DEVELOPING INTERCULTURAL COMPETENCE IN LANGUAGE LEARNING VIA CONCEPTUAL METAPHORS

Madatova Nigar Aydin

Candidate of Philological Sciences, CELTA Certified Teacher,
Associate Professor at the Department of English Stylistics
Azerbaijan University of Languages
134, R.Behbudov str., Baku, Azerbaijan
https://orcid.org/0000-0002-7871-3807

Language is used not only as a means of communication but also as a system reflecting national culture and mentality. In the process of teaching a language, great attention is paid to the development of linguistic competence. In contrast, important aspects such as cultural understanding of the language and intercultural aspects of communication often remain unexplored. Considering the complex relationship between language and culture, which involves multiple disciplines such as linguistics, philosophy, and psychology, the lack of a unified approach to this issue remains a significant challenge. Therefore, the development of intercultural competence has become a crucial and essential objective in contemporary language education. This article aims to examine the integral connection between language and culture, with a particular focus on the importance of developing intercultural competence in language teaching using the linguocultural approach. The article aims to emphasise the importance of incorporating cultural and intercultural elements into language instruction to promote genuine communication and mutual understanding. To achieve this aim, the study pursues such objectives as to consider the role of culture in language learning, to analyze the theoretical foundations of the relationship between language and culture, to explore how insights from linguistics, philosophy, and psychology contribute to the understanding of this relationship, to identify cognitive and linguocultural mechanisms that support students' understanding of cultural realities, to explore how conceptual metaphors can facilitate the development of intercultural competence and to provide practical strategies for integrating conceptual metaphor analysis into educational contexts. The research methods include comparative and content analysis of scientific, socio-pedagogical, and methodological literature. The results of the research can be used to create lessons that promote both linguistic competence and cultural awareness and integrate these cultural elements into teaching practice.

Keywords: *intercultural competence, conceptual metaphors, linguocultural approach.*

The statement of the problem. Modern society presupposes the establishment of political, social, cultural, linguistic, and other connections between various world communities, which leads to the exchange of information, the strengthening of interaction and mutual influence among representatives of different nationalities in various spheres of social and cultural life, including education. The ongoing intensive integration of countries and the globalisation of world political and socio-economic processes have created a situation of linguistic and cultural diversity at all levels of international contacts and cooperation. Cognitive linguistics, with its focus on the interplay between language, thought, and culture, provides a robust framework for exploring how learners conceptualise foreign cultural experiences. In the theory of language teaching, this tendency manifests itself in recognising that mastering a language means not only representing it as a set of words bound together by rules, and its learning as a tedious process of memorising words and rules, but also engaging with another culture and acquiring new sociocultural content. In modern conditions,

the process of learning a foreign language involves not only the interaction of the studied languages but also cultures, national characteristics, traditions, customs, and mentalities. Teaching a foreign language cannot be limited to developing speaking skills in the target language; it is also necessary to consider the interrelation and interaction between culture and language in their functioning. Language should be regarded as a means that promotes international communication and understanding of the culture of the country whose language is being studied. Consequently, the requirements for language proficiency are increasing, necessitating a constant search for new, practical teaching tools and methods in this discipline.

Through linguocultural analysis, educators can identify the conceptual metaphors embedded in language that shape learners' perceptions, attitudes, and intercultural understanding. Conceptual metaphors reflect the way individuals map one domain of experience onto another, allowing abstract cultural concepts to be understood through familiar cognitive structures. For example, the metaphor

"culture is a journey" enables learners to conceptualise intercultural learning as navigating unfamiliar terrains, highlighting both challenges and opportunities for growth. Similarly, *"language is a window"* frames language as a medium for accessing and understanding another culture, emphasising its cognitive and communicative role.

