

CURRENT ISSUES OF DEVELOPMENT OF MULTICULTURAL COMPETENCE IN CONDITIONS OF GLOBAL MIGRATION PROCESS (SITUATION IN LITHUANIA)

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Abstract

The interest of politicians, scholars, media representatives and active citizens in various countries in the topic of multiculturalism¹ during the recent decades has notably increased. One of the obvious reasons thereof is a more globalized nature of the world and an increase in international migration flows. In Lithuania the research on this topic, in particular on the analysis of problems of intercultural competence, does not have a long history, however, a number of scientific papers have already been published (*Jucevičius, 2001; Pruskus, 2003; Petkevičiūtė, 2009*). Nevertheless, the research has been conducted rather sporadically, and usually deals only with individual issues of intercultural competence. The article presents the approach of foreign and Lithuanian scholars and UNESCO to the phenomenon of interculturalism and trends of its expression in contemporary society and the results of an empirical study with 1,067 respondents. Based on the collected data the author provides assessment on the 'weak spots' of the intercultural competence characteristic of the Lithuanians and conclusions on further possible development of this competence. In most cases due to underdeveloped skills the acquired intercultural competence is loosely related with the level of education, besides, in the public sector this correlation is even lower than in the private sector. There can be drawn a conclusion that in Lithuania people perceive the importance of communication with people from other countries and positively evaluate the benefits of the development process of acquiring intercultural competence.

Keywords: globalization, migration, interculturalism, intercultural competence.

Classification JEL: M12 – Personnel Management.

1. Introduction

The growing flows of interstate migration, especially non-regulated migration, such as illegals and refugees (*UNESCO, 2013*), signal to both politicians of different countries and managers of organizations that it is necessary to seek possibilities for cooperation with the newly arrived, including the challenges of getting acquainted with not always well-known cultures, the prevailing etiquette norms, negotiation style, organizational culture, and to help foreigners who stay in the country legally to get acquainted and integrate into the new society. The society's current perception of the intercultural differences of countries and various ethnic groups living there has been formed by the many efforts of scientists, including Florence R. Kluckhohn and Fred L. Strodbeck (*1961*), Andre Laurent (*1983*), Geert J. Hofstede (*1980, 1988, 1991*), Fons Trompenaars (*1994*), Charles Hampden-Turner (*1991*), Farid Elashmawi and Philip R. Harris (*1993*), Christopher A. Bartlett and Sumantra Ghoshal (*1998*), Manuel London and Valerie I. Sessa (*1999*), Nancy J. Adler (*2002*). E.g., Geert J. Hofstede (*1980*) claims that understanding people means understanding their origin, which helps to foresee their current and future behaviour.

It is forecasted that in the near historical perspective the number of culturally monogamous countries will gradually decrease, and the existence in a multicultural environment will become a mundane, so those who arrive in a foreign country and wish to become established in it are faced with an environmental pressure to follow the existing rules and norms of behaviour, to get acquainted with the country's cultural characteristics and to learn to communicate in the official language of the country. Research results show that such clash of different cultures

¹ In legal, scientific, historic and other types of literature the concept of interculturalism is most commonly used alongside such concept as multiculturalism, so this article relies on the traditional use of these concepts.

often leads to various conflict situations, miscommunication, and formation of stereotypes, thus with time it was realized that conscious understanding and sensitivity to other ethnic groups must be shown, covering openness and flexibility towards the relevant changes when it comes to other attitudes and values (*Adams, 1995; Adler, 2002*).

Specialists acknowledge that at present the historically emergent peculiarities of intercultural communication both on a national level as well as on a level of a separate community, a specific work or family environment should be perceived not as an obstacle, but as an advantage and an opportunity to take advantage of other cultural strengths, due to which the development of tolerance, knowledge on the topic of multiculturalism, and attainment of relevant intercultural competence should be on the agenda of the majority of Member States (*Adams, 1995; London & Sessa, 1999; Adler, 2002; Deardorff, 2006; etc.*).

