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CULTURAL BARRIERS IN COMMUNICATION

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The problem of interaction and mutual understanding of cultures is especially relevant for modern society in connection with the complex social modernization processes experienced by it, the profound transformation of American culture and intense interethnic relations. Thus, in the process of perceiving each other, representatives of different cultures often encounter difficulties and obstacles that interfere with their mutual understanding and can lead to conflict situations. Researchers define such difficulties in communication by the term – intercultural barriers. Intercultural barriers arise for a number of reasons that need to be understood and it is necessary to develop a strategy for overcoming them.

Kapur outlines language barriers among communication barriers. These barriers in intercultural communication arise because representatives of different cultures use different models of perception of social reality through symbolic systems, which is reflected in the used language constructions, styles of oral and written communication [1]. Problems of a linguistic nature often become the first (and consequently the most memorable) difficulties in communicating with representatives of other cultures. It is almost directly linked to the problems with psychological wellbeing. The reason is the barriers, arising as a result of the linguistic inaccuracies, are the most stressful almost for any individual that decides to initiate interaction between cultures. As a result, it is rather necessary to focus on the problem of the language as the primary barrier of intercultural communication and communication as such.

Rampur writes in his article that conduct and human nature can be a barrier to communication. Culture affects a person's personality, and personality, in turn, affects the way of thinking [2]. The diversity in characters can lead to a disconnection in individuals. Extroverts can communicate without difficulty, and introverts cannot [2]. Good communication is conceivable just if both parties are prepared to communicate, ready to comprehend the distinctions as a part of their characters and comprehend their own disparities. However, this concept remains rather vague and requires further specification. The nature of a human being may not be viewed as a separate and a single reason for the emergence of cultural barriers in communication. It should be mainly linked to the issues that have rather psychological origins.

Vulcan additionally makes reference to in his article that different religions or positions can go about as a barrier to communication on a personal or professional level. Some of the time an individual may feel awkward in speaking with individuals from different religions. This is primarily a result of the distinction in convictions that they share [3]. Worldview affects the way of thinking, which can lead to differences in views [3]. Nevertheless, we have to comprehend the purposes behind these distinctions, and if this is done, religion will no longer stay a social barrier to communication. Religion in this situation might be viewed as one of the most significant barriers that prevents intercultural dialog from emerging. The latter has always been a strong regulator of internal and external relations between nations and ethnicities and that is why many of the world communities are strictly divided among each other basing exclusively on the religious criteria.

Kapur advises a series of solutions in order to overcome cross-cultural barriers. When communicating with a person or group, one must use a language that they are familiar with [1]. Likewise, one needs to have respect for individuals from different cultures and their values and convictions. When communicating, one should not use terms or references that are exclusively related to a particular culture [1]. Knowing various cultures and traditions will help to get along with individuals from different cultures. Practical knowledge of a second language is additionally a powerful method to decrease the effect of cultural barriers to communication [1]. Moreover, most importantly, this applies to people from other cultures with respect, this will help to establish an adequate connection.

Having analysed the cultural barriers in communications, it can be said that the surest way to overcome them is to remain tolerant of other people. The presence of barriers in intercultural communication is an incentive for the development of intercultural competence since it puts the person before the need to obtain new knowledge about the culture of partners, makes it necessary to improve his/her own communication skills, develop the ability to feel the peculiarities and mentality of a foreign culture. Thanks to these processes, the individual becomes able to adequately anticipate the prospects of communication with representatives of other cultures, more effectively achieve the goals of intercultural interaction, and more fully satisfy his/her cultural needs.

References:

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