Analysis of recent research and publications. To highlight the cognitive and communicative role of culture, it is essential to examine the formation history of intercultural communication first. The founder of the theory of intercultural communication is an American linguist and anthropologist, E. Hall, who was one of the first to demonstrate the close relationship between culture and communication convincingly. He is credited with the postulate: "Communication is culture, culture is communication" (Hall, 1990). Hall believed that the primary goal of studying intercultural communication problems was to address the practical needs of representatives from different cultures, thereby enabling their successful interaction with one another.

According to E. Hall, the key to successful intercultural communication lies in intercultural training, which should be based on the practical use of real-life facts of intercultural interaction that arise in direct contact with representatives of other cultures. (Hall, 1990). The result of analysing specific examples of intercultural interaction is the expansion of learners' intercultural competence and the overcoming of difficulties in everyday communication with people from another culture. E. Hall was also one of the first to substantiate the idea of expanding the scope of intercultural communication discourse by moving it into university classrooms and giving it the features of an educational process. As a result, intercultural communication began to be viewed not only as a new field of scientific research but also as an academic discipline.

In the United States, the development of this new academic discipline occurred over a relatively short period. Over time, this field of knowledge lost its purely practical character and evolved into a comprehensive university course that encompassed both theoretical and practical components. In the work of American researcher R. Porter, "Communication Between Cultures", intercultural communication is defined as interaction that occurs under conditions of such significant culturally determined differences in the communicative competence of the participants that these differences substantially affect the success or failure of a communicative event. The author defines communication as "...what takes place whenever someone responds to the behaviour or the consequences of the behaviour of another person" (Porter, 2016). Communication is considered to be something that occurs "whenever meaning is attributed to behaviour" (Porter, 2016). Western researchers have primarily focused on the skills and abilities required for intercultural communication, taking into account the cultural characteristics of various countries. During this period, anthropologists, psychologists, cultural theorists, and linguists became involved in research, which led to intercultural communication acquiring the status of a field of interdisciplinary scientific study from its inception. In contemporary education, the development of intercultural competence has become increasingly essential due to globalisation, digital communication, and multicultural classrooms (Byram, 2020). The concept of intercultural (or cross-cultural) competence appeared decades ago in several sources. Earlier, only the notion of communicative competence was discussed. Communicative competence is defined in modern methodologies as the ability to interpret and produce utterances in accordance with the situational context and the sociocultural norms of society. The most comparatively modern model of communicative competence is a three-level structure that unites communicative and intercultural competences. It includes:

– Encyclopedic (cognitive) competence – the ability to operate with knowledge about the structure of the real world and different fields, including professional activity;

– Linguistic competence – the ability to use linguistic means to achieve pragmatic goals;

– Interactive competence – the ability to establish, maintain, or interrupt communication following social conventions (Hatch, 1992).

Such knowledge enables understanding of cultural references typical of a linguistic community. Furthermore, students learning a language must develop the ability to interpret "physical and psychological signs that determine social belonging within the target culture, known as "semiotic consensus". One of the key components of intercultural competence that affects communicative competence is worldview – a set of ideas, beliefs, and values prevalent in a given society at a particular time. A student with intercultural competence can consciously compare cultures, identify similarities and differences, and analyse their mutual influences. Empathy should be at the core of developing this competence. For instance, Knapp-Potthoff's model of intercultural competence includes:

– Affective component (tolerance and empathy);

– Cognitive component (knowledge of both native and target cultures, and general knowledge about culture and communication);

– Strategic component (verbal, learning, and research strategies) (Knapp-Potthof, 1987).

W. Gudykunst and Y. Kim define intercultural competence through the concept of an intercultural personality – a person whose affective, cognitive, and behavioural traits transcend the boundaries of a single culture (Gudykunst, 1988). They identify five characteristics of an intercultural personality:

– Experience with cultures that challenge one's native traditions, leading to culture shock and understanding of how culture shapes worldview;

– Ability to act as a catalyst for intercultural contacts;

– Awareness of one's ethnocentrism and attainment of objectivity toward other cultures;

– Awareness of the worldview of people from developing countries, allowing for better mediation between cultures;

– Ability to demonstrate cultural empathy and adopt another worldview (Gudykunst, 1988).

