Acculturation as a Type of Intercultural Communication

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Abstract. *The article is devoted to the study of acculturation as a form of intercultural communication. Theoretical approaches to acculturation, its main stages and mechanisms are considered. The author analyzes the impact of acculturation processes on the individual and society, and identifies the main factors contributing to successful acculturation.*

Key words: *acculturation, intercultural communication, adaptation, intercultural competence, cultural integration, social changes, cultural differences.*

INTRODUCTION

Acculturation, as a crucial aspect of intercultural communication, plays a fundamental role in shaping cultural adaptation and integration processes in a globalized world. While previous research has explored acculturation theories and mechanisms, a knowledge gap remains in understanding how contemporary socio-cultural dynamics influence the depth and nature of cultural exchange beyond superficial adaptations. This study employs a mixed-method approach, combining theoretical analysis and case study evaluation to examine the impact of acculturation on individuals and societies. The findings reveal that acculturation is a multi-dimensional process influenced by psychological adaptation, socio-cultural interactions, and the degree of cultural openness. Results highlight that while globalization accelerates cultural convergence, true acculturation occurs when mutual respect and meaningful cultural exchanges take place. The implications suggest that fostering intercultural competence is essential for preserving cultural diversity while facilitating constructive cultural integration in an increasingly interconnected world.

METODS

This study addresses the knowledge gap in understanding acculturation as a form of intercultural communication by analyzing its theoretical foundations, key stages, and socio-cultural impacts. The research employs a qualitative methodology, drawing on content analysis of historical and contemporary case studies, along with a review of J. Berry's acculturation framework. The findings indicate that acculturation is influenced by both socio-cultural and psychological factors, with significant variation depending on the nature of cultural interaction, such as migration, language exchange, or digital communication. Results highlight the dual nature of acculturation—both enriching and challenging—depending on cultural resilience and openness to exchange. The study's implications emphasize the need for a balanced approach in intercultural communication, advocating for policies and educational programs that foster cultural integration while preserving cultural identity in an era of globalization.

RESULT and DISCUSSION

Culture is a profound phenomenon created by society. Each culture, like the character of an individual, reflects all the historical conditions that it has experienced, as well as the features of geographical, climatic and other realities. In the era of globalization, one of the disadvantages of

which is the leveling of cultures, it is important to prevent the "erasure" and destruction of unique cultural achievements. The interaction of countries and peoples in the 21st century should contribute to the spiritual enrichment of people and broaden their horizons.

Acculturation, as a process of cultural interaction while preserving their important differences, is an inevitable phenomenon of our era. At the same time, considering acculturation from the point of view of a positive assessment of culture, it can be recognized that cultural interaction is a positive process. Society, like an individual, can experience social illnesses, deviations, and make mistakes. However, the existence and recognition of culture indicates a long path of positive development of society, which gives it the moral right to continue to exist. Therefore, the mutual influence of cultures should be considered as a positive exchange of achievements necessary for further development.

The mutual influence of cultures is as natural as the exchange of feelings and thoughts between individuals, leading to changes due to communication. In the era of high speeds and the Internet, acculturation is inevitably accelerating, requiring additional analysis. It is important to note that cultural exchange should not be considered as an exchange of any obvious features, but as an exchange of significant and vital elements contributing to humanization. It is impossible to consider transitory fashion trends among teenagers or mass Westernization as true cultural features that influence the spiritual state of people in different countries.

When cultures (not necessarily national ones) exchange special features and change under their influence, this leads to a more complex cultural landscape and better adaptation to new conditions. Historical examples of various scales confirm this idea. For example, the "oriental despotism", introduced into the Russian ethnic group under the influence of the Mongol-Tatars, brought to Russia certain "oriental" features, political, social and other features necessary for its further historical development, not only to overcome the Mongol yoke. Eastern influences manifested themselves in the establishment of a strong, outwardly tough government, which made it possible to unite the country in difficult times, as well as in the development of diplomatic skills necessary for contacts with the Mongol-Tatars. The Oriental style began to influence art, everyday life and other aspects of life. It is worth noting that Russians could also develop patience and diplomacy under the influence of the Finno-Ugric peoples, who have long been Russia's neighbors.

If a culture has inner strength, then, like a strong personality, it will perceive the necessary features of other cultures, while remaining unique. This is what happened in the case of Russia. In our opinion, it would be more appropriate to use the term "cultural influence" rather than "acculturation", since the latter implies profound changes in cultural models, up to assimilation with another culture [2]. In the context of preserving the basic patterns of cultures, this seems more logical.

Contacts between cultures are carried out in the process of direct contacts between their speakers, which is relevant in the era of globalization. Within the framework of the stated topic, we should consider not the empty borrowing of individual elements of behavior, but changes that contribute to profound cultural changes. At the same time, in our opinion, the time has not yet come for statistically important conclusions, in addition, modern people are frivolous enough not to change profoundly, they are inattentive enough to each other to change at all under someone's influence (except in cases of cultural "prestige" or strong enough pressure). Therefore, it is possible to speak about acculturation in relation to our era rather conditionally.

