

**CROSS-CULTURAL COMMUNICATION IN EDUCATION:
COMMUNICATIONAL PROBLEMS IN THE ASPECT OF
MULTICULTURALISM**

*Toktasinov Dilshodbek - the student of Andijan State Institute
of Foreign Languages*

*Kodirov Khalilullo - the teacher of Andijan State Institute
of Foreign Languages*

Abstract: In today's globalized world, cross-cultural communication has become more important than ever before. Education is no exception, with schools and universities welcoming students from different cultural backgrounds and geographic locations. While this diversity enriches the academic experience, it also poses challenges that need to be addressed. In this article, we will explore some of the communicational problems that arise in the aspect of multiculturalism.

Key words: cross-cultural communication, multiculturalism, multicultural education, language barriers, cultural differences, nonverbal communication
Multiculturalism is the recognition and celebration of the diversity of cultures within a society. It is based on the idea that all cultures should be respected and valued, and that people should be free to express their cultural identity without fear of discrimination or prejudice. Multiculturalism encourages people to learn about and appreciate different cultures, and to work together to create a more inclusive and harmonious society.

Multicultural Education is type of multiculturalism focuses on providing educational opportunities that are inclusive of all cultures. It encourages students to learn about different cultures and to develop an appreciation for diversity. Multicultural education is a pedagogical theory that aims to prioritize multiple cultural perspectives in the classroom. Many traditional pedagogical theories leave cultural diversity aside and focus solely on teaching the curriculum. However, those teaching strategies can actually serve to reinforce cultural hegemony, benefiting students who already belong to the cultural majority and leaving other students behind.

What is multicultural education aiming to achieve?

Essentially, a multicultural classroom is designed to uplift various cultural perspectives, allowing students to utilize their own experiences in a pedagogical environment and helping build bridges between students from different cultural backgrounds. The growing emphasis on multicultural education is aligned with a broader trend in education that seeks to make schools more inclusive. That means inclusion for students from various cultures, students with disabilities, and more. Teachers who want to ensure all of their students feel welcome and accepted in the

classroom may want to look into ways to incorporate multicultural perspectives effectively and respectfully. Multicultural education is sometimes combined with other teaching strategies like social and emotional learning that also focus on students' well-being and individuality.

The Importance of Multicultural Education

There are many reasons to prioritize multicultural schools, and the importance of multicultural education is becoming increasingly clear. Most importantly, schools are, in many ways, a microcosm of the multicultural society of the US. Students and teachers benefit from being able to express their own cultural values in a safe environment. They also benefit from learning about other cultures respectfully, without alienating or bullying their peers. Rather than being a barrier to effective education, diversity in the classroom can be an advantage that helps make the school environment richer and more reflective of the real world. Multicultural education must be handled respectfully, and this can take practice. Fortunately, there are many steps that teachers and students can take to improve their cultural understanding.

The Benefits of Multicultural Education

There are many benefits of multiculturalism in education that are becoming better understood as multiculturalism in schools becomes a bigger priority. Both teachers and students can benefit from multicultural classrooms and the inclusive, respectful mindset that underlies multicultural teaching. These benefits hold true for any classroom's cultural makeup and age group. The following list is not exhaustive; it is just a sample of the advantages multiculturalism brings to a classroom. As the theory of multicultural education advances further, schools will likely start seeing even more benefits.

Language Barriers

Language is a fundamental aspect of communication, but it can also be a significant barrier when it comes to cross-cultural communication. Students who are not native speakers of the language of instruction may struggle to follow lectures, participate in discussions, and understand assignments. This can lead to frustration, anxiety, and reduced engagement in the learning process. Similarly, educators may find it challenging to convey complex concepts to students whose language proficiency is limited. To overcome this barrier, schools and universities should provide language support programs, such as English as a Second Language courses, language labs, and peer tutoring.

Cultural Differences

Culture shapes the way we think, behave, and communicate. When students from diverse cultural backgrounds come together, cultural differences can create misunderstandings and conflicts. For instance, students from collectivist cultures may be more inclined towards group work and may find individualistic cultures overly

competitive or selfish. Conversely, individualistic students may feel frustrated by the perceived lack of independence and initiative among collectivist cultures. To address these issues, teachers may need to adapt their teaching styles to accommodate diverse learning preferences. Additionally, schools should provide cultural sensitivity training to help students understand and appreciate each other's values, beliefs, and customs.

Nonverbal Communication

Nonverbal communication is a crucial aspect of cross-cultural communication, as it can convey meaning and emotions that words cannot. However, different cultures interpret nonverbal cues differently, leading to misunderstandings. For instance, eye contact is considered a sign of respect and engagement in Western cultures, but in some Asian cultures, prolonged eye contact is seen as aggressive or disrespectful. Similarly, gestures such as nodding or shaking the head may have opposite meanings in different cultures. To avoid confusion, educators should be aware of the cultural norms regarding nonverbal communication and consider how they may affect their interactions with students from different backgrounds.

In conclusion, cross-cultural communication is a vital aspect of education in today's multicultural world. To ensure effective communication, schools and universities need to address the communicational problems that arise due to language barriers, cultural differences, and nonverbal cues. By embracing diversity, providing language and cultural support programs, and fostering cultural sensitivity and awareness, we can create an inclusive learning environment that benefits everyone.

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