According to S. Kowalski, intercultural knowledge and skills include:

– Knowledge of traditional behaviour patterns in the target culture;

– Understanding that such behaviours are culturally determined;

– Awareness that speech and behaviour are influenced by age, gender, class, and region;

– Intellectual curiosity and respectful interest in other cultures;

– Ability to recognise cultural connotations of words and phrases;

– Capacity to grasp the essence of a foreign culture through specific examples;

– Empathy and tolerance toward another culture, avoiding ethnocentric judgment (Kowalski, 2023).

These studies collectively contribute to the development of intercultural competence in the learning process, focusing on enhancing cognitive abilities and the skills of linguocultural analysis in learners.

Purpose and objectives of the article. Successful language learning requires more than linguistic competence. It must include cultural context, making the linguocultural approach, which emphasises cultural interaction, the most effective method for forming intercultural competence. Linguocultural analysis emphasises how concepts encode cultural knowledge, norms, and values within language, providing insight into the social and historical dimensions of communication (Semino, 2002). The purpose and objectives of the article are to provide a linguocultural analysis of conceptual metaphors in the context of developing intercultural communication in education. This study aims to:

– Explore how conceptual metaphors enhance intercultural competence;

– Identify cognitive and linguocultural mechanisms that support students' understanding of foreign cultures;

– Provide strategies for integrating metaphor analysis in education;

To achieve these aims, the learners should be provided with such knowledge as:

– Recognise that every culture has the right to exist and should be evaluated by its own values and norms;

– See themselves as multicultural individuals belonging to several cultural types;

– Understand their role and function in global processes;

– Show empathy and initiative in intercultural communication;

– Participate actively against cultural inequality and discrimination.

The linguocultural approach in forming intercultural competence is based on the principle of the dialogue of cultures, which includes:

– Sociological aspect – awareness of interdependence between cultures;

– Sociocultural aspect – recognising each side as an active subject;

– Axiological aspect – understanding and respecting the values of another culture;

– Psychological aspect – promoting cooperation and emotional connection.

Implementing these approaches will help learners recognise similarities and differences between cultures, possess background knowledge of the target culture and strategies for acquiring it, reflect on and adapt this knowledge for effective communication, and understand their own cultural assumptions and experiences.

Presentation of the primary material. The expressiveness of culture through concepts is objective, fixed and at the same time abstract. Intercultural competence involves the ability to understand, interpret, and act effectively across diverse cultural contexts, a skill that is mediated by language, cognition, and culture (Deardorff, 2009). The cultural concept encompasses several valuable, emotionally charged attitudes that have been formed within a specific culture over a particular period. Examples of cultural concepts are mostly related to the symbolic approach, which is characterised by the fact that some aspects of culture acquire ethnic meaning and become symbols of nations. For example, *trident (tryzub), a sunflower, a lion, a floral hair wreath* – are symbols of Ukranian people; *a rose, horo, kopanitsa, rachenitsa* dances*, a musical instrument *gadulka,* bracelet *martenitsa,* national garb *prestilka,* and a shirt *riza* – Bulgarian; *a grey wolf, a red tulip, halay and zeybek* dances*, musical instruments *oud (ud), louta and cumbus,* a head wear *feska* – symbols of Turkish people; *fire, oil, tar, kamancha,* folk dance *yalli,* the na-

tional ornament *buta, charig* shoes, *kharibulbul* flower, *the legendary Karabakh horses* are symbols of Azerbaijani people; *krakowiak, kujawiak, mazurek, oberek, polonaise* dances, *a white eagle, a red poppy,* musical instruments *ligawka and burczybas* are symbols of Polish people; rhythmic dances with *castanets* and *bullfight* – Spanish; *a red rose, a golden harp and a unicorn* – British; *fan, kimono, sakura tree and green pheasant* – Japanese; *sari, lotus and an elephant* – Indian, etc.

