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THE ROLE OF LANGUAGE IN UNDERSTANDING AND OVERCOMING COMMUNICATION BARRIERS IN INTERCULTURAL SPACE

The modern world is characterized by increasing globalization, which requires active cross-cultural communication in all areas of life – education, business, diplomacy and daily communication. Language this is a fundamental aspect in this regard, both as a tool for understanding and as a potential obstacle to effective interaction. The ability to recognize and overcome language and cultural barriers is essential for fruitful international cooperation and mutual understanding between different social and ethnic groups.

Cross-cultural communication is often accompanied by difficulties arising from language and cultural differences. Barriers can be divided into several main categories: language barriers include differences in vocabulary, grammar, pronunciation and pragmatics, which often lead to misunderstandings or misinterpretations. Even those who are fluent in a foreign language may have difficulty understanding idiomatic expressions, culture-specific humor, or the differences between formal and informal language usage. Sociocultural barriers stem from different communication norms, values, and worldviews. What is considered polite in one culture may be seen as rude in another. For example, while direct eye contact is a sign of respect in Western culture, it may be seen as offensive in some Asian societies. Psychological barriers such as fears, stereotypes, and prejudices can hinder effective communication. People often subconsciously expect others to adhere to their own cultural norms, which can lead to tension and misunderstandings. Non-verbal barriers also play a role, as gestures, facial

expressions, and body language vary significantly between cultures. A gesture of approval in one country may have a completely different meaning in another.

To minimize these barriers, the mediating role of language in cross-cultural dialogue cannot be underestimated. Various strategies can help overcome communication barriers. Language adaptation and flexibility, such as simplifying the language, avoiding culturally specific idioms, clarifying meaning when necessary, and improving understanding. Studies have shown that using "global English" (a simplified form of English used in international settings) facilitates communication between non-native speakers [5, 245]. Translation and interpretation services are essential in diplomacy and business to ensure that communication is accurate and to the point [4, 37]. Although machine translation tools are constantly improving, they still require human control to avoid misunderstandings due to cultural differences. Cultural competence in language learning is also crucial. Language teaching should not be limited to grammar and vocabulary, but should also include the cultivation of cultural awareness. Research shows that people who learn a language and understand the cultural background show higher communicative effectiveness [3, 76]. Code-switching and multilingualism are common strategies to bridge cultural differences. Many bilingual and multilingual speakers switch between languages depending on the context, which promotes understanding in international organizations and multicultural communities [6, 21]. Reducing misunderstandings through cross-cultural pragmatics is another important approach. Understanding the pragmatic aspects of language (such as politeness or indirect speech) allows communicators to adjust their discourse and avoid unintentional uncivilized behavior [2, 63].

To promote effective cross-cultural dialogue, both individuals and institutions should adopt specific approaches. Promoting multilingual education is essential because promoting early foreign language acquisition can improve adaptability in cross-cultural contexts. For example, European policies emphasize multilingualism as a key competency for global citizens [4, 81]. Intercultural competence training is widely used in international companies and universities to help employees and students prepare for different environments. Promoting language learning is also becoming

increasingly important. Linguists who promote understanding in multilingual situations help avoid misunderstandings in legal, medical, and diplomatic contexts [8, 45]. In addition, the development of digital communication strategies is necessary in the modern world, as global online interactions require new cross-cultural communication methods, especially in virtual teams and international cooperation [7, 76].

In the modern world, language is not only a means of transmitting information, but also a tool for building cultural bridges. Overcoming communication barriers requires linguistic competence, cultural awareness, and psychological readiness to adapt to diverse communication styles. By fostering multilingualism, promoting intercultural education, and utilizing linguistic mediation, societies can achieve more effective and respectful international cooperation. Future research should further explore how digital communication, artificial intelligence, and evolving global linguistic trends influence intercultural interaction.

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