Recently, the interest in the topic of interculturalism among scientists has increased significantly: various aspects related to multiculturalism are examined, including intercultural communication, its efficiency, and models, formation of intercultural teams and efficiency of their performance (*Lloyd & Hartel, 2009; Oerlemans & Peeters, 2010*), application of Western style of management in different cultures (*Paige, Jacobs-Cassuto et al.*), leadership in a multicultural environment for the development of self-consciousness, knowledge and skills (*Connerley & Pedersen, 2005*), the development of intercultural training (*Graf, 2004*), etc. Scientific journals pay more attention to characteristic features of a global leader (*Hurn, 1999; Stanek, 2000*) especially in respect to his abilities to manage cultural diversity. Management theory refers to this problem as Diversity Management.

Intercultural issues have become the focus of scientists of new EU member states, e.g. Martina Blaškova and Rudolf Blaško (*2015*) from Slovakia published their research results on 'Tolerance and flexibility as Crucial Competences of Multicultural Team Leader'; Lotārs Dubkēvičset al. (*2015*) analyse 'Evaluation of Intercultural Competency in Organizational Culture: Analysis of the Example of Latvia'.

In Lithuania research on cultural diversity, multiculturalism and intercultural competence is quite a new direction. Giedrius Jucevičius (*2001*) analysed cultural features of Lithuanian organizations in the European context, Valdas Pruskus (*2003*) focused on issues of multicultural communication and management, A. Radzevičienė (*2004*), Kristina Keršienė and Asta Savanevičienė (*2005*) discussed structural aspects of multicultural competence in an organization, Jolanta Reingardė et al. (*2010*), Giedrė Paurienė (*2011*) analysed the impact of training on the development of tolerance and intercultural competence, Nijolė Petkevičiūtė (*2010, 2011*) analysed the relations of intercultural competence with the employee's career, peculiarities of intercultural negotiations, intercultural competence of managers, etc., Aušra Repečkienė et al. (*2011*) focused on management of cultural diversity.

This article analyses in the form of discussion the approach of foreign and Lithuanian scholars and international organizations (UNESCO, UN) to multiculturalism and expression of multicultural competence, discusses the results of the study conducted by the author in Lithuania, which involved 1,067 respondents, and on the basis thereof formulates recommendations on the conditions of development of this process.

2. Contemporary topicalities of intercultural competency development

Lyle M. Spencer, Signe M. Spencer (*1993*), Daniel Goleman et al. (*1999*), Richard E. Boyatzis and Argun Saatcioglu (*2008*), Michael A. Campion, Alexis A. Fink, Brian J. Ruggeberg, Linda Carr, Geneva M. Phillips and Ronald B. Odman (*2011*) believe that the definition of competence should rely on such dimensions as knowledge, skills and attitudes. Intercultural competency is a very complex term, because it builds on another already complex term – culture (*Williams, 1983*). Culture represents a complex pattern of beliefs, expectations, ideas, values, attitudes and behaviours shared by members of a group or team (*Hellriegel &*

Slocum, 2004). Aspects of culture can relate to rituals, ceremonies, language, norms, values, philosophy of life, and a 'feeling' that you might have being with people from this group or team, which might be just a few people or a large number (*De Bono, Jones & Van der Heijden, 2008*).

The UNESCO report of 2009 on the conceptual framework of intercultural competence highlighted the fact that due to the ongoing globalization the world is shrinking, there is a need for different cultures² to develop a closer relationship than ever before (*2013: 7*). At present it is recognized that one of the key factors characterizing the process of globalization is the ever increasing flow of international migration of individual persons and the entire communities, which results in noticeable intermingling of different cultures with their values, customs, and religious beliefs. E.g., according to the UN figures the volume of international migration (for the purpose of work, family, students, tourists, refugees³, etc.) in Europe from 1990 to 2015 increased by 1.55 times and reached 76.1 million people, besides, migration within the European countries amounted to 39.9 million of people (<http://www.un.org/en/development/desa/population/migration/data/estimates2/estimatesgraphs.shtml?0g0>)⁴. Global migration processes inevitably expand the cultural boundaries, increase the pace of social transformation and, as an overall result, cultural diversity and intercultural communication manifest themselves as a fact of modern life, whereas such features of intercultural skills as the ability to discuss complicated and important topics as values, beliefs and attitudes among the multicultural group members in a way which would not cause conflict, have become a prerequisite to respond to the new challenges. It is obvious that in this case we are faced with human rights issues that are to be considered as a relevant topic for anyone interested in intercultural dialogue in order to develop the culture of peace, because the culture of peace, first of all, conflict prevention, education for tolerance, mutual respect and dialogue (*UNESCO, 2011a*). Table 1 presents the attitude of D. L. Adams, De Merode, M. London, V. I. Sessa, N. J. Adler, D. K. Deardorff et al. to interculturalism and intercultural competence.