Cognitive linguistics offers tools for understanding how humans conceptualise experiences through language, revealing the mental structures that underpin perception, categorisation, and knowledge representation (Evans & Green, 2006). The enhancement of educational effectiveness mostly depends on new methods in language didactics. It explains the current growing interest among educators in the issues of organising knowledge and how they are represented in language through metaphorical projections.

The theory of conceptual metaphor has gone through various stages of development. Cognitive linguistics, as one of the most promising directions in modern linguistics, has contributed new insights into the development of various linguistic concepts. Within this framework, which is oriented towards understanding cognitive mechanisms of cognition, the concept of metaphor has been reinterpreted. The notion of the conceptual metaphor has emerged, which in modern cognitive linguistics is defined as "a mental operation on conceptual structures (domains, frames, mental spaces, etc.), a way of cognition, categorisation, conceptualisation, evaluation, and explanation of the world" (Lakoff, 2003). Conceptual metaphors are perceived as reflections in language of human consciousness processes, as tools for understanding the world and the interrelationship of its phenomena. The theory of conceptual metaphor is applied in the study of the dynamics of meaning and polysemy at various linguistic levels, examining the relationship between the primary, concrete meanings of a linguistic unit and its figurative meanings.

In classical theories, a metaphor is considered "a linguistic expression in which a word or several words denoting a concept are used outside their usual meaning in order to express another, similar concept" (Lakoff, 2003). A metaphor, as a transfer of meaning based on the relationship of similarity, was traditionally viewed as a purely linguistic phenomenon and was often discussed in the context of literary language. Therefore, the problem of metaphor was mainly considered from a literary perspective. However, this understanding does not explain how one concept is transferred into another domain. Our everyday conceptual system, within which we think and act, is metaphorical in its very nature.

The theory of conceptual metaphor cannot be considered without addressing the issue of the interaction between metaphor and culture. The founders of cognitive linguistics, G. Lakoff and M. Johnson, stated that the values existing in culture are represented in the metaphorical system of a particular linguistic community. Moreover, cultural values do not exist in isolation from one another; they must form a coherent system, together with metaphorical concepts, within which our lives unfold (Lakoff, 2003). Thus, it can be stated that the system of value orientations of the speaker is determined by cultural dominants, which represent the most significant meanings for the national culture, and the sum of these meanings forms its uniqueness, preserved in language. The phenomenon of cultural dominance being fixed in language has been termed "linguoculture," with its core consisting of conceptual metaphors. For example, these conceptual metaphors can play a significant role in intercultural learning:

1. *Culture is a garden* – Learners perceive culture as something that can be nurtured, cultivated, and diversified. This metaphor promotes an understanding of intercultural competence as an ongoing, dynamic process.

2. *Intercultural communication is a bridge* – This metaphor emphasises connection, mutual understanding, and overcoming gaps between cultural communities. It fosters awareness of the need for empathy and adaptability in communication.

3. *Language is a tool* – Language is conceptualised as an instrument for accessing cultural knowledge and navigating social interactions, highlighting its cognitive and practical significance.

4. *Intercultural learning is navigation* – Learners conceptualise the intercultural experience as a journey with obstacles, discoveries, and checkpoints, which encourages active engagement and problem-solving.

5. *Cultural identity is a container* – This metaphor illustrates the boundaries and flexibility of individual and group identities, supporting reflection on self and others in cross-cultural contexts.

Through these metaphors, students internalise complex intercultural concepts in a cognitively accessible way, enhancing both comprehension and practical competence. Conceptual metaphors, central to cognitive linguistics, allow abstract ideas to be understood via more concrete, embodied experiences (Lakoff, 2003). For instance, the conceptual metaphor *"language is a tool"* frames learning as a means of utility, access to knowledge, and enhances practical language use in culture. Conceptual metaphor *"culture is a tapestry"* highlights an interwoven blend of abstract notions, customs, traditions, symbols, and values.

