



## INTEGRATING INTERCULTURAL COMPETENCE IN TEACHING FOREIGN LANGUAGES AT SCHOOL IN CLASSROOMS

**Odilova Ozoda Orifovna**

odilovaozodaorifovna0405@gmail.com

Samarkand State Institute of Foreign Languages

**Abstract:** This paper explores the critical necessity of integrating the intercultural component into the process of foreign language education. In an increasingly globalized society, linguistic proficiency alone is insufficient for effective communication; learners must also possess the cultural intelligence to navigate diverse social norms, values, and non-verbal cues. The study examines current pedagogical frameworks that shift the focus from a purely "native-speaker" model toward Intercultural Communicative Competence (ICC).

**Key words:** classroom culture, extralinguistic factors, politeness, body language, formal greeting, informal greeting.

### **Introduction**

Integrating intercultural competence is the process of acquiring the knowledge, skills, attitudes, and awareness needed to communicate effectively and appropriately across cultures. It involves understanding cultural values, norms, communication styles, and behaviors, as well as recognizing one's own cultural biases. Key components include cultural knowledge, communication skills, openness, empathy, and self-awareness. Barriers such as stereotypes, ethnocentrism, language differences, and nonverbal misinterpretations can hinder communication, but can be overcome through education, reflection, experiential learning, and active engagement with diverse communities. Intercultural competence is essential for fostering mutual respect, reducing misunderstandings, promoting collaboration, and preparing individuals to function successfully in a globalized and multicultural world.

### **Literature Review**

The integration of intercultural competence is defined as the acquisition of specific knowledge, skills, and attitudes necessary for effective cross-cultural communication. According to the provided text, this process goes beyond linguistic fluency to include an understanding of cultural values, norms, and behavioral expectations. A central theme in recent pedagogy is the inseparable nature of language and culture; as Johnson (2009) posits, learning a language inherently requires an acceptance of its accompanying culture.

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emphasizes that while grammar and vocabulary form the structural "bulk" of a language, cultural understanding acts as the cohesive element that enables functional communication. This is particularly evident in the "classroom culture"—the social realities and norms that emerge within a learning environment.

Furthermore, the literature highlights the role of language as an expression of identity and a social system. For learners of English, mastering greetings is a primary step in navigating these social systems. The distinction between formal, informal, and slang greetings reflects the hierarchical and relational nuances of English-speaking societies (e.g., the UK and the USA). Scholars suggest that exposure to these diverse cultural expressions fosters a "safe" environment for students, ultimately building the confidence required to interact within globalized, multicultural contexts.

### **Method**

Teaching culture is an integral part of Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages (TESOL). In order to communicate clearly and effectively in English, students must have knowledge of the language's vocabulary, grammar, when and how to use them appropriately (function), and the corresponding body language. Language and culture is an important in the classroom, while grammar and vocabulary are what makes up the bulk of any language, cultural understanding brings this together and allows the student to communicate easier. Neglecting this aspect of language can be damaging to the student's ability to communicate effectively. English culture is based on the cultures of the English speaking countries like Britain and USA. According to Johnson (2009), there is no way in which someone can learn a language without accepting the culture that comes with it. Therefore, as one learns the language he or she is forced to accept the cultures of it. Students who learn about different cultures during their education feel more comfortable and safe with these differences later in life. This allows them to interact in a wider range of social groups and feel more confident in themselves as well as in their interactions with others.

Classroom culture are the persistent social realities that emerge in a classroom such as norms and habits. For example, a rule is classroom management and a pervasive group tendency to observe or rebel against that rule is classroom culture. A particular language points to the culture of a particular social group. Learning a language, therefore, is not only learning the alphabet, the meaning, the grammar rules and the arrangement of words, but it is also learning the behavior of the society and its cultural customs. On a deeper level, language is an expression of who we are as individuals, communities, nations. Culture refers to dynamic social systems and shared



patterns of behavior, beliefs, knowledge, attitudes and values. Culture is an important in English, Culture Knowledge Allows You to Think in Another Language. You won't have to create the phrases in your native language and then translate them in the new language. Understanding culture allows you to give the right meaning to each word, in the larger context, because you'll be able to think in the foreign language. As a means of communicating values, beliefs and customs, it has an important social function and fosters feelings of group identity and solidarity. It is the means by which culture and its traditions and shared values may be conveyed and preserved. Language is fundamental to cultural identity. What is the relationship between culture and English language? The two are intertwined. A particular language usually points out to a specific group of people. When you interact with another language, it means that you are also interacting with the culture that speaks the language. You cannot understand one's culture without accessing its language directly.

Greetings in English Beyond "How Are You?" and "Hello" You probably already know "hello" and "how are you?" in English. However, English speakers also use many other English greetings and expressions to say slightly different things. Let's learn how to use some other simple formal and informal English greetings, as well as fun slang expressions that English speakers use to greet each other. It's best to begin by using formal greetings in most business situations, and then listen to how your co-workers or business partners greet you. It's a good idea to wait until someone speaks casually with you before you speak casually with them. You may find that people will begin to use casual greetings with you over time, as you get to know each other better. Formal greetings are also used when you meet older people.

