

## University Teacher Professional Communication in Multicultural Group Context

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The process of internalization in the context of university education has raised the issue of establishing suitable learning conditions to students with various cultural backgrounds. While students have been provided with opportunities for exchange programmes, teacher-student interaction still needs to be developed as individuals from different cultures possess unique standpoints in regard to particular communicative situations in academic environment.

Many books on pedagogy addressing the issue of teaching peculiarities and communicative competence have been published. For instance, Elena Sysoeva (2014) in her book *University Teacher Communicative Culture* describes specifics of teacher interaction with students. It is valuable for instructing current and future teachers in what ways skillful use of communication could be beneficial.

Teacher communicative competence is one of the leading competences a teacher should acquire as communication is considered to be a tool for educating (Sysoeva, 2014). However, teacher training practices in Russia mostly focus on teaching methodology and psychological features of pupils and students in regard to the age (Okhremenko, 2019). Little attention is paid to the psychological features brought by cultural background.

The research seeks to provide an analysis of the current teacher professional communication methodology and determine the skills a teacher should possess in order to successfully communicate with students from different cultural backgrounds. To achieve the set purpose, the paper will address the following research questions:

1. How could university teacher professional communication be defined?
2. How do Russian universities prepare would-be teachers for professional communication in a multicultural environment: methods, curriculum, practices?
3. What skills should teacher training programmes develop in order for teachers to successfully communicate in a multicultural context?

In order to determine crucial skills for efficient intercultural communication, this research paper explores five communication theories applicable to intercultural academic group settings, namely, Symbolic Interactionism (Mead, 1934), Dramatism (Burke, 1968), Narrative Paradigm (Fisher, 1984), Speech Codes theory (Philipsen, 1997), and Expectancy Violations theory (Burgoon, 1988). Prevalent teaching principles instructed at Russian pedagogical universities are also examined.

The analysis is based on the qualitative research methods. We use a survey containing deep questions for international students, who are currently studying at the School of Foreign Languages, HSE, and direct observation of teacher-student interaction in the classroom settings. The expected outcomes of the research paper include a matrix of communication skills and a training session for university teachers. The matrix of knowledge and skills will rely on the studied communication theories. The basic knowledge and skills which could be defined due to the preliminary results are the following: the ability to find common grounds with students; proficiency in leading a persuasive coherent conversation; the skill to control all the nonverbal communication cues; the ability to accept and work with students' unique way of thinking.

The defined skills should be added to the teacher professional training, which will help to reduce a number of possible miscommunications and conflicts with international students. The training session will be specifically developed for HSE teachers and will consist of 12-hour course, divided into two parts: theory, explaining communicative and intercultural peculiarities, and practice, based on real-life case studies.

The results of the study could allow teachers to get more profound knowledge on the topic of communicative peculiarities as well as to master their teaching competences. Moreover, the training session developed on the basis of research outcomes could help HSE teachers better understand what situations may cause conflicts, thereby, increasing chances of successful communication.

In future the research could be broadened by interviewing a greater number of international students, especially those who represent cultures that have not been listed before. Both, the matrix and the training session could, then, be modernized and adopted to other Russian pedagogical universities so that during the training stage future teacher would already acquire necessary skills.

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