Conceptual metaphors provide a cognitive framework for enhancing intercultural competence. By mapping unfamiliar cultural experiences onto familiar domains, learners can gain a deeper understanding of abstract concepts. For example, conceptual metaphors such as "*intercultural learning is navigation*" promote active engagement, resilience, tolerance and problem-solving. "Intercultural communication is a bridge", emphasises empathy and flexibility, which are key to effective intercultural interaction.

A specific metaphorical designation can represent a fragment of an individual's conceptual sphere. However, a complex of individual metaphors forms a conceptual metaphor that reflects the conceptual sphere of society and its cultural dominants. A comparative study of the metaphorical model (or method) begins with the investigation of verbalised components of individual conceptual spheres, regardless of whether the individual concept includes an evaluative component or whether the content is culturally specific. The results of research are primarily derived from both universal and culturally specific elements within national conceptual spheres. Thus, in this context, the interaction between individual and culturally specific conceptual content becomes crucial.

Table 1

Key Conceptual Metaphors in Intercultural Learning

Conceptual Metaphor	Source Domain	Target Domain	Cognitive Function	Pedagogical Implication
Culture is a garden	Garden	Culture	Growth, diversity, care	Promotes nurturing of cultural awareness
Intercultural communication is a bridge.	Bridge	Communication	Connection, overcoming gaps	Encourages empathy and collaboration, highlights adaptive communication and social skills
Language is a tool	Tools	Language	Utility, access to knowledge	Enhances practical language use for culture
Intercultural learning is navigation.	Journey	Learning	Exploration, problem-solving	Motivates active engagement in unfamiliar contexts
Cultural identity is a container.	Container	Identity	Boundaries, flexibility	Supports reflection on self and others
Culture is light	Light	Knowledge and awareness	Illumination, understanding	Encourages insight

Table 2

Mapping Metaphors to Intercultural Competence Skills

Metaphor	Knowledge	Skills	Attitude
Culture is a garden	Understanding cultural norms	Observation and analysis of cultural differences	Curiosity, openness
Intercultural communication is a bridge.	Communication gaps	Effective interaction	Empathy, flexibility
Language is a tool	Language structures	Using language in context	Confidence, adaptability
Intercultural learning is navigation.	Awareness of cultural challenges	Problem-solving	Resilience, tolerance
Cultural identity is a container.	Self-knowledge and group identity	Reflection and comparison	Respect, acceptance

Table 3

Interaction of Individual and Cultural Concepts

Feature	Individual Concept	Cultural Concept
Stability	Dynamic, changes with experience	Stable, historically established
Emotional coloring	Subjective, personalised	Objective, socially shared
Formation	Individual consciousness and perception	Collective consciousness and cultural memory
Transmission	Personal interaction	Encoded in language, art, and traditions
Examples	Personal meaning of "home"	National symbols include a "floral hair wreath" or "sakura tree"

Based on the above-mentioned, we can consider that:

1. Concepts mediate cognition, culture, and communication, serving as foundations for intercultural learning.

2. Conceptual metaphors facilitate the transmission of abstract cultural knowledge into educational practice.

3. Semantic-cognitive modelling allows for systematic analysis and visualisation of individual and cultural concepts.

4. Integrating cognitive-linguistic and intercultural approaches enhances learners' global competence while respecting cultural specificity.

Thus, in the theory of conceptual metaphor, the idea of the connection between metaphors and the worldview of a specific linguistic community is developed. This idea highlights two aspects. On the one hand, conceptual metaphors are, in a certain sense, universal, as they are formed according to certain fundamental principles that are the same across all linguistic cultures. On the other hand, metaphorical strategies reflect the cultural traditions of choosing means of interpreting abstract categories, the existence of which is determined by various extralinguistic factors typical of a specific linguistic community.

