**SYLLABUS**

**Module: CROSS-CULTURAL COMMUNICATION**

The main aim of this module is to give the student basic knowledge on communication, cross-cultural communication, and the specific features of intercultural communication in Ukraine in historical and contemporary aspects.

The module consists of 3 themes (total 15 hrs, 0,5 ECST).

**THEME I. INTRODUCTION**

*This theme is dedicated to the clarification of the term “communication”, “culture”, and “cross-cultural communication”. The main understanding of the content and meaning of cross-cultural communication will be characterized.*

What does it mean, “communication”? There are a number of different approaches towards understanding the term “communication”. Simply, it means the process of transferring information from one person to another, or from person to group, etc. Every communication act involves at least one sender of the information message and one (or several, or group, etc.) recipient. And the main peculiarity of effective communication is getting feedback. Given the fact, the process of transmitting information messages includes also emotions, the general cultural level of the sender/ recipient, social and cultural circumstances, and other factors the feedback clarifies the fact of not only reception of information, but also the reaction, and personal or group response to it.

So, the communication as the process consists of the sender, the message (information), the recipient:



**Categories of communication**:

* ***Verbal:*** face to face, different media connection which allows personal communication (like telephone, Skype, WhatsUp, Messenger, Telegram, etc., and also traditional radio and TV).
* ***Non-Verbal***: body language, gestures, dressing, actions, facial expressions, etc.
* ***Written:*** letters in paper and digital forms, books, magazines, Internet, etc.
* ***Visualized***: graphs, charts, maps, logos, paintings, memes, etc.

***It is necessary to point out that an effective communicator feels and understands his / her audience***.

For better understanding the process of cross-cultural communication, we have to clarify what is culture. By Geert Hofstede, “culture is the collective mental programming of the mind which distinguishes the members of one group or category of people from another. It is a collective phenomenon because it is at least partly shared with people who live or lived within the same social environment, which is where it was learned. Culture is learned, not inherited. It derives from one’s social environment, not from one’s genes. Culture should be distinguished from human nature on one side and an individual’s personality on the other”[[1]](#footnote-0).

The scientist suggested such types of culture:

* a national level according to one’s country ( or countries for people who migrated during their lifetime);
* a regional and/or ethnic and/or religious and/or linguistic affiliation level, as most nations are composed of culturally different regions and/ or ethnic and/or religious and/or language groups;
* a gender level, according to whether a person was born as a girl or as a boy;
* a generation level, which separates grandparents from parents from children;
* a social class level, associated with educational opportunities and with a person’s occupation or profession;
* for those who are employed, an organizational or corporate level according to the way employees have been socialized by their work organization[[2]](#footnote-1).

So, cultural diversity is characteristic not only for the world as a whole but also for separate locations. To integrate into any society it is necessary to identify the specific, mentality of people, who are living there and so on. It will help a person to overcome the stereotypes of different mutual perception on an individual level first of all.

So, cross-cultural communication can be clarified as the process of exchanging information between people which are belonging to different cultures. Of course, the acceptance of new culture depends on a number of factors like the situation (business, vacation, study, labor migration, etc.), the time the person is going to be in another culture, language skills, and others.

Every nation has its own history, traditions, past and present, values, models of behavior, laws. And successful integration into a new society depends a lot on persons’ openness and willingness to learn and to accept the new experience.

**Suggested open access materials:**

* *Beyond Cultural Differences: Intercultural Stories and Dialogues*, <https://beyondculturaldifferences.wordpress.com/research-theories/>
* *What is Communication?*, <https://www.skillsyouneed.com/ips/what-is-communication.html>
* *Cross-Culture Communication. Good Collaboration Is a Mus*t, <https://www.mindtools.com/CommSkll/Cross-Cultural-communication.htm>

**Suggested video:**

* *Cross cultural communication | Pellegrino Riccardi | TEDxBergen*, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=YMyofREc5Jk&ab_channel=TEDxTalks>

**THEME 2. UKRAINE AS THE OPEN SPACE FOR CROSS-CULTURAL COMMUNICATION**

*This topic is dedicated to the brief outline of historical, social, and political peculiarities of the country's experience.*

