# THE MULTICULTURAL COMMUNICATION AND ITS INFLUENCE ON THE INTERNATIONAL TOURISM INDUSTRY

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*Introduction: After World War II, a new international system was established and it stimulated reduced trade barriers and formed new international economy. Entrepreneurs asked for deeper analysis of culture as found multicultural communication an important part of business. This way, International tourism deserves deepened analysis as entire structure of it is multicultural communication and recent tourism trends warns against need to be prepared to revise existing organizational standards of international tourism enterprises.*

*The aim of this article is literature review identifying issues of multicultural communication related to international tourism business in the discourse of globalized societies.*

*Methods: It defines areas of further research to make evaluation of multicultural communication interaction to international tourism and propose issues for discussion related to new challenges of customer relations in the context of changing market situation and further growth of the importance of cultural communication in tourism.*

*Keywords: multicultural communication, globalization, international tourism business environment*

**JEL CLASSIFICATION: F00, F10, F15**

## Introduction

The tourism industry is considered transnational and cross-cultural in its genetic nature and character. It is a global socio-cultural practice, as well as a growing sphere of professional activity, and the most common and increasingly affordable way of learning and mastering the world, that is, "their" and "foreign" cultures, As a result, the modern tourism industry is not able to perform its functions without intercultural communication. Due to the fact that globalization processes in society are accelerating, the nature of intercultural communication in the system of international tourism industry is undergoing various changes. The effect of space-time communication, the formation and spread of a global language and global culture, cities, tourism market, information and virtualization of tourism space, and many other factors of globalization to a large extent modify the content and features of intercultural communication in tourism.

Tourism is an industry that serves the international communities. Language plays here an important role in the global and local communication. A tourist travels to various destinations due to the fact that it is of environmental, social, cultural, and religious importance. No tourist chooses a destination due to the language, but often tourists consider language a barrier for travel and tourism. This article explores the diversity in culture in terms of language used for communication both oral, written, and body language in the context of global to local.

The tourism industry is experiencing changes, which affect the globalization, and creates a new context for its development and a new environment in which people travel with ever-decreasing restrictions, and as a result, become witnesses and participants in the interpenetration of cultures, wide intercultural contacts. Tourism not only affects the economic development of the regions, while creating a large number of jobs, and affects the natural environment, but it is also an agent of cultural change. The content and forms of intercultural communication in the system of international tourism become and develop as a result of interaction between the subjects of social and

cultural activities in tourism, and are tourism factors at the level of individuals, groups, social communities, and ethno-cultural, professional and business communities, organizations and institutions that belong to different cultures. This interaction takes place in the tourist conceptual space in view of the fact that it is necessary to achieve a basic and effective understanding based on the needs of joint activities and the exchange of information through the adopted sign systems, that is, through languages, techniques and means of their use. It is assumed that intercultural communication is a communication between representatives and carriers of different cultures, that is, a meeting of so-called "their" and "alien" but also the interaction of identical units, which suggests that, on the one hand, the existence and expansion of various cultural-specific species and forms of intercultural contacts, and on the other, it is the development and transformation of the units themselves in the process of intercultural interaction in the tourist space. In the global tourism space, the culture of tourism, and as a consequence, the tourism industry culture determines and directs tourism communication and the latter supports strengthens, recreates and transfers the tourism culture for others. It should also be noted that tourism as a multicultural phenomenon has the features of intertext, which is a tourism texts overlay of different interacting cultures, the use of which is provided by a set of cultural-specific concepts. Interaction of globalization on international tourism business environment and intercultural business communication is comparably newly appeared subject, taking into consideration that contemporary tourism has developed as a typical product of Western societies (Davidson, 1993:5). Entrepreneurs of Western societies have developed international tourism, basing their ideas in classical Western philosophy, values and lifestyle (Hooker, 2009: 60). Even Europe is still expected to be main market player in terms of international travelers, international receipts and international expenditures, new emerging markets of international tourism certainly play increasing role (UNWTO, 2000). Changing structure of international tourism business environment will be challenging for destinations, current market leaders, and in particular Europe as new

outbound tourism markets is expected to require alternative products, corresponding to their cultural interests and needs.

In order to better understand further expectations, intercultural differences will re-gain their topicality as they might act as a guarantee for successful operational performance. In the context of globalization, cultural aspects cannot be ignored (Kavous 2009:513) Intercultural communication, fundamentally, is an approach to analyze how different cultures or people with different cultural background interact to each other. Even formulation of one and unique definition of culture is challenging, often there are three significances mentioned how culture can be understood: sense of excellence, integrated system of human knowledge and opinion and attitudes, values and practices describing institution, organization or group (Singer 1998:98). All the different definitions demonstrate understandings on how to understand certain action or criteria, how to analyze them.

