

## **Internationalization of Higher Education in Ukraine**

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***Abstract:** The paper highlights intercultural cooperation increasing due to the international integration and globalization in recent years. Students play an active role in this process as they have different practices abroad. Today in Ukraine one of the significant tasks is to create the theoretical and practical basis for training of students for intercultural communication and cooperation. The knowledge of foreign languages helps the students of different specialties to promote their mobility and international competences. Learning a foreign language in higher education establishments has a cultural sense, because a future specialist who knows a foreign language has to perform professional activities on the international level.*

**Keywords:** Intercultural cooperation, integration, globalization, training of students, higher education.

The top three priorities of education policy in Ukraine, as officially reported to UNESCO European Center for Higher Education by Kremen and Nikolajenko (2006), are “the further development of the national education system, its adjustment to a new economy, and its integration into the European and global community” (p. 11). As a result, internationalization of higher education is viewed positively by Ukrainian policy-makers and encouraged to fully integrate Ukrainian higher education into the European Higher Education Area (EHEA) and the European Research Area (ERA), and increase its competitiveness and compatibility with higher education of other countries, while preserving national achievements and traditions of higher education (Kremen & Nikolajenko, 2006).

The role of the discipline “Foreign language” in intercultural communication is unique because mastering of foreign language provides functional dialogic interaction of different cultural world outlooks and traditions. Besides, foreign language classes create academic microclimate in which linguistic knowledge and skills of a student are fundamentally combined with intercultural basis. S. Ter-Minasova noted that each foreign language lesson is a crossroads of cultures and practice of intercultural communication because every word gives an idea of the world depending on the national consciousness [2, 3, 4].

Thus, the mastery of the English language, like any other language, can be confidently classified as a component of the overall culture of the individual by which the individual is attached to world culture. It also should be noted that intercultural communication affects the development of the Ukrainian society. Not less important is the possession of the local lore, because it is a necessary condition for the interpenetration and interaction of cultures of such a complex and multifaceted process as intercultural communication [3, 4].

Indeed, in a casual conversation with a foreigner who arrived in Ukraine it is hardly ever appropriate to turn to description of the charms of the capitals of the US or the UK, instead of stories about local attractions. Not less important is the role of ethno-cultural components of communicants (traditions, customs, national ceremonies, elements of the national consumer culture, national picture of the world, national artistic culture) in the process of intercultural communication which expands proportionally to the intensification of intercultural contacts. It is worth mentioning that over 100 nationalities live in Ukraine. The prominent position in the intercultural communication occupies the culture of the representatives of different ethnic communities where ethnic tolerance is a determining factor. Just student surroundings are one of the most intense areas of inter-ethnic and national contacts. Therefore, the important task of modern higher educational establishment to form the communication culture and train inter-ethnic tolerance.

In our opinion, a student of the higher educational establishment, regardless of speciality, requires a complex of knowledge and skills that enable to perceive and produce messages containing local lore information both formal and informal intercultural communicative contacts [2].

Indeed, the roles of higher education institutions and current and preservice educators as agents of intercultural understanding and dialogue cannot be overestimated. In its White Paper on intercultural dialogue, the Council of Europe (2008) pointed out that the university can nurture publicly active ‘intercultural intellectuals’ promote scholarly research on intercultural issues, and implement appropriate intercultural practices in all aspects of teaching. Accordingly, higher education curricula need to include methods and strategies that can prepare graduates to manage and peacefully resolve intercultural conflicts stemming from racism, xenophobia and other negative manifestations of monoculturalism, as well as foster democratic global institutional approach [2, 3]. Thus, it is important that higher education faculty and students have both the knowledge of intercultural issues and the ability to implement them effectively in classrooms.

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