Ukraine is a multinational state. Its’ history goes back to ancient times. From the first tribes which appeared on the territory of contemporary Ukraine till nowadays, our state is the homeland for people of different nationalities, confession belonging, races, etc. Appeal to the historical past of Ukraine opens the possibility of a deeper understanding of the peculiarities of modern socio-political processes in our country. In general, Ukrainian history is full of dramatic events. For a long period, it has had its own sovereignty. And Ukrainian lands were divided between several states. At the end of the XVIII century, most of the contemporary Ukrainian lands were divided between the Austrian (later – Austrian-Hungarian) and Russian Empires. Both monarchies settled their laws and rules there. Till the beginning of World War I the composition of the national population has been changed a lot. A great number of representatives of other nationalities migrated to Ukraine, including Russians, Germans, Austrians, etc. The national policy in both empires differed: in Austrian-Hungarian Empire after the Spring of Nations it became more tolerant towards national minorities. In opposite, in Russian Empire, the tendencies toward Russification became increasingly powerful. World War I destroyed both empires. But it is possible to look at the creation of the USSR as on the revitalized Russian Empire

The XXth century brought completely new experience for people who lived in Ukraine. In the first decade, Ukraine was divided between four states: the Soviet Union, Poland, Romania, and Czechoslovakia. After World War II, Ukrainian lands were gathered in the USSR. And only in 1991, Ukraine declared its sovereignty and independence.

During the Soviet times, Ukrainians got completely new social, economic, political, and cultural experience. The Soviet period in Ukrainian history was really destroying for nation mentality. For more than 70 years in the East, Center, and South and over 45 years in the West, the policy of denationalization was provided in Ukraine. It was accompanied by the mass repressions, the holocaust of 1932-1933, policy of internationalism which was more the policy of russification, etc. And the most important fact is that generations of Ukrainians grow up on Soviet propaganda. A completely new social-political environment was created: with a formally non-national basis but in fact with the Russian culture one. The last was the fundament for the creation of Homo Soveticus. That environment was full of parades, Soviet movies, Soviet music, Soviet poems, Soviet symbols, etc.

We can distinguish one positive in the context of our topic: during the Soviet period the migration of population was really huge and people became acquainted with new cultures, traditions, mentalities. But the positive was leveled by absolute control by the authorities, the policy of building a Soviet citizen, intolerance, and even aggression (with the repressive policy) toward any manifestations of national.

After 1991 Ukraine has been started to build a new democratic state. But the process of democratization was complicated by the huge Soviet experience and unpreparedness for responsibility in individual and collective state-building processes. Two revolutions: Orange (2004) and the Revolution of Dignity (2013-2014) demonstrated the willingness of the Ukrainian people toward to EU. They influenced the process of self-identification. But that is the next topic.

It’s important to point out that Ukraine was and still is the open space for cross-cultural communication both on individual and collective levels People of different national origins, cultures, races, etc. are closely interacting here and building a new democratic and tolerant society.

**Suggested open access materials:**

* *Culture Crossing Guide. A community-built resource for cross-cultural etiquette and understanding*, <http://guide.culturecrossing.net/basics_business_student.php?id=213>

**THEME 3. IDENTICAL DIMENSION OF INTERCULTURAL COMMUNICATION**

*The main aim of this theme is to clarify what is identity and how it influences Ukrainian reality.*

The identity question is one of the most actual both in contemporary science and in politics. This question concerns different aspects of our lives including culture, nationality, gender, social class, etc. There are many definitions of the term “identity”.

James D. Fearon wrote, “identity” in its present incarnation reflects and evokes the idea that social categories are bound up with the bases of an individual’s self-respect”[[3]](#footnote-2). The Concise Oxford Dictionary of Current English gives five attitudes toward a definition of the term “identity”[[4]](#footnote-3). Between them, the first three are related to our issue: 1. a) the quality or condition of being a specified person or thing, b) individuality, personality; 2 identification or the result of it; 3 the state of being the same in substance, nature, qualities, etc.

Anthony Smith in his “National identity” defined the categories and roles of a human individual self. He is speaking about gender, local and regional identity, social, religious, and ethnic identities. Special attention is paid to the multiple identities[[5]](#footnote-4).