Culture includes technology, arts, science as well as moral values, also habits and behavior of individuals, groups or societies. Through culture, individuals and societies set a frame of daily routines, by implementing general understanding of categories as right or wrong, good or bad and similar (Hofstede, 1989: 390). At the same time, there is an emphasis on language, physical and psychological dimension, determining the successful outcome of communication. It is, however, important to highlight interdependence of these dimensions as they can be observed from either objective or subjective perception. Considering ongoing market changes, formulation of new international business communication strategies are expected. In these strategies intercultural communication will be playing an increasing role, considering that effective intercultural communication strategy can improve company's global competitiveness (Griffith, Harvey, 2000:88).

As culture in general is playing an important role on corporate organizational culture and employees as basic elements of organization when it comes to cultural analysis in an organization (Evans, 2007:2), intercultural communication difficulties arise also in international business relations. Obviously, that increasing numbers of

outgoing tourism travelers from emerging markets and so called BRIC countries in the first place (UNWTO, 2000; UNWTO 2010) and existing prognosis of increasing importance of these markets, are considered as a new business opportunity for inbound tourism business in most of destinations and Europe, as a market leader in particular.

However, these opportunities are bounded with challenges, related to intercultural differences and among them the following should be highlighted.

Firstly, in the future, people will have to spend more and more time with people who will be speaking different languages, related to different values and will be interacting to different principles, compared to ones currently known in Western societies. The world is becoming smaller and it can be named as global village and can be considered as a form of future societies (Barnlund 1998: 35). Cultural relations, both in daily routines and business are expected to gain its importance. We will not be able to live only with basic knowledge of cultural differences or learned standard phrases of different languages. Finding of ways how to enter into different cultural space, understand values and norms of this space will be an important task. Without it, societies and industries will not be able to operate efficiently as members of global system, lacking general knowledge of conditions how international business is done. Every culture expresses it through communication and cultures primarily exist to defend groups of symbols, language, gestures, physical contact and importance of subjects (Barnlund 1998: 38). In a conversation, the involved members seek to find information defining importance, which can be further associated to understandable things.

Each culture tends to create its own universe of discourse (Barnlund 1998: 45) and when different universes interact to each other, culture shock occurs. In a global village, such interaction is unavoidable. If language can be learned, then understanding of physical contact is something requiring different knowledge and cultural understanding (Griffith, Harvey, 2001:89).

Secondly, emerging international tourism markets represent different cultural type and communication context. In analysis of culture and elements, different societies are encompassing into their cultures: two cultural types can be distinguished, based on psychological studies and studies concentrating on individual relationship to group (Triandis, Bontempo, Villareal, 1988:324,326). Two cultural groups can be named: individualist (USA, Canada, Europe – UK, Germany, Scandinavia, Australia, New Zealand, individual goals are primary versus collectivist) and collectivist cultures (Asia (Japan, China, Korea, India), Africa, Mediterranean countries, Middle East, Central and South America (Brazil, China, Argentina), goals of individualist are subordinated to collectivist; in collectivist cultures it is considered to be important – how my own action interacts with entire group) (Watkins, Liu, 1996: 69).

Individualist and Collectivist cultures also represent different approaches how emotions, also towards service supplier are expressed. Individualists are concerned only about personal concerns, while in collectivist cultures the worth of entire group is considered; in collectivist cultures emotions signal internal, subjective feelings, while in an individualist culture emotions signal changes of reality (Mesquita, 2001: 69). Alternatively, it is offered categorization of cultures from communicational perspective and they are observed and named respectively low context and high context communication. Cultures with Western European roots rely in low context communication when details are specified and context must be explicit in the message. The message itself means everything. Low context cultures are German-Swiss, Scandinavian, English (both American and British); in contrast, have high context communication when all is understood from the context, where verbal messages have little meaning without the surrounding context. These are such cultures as Japan, China, Arab Countries, Latin American countries; In these cultures, relations are close and personal, like in a family (Hooker, 2008: 250).

Practically, classical international tourism market leaders and core markets can be considered as low context, while current ongoing

market changes means that high context cultures are expected to enter these markets.