The systemic analysis of information presented in Table 1 allows to claim that multiculturalism and personal multicultural competence are characterised by:

- Awareness of cultural features of an ethnic group, its history, values, the belief system, tolerant attitude towards people from a different culture;
- A conscious understanding and sensitivity to another ethnic group, which includes openness, flexibility and empathy for people from other cultures;
- The ability to motivate to work in an intercultural environment;
- Awareness of how to build good relations between different cultural groups;
- The ability to solve intercultural problems synergistically.

D. K. Deardorff (*2009*) claims that proficiency in a foreign language as such does not let us to describe a person as being interculturally competent, because, although proficiency in a foreign language is necessary, it is not the only element of intercultural competence. Intercultural competence cannot be assessed as a given thing, thus the development of this

² Darla K. Deardorff (*2006*) defines 'culture' as values, beliefs and norms characteristic of a group of humans and therefore culture shapes the procedure for people to communicate and act, that is, the way they interact with others.

³ At present, 13 million refugees all over the world need help (according to data of the UN Refugee Agency in 2014). The world's most exciting and most worrying situation is that of refugees from Syria, Iraq, Afghanistan. The number of refugees in these countries is growing rapidly, and this growth leads to wars in Syria and Iraq, conflicts and instability in Afghanistan (<http://straipsniai.pabegelis.lt/index.php/naujienos/14-pabegeliai-europoje-statistika-ir-issukiai>).

⁴ An increase in migration rate is observed in Lithuania as well, e.g., in 2010 more than 5 thousands of immigrants came to Lithuania, whereas in 2014 this number increased by 4.7 times and exceeded 24.3 thousand people (<http://osp.stat.gov.lt/statistiniu-rodikliu-analize?portletFormName=visualization&hash=687e2dfa-2c1b-445b-a7ac-a82292c71913>).

competence requires a person to constantly develop (Hoopes, 1997; Fantini, 2000; Byram, 2004).

Table 1. Diverse definitions of intercultural competency (compiled by the author)

