the essential factor in the exchange of ideas among language users, which ultimately builds communication.[9]

The idea of intercultural competency has been increasingly popular in the realm of second language education in recent years. When evaluating a language learner's proficiency, one factor to consider is their intercultural competence, also known as intercultural communicative competence (ICC). Competence of this type encourages pupils to draw parallels between their own cultural background and the civilizations they are learning about in school. Learning about many cultures helps people become more empathetic and understanding of others, without falling into the trap of making generalizations about them. To put it another way, intercultural competence is the foundation on which students can build an appreciation, understanding, and tolerance of the cultural norms of speakers of other languages. The very idea of culture forms the foundation of intercultural competency. The definition of culture, according to many authorities, is too broad. Cultures that can be taught in schools must be restricted. "Culture is a highly complicated, enigmatic, multifaceted idea that includes many diverse and overlapping domains and that intrinsically defies straightforward categorization and classification." It can be summarized that culture is a complex domain that requires extensive categorization and classification based on the definition. As an alternative, Lazar states that in language teaching, the instructor must be able to categorize which culture each student belongs to. Culture with a capital C refers to the domain of civilization, including the arts and literature, while culture with a small c refers to the linguistic domain. Culture, in the context of education, is defined as "communication styles, beliefs, values, attitudes, and perceptions." It supports the notion that the only type of culture that should be taught to pupils is the one that can have an effect on their language production, as this is linked to their understanding of various philosophies, values, and modes of expression. According to this, people acquire new cultural knowledge as part of the

normal course of their development as social beings in relation to their surroundings. Additionally, he states that enculturation and acculturation are two distinct forms of cultural learning. Native people who are raised in their own environments are said to have undergone a process of enculturation. In many cases, this leads to an inflated view of one's own culture's superiority. This could happen because they never leave their own community to learn about or practice any other culture. Acculturation, on the other hand, is the process by which students consciously adopt a new cultural norm. The importance of cultural learning in an EFL context is highlighted by the discussion of culture above. Because of this, students' intercultural competency grows and flourishes in language courses. There is no denying the importance of incorporating intercultural competence into the educational system. Furthermore, there are several challenges that educators must encounter in order to develop students' intercultural competence and sensitivity. ICC helps people from different cultures understand each other, even if they don't speak a foreign language very well. This is because they know, have experience with, and follow the rules and norms of business communication and behavior in the other culture. This is because being able to communicate well with people from other cultures means knowing, practicing, and following the rules and norms of business communication and behavior in that other culture. This skill is an important part of the future interpreter's overall social and professional skills, which allow him to do his job well. As part of the learning process, the program that has been designed requires students to develop the skills and knowledge they need to do oral and written translations in the business field. Also, students must be able to explain the meaning of statements of different styles, types, and genres in a way that is clear and accurate, especially when interlingual and intercultural communication is involved. Teaching English as the language of intercultural business communication meets the students' needs for interpersonal, intercultural, and interethnic communication with native speakers of the target language and people who speak English as a means of communication. This can be done by teaching English as a business language that can be used across cultures.

5. FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

Both the perceptions and attitudes regarding the three well-established ICC dimensions, as well as additional factors introduced by ESP participants, were examined in this study. Since both results validate the validity of the model and provide an update tailored to ESP students, they are equally important for this study's conclusions and the conclusions to be drawn. The following are examples of methods of teaching the English language that attempt to integrate, either selectively or completely, the following three skills during instruction:

•Content based language teaching (CBLT)

•Task based language teaching (TBLT)

•Communicative language teaching (CLT)

Facilitating The Integration Of The Language Skills:

In determining the levels of English proficiency that students may be able to achieve, in addition to the degree to which there are factors that positively influence English learning, the manner in which the language skills are taught, whether integrated or segregated, plays a significant role in the level of English proficiency that can be achieved by students. It is essential to determine the extent to which the integrated skills approach to language instruction is actually being utilized in English instruction programs. Even in programs where the curriculum includes courses with the names of individual language skills or subskills, such as Grammar, Conversation, Phonetics, or Writing, amongst others, integrated (communicative) teaching of language skills should be implemented. This is because integrated teaching is more effective in helping students learn and retain information. Incorporating a variety of skills is one way to instruct students in such abilities and sub-abilities.

In particular, the utilization of an integrated approach to teaching language skills is very important in programs for beginner students. Beginner students are at the stage of learning a language in which they are developing their abilities to interact with other people, so it is important for them to have the opportunity to practice these skills (BICS-basic interpersonal communication skills). In order to successfully execute integrated language skills instruction, it is necessary for students as well as the instructor to play the appropriate role in order for the approach-specific activities to be carried out in a consistent and unobstructed manner. Adults

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who want to study English in college but only have a beginning level of proficiency in the language would benefit from the development of a brief university program based on an integrated (communicative) approach to teaching language skills. This level of proficiency is lower than the one required to be granted entry into a bachelor's program in English, so the creation of this program would be beneficial.[10]

Consequences For Further Development Of The ICC:

Given that ICC is so important to both the English language and its acquisition, educators and teachers of English as a second language (ELT) should concentrate on developing their students' ICC and use a wide variety of strategies to do so. For learners to successfully learn about other cultures and develop intercultural competence (ICC), there are some big issues that need to be dealt with. Some of these key issues are the use of the intercultural language teaching (ICLT) model in the ICC training process (Tran & Seepho, 2015), the use of different activities to integrate culture into English as a foreign language (Tran & Seepho, 2015), materials and content, ICC assessments, and, perhaps most importantly, the effective training of English language teachers (Tran & Duong, 2015).

