

The Role of Discourse in Teaching Intercultural Professional Communication

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ABSTRACT

With Kazakhstan's accession to the Bologna Process, particular importance is attached to the professionally-oriented approach of teaching foreign languages to students, which facilitates formation of their foreign language communicative ability. The article deals with the problem of teaching English to students for the purpose of formation of international communicative competence of the future experts with the aid of professional discourse, which is defined as a verbal communication aimed at solving theoretical and practical problems that requires training and experience in a definite sphere of activity. The paper considers "discourse" from the perspectives of different theories and authors, it describes the main characteristics and types of discourse, differentiated the terms "discourse" and the term "text", examined the peculiarities of them and it also lists specific features of "discursive competence" and accentuates its importance in the process of teaching foreign language communication within the new paradigm of Kazakh education system.

KEYWORDS

discursive competence, foreign lingual discourse, intercultural communication, text, the subject of intercultural communication

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Introduction

The economic and socio-cultural changes in the modern world have led to the expansion of cooperation in international educational projects, to increase of professional contacts in a foreign language environment. An updated paradigm of higher education demands the specialists to have professional competence, an integral part of which is fluency in a foreign language and foreign language standards for professional communication. A wide range of multi-level training program allows to embody the tasks of training of competitive specialists with the proviso that, instead of targeting on only the absorption of the finished specialized knowledge, the content of education should contribute to formation of a common cultural and professional competence, to the readiness to learn throughout life. In this regard, the quality of higher education is characterized not only by the amount of knowledge in the specialty, but also by the ability of future graduates to lead foreign language professional communication with specialists in other countries.

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In the system of continuous education the independent work of students is becoming the key factor and consequently, their self-service access to educational resources and technologies of self-education. Motivations, interest, inclination of students are seen as the key and the most expensive resource efficiency of education.

Particular interest is shown to professionally-oriented approach of teaching foreign languages to students, which provides the formation of their ability to foreign language communication in specific professional, business and scientific spheres and situations, taking into account the characteristics of professional thinking. There is a need for new forms and methods of teaching, which ensures maximum efficiency of the implementation of new educational training programs that are in demand in the labor market. In this regard, the quality of higher education is characterized not only by the amount of knowledge in the specialty, but also by the ability of future graduates to foreign language communication. This implies the need not only to own foreign language communicative and intercultural competences, but also to be able to act adequately in a professional communication, have a working knowledge of research character information in a foreign language, to be able to consistently develop the discussion of professional problems.

Teaching the foreign languages in high schools now requires new approaches, as Kazakhstan's accession to the Bologna Process involves a large-scale training of students who are ready to learn in the education of European universities. In light of the new education policy in Europe, based on the competence approach in teaching foreign languages, there is a new task - to teach the student the ability to think independently and to independently acquire knowledge. In the context of the Bologna agreements, universities are seen as "corporation for the production of knowledge and as the locomotive for further integration in other spheres of life" (Globalization and education, 2004). At the present stage there are heated discussions about the Bologna Process. There are a wide range of discussions about issues of education and its modernization. Nowadays the Kazakh education system faces strategic challenges that cannot be solved without rethinking of the theory and practice of language education. Intercultural communication, which is determined by the development of global informational field, is considered as a priority area of education at the present stage.

Literature Review

Currently, many researchers recognize the extraordinary relevance of the study of intercultural competence as a component of communicative competence. Successful communication is necessary to the understanding and use of the body of knowledge possessed by native speakers, the participants of verbal interaction. V. Telia's approach seems conceptually significant in this review, according to which "Culture deals with a indiscrete way of thinking, it "speaks" the language of coherent and at the same time, non-linear fuzzy categories; conceptual understanding of the categories of culture finds its expression in natural language" (Telia, 1999).

"Today it has become clear that to study and to teach a foreign language it is necessary to do it in the context of social, cultural and political life of the people who speak those languages, that is closely connected with the world of the target language" (Kunanbayeva, 2005). This is due, primarily, to the fact that in the modern world in a situation of globalization, the problem of mutual understanding

between nations is becoming more and more acute. And one of the main tasks is to learn to overcome difficulties in contacts, communication, and sometimes in the collision of different cultures, which is caused by the difference in their historical, political and cultural development. The impact of intercultural interaction on the learning process is huge. It extends the background knowledge of the language picture of the world, the overall outlook of students.