Contacts between cultures occur through the direct interaction of their speakers, which is especially important in the era of globalization. Within the framework of this topic, it is necessary to consider not just the borrowing of individual elements of behavior, but changes that lead to profound cultural transformations. At the moment, it may be too early to draw statistically significant conclusions, since modern people are often shallow and not attentive enough to each other to change under the influence of other cultures (except when it comes to cultural "prestige" or strong pressure). Therefore, the application of the concept of "acculturation" to our era should be considered with caution.

When representatives of strong cultures interact, a process of acculturation can occur. For example, one can imagine that a revived Russia, interacting with Chinese citizens in the course of economic activities and tourism projects, will strengthen some features of its national character and acquire new

ones. At the same time, the reverse process may be observed, although China is probably less prone to change due to its traditionalism. Acculturation can also be expected in contacts with Japanese civilization, English culture, French national characteristics, etc.

It is important to note that, on the one hand, obvious differences between cultures can contribute to their "attraction", opening up opportunities for useful knowledge and change. On the other hand, these differences can also "alienate" cultures from each other. It is necessary to correctly distinguish between studying the characteristics of another culture and the changes taking place under its influence.

When we consider modern types of intercultural communication that can significantly change society, we can identify several key aspects. Firstly, marital relations and relationships with relatives and acquaintances of a non-cultural spouse. Secondly, labor migration, in which people move to a foreign cultural space and adapt their culture to new conditions. However, such an impact will be significant only if the profession and personality of the guests are "serious".

The expansion of language schools and the impact of international projects also create favorable conditions for acculturation. Interaction via the Internet, given its internal typology, can also contribute to a deep cultural exchange.

The more serious and effective an activity related to intercultural communication is, the longer the contacts and the more open its participants are, the more likely mutual cultural influence is. It is worth noting that currently there are not many conditions that force people to adopt another culture, and the cultural baggage of representatives of national culture can be significant, which contributes to the preservation of identity while enriching cultural experience.

In past eras, conquests, the establishment of vassalage between countries, strong religious influence, as well as significant migrations for climatic and other important reasons led to closer contacts between cultures and significant changes. Intercultural communication unfolded within the framework of the relations "slave - master", "boss - subordinate", "representative of the upper stratum - representative of the lower stratum", "minister of worship - an ordinary person", "military - civilian", etc. The larger and more intense such relations were, the more actively cultural achievements were adopted (in particular, positive and useful acquisitions that contribute to adaptation to new conditions). Acculturation was especially active if cultural elements were accepted voluntarily, despite the paradoxical nature of this statement.

J. Berry, known for his research in the field of acculturation theory, identifies two key aspects of this process: socio-cultural and psychological.

The socio-cultural aspect includes:

➢ Interaction with representatives of your cultural group.

➢ Contacts with members of other cultural groups.

➢ The importance of using your native language.

➢ The frequency of using a foreign language.

➢ Assessment of recognition and acceptance by the new group.

➢ Attitudes towards possible withdrawal from a new society.

Psychological adaptation covers the following elements:

➢ Assessment of acculturation prospects.

➢ The level of satisfaction with the meaning of life in general.

➢ The degree of satisfaction with being in a new group.

Berry's views have a close connection with the concept of multiculturalism.

Acculturation, as a process of cultural interaction, is especially relevant in the era of globalization. Global changes and the accelerated pace of intercultural communication require a revision of

approaches to cultural exchange and mutual understanding. The research of J. Berry, who highlights the socio-cultural and psychological aspects of acculturation, shows the importance of an integrated approach to the study of this phenomenon.

Contacts between cultures at different levels — from marriage and labor migration to the expansion of linguistic schools and communication via the Internet — create conditions for deep cultural interaction. However, it is important to distinguish between the superficial borrowing of cultural elements and profound changes that contribute to the humanization and improvement of intercultural understanding.

Historical examples, such as the influence of the Mongol-Tatars on the Russian ethnic group, demonstrate that mutual cultural influence can lead to significant changes and adaptation to new living conditions. It is important to remember that a strong culture, like a strong personality, is able to perceive the beneficial features of other cultures while maintaining its uniqueness.

In the context of globalization, it is necessary to strive to achieve an ethical balance in intercultural communication, respecting cultural differences and preserving the identity of each culture. This is the only way to ensure spiritual enrichment and broaden people's horizons, contributing to the preservation and development of cultural diversity in the modern world.

CONCLUSION

This study explored the phenomenon of acculturation as a key form of intercultural communication, identifying gaps in understanding its depth beyond superficial cultural borrowing. Using a theoretical and analytical approach, the study examined acculturation's socio-cultural and psychological dimensions, drawing on J. Berry's framework. Findings indicate that while globalization accelerates cultural exchange, profound acculturation remains conditional, influenced by factors such as identity preservation, cultural prestige, and societal pressures. The results highlight the complexity of cultural adaptation and the importance of maintaining cultural uniqueness while embracing beneficial influences. These insights have significant implications for policy-making, education, and global communication strategies, emphasizing the need for ethical intercultural dialogue that fosters mutual enrichment without cultural erosion.

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