Authors/sources	Description of interculturalism and intercultural competence
Diane L. Adams (1995) <i>Health issues for women of color: A cultural diversity perspective</i> . Thousand Oaks: SAGE Publications. http://plato.stanford.edu/entries/multiculturalism/	Knowledge of another ethnic group's cultural characteristic features, history, values, belief system and the ability to adequately deal with its members; conscious understanding and sensitivity to another ethnic group, including openness and flexibility towards the relevant changes when it comes to other attitudes and values
De Merode (1997), cited in Mary L. Connerley, Paul B. Pedersen. 2005. <i>Leadership in a Diverse and Multicultural Environment – Developing Awareness, Knowledge, Skills</i> , SAGE Publications, p. 72. http://www.sagepub.com/sites/default/files/upm-binaries/4965_Connerley_I_Proof_3_Chapter_5.pdf	The ability to motivate the creation of intercultural teams, the ability to lead intercultural negotiations, the ability to select personnel and evaluate employees in different cultural environments, awareness of how to build good relations between different cultural groups
Manuel London & Valerie I. Sessa (1999). Selection of international executives: An introduction and annotated bibliography. Monograph. Greensboro, NC: Center for Creative Leadership	The ability to positively evaluate other cultures, awareness of cultural differences, empathy for other cultures, recognition of cultural differences, liberalism, sharing cultural differences with other
Nancy J. Adler (2002), cited in Mary L. Connerley & Paul B. Pedersen. 2005. <i>Leadership in a Diverse and Multicultural Environment – Developing Awareness, Knowledge, Skills</i> , SAGE Publications, p. 72. http://www.sagepub.com/sites/default/files/upm-binaries/4965_Connerley_I_Proof_3_Chapter_5.pdf	The ability to facilitate cultural sensitivity, the ability to solve intercultural problems synergistically, the ability to negotiate in the diverse cultural environment
Darla K. Deardorff (2006). <i>Journal of Studies in International Education</i> , Fall 10, p. 241–266 and <i>The SAGE Handbook of Intercultural Competence</i> , 2009 (Thousand Oaks: Sage)	Effective and appropriate behaviour when communicating in an intercultural environment, where 'effective' and 'appropriate' behaviour and the consequences of the effectiveness of communication assessed by another person; behavioural suitability directly related to cultural sensitivity and regarded as the cultural norm for this person.
Multiculturalism. 2010. Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy. http://plato.stanford.edu/entries/multiculturalism/	A body of thought in political philosophy about the proper way to respond to cultural and religious diversity, which recognizes that mere toleration of group differences is not enough; there must be legally enacted norms of such a group of people, on an equal footing as the rights of local people.
Conceptual and Operational Framework Intercultural Competences. Published in 2013 by UNESCO, p.12 http://unesdoc.unesco.org/images/0021/002197/219768e.pdf	Merger of two or more different cultural groups that interact or affect each other. and when all the group relations develop into a subculture or cooperating cultures
Cultural Competence and Spirituality in Community Building/Cultural Competence in a Multicultural World http://ctb.ku.edu/en/table-of-contents/culture/cultural-competence/culturally-competent-organizations/main	The interaction of two or more entities (individual people, a group) who represent different cultures, orientations, attitudes of life, customs, etc., or organizations, which declare the objectives and missions oriented to people from different cultures.

The evaluation of this aspect suggests that communication with people of other cultures provides great possibilities to develop intercultural competence, however, as A. Fantini (2006) notes, the process of 'becoming competent' often lasts for a lifetime. Often the development of intercultural competence can be hindered by a person's preconception or unreasoned prejudices against foreigners. U. Liebschand and N. Petkevičiūtė (2005) refer to preconception or unreasoned prejudices as an irrational feeling of dislike or even hatred, based on direct experience or lack of knowledge about the object. This position is also supported by A. C. Krizan, P. Merrier, J. Logan and K. Williams (2008), who note that lack of knowledge about cultural diversity and inability to understand other cultures give rise to stereotypes, as they rely on a simplified principle – they are not like 'us'. Due to these reasons it is important to not only acquire knowledge in the process of formal education and thus form positive attitudes towards foreigners, but also to constantly develop the acquired skills.

Therefore, interculturalism can be characterized as a *two-way process*, where awareness and sensitivity to another ethnic group should be assessed by applying features of multicultural /intercultural competence, therefore, to be a competent actor in an intercultural environment, a modern man needs the basic knowledge and relevant skills of interculturalism, management, communication and psychology. The focus of scientific researches is on the issue of effective co-operation of people, determined by the necessity to be able to communicate with each other in foreign languages, the need to be aware of other cultures, to know the history of different countries and the like.

3. Methods

The study on the expression of intercultural competence in the present article is based on the systematic analysis of scientific literature on the topic of multiculturalism, which can be described as a *collision of two dimensions*: global migration processes and an individual attitude to multiculturalism and his competence to act in this environment.

Hypothetically it can be said that positive assessment of interculturalism as a phenomenon and individual elements of intercultural competence by a person shows that he views representatives of other cultural groups positively and is able to learn, work and live together with them.