The Implementation Of The ICLT Model Throughout The ICC Training Procedure:

Learning English as a Foreign Language (EFL) programs include a wide range of culturally significant activities. With the goal of enhancing their students' intercultural communication skills, Tran and Seepho (2015) proposed a number of methods for incorporating cultural elements into EFL classrooms (ICC). Cultural asides, culture capsules, culture clusters, the slice-of-life method, creating a genuine environment, the cultural self-awareness method, a quiz or multiple-choice questions, role-playing, welcoming foreigners, and debate are all part of the program.

The Components And The Substance:

Learners rely heavily on the resources and the information included within them to help them understand and assimilate the cultural aspects. The substance of the learners' culture, the culture that is being targeted, and international culture should all be covered by the resources that are

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employed (Alptekin, 2002: Cetinavci, 2012). However, "the commercial English textbooks used in ASEAN countries are found to cover largely linguistic competency," and there is very little cultural material in such textbooks, according to Tran and Duong (2015). The countries of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) utilize these textbooks. Since 2007, English has been an official language in ASEAN countries, and most of those countries have transitioned from teaching English as a foreign language (EFL) to teaching English as a local language (ELF). Because of this, it is essential that the cultures of ASEAN be taught and studied (Kirkpatrick, 2011) in order to equip students with the skills necessary to perform well in environments that require knowledge of several languages and cultures.

Given the importance of cultivating ICC in order to prepare students of the English language for success in intercultural communication (Ahnagari & Zamanian, 2014), it seems obvious that particular evaluations will be required in order to measure learners' levels of ICC competence. In order to accomplish this goal, a wide range of methods, such as portfolios, formative assessments, and questionnaires, are being utilized. According to Aguilar (2010), the most appropriate technique to evaluate ICC is to use a portfolio since it gives students the opportunity to create and self-review their own ICC during the course of their education using a practicum and a continuum that are provided by the portfolio. When it comes to assessing ICC, Lussier et al. (2007) argue that formative evaluations are preferable to summative ones so that both the competency and the learning process can flourish. They say this because formative assessment strives to develop ICC and keep the learning process active. In addition, the questionnaire survey offers a straightforward and uncomplicated method for assessing the ICC proficiency of the trainees (Lussier et al., 2007). Because of this, and because there is a limit on the amount of time that can be spent on the evaluation, an online survey in the form of a questionnaire will be used.

However, in order to accurately acquire the information that is required, the thorough and proper design of the questionnaire items is something that needs to be taken into consideration. In point of fact, obtaining an ICC is regarded as a learning activity that continues throughout one's life and is never considered to be finished (Aguilar, 2010). After a certain amount of time has passed, the evaluation will continue in a cyclical fashion so that an accurate assessment can be obtained;

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as a result, considerations and modifications can be made to better equip students, speakers, and mediators to work across cultural divides.

Instruction for instructors of the English language:

Teachers play a crucial part in the process of fostering ICC development in students because they act as scaffolds for the students as they undergo a process of developing intercultural competence as they learn to communicate effectively in a second language. Because of this, educators play a key role in helping their pupils develop ICC (Moeller & Nugent, n.d). Tran and Seepho (2015) argue that a teacher's inability to include cultural elements into their classroom practice is a major impediment to their students' development of intercultural competence. One of the caveats they point out is this. Therefore, it is essential to provide educators with training programs, workshops, and seminars on intercultural language education so that they can become more knowledgeable about the significance of ICC and competent in the application of appropriate methods when instructing intercultural language classes. These programs can be found in a variety of formats, including workshops, seminars, and training programs (Tran & Duong, 2015).

6. CONCLUSION

This article has done a thorough job of introducing how the concept of communicative competence in ELT has developed to acknowledge the significance of the inextricable combination of language and culture. The exploration of cultural and multicultural facets in language learning is essential, particularly but not solely among native English speakers. Students can express their perspectives, personal experiences, and self-reflection about their own and other cultures through video projects. Students' intercultural understanding and English language proficiency are enhanced through these initiatives, which include discussions about identities. Teachers of English must give students the opportunity to reflect on and articulate both their own and the perspectives of others around them. Students will be able to explore English in different situations (e.g., English-speaking nations and non-English-speaking countries) and cultures, while respecting linguistic and cultural diversity as the ultimate goal.[11] The ability to communicate effectively and appropriately across cultural boundaries depends on students'

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mastery of ICC, which can be greatly facilitated by the incorporation of intercultural knowledge (Galante, 2015). From what we can tell from the available material, it is essential that ICC be incorporated into the English language, and this need has been pointed out repeatedly throughout the review. The participation of educators in this process is also extremely important, and they should be encouraged to participate in more in-depth training on how to include ICC into their teaching techniques. The purpose of this paper is to contribute to the existing body of information addressing the significance of including ICC and multicultural components in the instruction of the English language.[12] Intercultural competency has been identified as a key factor that needs to be considered when educating students in the English language. Ignoring this competency may affect the student's competence in producing language that is correct, fluent, and acceptable. In addition, the pupils may be better able to prevent prejudice and miscommunication by developing this skill. Thus, it is required that English teachers always integrate intercultural competence while building up students' capacity for communication by utilizing English.[13]

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