ACCULTURATION AS A FORM OF INTERCULTURAL COMMUNICATION

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Abstract

Cultural contacts form the basis of communication between peoples, in the process of which they become acquainted with alien cultures. When studying the processes of interaction between cultures and cultural contacts it is necessary to refer to the essence of the concept of acculturation and consider its definition and stages of development.

Introduction

Acculturation is both a process and a result of the mutual influence of different cultures, in which all or part of one culture adopts the norms, values and traditions of the other. Acculturation is usually seen as a two-way process in which both cultures in contact may act as donor and recipient cultures simultaneously, although the extent of their influence on each other may vary. Moreover, members of one culture may either fully adopt the values of the other or reject them in whole or in part. Acculturation is also often understood as the process by which one, usually a culturally less developed people, or some part of it, absorbs some elements of the material or spiritual culture - or the entire culture of another, usually culturally more developed people.

Materials and Methods

The term "acculturation" was introduced by American anthropologists as early as 1880 to describe the process of cultural change in two different cultural groups that come into contact with each other [1]. Within anthropology, the first major studies of acculturation were carried out only in the 1930s, and the first classic definition of acculturation was presented by R. Redfield, R. Linton and M. J. Herskovits in 1936: "Acculturation covers those phenomena which occur when groups of individuals with different cultures come into prolonged direct contact with subsequent changes in the cultural patterns of one or both groups. According to this definition, acculturation should be distinguished from cultural change and from assimilation, which is sometimes a stage of acculturation" [2].

Thus, from the beginning, acculturation was understood as a bidirectional process with changes within both groups in contact. Emerging from anthropology and sociology, the term "acculturation" has become an area of interest in cross-cultural psychology in the 1960s. A distinction was made between group and individual levels of acculturation. This distinction was originally made by T. Graves. He described the process of psychological acculturation as changes that occur to an individual as a result of being in contact with other cultures and as a result of his cultural or ethnic group [3].

Following the early definitions of acculturation in relation to acculturating individuals, acculturation was later conceptualized within psychological disciplines as a process of resocialization involving psychological features like changes in attitudes, values and identification; acquisition of new social skills and norms; changes in preferences of reference groups and membership groups; adjustment or adaptation to an altered environment [4].

More recent works on acculturation have identified two types of adaptive outcomes: psychological and socio-cultural [5]. The first type describes a set of internal psychological outcomes, such as good mental health, psychological well-being and achievement of personal satisfaction in the new cultural context. The second refers to a set of external psychological outcomes that link individuals to their new environment and refers to the acquisition of appropriate social skills and behaviours needed to successfully carry out daily activities.

The literature on acculturation has been accumulating since the beginning of the last century. However, there is a gap between the accumulation of empirical material on acculturation and the development of theories that systematise and define the central concepts of the process of change resulting from cultural contact [6]. When considering the changes to which immigrants are subjected, the terms "adaptation" and "assimilation" have been used interchangeably with "acculturation" [7].

Sociologist M. Gordon proposed a one-dimensional model of assimilation to describe the cultural changes that members of a minority group undergo [8]. His model presents acculturation as a sub-process of assimilation with biculturalism represented only as a transitional stage in the process from total segregation to total assimilation. The main premise of this model is that a member of one culture loses his or her original cultural identity as he or she acquires a new identity in the new culture. Furthermore, in this model, only members of the minority group are considered responsible for their failure to assimilate into the host society. Similar

unidirectional models of acculturation have been developed within social psychology [9] to describe the acculturation of individuals on a continuum from full acceptance and preservation of the heritage culture to full assimilation. One-dimensional theories have influenced a number of acculturation studies and have even used in recent work by social and cross-cultural psychologists [10]. Criticism of one-dimensional models has led to the development of two-dimensional models of acculturation, in which immigrants' identification with two cultures is assessed on two independent dimensions [11].

In cross-cultural psychology I. Zak and A. Der-Karabetian were the first to propose and test the hypothesis that heritage culture and host culture identities are not extremes of one bipolar dimension, but are orthogonal and independent of each other. Based on the results of the study I. Zak suggested that a person can identify positively or negatively along both dimensions of identity or positively on one dimension and negative on the other and vice versa [12].

Discussion of the Research

These results were later confirmed by a study by A. Der-Karabetian, who found that the relationship between the two identities was influenced by the situation in which the minority members find themselves. A few years later, N. Hutnik proposed a new socio-psychological approach to minority ethnic identity in which, following I. Zak and A. Der-Karabetian suggested that "two dimensions - identification with the minority group and identification with the majority group - should be used in conjunction with one another to accurately understand the different styles of cultural adaptation of ethnic minority individuals" [13]. This idea is well illustrated in N. Hutnik's minority identity model. Hutnik. According to her, minority ethnic identity consists of 2 main elements: self-categorisation strategy and cultural adaptation style - beliefs, attitudes, values and modes of behaviour. Both components relate to both the ethnic minority group and the ethnic majority group. There are 4 styles of cultural adaptation and 4 self-categorisation strategies corresponding to them.

In a four-polar model created and tested on a sample of Indian girls living in England, N. Hutnik suggested four strategies for ethnic self-identification of individuals:

- assimilative (the individual identifies with the majority group – "British, not Indian");

- acculturative (the individual categorises themselves with a "hyphenated" identity – "British and Indian at the same time");

- marginal (the individual is indifferent to ethnic group identities or does not want to identify with any group-"not Indian, not British");

- dissociative (the individual identifies entirely within a minority ethnic group- "Indian, not British").