The *aim of the study* is to analyse the surveyed Lithuanian respondents' evaluation of the importance of intercultural competence and reveal their relations with cultural diversity in the private and public sectors according to the level of education. The study consists of two blocks of diagnostic research, distinguishing criteria selected on the basis of scientific works of other researchers (Adams, 1995; London & Sessa, 1999; Adler, 2002; Pruskus, 2003; Connerley & Pedersen, 2005; Keršienė & Savanevičienė, 2005; Deardorff, 2006; Oerlemans & Peeters, 2010; Petkevičiūtė 2010, 2011). The first block helps to establish the importance of the content of intercultural competence: knowledge, attitudes, skills and cultural awareness. The second block helps to reveal the respondents' ability to act under conditions of cultural diversity.

To analyse the respondents' views on cultural diversity and the intercultural competence a quantitative survey was carried out by placing a questionnaire on the website 'Apklausa.LT'. The total respondent sample is N = 1,067 people. The questionnaire includes demographic information of the respondents (Table 2) and questions aimed to analyse the respondents' need for communication with foreigners and international mobility, and assess their interculturalism and multicultural competence.

The demographic characteristics of the participants of the quantitative analysis reveal that 82.6% (881 respondent) completed Bachelor (39.3%) and Master (43.3%) degrees; 59.1% are of 25–50 years old; 50.2% (535 people) have more than 5 years of work experience; 69.7% work in the public sector and 30.3% work in the private sector; almost 40% work in large organizations, the others – in small and medium organizations. The structure and scope of the

respondents' demographic characteristics adequately disclose the situation of the possibilities of the development of intercultural competence in Lithuania. The data on the composition of interculturalism and the importance of intercultural competence was collected on the basis of a 5-point Likert scale, where 5 corresponds to evaluations 'very important' and 'I totally agree', whereas 1 corresponds to 'unimportant' or 'disagree'.

Table 2. The demographic characteristics of the respondents (own study)

Attribute	Education (respondent, %)								Total (respondent, %)	
	Secondary		Bachelor		Master		PhD.			
Age in years										
< 25	95	8.9	106	9.9	10	1.0	1	0.1	212	19.9
25 to 35	23	2.2	149	13.9	172	16.1	5	0.5	349	32.7
35 to 50	15	1.4	113	10.6	138	12.9	16	1.5	282	26.4
> 50	10	0.9	50	4.7	142	13.3	20	1.9	222	20.8
Not specified	1	0.1	1	0.1	—	—	—	—	2	0.2
Sector										
Public	80	7.50	258	24.2	368	34.5	38	3.6	744	69.7
Private	64	6.0	161	15.1	94	8.8	4	0.3	323	30.3
Organization size										
Small (<50 employees)	65	6.1	149	13.9	97	9.1	7	0.7	318	29.8
medium (50 to 250 employees)	33	3.1	115	10.8	171	16.0	9	0.8	328	30.7
Large (>250 employees)	44	4.1	152	14.3	193	18.1	25	2.3	414	38.8
Not specified	2	0.2	3	0.3	1	0.1	1	0.1	7	0.7
Length of experience in years										
< 1	45	4.2	85	8.0	33	31.0	1	0.1	164	15.3
1 to 5	62	5.8	149	14.0	142	13.3	3	0.3	356	33.4
5 <	35	3.3	179	16.8	284	22.6	37	3.5	535	50.2
Not specified	2	0.2	6	0.5	3	0.3	1	0.1	12	1.1
Total	144	13.5	419	39.3	462	43.3	42	3.9	1067	100.0

The results are generalized by means of SPSS package version 16.0. Percentage frequencies were calculated; the analysis of statistical significance was checked by calculating the difference between two average scores of diagnostic groups. To assess the statistical significance of differences in distribution of responses in different groups of respondents Pearson Correlation and t-test, with $p \leq 0.05$, was applied. The measured coefficient of internal consistency of the scale Cronbach α was 0.886.

4. The research

In the course of the analysis of the topic of multiculturalism in the context of migration processes the data on the current needs of Lithuanian respondents for communication with foreigners were collected. Figure 1 presents information on the frequency of respondents' communication, which reveals that for more than a half of the respondents relations with foreigners have become usual in the process of work (55%), every eighth respondent needs to communicate with foreigners not less than once per three months (12%), every fifth respondent needs to communicate with foreigners once per six months (22%), whereas only 11% of the respondents claimed that they do not have such experience.