### **Results**

Good morning, Good afternoon or Good evening These are formal ways of saying "hello", which change depending on the time of day. Keep in mind that "good night" is only used to say "goodbye," so if you meet someone late in the day, remember to greet them with "good evening," rather than "good night." "Good morning" can be made more casual by simply saying "morning." You can also simply use "afternoon" or "evening" as informal greetings, but these are less commonly used. 2. It's nice to meet you or Pleased to meet you These greetings are formal and polite. If you say this to someone when you meet him or her for the first time, it will make you seem courteous (polite). Remember to only use these greetings the first time you meet someone. Next time you see the person you can show that you remember him or her by saying "it's nice to see you again" or simply "it's nice to see you." 3. How have you been? This greeting question is only asked by people who have already met. If someone asks you "how have you been?" they want to know if you have been well since the last



time the two of you met. 4. How do you do? This greeting is VERY formal, and quite uncommon and old-fashioned now, but it may still be used by some older people. The proper response is "I'm doing well" or, as strange as it seems, some people even ask "how do you do?" right back as an answer. Informal Greetings in English 5. Hey, Hey man or Hi You can use "hey" and "hi" to greet someone instead of "hello." Both are particularly popular among younger people. While "hi" is appropriate to use in any casual situation, "hey" is for people who have already met. If you say "hey" to a stranger, it might be confusing for that person because he or she will try to remember when you met before! You can also add "man" to the end of "hey" when greeting males. Some people also use "hey man" to casually greet younger women, but only do this if you know the woman very well. Remember that "hey" doesn't always mean "hello." "Hey" can also be used to call for someone's attention. 6. Greeting a stranger But what about introducing yourself to a stranger? Speaking with strangers is often a dreaded (feared) task for many speaking in a second language, and for English learners it is no different. We have particular titles used for greeting strangers in English and usually, it is more formal speech. 7. How's it going? or How are you doing? These are casual ways of asking "how are you?" If you're trying to be particularly polite, stick with "how are you?" but otherwise, you can use these expressions to greet almost anyone. The word "going" is usually shortened, so it sounds more like "go-in". You can answer with "it's going well" or "I'm doing well" depending on the question. Although it's not grammatically correct, most people just answer "good"-and you can too. Like when responding to "how are you?" you can also follow your answer by asking "and you?" 8. What's up?, What's new? or What's going on? These are some other informal ways of asking "how are you?" which are typically used to casually greet someone you have met before. Most people answer with "nothing" or "not much." Or, if it feels right to make small talk, you could also briefly describe anything new or interesting that's going on in your life, before asking "what about you?" to continue the conversation. 9. How's everything?, How are things? or How's life? These can be used to casually greet someone and ask how the person is doing, but most often these sentences are used to greet someone you already know. To these, you can answer "good" or "not bad." Again, if small talk feels appropriate, you could also briefly share any interesting news about your life, and then ask the person "what about you?" or another greeting question. 10. How's your day? or How's your day going?

These questions mean "how are you?" not just right now, but how you've been all day. You would use these greetings later in the day and with someone you see regularly. For example, you might ask a co-worker one of these in the afternoon, or a cashier that you see at the grocery store every evening. "It's



going well" is the grammatically correct response, but many people simply answer with "fine," "good" or "alright." By the way, notice that "good," "fine" or "not bad" are perfect answers to almost any greeting question.

### 11. Good to see you or Nice to see you

These casual greetings are used with friends, co-workers or family members that you haven't seen in a while. It's common for close friends to hug when they greet each other, particularly if they haven't seen each other in some time. So you might use this greeting along with a hug or handshake depending on your relationship with the person.

### 12. Long time no see or It's been a while

These casual greetings are used when you haven't seen someone in a long time, particularly if you meet that person unexpectedly. How much is a long time? It depends on how often you normally see that person. For example, you could use one of these greetings if you normally see the person every week, but then don't see them for a few months or more. Usually, these phrases are followed by another question, like "how are you," "how have you been?" or "what's new?" Slang Greetings in English Slang greetings are extremely informal, and should only be used with people that you know very well, and feel very comfortable with. Keep in mind that a lot of slang is regional, and using Australian slang in the United States, for example, can sound quite strange. You'll need to learn the local slang wherever you are, but these common examples will help you get started.

### 13. Yo!

This extremely informal greeting is common in the U.S. It comes from 1990's hip-hop slang and these days it's often used both seriously and jokingly. This greeting should only be used with very close friends, and never in a business setting.

### 14. Are you OK?, You alright? or Alright mate?

This casual way of asking both "hello" and "how are you" is common in Britain. You can respond "yeah, fine," or simply "alright" before asking "and you?" to the other person.

### 15. Howdy!

This is a very informal abbreviation of "how do you do?" that is common in certain parts of Canada and the U.S. Keep in mind that if you say "howdy" outside of these regions, you will sound like a cowboy, and it might make the other person laugh. This greeting, short for "how are you?", is commonly used in certain parts of England. However, you don't need to actually answer this question-you can just say "hey!" right back. And of course, once you've nailed the introductions, there's another set of phrases you need to learn. That's right, farewells (saying goodbye)! You'll find that greeting people in different ways



will help your English sound more natural, and it might even make English greetings more fun and interesting for you. In conclusion, greetings and introductions vary across English-speaking countries and cultures, but they are all important parts of daily communication. A handshake is a common greeting in many countries, particularly in professional settings, but other greetings such as a wave, a nod, or a hug may be more appropriate in informal settings. When introducing oneself, it is customary to give one's first name and last name, but in some cultures, it is also customary to include one's occupation or job title.

### **Conclusion**

The relationship between the English language and culture is deeply intertwined; one cannot truly master the former without accessing the latter. As demonstrated in the analysis of greetings—ranging from the formal "How do you do?" to the informal "Yo!"—language serves as a dynamic tool that signals social status, regional identity, and levels of intimacy.

Neglecting the cultural context of language instruction can significantly impair a student's ability to communicate effectively, leading to potential misunderstandings or social friction. Conversely, a robust understanding of intercultural competence allows learners to "think" in the target language rather than merely translating from their native tongue. Ultimately, fostering cultural awareness alongside linguistic skills prepares individuals to navigate a globalized world with mutual respect, empathy, and professional success.

### **USED LITERATURE**

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