In the professional communication the norms and values of the exchange of experience, exchange of activities, as well as specific forms and methods of human interaction in solving business issues, stereotypes in the service, officials and other behaviors play an important role. In order to cover the entire complex of relations in this sphere of human activity, the concept of “business culture” can be used (Business Culture, 1994). Culture of business man is manifested primarily in the culture of communication as the most important aspect of the activity. The scope of the concepts related to the business culture, which includes not only the norms and values of the exchange of experience, but also specific forms and methods of interaction between people in the solution of professional (business) issues (Astafurova, 1997). The interaction here is based on the strategies and tactics to achieve professional and industrial purposes, and the methods of persuasion of the impact. Established in speech practice the strategies usage patterns, techniques and choice of language means can form a discourse of professional communication in a variety of its forms and types (business letter, meeting, negotiations, etc.).

The importance of cultural factors in the general discourse and intercultural professional discourse in particular is due not only to its functional and pragmatic significance, but also to the cognitive bases of discursive activity. In the concept of Linde Sh. the system of discourse coherence is seen as a link between the structure of language and discursive practice (Linde, 1997). The system of coherence, by definition, is a system of beliefs (ideas, opinions, estimates, etc.) and relationships between them are accepted in a given culture. Focusing on the international community on the multilingual cooperation in solving global problems, of course, it is necessary to prepare graduates to be capable of dialogical cooperation. Such kind of specialist, a person with a high level of development of cognitive activity, who has good knowledge and communication foundations of intercultural communication, has a “secondary cognitive consciousness” and ability to adequately carry out intercultural communication is called “the subject of intercultural communication” (Kunanbayeva, 2010).

The role of discursive competence is increasing, which is an integral substance of the communicative competence and is a knowledge of the different types of discourses and the rules of their construction, as well as the ability to create and understand their view of the situation of communication.

Discourse competence involves the willingness of the students to construct utterances in the target language. The student must acquire the ability to locate information in the text, performing a variety of macrofunctions (description, narration, exposition, etc.); build a coherent written text (essay, business letter, etc.). When learning a foreign language work on discursive competence includes at an early stage testing of individual proposals (Igbayeva, 2010).

Methodological Framework

At the heart of discursive competence there is the notion of discourse. Discourse (from Lat. *Discursus* “conversation, the conversation”, francs. *Discourse* “speech



speech”, English. Discourse “written or oral communication, speech”, German. Diskurs “discussion, talk, speech” in different languages means speech, the process of language activity, a way of speaking.

In order to indicate the specificity of the discourse and its role in the training of an oral foreign language professional communication, it is necessary first of all to determine the understanding of this phenomenon.

Because of its ambiguity, the term “discourse” is used in philosophy, ethnology, anthropology, semiotics, sociology, linguistics, literary criticism, and others. There are works devoted to the discourse of well-known foreign and domestic scientists, such as N. Arutyunova, T. van Dijk, Y. Stepanov, E. Kubryakova, O. Alexandrov, M. Makarov, T. Nikolaev V. Krasnyh, V. Karasik, I. Rubert, T. Plekhanov, N. Kulibina, S. Podkidysheva, V. Tyupa, E. Suleimenova, G. Burkitbayeva, G. Amanbaeva, V. Lee, B. Ahatova, B. Zhumagulova, etc. So, E. Suleymenova writes: “It has become urgent to learn the language in its dynamic interaction with the real world and the changing worlds of new technologies, expanding the possibilities of obtaining, storing and transmitting information by the individual and society as a whole, the emergence of new types of texts and updating the old genres and styles” (Suleimenova, 2006).

In linguistics, the term discourse began to be widely used in the early 70s initially close to the term “functional style”. Under the functional style there is an understanding of the special type of texts (spoken, bureaucratic, newspaper, etc.), as well as inherent to every style of lexical and grammatical structure of the system as language phenomena which is studied in sphere of stylistics. In the Anglo-Saxon and European traditions in this period there were no stylistics as a special branch of linguistics and scientists used the term discourse as a synonym for the text. Later still linguists realized that discourse - is not only text, but also has some system behind it. As a result, with term functional style the term discourse was used, which was then completely replaced the previous one.