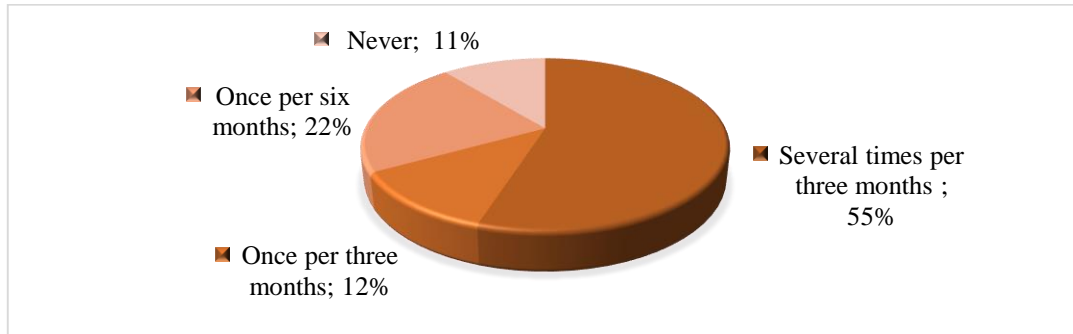


Figure 1. Frequency of cooperation with foreigners (own study)

Figure 2 shows that the majority of Lithuanians communicate with foreigners without leaving Lithuania (52%), almost every third respondent (28%) goes on business trips only once per several years, whereas only every fifth respondent goes abroad on business several times per year.

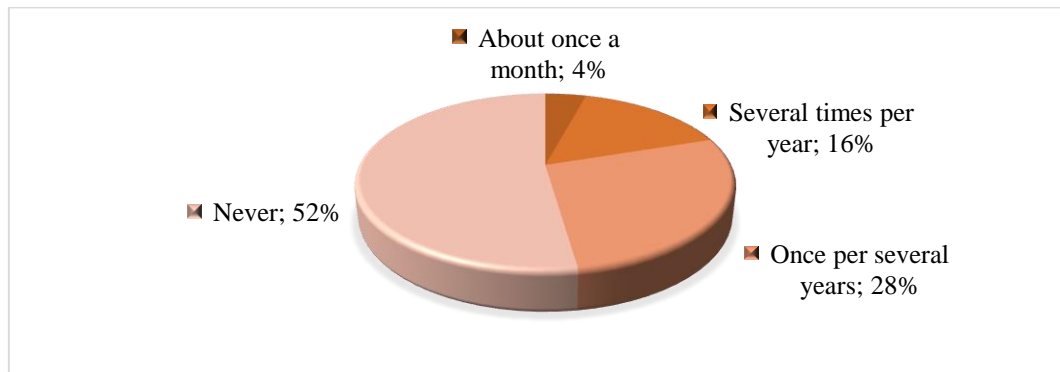


Figure 2. Frequency of business trips abroad (own study)

As shown, the need to acquire and develop intercultural competence in the Lithuanian society is quite varied and evaluated from a 'very important' to 'not important / not relevant'. The study showed that more than half of the respondents (51.9%) most frequently communicate with people from Eastern Europe (Russia, Ukraine, Belarus), Baltic states (Latvia and Estonia) and Middle Europe (Poland, Czech Republic, Slovakia, Hungary). In the last decade there has been a significant increase in trips to the West (France, Germany, Spain), North and South European countries and at the moment trips have become an important intercultural phenomenon for four out of ten respondents who go abroad. Table 3 contains the information on the countries of most frequent contact.

During the study a correlation between the importance of the elements of intercultural competence and the respondents' education was verified statistically (Table 4). The respondents' evaluations reveal that the perception of the importance of intercultural competence has a weak correlation with their education (Pearson Correlation did not exceed 0.18), besides, in the public sector this correlation is lower than in the private sector.