The question which is more or less actual for everyone: who am I? And that is an identical question. In cross-cultural communication, a personal identity plays a fundamental role, on our opinion. It is interesting that for many people national identity is datum: it’s impossible to choose the place of birth, national identity of parents, and so on. But both history and nowadays reality demonstrates that a person can have single, double, multiple identities. And social and political factors influence it a lot. For example, after the proclaiming the independence in Ukraine, the number of people of other nationalities decreased. That happened first of all because a certain percentage of the population just changed their official belonging to the Russian nation, for example.

During the revolution transformations at the beginning of the XX century, the participation of people in those processes did not depend only on national identity. First of all, they united people with common values and outlooks. In the events of 2013-2014, a huge role played European-oriented Ukrainians – representatives of the so-called middle class.

The overview of the dynamic of identity changes of Ukrainians during the independence is giving a better understanding of the situation in Ukraine. What are Ukrainians thinking about Ukraine? That was the subject of another poll done by Il’ko Kucheriv Democratic Initiative Foundation from June 26 till July 18, 2015[[6]](#footnote-5). So, on the question “*Whom do you feel yourself*?” (one response) the data are:

|  | ***1992*** | ***2000*** | ***2002*** | ***2004*** | ***2005*** | ***2006*** | ***2008*** | ***2010*** | ***2012*** | ***2013*** | ***2014*** | ***2015*** |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Citizen of Ukraine | 45.6 | 41.1 | 41.3 | 44.3 | 54.6 | 51.6 | 51.8 | 51.3 | 48.4 | 50.7 | 64.6 | 57.5 |
| Representative of the ethnic, nation group | — | — | 3.0 | 3.1 | 2.1 | 1.8 | 2.6 | 3.1 | 1.8 | 2.0 | 2.1 | 3.1 |
| Citizen of the former USSR | 12.7 | 12.2 | 12.7 | 10.7 | 8.1 | 7.3 | 9.0 | 6.9 | 8.4 | 6.6 | 5.5 | 3.9 |
| Citizen of the Europe | 3.8 | 2.8 | 0.7 | 0.7 | 0.8 | 1.3 | 0.4 | 0.9 | 1.2 | 1.2 | 1.1 | 1.3 |
| Citizen of the world | 6.4 | 5.6 | 2.7 | 2.4 | 2.5 | 2.9 | 1.7 | 3.1 | 2.4 | 2.4 | 2.1 | 4.2 |
| Other | — | — | 1.6 | 1.4 | 1.0 | 0.7 | 0.6 | 0.8 | 0.3 | 0.6 | 0.5 | 0.6 |

*Source: http://www.dif.org.ua/ua/polls/2015a/do-dnja-nezalezhnosti-sho-ukrainci-dumayut-pro-ukrainu\_\_1440150573.htm*

The interaction of different identities gives a vast array of possibilities for the democratization of Ukraine and building an open society here.

**Suggested open access materials:**

* *Ukraine's Struggle for a Future-Oriented Identity: Q&A with Mykola Riabchuk*, <https://huri.harvard.edu/news/ukraines-struggle-future-oriented-identity-qa-mykola-riabchuk>

1. *Beyond Cultural Differences: Intercultural Stories and Dialogues*, https://beyondculturaldifferences.wordpress.com/research-theories/ [↑](#footnote-ref-0)
2. Ibid. [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
3. James D. Fearon, “What is identity (as we now use the word)?”, web.stanford.edu/group/fearon-research/cgi-bin/wordpress/wp-content/uploads/2013/10/What-is-Identity-as-we-now-use-the-word-.pdf [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
4. *The Concise Oxford Dictionary of Current English,* 1991 ed., s.v.”identity”. [↑](#footnote-ref-3)
5. Anthony D. Smith, *National Identity* (Reno, Nevada: University of Nevada Press, 1991), 4-8. [↑](#footnote-ref-4)
6. “Opytuvannya.” Fond Democratychni Initsiatyvy imeni Il’ka Kucheriva, 2015, *“Do Dnya Nezalezhnosti: shch ukrayintsi dumayut’ pro Ukrayinu?”*, http://www.dif.org.ua/ua/polls/2015a/do-dnja-nezalezhnosti-sho-ukrainci-dumayut-pro-ukrainu\_\_1440150573.htm (accessed 3 August, 2016). [↑](#footnote-ref-5)