Data, Analysis, and Results

Expanding the use of the concept of discourse led to the fact that it has penetrated into the theory and teaching of foreign languages. According to researchers, borrowing the term discourse from linguistics is important, because, for a long time, the basic concept for the theory and practice of teaching the foreign languages was the text.

The text is “profitable” didactic material in the sense that it has a holistic and complete form and content, is the “pattern of verbal communication of the informant” (Dijk, 1989), which contains the studied language (lexical, grammatical) material, a certain topic, enabling the situation of communication. Thus, the text is presented as a carrier of specific information, as well as the sample of the usage of the particular language material in a specific speech situations.

Thus, the concept of discourse has grown, it is not the same as with text and have the right to independent existence in the theory and practice of foreign language teaching. It is also clear that at the present time in teaching communication in a foreign language it can not be limited to use only the concept of the text because it does not cover all of the properties of speech compositions that need to be taken into consideration. However, it is still not included in wide use, the teachers are not always familiar with it and often supplanted by the notion of “text”. Burkitbaeva G., continuing the theme, explained that “discourse describes the

communication process leading to the formation of the formal structure of the text". "From the perspective of information theory, the discourse has a certain structure consisting of the sender, recipient, message context, language and speech code sequence" (Burkitbayeva, 2004). The discourse concerns "inward" or domestic context. It includes the structure of the individual communicant with his knowledge, experience, moral character, motivation and structure of the "outside world".

For the theory and practice of training of foreign language it is important to understand the discourse as a complex speech product that is not confined to a particular statement, and has certain extralinguistic parameters such as: speaker, listener, their personal and social characteristics, and other aspects of the social situation.

The current trend in the development of communicative linguistics is to consider language as discourse. Comparing the language and discourse, we can clearly determine that the language itself is universal, and discourse by definition is special.

Depending on the scope of activities the stereotyped set of speech acts, the typical situation of communication inherent to representatives of a particular profession can be distinguished.

Some scientists estimate that there are currently a large number of studies on the relationship between culture and discourse (Wierzbicka, 1991). However, the language of discourse characteristics has still not received appropriate attention. At the same time it is acknowledged that theoretically informed studies of intercultural communication in the context of the business situation may contribute to the development of an integrated approach that brings together culture, language, discourse and communication. In clarifying the problems and issues of intercultural communication the important place is given to contrastive (comparative) study of discourse, which compares two or more cultures. In general, studies on intercultural communication are not limited with oral discourse; the scope of research is actively involved the discourse submitted by written texts on professional topics (business letter, instructions, etc.). Further analysis of the research in this area is based on the works of foreign scientists, published in English in various publications. The focus is on works that address culture specified use of language in the professional (business) discourse, written and oral.

In written form the discourse there are such genres as advertising, letters on professional topics (business, scientific, and others.). Written discourse has certain advantages for studying in the socio-cultural aspect. First of all submitted in writing (fixed) form of texts this kind of discourse can identify and describe the cultural characteristics that correlate with their linguistic expression. In addition, it is the linguistic side of written discourse has received a thorough and detailed description of the development paradigm of the theory of functional styles.

In the context of teaching the oral foreign language professional communication, studying particular discourse of a particular specialty, analyzing its form and content, we will inevitably enter into the semantic field of the field of knowledge, which is taken from the discourse. Cognizing this specific field, we are beginning to actively use specific to the discourse expressions, thereby gaining the ability to interact in different situations of professional communication. Some discourses are more preferred than others in certain circumstances, but the discourses are determined. In each specific field of professional communication there



is oriented choice of language means which reflect intentional installation of communicants.

Written discourse provides a reliable and easy to use language material for contrastive studies of language and cultural interaction in the discourse. The attention of researchers is attracted to the genre of business letter, the learning perspectives of which is supported by the data on the availability of culture specified differences identified in the benchmarking (Bhatia, 1993). The authors of these studies point out that the letter of the business genre (about employment, the grant to conduct scientific research, etc.) show a variation on a number of parameters such as between western and eastern cultures, and between Western cultures. Covering business letter fulfils basic function in Western cultures - to give self-esteem, ie, highlight, underline their skills and experience, "suitability" for this work. In East cultural society cover letter serves only "accompaniment" of the sent summary and is not used as an opportunity to influence the employer's decision to grant the job (Bhatia, 1993).