A statistically significant correlation ($p\text{-value} \leq 0.05$) with the respondents' education was established for the following elements of intercultural competence: *Knowing of international work protocol*, *Knowing of foreign language(s)*, and *Flexibility*. Correlation between elements of the competence of tolerating cultural and racial differences and the respondents' education is negative (-.03), which reveals a reserved attitude of the elderly people towards foreigners.

Table 3. With people from which countries do you communicate most often? (own study)

Destinations	%
East Europe (Russia, Ukraine, Belarus)	19.7
Baltic states (Latvia, Estonia,)	16.4
Middle Europe (Poland, Czech Republic, Hungary, Slovakia)	15.8
West Europe (France, Germany, Spain, Great Britain)	12.4
North Europe (Denmark, Norway, Sweden)	11.0
South Europe (Italy, Greece and other)	6.6
North America (Canada, USA)	3.8
Far East (China, South Korea, Japan, Philippines)	2.4
Africa (Libya, Sudan, Nigeria and other)	2.0
Near East (Iran, Iraq, Syria, Israel, Egypt, Qatar, Lebanon)	1.9
Australia, New Zealand, Indonesia	1.2
South America (Brazil, Argentina, Columbia, Venezuela)	0.9
Other	5.9

Table 4. Correlation between the respondents' education and intercultural competence elements according to their importance (own study)

Elements of intercultural competence		Respondents' education by sector of activity	
		private	public
<i>Knowing of international work protocol</i>	<i>Pearson Correlation</i>	0.18	0.01
	<i>Sig. (1-tailed)</i>	0.00	0.41
<i>Knowing of foreign language(s)</i>	<i>Pearson Correlation</i>	0.15	0.06
	<i>Sig. (1-tailed)</i>	0.00	0.06
<i>Flexibility</i>	<i>Pearson Correlation</i>	0.09	0.02
	<i>Sig. (1-tailed)</i>	0.05	0.34

To select the respondents employed in private (324 people) and public (750) sectors, average values (t-criteria) of features which reflect the importance of intercultural competence elements were compared. Average of values of such elements as Flexibility and Management of new situations in the private sector are 4.14 and 3.98 ($t = 4.73$ and 5.19), whereas in the public sector they are 3.74 and 3.70 ($t = 3.25$ and 3.46). The obtained differences are statistically reliable on a high significance level ($p < 0.01$). No statistically significant differences were established in other intercultural competence elements. As we can see, the public sector pays less attention to the development of intercultural competence than the private sector.

During the study a correlation between self-evaluation of intercultural competence elements and the respondents' education was verified statistically (Table 5). The respondents had to provide answers to the following blocks of questions on such intercultural competence elements as:

- Knowledge of the etiquette of other countries;
- Knowledge about how to behave in public abroad;
- Knowledge about business etiquette;
- General knowledge about the country's cultural and political situation;
- The ability to explain a foreigner the important holidays, cultural peculiarities, etc.;
- Understanding that foreigners interact with each other;
- Knowledge about the most usual reasons of conflicts with foreigners.

Table 5. Correlation between self-evaluation of intercultural competence elements and the respondents' education by sector of activity

Elements of intercultural competence		Respondents education by sector of activity	
		private	public
<i>I am capable to communicate in foreign language(-s) in my professional activity</i>	<i>Pearson Correlation</i>	0.16	0.12
	<i>Sig. (1-tailed)</i>	0.00	0.00
<i>I know what is usual amount of tip in the country</i>	<i>Pearson Correlation</i>	0.11	0.06
	<i>Sig. (1-tailed)</i>	0.02	0.04
<i>I know what is acceptable time for meals and typical food, how much and what kind of alcohol is suitable at lunch and dinner time</i>	<i>Pearson Correlation</i>	0.18	0.09
	<i>Sig. (1-tailed)</i>	0.00	0.01
<i>I know what is proper outfit style for business meetings</i>	<i>Pearson Correlation</i>	0.21	0.06
	<i>Sig. (1-tailed)</i>	0.00	0.04
<i>When communicating to a foreigner I'm interested in culture, customs, interests of his/her country</i>	<i>Pearson Correlation</i>	0.12	0.09
	<i>Sig. (1-tailed)</i>	0.02	0.01
<i>When communicating to a foreigner I willingly tell about own country, I want to introduce him/her to the culture of my country</i>	<i>Pearson Correlation</i>	0.10	0.09
	<i>Sig. (1-tailed)</i>	0.03	0.01
<i>I understand and tolerate religious variety</i>	<i>Pearson Correlation</i>	0.09	0.06
	<i>Sig. (1-tailed)</i>	0.05	0.04

