III. THE CHALLENGES OF CULTURAL IMAGES IN THE TRANSFORMING SPACE

THE MAIN SKILLS AND COMPETENCES OF MULTILINGUALISM IN THE CONTEXT OF THE EUROPEAN UNION

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The paper presents multilingualism and multiculturalism as one of the main aims of the European Union (EU) and deals with the issue of political and cultural globalization. More and more young people describe themselves as cosmopolites. Multiculturalism is especially noticeable in the sphere of languages. Languages are fundamental for Europeans wanting to work together. They go to the very heart of the unity in diversity of the EU. It is important to nurture and to promote our linguistic heritage in the Member States but we also need to understand each other, our neighbours, our partners in the EU. Speaking many languages makes businesses and citizens more competitive and more mobile. The EU policy of official multilingualism as a deliberate tool of government is unique in the world. The EU sees the use of its citizens' languages as one of the factors which make it more transparent, more legitimate and more efficient. At the level of culture and of enhancing the quality of life, too, the EU works actively to promote the wider knowledge and use of all its official languages throughout the Union. The ability to speak foreign language and multiculturalism are inseparable parts of the EU integrations. There are certain skills and competences that a multilingual, multicultural European citizen must acquire in order to become a full-fledged EU member.

Keywords: internationality, multiculturalism, multilingualism, skills and competences of multilingualism.

Introduction

As Leonard Orban, European Commissioner on Multilingualism stated, languages are fundamental for Europeans wanting to work together. They go to the very heart of the unity in diversity of the EU. We need to nurture and to promote our linguistic heritage in the Member States but we also need to understand each other, our neighbours, our partners in the EU. Speaking many languages makes businesses and citizens more competitive and more mobile. We need to communicate in a language we can

understand. Promoting multilingualism is an excellent way to bring European citizens closer to each other. Multilingualism is the mastery of multiple languages. A person is multilingual if he or she knows several languages; a document or message is multilingual if it is presented in multiple languages (*Microsoft Encarta* 2008). To give them access to information and to contributing their views. Learning languages leads to better understanding. Interpretation and translation can help to participate in the activities of the EU and read the publications of the EU. Promoting multilingualism in the different Policies of the EU, such as culture, education, communication and employment is at the centre of the objectives of the EU. This is a real contribution to the competitiveness of the European economy.

This paper discusses the necessity of each competence in the context of multilingualism and multiculturalism. Multicultural means: 1) of more than one culture: relating to, consisting of, or participating in the cultures of different countries, ethnic groups, or religions 2) supporting integration: advocating or encouraging the integration of people of different countries, ethnic groups, and religions into all areas of society (*Microsoft Encarta* 2008).

The object of research is the skills and competences that are necessary in the development of one's multiculturalism and multilingualism as well as the importance of multilingualism in today's EU.

The aim of research is to analyze those skills and competences that a person will need living in a multicultural and multilingual area of the EU, and *vice versa* – the importance of the characteristics of multilingualism and multiculturalism in the EU.

The following methods have been applied: the analysis of scientific literature in order to clarify what are the basic skills and competence and what is the difference between those two notions, the analysis of the EU documents concerning the issue of multiculturalism and lifelong learning competences. The following sources have been used to analyse the terms of skills and competences and to draw the difference between them (see Laužackas *et al.* 2005; Tandzegolskienė 2008). To analyse multilingualism and multiculturalism in the EU the following EU documents have been used (see *Key Competences For Lifelong Learning: A European Reference Framework*[1] 2006; *A List of Competences set by Directorate General for Translation (DGT)*: *Competences for Professional Translators, Experts in Multilingual and Multimedia Communication*[2] 2009).

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[1] *The Key Competenfor Lifelong Learning: A European Framework* is an annex of the *Recommendation of the European Parliament and of the Council of 18 December 2006 on Key Competences for Lifelong Learning* that was published in the *Official Journal of the European Union* on 30 December 2006/L394. (see *http://eurlex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/site/en/oj/2006/l_394/l_39420061230en00100018.pdf*). The *Recommendation...* is one of the outcomes of the joint work of the European Commission and the Member States within the Education and Training 2010 Work Programme. The Work Programme is the over-arching framework for policy cooperation in the area of education and training, and is based on commonly agreed objectives, indicators and benchmarks, peer-learning and dissemination of best practice. For more information see *http://ec.europa.eu/education/index_en.html*

[2] *European Master's in Translation* (EMT Expert Group) was set up by the DGT in April 2007. Its main task is to make specific proposals with a view to implementing a European reference framework for the *European Master's in Translation* (see *http://ec.europe.eu/emt and http://europa.eu/languages* to check the importance of the EU policy of multilingualism and multiculturalism).

General description of European context and Lithuania in it

The EU is founded on the principle of diversity of cultures, customs and beliefs. This includes languages. On a continent where so many languages are spoken, this is natural.