Conclusions and directions for further research. This research demonstrates that integrating linguocultural analysis and conceptual metaphors into language teaching provides a robust framework for fostering intercultural competence in learners. As globalisation continues to increase cultural interactions and understanding, language becomes a means of accessing and reflecting culture, making it one of the essential factors in the language learning process.

The linguocultural approach reveals that the theory of conceptual metaphor, grounded in cognitive linguistics, enables learners to internalise abstract cultural concepts through concrete, relatable mental structures. Conceptual metaphors not only simplify the complex nature of intercultural communication but also encourage empathy, adaptability, and critical reflection. Moreover, as intercultural competence becomes a crucial skill for navigating the interconnected world, the role of language education extends beyond linguistic proficiency to encompass a deeper understanding of culture. The emphasis on empathy, awareness of cultural differences, and the ability to reflect on one's own cultural assumptions are key aspects in shaping well-educated global citizens.

One of the conditions for the effective formation of intercultural communication skills in learners is the creation of a language environment that fosters the "immersion" of learners into the realm of foreign culture. Establishing a setting for honest communication, connecting foreign language teaching to real-life situations, and actively using languages in life, in natural situations, will contribute to the increased effectiveness of teaching a language as a means of communication. These can include academic discussions, with the involvement of foreign specialists, summarising and discussing foreign scientific literature, learners' participation in international conferences, open lectures and academic societies based on interests. The choice of teaching methods and forms should focus on their active, cognitive-searching, emotional-behavioural, and cultural-historical character. Therefore, it is necessary to scientifically justify and develop new methods of teaching a language as a means of communication, as well as to master fundamentally new educational materials that can teach people to communicate effectively.

In future, by engaging learners in the exploration of conceptual metaphors, educators can facilitate the development of cognitive, affective, and strategic skills essential for successful intercultural interaction. Ultimately, the linguocultural approach will not only enrich language education but also contribute to the broader goal of promoting mutual respect, dialogue, and cooperation in a multicultural world.

In this regard, to ensure the adequate preparation of learners as future specialists for life in a multicultural space under conditions of intercultural communication, a clear and skilled organisation is required, one that takes all these factors into account in the educational process.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

1. Byram M. Teaching and Assessing Intercultural Communicative Competence. Multilingual Matters, 2020. 200 p.

2. Deardorff D. K. The SAGE Handbook of Intercultural Competence. SAGE Publications, Inc., 2009. 560 p.

3. Evans V., Green M. Cognitive Linguistics: An Introduction. Edinburgh University Press, 2006. 848 p.

4. Gudykunst W. B., Kim Y. Y. Theories in Intercultural Communication, SAGE Publications, Inc., 1988. 328 p.

5. Hall E. T. Understanding Cultural Differences / E. T. Hall, M. R. Hall. Yarmouth, ME: Intercultural Press, Inc., 1990. 196 p.

6. Hatch E. *Discourse and Language Education,* Cambridge University Press, 1992. 348 p.

7. Knapp-Potthof A., Knapp K., Enninger W. Analysing Intercultural Communication, De Gruyter Mouton, 1987. 327 p.

8. Kowalski S. Cultural Sensitivity Training, Developing the Basis for Effective Intercultural Communication, Econcise, 2023. 197 p.

9. Lakoff G., Johnson M. Metaphors We Live By. University of Chicago Press, 2003. 200–407 pp.

10. Porter R., Samovar L., McDaniel E., Roy C. Communication between Cultures. Cengage Learning, 2016. 432 p.

11. Semino E., Culpeper J. *Cognitive Stylistics:* Language and Cognition in Text Analysis. John Benjamins Publishing Company, 2002. 349 p.

