

**Crossing Borders. Raising Cultural Awareness of Students in Pedagogy by Applying the Interdisciplinary Approach to Analyse Conceptual Metaphors in O. Henry's Short Story "The Last Leaf"**

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**Abstract:** *This article presents a model for raising students' cultural awareness in teaching Bulgarian and English languages through interdisciplinary analysis and discussion of conceptual metaphors in O. Henry's short story "The Last Leaf". Initially, it defines and discusses three main concepts. The first is the interdisciplinary method. The latter integrates knowledge and techniques from multiple disciplines and is applied for a more comprehensive and in-depth understanding of the discussed topics and analysis of their interrelationships. The design of the students' activities and discussions finds ground in the Integrated Process Model of Intercultural Competence, suggested by Diana Bebenova-Nikolova. Another theory that the article uses is the theory of conceptual metaphors, first presented by George Lakoff and Mark Johnson, which explores metaphors not simply as a decorative tool in language but as a conceptual tool for structuring, restructuring, and even creating reality. Following these stepping stones, the article describes applying an in-depth holistic and interdisciplinary approach to some conceptual metaphors from the story "The Last Leaf" to raise the intercultural sensitivity hand-in-hand with the language competency of pre-teachers in English. The described practice shows how some literary texts can be used to cross borders and communicate cultural issues metaphorically.*

**Keywords:** *conceptual metaphor; intercultural competence; interdisciplinary approach.*