Professional communication is possible only among people who have a common body of knowledge. However, this is not enough for the successful implementation of the communication. As it was pointed out by M. Evdokimova, modern professional activity requires the development of specialists demanded by the international community, not only the skills related to their professional activities, but also the ability to think globally and critically, have not only communication, but also cognitive competence for understanding of background knowledge and understanding of foreign-language partners professional communication (Evdokimova, 2008).

Production activity of human can be multi-faceted and versatile. Communication in the professional field is characterized by multi-componence, because diverse areas of scientific communication have a special thesaurus, situations of interaction, communicative and practical intentions and strategies for achieving them (Astafurova, 1997). Students can get the necessary information about the professional thesaurus through the study of speech activity, i.e., discourse in which all the specific features of the foreign language society are reflected (Khaleeva, 1989).

In the field of foreign language education of students the particular interest is given to the increase of the efficiency of students' foreign language communicative competence formation through teaching foreign language professional discourse. According to known scientists N. Galskova and N. Gez, "the communicative competence is person's ability to understand and produce foreign-language expressions in a variety of socially determined situations, taking into account the linguistic and social rules that are held by native speakers" (Galskova & Gez, 2005).

Therefore, the formation of foreign language communicative competence of students should be directed at reducing cross-cultural distance between different societies through the formation of competencies that would help future specialists to carry out professional communication in terms of cultural interaction that is achievable in teaching of foreign language professional discourse. Therefore, using the definition of V. Safonova, the formation of students' foreign language communicative competence should be labeled as the full development of the individual, his ability and willingness to participate in professional foreign language communication on the basis of certain rules and requirements to communicate,

based on the principles of cooperation, mutual respect, the ability to analyze and present scientific hypotheses and defend the results of the studies (Safonova, 2004).

From the above it can be concluded that the personality-oriented and competence-based approaches are essential to develop an effective program of foreign language teaching for development of the foreign language education for students, because it contributes to the development of socially significant competences, implement communicative orientation of training to reveal the creative potential of students, to form skills of independent work, to raise tolerance in the communication process.

The foreign language professional discourse is determined by different researchers in different ways. Some define it as a set of linguistic mastery of the necessary knowledge and skills to adequately act in certain circumstances, professional communication (Shaturny, 2009). Other researchers understand by professional discourse the professional speech action as a specific concept of the social, and under the professional activity the socially significant interaction with its usual speech, covering all aspects of professional life activity, including socio-cultural and foreign language is understood (Proschyants, 2010).

Let's consider the concept of foreign language professional discourse as the basis of communicative behavior within a particular professional activity. Following Eluhina N. we can note that unlike text, discourse is an example of the implementation of certain communicative intentions in the context of a specific communicative situations and in relation to a specific partner, a representative of another culture, which is expressed in the appropriate situation, with help of the linguistic and nonlinguistic means (Eluhina, 2002). Analysis of the work of domestic and foreign researchers (T. Van Dijk, Makarova M., Burkitbayeva G., Akhatova B.) help to determine the following properties of discourse (In the space, 2010):

- situational conditionality with regard to its implementation in a particular situation, characteristic of the respective spheres of communication;
- thematic connectedness and conditionality as the substantial components of the discourse revealed within a particular theme;
- social orientation, because it is characterized by the social status of the communicants;
- dynamism in connection with the existence of the possibility of modifying the themes within the communicative situation;
- non-uniform structuring;
- the boundaries of uncertainty.

Teaching foreign language discourse makes it possible to generate communication skills in which students need to understand in what ways are the interlocutors, the situation in which communication is carried out and how, depending on these factors, it is necessary to build the statement. It should be noted that the professional community is relatively limited on the composition of a community of people, which is characterized by a certain discourse, a certain picture of the world is built, that is defined by the essence of the profession and a native of professional activity (Makarov, 2003). Thus the concept of foreign language professional discourse arises that is based on objective data and aims to transfer knowledge using strictly selected linguistic and stylistic means.



The foreign language professional discourse is characterized by knowledge of a number of linguistic and extra-linguistic factors, among which are the particular objective and cognitive world of communicants, variety of types of special texts and the professional communication.

It should also consider the conflicts that arise in the understanding and communication between specialists and non-specialists. Of particular importance in this case is the mental lexicon as a category of discourse as an active living system which is constantly going on to establish new contacts, allowing to find and to realize the meaning of words, deterministic communication professional sphere (Gural, 2009).