REFERENCES

1. Byram, M. (2020). *Teaching and Assessing Intercultural Communicative Competence.* Multilingual Matters, 200 p.
2. Deardorff, D. K. (2009). *The SAGE Handbook of Intercultural Competence.* SAGE Publications, Inc., 560 p.
3. Evans, V., & Green, M. (2006). *Cognitive Linguistics: An Introduction.* Edinburgh University Press, 848 p.
4. Gudykunst, W.B., & Kim, Y.Y., (1988). *Theories in Intercultural Communication,* SAGE Publications, Inc., 328 p.
5. Hall, E.T. (1990). *Understanding Cultural Differences* / E. T. Hall, M. R. Hall. Yarmouth, ME: Intercultural Press, Inc., 196 p.
6. Hatch, E. (1992). *Discourse and Language Education*, Cambridge University Press, 348 p.
7. Knapp-Potthof, A., Knapp, K., & Enninger, W. (1987). Analysing Intercultural Communication, De Gruyter Mouton. 327 p.
8. Kowalski, S. (2023). Cultural Sensitivity Training, Developing the Basis for Effective Intercultural Communication, Econcise, 197 p.
9. Lakoff, G., & Johnson, M. (2003). *Metaphors We Live By.* University of Chicago Press, 200–407 pp.
10. Porter, R., Samovar, L., McDaniel, E., & Roy, C. (2016). Communication between Cultures. Cengage Learning, 432 p.
11. Semino, E., & Culpeper, J. (2002). Cognitive Stylistics: Language and Cognition in Text Analysis. John Benjamins Publishing Company, 349 p.

РОЗВИТОК МІЖКУЛЬТУРНОЇ КОМПЕТЕНТНОСТІ В ОВОЛОДІННІ МОВОЮ ЧЕРЕЗ КОНЦЕПТУАЛЬНІ МЕТАФОРИ

Мадатова Нігар Айдин

доктор філологічних наук, сертифікований викладач CELTA,
доцент кафедри англійської стилістики
Азербайджанського університету мов
вул. Р. Бехбудова, 134, Баку, Азербайджан
https://orcid.org/0000-0002-7871-3807

Мова використовується не лише як засіб комунікації, але й як система, що відображає національну культуру та менталітет. У процесі викладання іноземної мови велика увага приділяється розвитку лінгвістичної компетенції, тоді як такі важливі аспекти, як культурне розуміння мови та міжкультурні аспекти комунікації, залишаються недостатньо дослідженими. Беручи до уваги, що взаємозв'язок між мовою та культурою є складним питанням, яке охоплює кілька дисциплін – таких як лінгвістика, філософія та психологія, – відсутність єдиного підходу до цього питання залишається суттєвою проблемою. Тому розвиток міжкультурної компетентності став необхідною та надзвичайно важливою метою сучасної освіти з іноземних мов. Метою цієї статті є дослідження тісного взаємозв'язку між мовою та культурою з особливим акцентом на важливості розвитку міжкультурної компетентності у процесі викладання іноземної мови з використанням лінгвокультурного підходу. Стаття спрямована на підкреслення необхідності інтеграції культурних і міжкультурних елементів у процес навчання мови для сприяння справжній комунікації та взаєморозумінню. Для досягнення цієї мети у дослідженні ставляться такі завдання: розглянути роль культури у вивченні мови; проаналізувати теоретичні основи взаємозв'язку між мовою та культурою; дослідити, як досягнення лінгвістики, філософії та психології сприяють розумінню цього взаємозв'язку; визначити когнітивні та лінгвокультурні механізми, що допомагають студентам зрозуміти іноземні культурні реалії; з'ясувати, як концептуальні метафори можуть сприяти розвитку міжкультурної компетентності та запропонувати практичні стратегії інтеграції аналізу концептуальних метафор у навчальний процес; оцінити сучасні підходи до викладання іноземних мов. Методи дослідження включають порівняльний та контент-аналіз наукової, соціально-педагогічної та методичної літератури. Результати дослідження можуть бути використані для створення уроків, які сприяють розвитку як лінгвістичної компетентності, так і культурної обізнаності, а також інтегрують ці культурні елементи в навчальну практику.

Ключові слова: *міжкультурна компетентність, концептуальні метафори, лінгвокультурний підхід.*