**Lecture 6. *Intercultural business communication in social space of foreign countries and Ukraine***

**The aim:** to identify the opportunities and challenges of intercultural business communication in the context of globalization; to explain how our social location and standpoint shape how we see, experience, and understand the world differently.

**Plan**

1. Intercultural business communication in the context of globalization.

2. Definitions of culture that influence intercultural business communication in the global context.

3. Features of Ukrainian business culture.

**Keywords:** globalization framework, humanitarian paradigm, national and cultural identity, local culture, tolerance, communicative potential of cultures, communicative competence, intercultural communication, communicative behavior.

**1. Intercultural business communication in the context of globalization.**

The context of globalization within which intercultural business communication occurs is characterized by the following:

- An increasingly dynamic, mobile world facilitated by communication and transportation technologies, accompanied by an intensification of interaction and exchange among people, cultures, and cultural forms across geographic, cultural, and national boundaries.

- A rapidly growing global interdependence socially, economically, politically, and environmentally, which leads to shared interests, needs, and resources together with greater tensions, contestations, and conflicts.

- A magnification of inequities based on flows of capital, labor, and access to education and technology, as well as the increasing power of multinational corporations and global financial institutions

- A historical legacy of colonization, Western domination, and U.S. hegemony that continuous to shape intercultural relations today.

These characteristics of globalization point to the centrality of intercultural communication as a fundamental force shaping our current age. Globalization refers to the complex web of forces and factors that have brought people, cultures, cultural products, and markets, as well as beliefs and practices, into increasingly greater proximity to and interrelationship with one another within inequitable relations of power. The word globalization is used here to address both the processes that contribute to and the conditions of living in a world where advances in technology have brought the world’s people spatially and temporally closer together; where economic and political forces of advanced capitalism and neoliberalism have increased flows of products, services, and labor across national boundaries; and where cultural, economic, and political ideologies «travel» not only through overt public campaigns, but through mass media, consumer products, and global institutions.

Economic globalization is characterized by a growth in multinational corporations; an intensification of international trade and international flows of capital; and internationally interconnected webs of production, distribution, and consumption – has increased intercultural interaction and exchange exponentially.

**2. Definitions of culture that influence intercultural business communication in the global context.**

What is the relationship between communication and culture? The three different approaches to culture illustrate different assumptions about communication. According to *the anthropological definition of culture* as a sharing system of meaning, communication is a process of transmitting and sharing information among a group of people. In this case, communication enables culture to be constructed and mutually shared by members of a group.

In *the cultural studies definition*, culture is a contested site of meaning. According to this view, communication is a process through which individuals and groups negotiate and struggle over the «agreed» and «appropriate» meanings assigned to reality. Through verbal and non-verbal communication as well as the use of rhetoric, some views are privileged and normalized while other perspectives are marginalized or silence. Thus, communication is a process of negotiation, a struggle for power and visibility rather than a mutual construction and sharing of meaning.

Finally, in *the globalization definition*, culture is viewed as a resource. In this case, communication can be viewed as a productive process that enables change. We usually associate the word productive with positive qualities. However, «productive» here simply means that communication is a generative process. People leverage culture to build collective identities and exploit or mobilize for personal, economic, or political gain. Communication is a process of using cultural resources.

**3. Features of Ukrainian business culture.**

In the spectrum of business cultures can be divided into two poles: the Western business culture and the Eastern business culture. Typical Western cultures include the Euro-American and Western business cultures. The most typical Eastern business culture is Asia and Eastern countries (Japan, China, Korea, Taiwan, Singapore, Hong Kong and the countries of Islam). Features of these types of business cultures have historical, religious and general cultural background. Ukraine is situated geographically between East and West. Business culture of this country has an intermediate position between the Western and Eastern cultures according to the number of parameters (individualism / collectivism, hierarchy / egalitarianism, etc.).

Today Ukraine is the biggest country in Europe, with the population of 44,8 million (that has a grave tendency for declining due to the low birth-rate and massive work immigration). To the east and northeast of Ukraine is Russia; to the west are Poland, Slovakia, Hungary and Romania. Ukraine's strategic geographical position in ancient periods as well as nowadays has made it a cross-road between the East and West of Europe.