Learning foreign language professional discourse, i.e., development of the ability to carry out foreign-language communication on professional issues through the formation of the various competencies that make up the foreign lingual communicative competence, is of particular interest. Learning a foreign language is intended to ensure (Ter-Minasova, 2009):

- raise of the level of educational autonomy, the ability to self-education;
- the development of cognitive and research skills;
- development of information culture;
- expansion of the outlook and increase general culture of students;
- fostering tolerance and respect for the spiritual values of different countries and peoples.

A mandatory condition for the successful implementation of foreign language communication is the presence of communicants general background knowledge about the world, sufficient specialized knowledge and professional understanding of the subject matter, which is defined as a foreign language discourse. The foreign language professional discourse can be implemented in a business conversation, discussion, debate, report, report, review, report, research paper, thesis work, etc. Its substantial and substantive content is inextricably linked with the so-called “language for special purposes”, which is the means of implementation of discourse and an integral part of foreign language professional discourse - the mental lexicon. In this context, a language for specific purposes is considered as a set of linguistic resources used in the texts of foreign language communication and to transmit information on a certain topic, speech reception, discussion, analysis (Ozerova, 2000).

The simulated training process a reference text and a set of exercises to it are used. The text is not chosen accidentally, because the communicative function of the text is shown through its property to be the most important means of human communication, information exchange of partners in communication (Folomkina, 2005). Its cognitive function is realized through the formation of skills and abilities of expression judgments or conclusions on the subject of communication. It has a discursivity, situationality of communication, has thematic relatedness to the field of communication, fits to a certain terminological system. Text is a “product of verbal expression that contains the necessary for the transmission of information organized in a semantic and structural unity of a certain level of language” (Galskova, 2005). According to the S. Schatilova, text is used as a means of teaching writing and speaking, and in the first stage, it can be reproductive, later becomes productive when the student speaks freely about reading, presents its opinion on the text of the problems (Shatilova, 1990).

The next step is training to work with the information on the basis of the authentic text. According to T. Serova, using tasks to the texts on pre-reading, while-reading and post-reading steps is necessary to form the ability to search for parts, identification of key points, analysis of information, presentation of the results in a form appropriate communication model (using the right phrases and expressions for the adequate to the perception of the presentation of processed text memorization information in the form of certain frames), discussion and new ideas on the basis of selected materials (with training in the use of appropriate means of communication) (Serova & Kovaleva, 2006).

Further, this activity should have independent, creative nature, to promote self-actualization of students, enhancing their ability to cognition.

The range of educational and speech exercises include exercises aimed at formation of basics of professional communication through solving communicative tasks in educational and speech situations. They mimic the typical situation of communication and are built on the professional orientation discussions. The basis of the exercises consists of most commonly used phrases, sentences for discussion. It helps to form the ability to ask questions, explain their point of view, to express approval or criticism of the interlocutor, etc.

In these exercises, the vocabulary used by professional terminology system, to form the ability to correctly construct statement of read material, thus contributing to teaching the foreign language professional discourse.

Exercise - one of the organizational and technological means (or forms) of foreign language education in the formation of foreign language competence. Understanding of the exercises within the meaning of the text as the basis for the formation of practical skills for intercultural communication takes exercise beyond textbook material, or minimum unit training speech activity (Kunanbayeva, 2010).

This treatment offers a viewing the exercise from the position of organizational-activity forms of mastering the objective content of foreign language education criteria, which is their primary purpose, because it is the exercises have objective, structurally standardized, typed, effective character.

Classification of exercise depends on the commitment to a particular theory or approach. According to the position of Kunanbaeva S. modeling of context-based communication is carried out in three phases – preparing phase, situational modeling phase and phase of intercultural professional communication. In keeping with the provisions of cognitive-linguacultural methodology (Kunanbayeva, 2005), and skills generated in the process of formation of tourist discourse, and a set of exercises as a way to achieve the competent result, can be presented in five blocks used at appropriate stages. Namely:

- 1) re-cognitive exercise;
- 2) interpretive exercise;
- 3) analytical and evaluation exercises;
- 4) reproductive and modifying exercises;
- 5) situational and creative exercises.