Thirdly, conceptual challenges are packed into language and importance of competences. In a globalized world international trade is a new form of global economic order. In 1960 international trade was only 136 billion USD, compared to 9 trillion in 2000 (EFMD). Growth of international trade stimulates further growth of global interdependence. Globalization requires managers to become interculturally competent. This competence includes nature of work, as well as worker and management process. Any business conducted across national borders is different from business run in domestic market only (Saee 2007:56). Through occurring changes affecting modern societies in forms of market liberalization, political democratization and technological development, globalization obviously has created new challenges for international tourism and it can be named a product of globalization. It has also stimulated emergence of intercultural communication as a phenomena of a modern society involving interpersonal communication between people from different socio-cultural systems and/or communication between members of different subsystems (ethnical or racial groups) (Saee 2007: 57).

However, these relations are accompanied with wrong assumptions, where among most important is that efficient communication between cultures is solely based on linguistic competences; much of knowledge that people have about different cultures is not based in language (Bloch 1991: 184) and assumption that communication is mechanical, unrelated to emotional and other interpersonal factors (Saee 2007:57). At the same time, undeservedly, less attention is paid to the fact that misunderstandings come from existing stereotypes and unneeded ethnocentrism and intercultural differences are embedded into values and priorities of different cultures. Five competences needed to become interculturally competent

1) cultural awareness: understanding the differences,

2) communicative competence: communicating across the differences,

3) cognitive competence: acknowledging stereotypes,

4) valuing differences,

5) gaining synergy from the differences;

Fourthly, Barna M. LaRay gives an overall summary supplementing some of the previously mentioned issues, naming them stumbling blocks (LaRay 1998:173). The ones deserving more attention are

1) assumption of similarities, based on own assumption of proper way of living, not considering biological and social expectations;

2) non-verbal interpretations of people representing different cultures;

3) previously formed assumptions and stereotypes creating misleading image reducing effectiveness of communication;

4) wish to evaluate and compare individual, group or cultural perception to the one owns;

5) disturbance, as any intercultural communication is closely related to interaction with unknown, creating wish of defense.

Intercultural dialogue is also an effective form of intercultural communication and a tool for smoothing interethnic, interracial, interreligious contradictions and tensions, movement to peace and stability, sustainable development, solving the problems of preserving the natural and cultural environment and cultural diversity. It can also act as a means, model for solving the civilizational problems of the modern multicultural world in its global understanding, as well as a strategy of cultural policy of states in a multicultural world. It is necessary to understand the dialogue of cultures in the global tourism space as an effective form of intercultural communication, the main purpose of which is to achieve interaction, mutual understanding and mutual enrichment of peoples, countries and cultures

Having catered to international tourists for years, hotel workers in many countries already recognize the need for multicultural awareness and skills. Many hotel employees, however, do not have a

multicultural outlook. A study of 19 hotels that serve a large number of foreign guests found that communicating with those guests in their language is important. But speech alone is not enough, and guest-contact employees should learn about visitors' cultural expectations. Hoteliers should supply their personnel with multicultural training either on their own, in conjunction with other operations, or in partnership with local college programs. Strategies for multicultural training include language training and familiarization with the body language, social systems, history, and etiquette of other cultures.

It should be mentioned that intercultural communication is a tool for making of the tourist environment to provide a safe, comfortable, sustainable, harmonious, understandable and attractive environment for tourists. As a result, both verbal and non-verbal tourist communication are considered. And verbal communication systems are broadcast in the cultural and intercultural spaces of tourism through a system of concepts, which are verbalized in national and international tourism term systems.

**Conclusion**

To summarize, everything stated above, it must be pointed out, that the intercultural competence as a set of interrelated components (language, communicative, cultural and other competencies) is a social need of the individual, which provides it with intercultural adaptability, and professionally significant qualities of a new generation specialist, designed to act in a multicultural environment. It should also highlight the conceptual competence, in which it is believed that the necessary knowledge, understanding, ability and willingness to effectively interpret the figurative, conceptual, value meanings of concepts, and should be used correctly all of the above in communication linguocultural and linguocognitive concepts from the common for communicants cognitive base, as the fact that intercultural communication constantly and synchronously creates and recreates concepts in which it makes sense and in turn, involves the interaction of the concept spheres of different cultures.

Thus, it can be concluded that globalization has helped to develop contemporary tourism and at the same time created new challenges with further global integration. Discourse of intercultural communication, its importance and competences is among the key issues to be noted. Overall literature analysis of intercultural communication highlights conceptual cultural differences of emerging markets and content of these differences is challenging to business. Integration of basic principles of intercultural communication should be respected into international tourism business as they respect important elements of the industry (individual relations to group, perception and language)

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