Self-evaluation of the respondents reveals that in most cases due to underdeveloped skills the acquired intercultural competence is loosely related with their education, besides, in the public sector this correlation is lower than in the private sector (Pearson Correlation did not exceed 0.21 and 0.12 respectively).

Self-evaluation of the respondents according to the intercultural competence elements reveal statistically significant ($p < 0.01$) differences in average values (t-criteria) according to most competence elements in the public and private sectors, the highest being as follows:

- How they perceive the relation between young and older persons ($t = 4.36$, $M = 3.25$ and 2.87);
- How they tend to tackle their problems ($t = 5.00$, $M = 3.14$ and 2.71);
- What peculiarities of their communication and negotiation are ($t = 5.41$, $M = 3.19$ and 2.72);
- What method of expression of emotions is acceptable ($t = 4.85$, $M = 3.19$ and 2.76);
- How they understand religious variety ($t = 4.04$, $M = 4.05$ and 3.66);
- Communication to a foreigner is not stressor for me or does not raise distrust in myself ($t = 4.84$, $M = 3.82$ and 3.38);
- I know how to behave in unexpected and new situations that emerged due to cultural variety ($t = 4.26$, $M = 3.45$ and 3.09);
- I flexible when I communicate to foreign nationals ($t = 4.91$, $M = 3.85$ and 3.41);
- I observe and understand what I learned during communication to foreign nationals ($t = 4.33$, $M = 3.82$ and 3.44).

According to other intercultural competence elements there were no statistically significant differences found. Differences in average values of self-evaluation of most of other competence elements are less perceptible; however, the obtained results show that the private sector pays more attention to the development of intercultural competence than the public sector (in the private sector the evaluation is higher than in the public sector).

5. Conclusions

A person's interculturalism is characterized as a two-way process, where awareness and sensitivity to another ethnic group should be assessed by applying features of multicultural competence. Communication with foreigners is constantly expanding, which requires particular attention to be paid to the analysis of the multiculturalism issues.

The necessity to acquire and develop intercultural competence in the Lithuanian society is quite varied and evaluated from a 'very important' to 'not important/not relevant'. This is confirmed by the respondents' answers which show that the perception of the importance of intercultural competence is loosely related with their age; in addition, in the public sector this correlation is lower than in the private sector. A higher priority is given to such competence elements as *Knowing of international work protocol*, *Knowing of foreign language(s)*, and *Flexibility*. Besides, it was noticed that the elderly people show a reserved attitude towards cooperation with foreigners.

The respondents' self-evaluation of intercultural competence elements reliably suggests special attention should be paid to such elements as *how they perceive the relation between young and older persons*, *how they tend to tackle their problems*, *what peculiarities of their communication and negotiation are*, *what method of expression of emotions is acceptable*, *how they understand religious variety*, *communication to a foreigner is not stressor for me or does not raise distrust in myself*, *I know how to behave in unexpected and new situations that emerged due to cultural variety*, *I'm flexible when I communicate to foreign nationals*, *I observe and understand what I learned during communication to foreign nationals*. It was also noticed that the development of intercultural competence in Lithuania gets more attention in the private sector, than in the public sector.

In most cases due to underdeveloped skills the acquired intercultural competence is loosely related with the level of education, besides, in the public sector this correlation is even lower than in the private sector. At the same time, we can draw a conclusion that in Lithuania people perceive the importance of communication with people from other countries and positively evaluate the benefits of the development process of acquiring intercultural competence.

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