The determining factor in educational and speech situations is the motive of the communication. In developing such situations it is necessary to take into account the psychological characteristics of students and their personal interests to carry out effective communication. Working with professionally-oriented tasks



(group and individual) shows that by that there is improvement of professional communication skills, improvement of foreign language communicative competence, formation of the foundations of foreign language professional discourse possession of the future experts. During the implementation of professionally-oriented task activities the skills such as a willingness to work in a team, the ability of the public presentation, the ability to plan informational retrieval, work with information, analyze and process it, the ability to evaluate their own progress in the acquisition of knowledge can be developed.

Based on the understanding of the text as one of the important factors to develop the subject of intercultural communication, we should stop and reveal the features of the exercises that are integrated into learning activities.

In modern textbooks there are various types of exercises, such as:

- 1) exchange of views / information in situations of professional communication, on the basis of certain benefits of the text;
- 2) the debate on the basis of the given question;
- 3) the expression of agreement / disagreement with the statements on the read text;
- 4) questions to the text to encourage the deployment of thought on the basis of knowledge, opinions and experience;
- 5) study, discussion and solution of situations from business practices;
- 6) role play.

Exercises are an integral part of the text as a unit of study, and its structure should coincide with the real life communication structure. Learning success is largely dependent on how in the course of the exercises, students master this text, learn to communicate on professional topics in the classroom, acquire the freedom to express their thoughts.

In addition to the exercises presented in the textbooks, the most important in the structure of the academic text is to use in the classroom to manage the creative exercise of discussions / debates on professional topics. Topics of discussion may be different, affecting certain specific topics of the textbook section and go beyond them. For example, the problem of personal relationships between representatives of competing companies, security companies and potential risks raised in the situation of the business practices of the textbook "Keys to Management" (Unit 2, Decision-making ") may develop into a discussion of personal quality management, legal aspects of the work and the contractual obligations of employees in the company, company policy, staff relations within the company, etc.

For these exercises it is important to:

- 1) integrate in the discussion of linguistic material unit, which corresponds to the stage of learning and correlated to a specific section of the textbook;
- 2) demonstrate the statements of the teacher as a way of bringing language material and induce factor trainees statements;
- 3) correct errors by repeated or instant correction to avoid creating barriers to communication of students and corresponds to the natural communication;
- 4) outline of the development of thought corresponds to the model of verbal expression of intent;

6) bringing examples from business gurus to agree on this issue as a stimulating factor expression and communication activities of the trainees.

That creative exercises Discussion / Debate to develop a mechanism of text structuring, formation and formulation of ideas in foreign lingual professional communication. They may be based on a series of interrelated issues within one or several interrelated themes, and these questions, being extremely versatile (can be converted to any student), suppose an extraordinary (as appealing to the personality and opinion, and the answer is student-specific) but technically (in terms of grammar) programmed response, in turn, initiates the discussion. This form of exercise also reflects the reaction of the teacher and the students, because it is an adequate interlocutor reaction distinguishes text dialogue from the traditional question-answer exercises. Raised in this article, the problem requires further development in the form of creation in line with the above concept creative exercise. Theory and practice lead us to the conclusion that the training on the basis of the discourse as a teaching unit enables students to successfully learn the mechanisms of speech activities and discussion / debate as a creative form of exercise is an effective way of communicative teaching professional communication.

Discussions and Conclusions

When selecting learning technology the principle of maximum proximity of the educational process to the real situations of professional communication should be the main aspect. Understanding the purpose of foreign language learning as the formation of foreign language communicative competence, which includes the ability to conduct foreign language professional communication, we denote one of the tasks, the solvation of which is necessary for the achievement of this goal, as the formation of skills of such communication through the learning of foreign language professional discourse.

The modern concept of education encourages participation in the dialogue of cultures on the basis of integration and simultaneous differentiation of the socio-economic, political and ethnic traditions. Therefore, discursive communication serves the purpose sought by the communicative method of implementing one of the fundamental principles of teaching foreign languages - verbal communicative orientation.

In the light of all the above we can draw the following conclusion: the teaching of foreign languages, according to the latest objectives of education and the requirements of professionals, based on the paradigm it is necessary to build, "discourse - communication - Intercultural Communication".

Disclosure statement

No potential conflict of interest was reported by the authors.

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