This model allows for the possibility of a mismatch between cultural adaptation style and self-categorisation, reflecting the discrepancy between verbal cognitive evaluations or reactions and often insufficiently conscious non-verbal manifestations.

According to V.N. Pavlenko, "the merit of the researcher lies not so much in the fact that she proposed a typology of ways of self-categorization (similar attempts have been made before her), but in the fact that she showed the possibility of mismatch between the way of self-categorization and the individual's style of cultural adaptation" [14].

However, the results of a study carried out by N. Hutnik in 2003 were different. The purpose of this study was to test whether the four self-categorisation strategies obtained 20 years ago in British Asian adolescents could be used today, and to examine the relationship between self-categorisation strategies and cultural adaptation styles in 2003 and compare them with the results of 1983.

The only two-dimensional model of acculturation in social psychology, which is based on the social theory of identity, is the mobility model of cultural integration or model of integration strategies developed by F. Moghaddam [15]. This model explores the strategies used by immigrants to improve their economic and social situation in Canada, examining their position along two dimensions: assimilation versus cultural preservation, and normative versus non-normative behaviour. The model proposes four mobility strategies:

1. Normative / Assimilation.

2. Normative / Preservation of cultural heritage.

3. Non-normative / Assimilation.

4. Non-normative / Preservation of cultural heritage, with normative assimilation most characteristic of immigrants.

The author distinguishes three main spheres in the life of migrants: private life; life within their ethnic community, where norms and values of the "native" culture prevail; and public life, where "new" values and norms prevail. The notion of normativity and non-normativity of integration strategies refers to the extent to

which the strategies correspond to the interethnic power relations established at the moment. Strategies are considered normative if they do not violate the status quo and vice versa - the more they contribute to changes in the interethnic situation, the more they are regarded as non-normative (blocking elections, boycott, protest demonstrations, etc.). The two-dimensional model of acculturation developed by J. Szapocznik and his colleagues in clinical psychology for Hispanic youth living in the US, focused on the individual's behaviour and values when assessing acculturation. The first dimension in this model reflects biculturalism on a bipolar scale ranging from the acceptance of only heritage culture or only the culture of the new society to the acceptance of both cultures simultaneously.

The second dimension shows the intensity of cultural participation from cultural marginality to cultural participation. Four styles of acculturation are possible when these two dimensions are combined:

1. Bicultural individual with a high degree of participation in both cultures.

2. Monocultural individual with a high degree of participation in either the heritage culture or the new culture.

3. Marginalised mono-cultural individual with low degree of participation in heritage culture or new culture.

4. Marginal bicultural individual with low participation in both cultures.

The best known model of acculturation, in which identifications with the heritage culture and with the new culture are evaluated independently, is the model of J. Berry and his colleagues proposed within the framework of cross-cultural psychology. According to J. Berry, immigrants settling in the host society have to answer 2 basic questions - how important it is to maintain their own cultural identity and how important it is to maintain a relationship with the new culture. When these two dimensions of cultural change intersect, they result in 4 attitudes of acculturation, also referred to as acculturation strategies that immigrants can adopt: assimilation, integration, marginality and separation.

The integration strategy reflects the desire to preserve the original culture in everyday interactions with other groups. The assimilation strategy is characterised by immigrants' desire to routinely interact with other cultures and reluctance to maintain their cultural identity. Immigrants who adopt a strategy of Immigrants who adopt a strategy of separation give importance to the preservation of their own culture and at the same time Immigrants who adopt a strategy of separation value the preservation of their own culture and at the same time want to avoid interactions with other cultures.

According to J. Berry, integration is the most preferred acculturation attitude: immigrants who choose this attitude show the highest level of adaptation. Marginalisation, on the contrary, is the least preferred attitude: respondents who chose this attitude show the lowest level of adaptation. Assimilation and separation traditionally occupy an intermediate position and are associated with an average level of adaptation. Research results confirming this pattern have been accumulating over the last decades. For instance, studies have shown that immigrants who chose separation and marginalization as acculturation strategies show low levels of adaptation [16]. In addition, it has been found that immigrants living in Canada who have chosen the integration attitude are the least exposed to the stress of immigrants who chose to integrate are less affected by acculturation stress than those who chose to marginalise, but more affected than those who chose to integrate. These findings were confirmed by the results of the ICSEY cross-cultural study, which included immigrant adolescents from 13 countries and four continents.

In this study, adolescents with an integration attitude had the best psychological and socio-cultural adaptive results, while adolescents with a marginalization attitude had the worst; immigrants with a separation attitude had high psychological and socio-cultural adaptive results but low sociocultural adaptive results, while those with an assimilation attitude showed average psychological adaptation and low sociocultural adaptation. However, in some studies the relationship between acculturation attitudes and adaptation outcomes is not as clear-cut. For example, C. Ward and A. Rana-Deuba found that integration affects only psychological adaptation, while assimilation affects only sociocultural adaptation.

Conclusion

Thus, to date a number of acculturation models have been developed: one-dimensional (M. Gordon) and two-dimensional (I. Zak, A. Der-Karabetian, N. Hutnik, F. Moghaddam, J. Szapocznik, J. Berry, R. Bourhis). The possibility of discrepancy between the style of cultural adaptation and self-categorization of an individual was proved (N. Hutnik), as well as the use of different acculturation strategies in different spheres of life (F. Moghaddam, M. Navas).

More recently, variants of the interaction between acculturation strategies chosen by migrants and the host society were considered (R. Bourhis). The study has looked at the interplay between migrants' and host societies' acculturation strategies

- despite criticisms of the Acculturation model (J. Berry). Berry, this model remains the best known and most widely used.

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