

THE ROLE OF INTERCULTURAL COMPETENCE IN TEACHING BUSINESS ENGLISH

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***Abstract.** Back in 1993, in “Context and culture in language teaching”, Claire Kramsch rightfully noted that “every time we speak we perform a cultural act.” As Business English trainers, our main purpose is to enhance learners’ ability to communicate successfully in various contexts. Consequently, the teaching and learning processes go well beyond language accuracy and vocabulary acquisition. It is therefore quintessential to integrate intercultural skills in the Business English class. The aim of this paper is to discuss the main trends in developing intercultural competence in English by pointing to the main areas that need to be covered in order to enable learners acquire the skills necessary to do business internationally. This may be achieved by understanding and actively using the rules that govern discourse conventions, country specifics, corporate cultures, gender issues, politeness, conflict management, etc. Whether the educational system in our country can provide the appropriate context for acquiring these skills remains to be debated. First, we will provide an overview of the main researchers’ work in the field of intercultural communication. Then, we will identify and discuss the key issues which are paramount to successful business communication. Finally, we will focus on how these key issues can be taught to, understood and actively used by undergraduate Business students.*

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