The most characteristic feature which can distinguish the Ukrainians from other Slavs is «hutoryanstvo» as a natural state of the Ukrainian nation. Explanation of this feature we can find in historical and geographical characteristics of the country. Ukraine is a mostly flat or rolling country with fertile plains which are heavily farmed and some forests in the north. Due to favorable climatic conditions, Ukraine is traditionally an agricultural area. It grows wheat, maize, buckwheat and other corn, red and green vegetables, all kinds of fruit, melons and berries.

The mentality of the national farmer is described in this way: Farmer finds himself quite smart, and even if he is not very clever, he is really «wise». His intelligence and wisdom are manifested in the ability to avoid real or imaginary risk and unnecessary work. Farmer hates authority at home, but at a meeting with the object of hate (official) is welcoming and wishing him good health. This farmer is eliminated from participation in solving social problems, lives on the principle: «none of my business». He often shunned by brave and enterprising people, seeing in them a hidden danger to their well-being, and that is why he is trying to keep away from them. He does not understand the action of courageous people. His conclusions are: «If I am afraid, why wasn’t he afraid of?», «If Icannot decide why he is solved?», «It is better to be wise and cautious than courageous and broken».

Consequences of this natural state of the Ukrainian nation are:

- Individualism, which is the mental factor of individuality of Ukrainian nation, together with collectivism as feeling of self in the society, which is a result of history of colonialism of Ukraine. All researchers note the peculiarity of the mentality of Ukrainians: pragmatism, individualism. But at the same moment, all researchers note that recognizing and respecting by others are the most important things for this nation. Social nature of Ukrainians shows itself also in the way they determine the status of the person. Even nowadays when material success means quite a lot for each person, high position in the social rank appreciated often much higher than other factors.

The other index of collectivist nature of Ukrainians is that they work mainly in a team. Majority of decisions, from the routine to the vitally important ones, are made after numerous consultations and meetings, in which great number of people in organization participate. In most of Ukrainian organizations it is rather hard to find people who dare to handle the entire process of decision-making on their own. Opposite to Western culture in Ukraine self - actualization needs, as A. Maslow named them, are not the top of hierarchy of the person’s needs. The most important for this nation are esteem needs, which mean not even feeling of self - respect, they are feeling of being recognized and respected by others.

- Ukrainians, as well as other representatives of collectivist nations, are very hospitable. Their hearts and their doors are always opened for friends or just people who attract them. Their need to be liked and appreciated by somebody else has its addition - when Ukrainians have a choice they deal only with people whom they like personally.

- Love for freedom, but agreement on subordination because of profit, «economic», hard working (for self interests). Historically the Ukrainian ethnos was formed in specific conditions, and till now exists with poetic elements of mythology. Ukrainian forest-steppe landscapes, distant horizons, which raise the waves of dreams, sensuality, passivity and carelessness and at the same time, grow the tendency to receive freedom and anarchy.

- Tolerance, Ukrainians prefer to follow by the call of their hearts. They are very emotional people with domination of feelings and emotions.

Cross-cultural differences between East and West can be seen in their relation to the time. There are three different groups of cultures:

- Monochromic – linear quantitative time; time is divided quite naturally into segments; it is scheduled and compartmentalized, making it possible for a person to concentrate on one thing at a time (USA, UK, Germany, and North Europe);

- Polychromic – time is perceived as being almost tangible: people talk about it as though it were money, as something that can be «spent», «saved», «wasted», and «lost» (Latin America, the countries of Islam, Ukraine, Russia);

- Reactive – combination of two previous styles; activity is organized not by a strict and invariable plan, depending on the changing context as a reaction to these changes (China, Japan, Korea, Taiwan, Singapore).

Ukraine is one of the most polychromic countries in the world. Polychromic time is characterized by the simultaneous occurrence of many things and by a great involvement with people. There is more emphasis on completing human transactions than on holding to schedules. For example, two polychromic Latins or Ukrainians conversing on a street corner would likely opt to be late for their next appointment rather than abruptly terminate the conversation before its natural conclusion. Polychromic time is experienced as much less tangible as monochromic time and can better be compared to a single point than to a road.

Polychromic people feel that private space disrupts the flow of information by shutting people off from one another. In polychromic systems, appointments mean very little and may be shifted around even at the last minute to accommodate someone more important in an individual's hierarchy of family, friends, or associates. Some polychromic people (such as Ukrainians) give precedence to their large circle of family members over any business obligation. Polychromic people also have many close friends and good clients with whom they spend a great deal of time. The close links to clients or customers creates a reciprocal feeling of obligation and a mutual desire to be helpful.