The official languages of EU countries alone represent three language families: Indo-European, Finno-Ugric and Semitic and, compared to other continents, this is relatively few. Linguistic diversity has become more visible than ever because people now have much more contact with foreigners than ever before. They increasingly face situations where they have to speak languages other than their own, whether through student exchanges, migration and business in Europe's increasingly integrated market, tourism or even general globalization.

Article 22 of the EU's charter of fundamental rights, adopted in 2000, requires the EU to respect linguistic diversity and Article 21 prohibits discrimination based on language. Together with respect for individuals and for linguistic diversity, openness towards other cultures, tolerance for others is a core of EU value. This principle applies not only to the 23 official EU languages but also to the many regional and minority languages spoken by segments of its population. It is this that makes the EU what it is – not a "melting pot" that reduces difference, but a place where diversity can be celebrated as an asset.

According to the Treaty of Lisbon, signed by the Heads of State or Government of all EU Member States in December 2007, the EU shall respect its rich cultural and linguistic diversity, and shall ensure that Europe's cultural heritage is safe-guarded and enhanced.

The EU actively encourages its citizens to learn other European languages, both for reasons of professional and personal mobility within its single market, and as a force for cross-cultural contacts and mutual understanding. The EU also promotes the use of regional or minority languages, which are not official EU languages but which are spoken by up to 50 million people in the Member States, and as such form part of our cultural heritage.

The ability to understand and communicate in more than one language – already a daily reality for the majority of people across the globe – is a desirable life-skill for all European citizens. Learning and speaking other languages encourages us to become more open to others, their cultures and outlooks; it improves cognitive skills and strengthens learners' mother tongue skills; it enables us to take advantage of the freedom to work or study in another Member State.

As a recent Eurobarometer survey shows, half of the citizens of the EU state that they can hold a conversation in at least one language other than their mother tongue. The percentages vary between countries and social groups: 99% of Luxemburgers, 93% of Latvians and Maltese and **90% of Lithuanians** know at least one language other than their mother tongue, whereas a considerable majority in Hungary (71%), the UK (70%), Spain, Italy and Portugal (64% each) master only their mother tongue. Men, young people and city dwellers are more likely to speak a foreign language than women, senior citizens and rural inhabitants, respectively (see *http://europa.eu/*

languages/en/chapter/14). One can see that Lithuania occupies one of the highest statuses in terms of multilingualism and multiculturalism. The citizens of our country definitely have certain skills and competences developed, that are necessary to lead multicultural life. They have also developed certain skills that are crucial in the development of the competence of multilingualism.

General description of skills and competences

As globalization continues to confront the EU with new challenges, each citizen will need a wide range of key competences to adapt flexibly to a rapidly changing and highly interconnected world. Education in its dual role, both social and economic, has a key role to play in ensuring that Europe's citizens acquire the key competences needed to enable them to adapt flexibly to such changes. In this context, one of the main aims of the *Common European Framework of Reference for Languages*[3] is to identify and define the key competences necessary for personal fulfillment, active citizenship, social cohesion and employability in a knowledge society. According to the *Framework*, competences are defined as a combination of knowledge, skills and attitudes appropriate to the context. *The Key Competences* are those which all individuals need for personal fulfillment and development, active citizenship, social inclusion and employment. Though there has not been a clear division of skills and competences, as these terms developed very quickly and are often used in the same context and the same meaning, skills are usually defined as the learned capacity to carry out pre-determined results often with the minimum outlay of time, energy, or both, while *competence* is the general ability to perform a specific task, action or function successfully, to perform a certain activity on the grounds of the existing knowledge, skills and attitude system. The notion of competence includes creativity, while a skill does not mean performing a task in a creative way. Competence is shown in action in a situation in a context that might be different the next time you have to act. In every profession human work is not only multiple, but also complex. The content of professional activity includes not only the possibility to qualitatively perform certain functions, but also to coordinate them. That means that a worker, who wishes to perform a certain job well must have certain functional abilities, which are called competences. And the whole of such competences lets us talk about a certain qualification. Thus *competence* (Latin *competentia*) is a functional ability to perform an adequate action (Vaitkevičiūtė 1999). If a person completes many various functions in a certain occupation (this is true in almost all cases), it is true to say that he or she has to acquire many different competences. This is the time to speak about the competence bouquet, whole, empowering an employee/manager to perform in a certain occupation (Laužackas 2005) by giving out the main skills and competences necessary in the fide of every multicultural EU citizen. The competences will be discussed bearing in mind the concept of multilingualism and multiculturalism.

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[3] See *http://www.coe.int/t/dg4/linguistic/CADRE_EN_asp*

Discussion of skills and competences in the field of multilingualism and multiculturalism

The *Framework* sets out eight key competences:
a) Communication in the mother tongue;
b) Communication in foreign languages;
c) Mathematical competence and basic competences in science and technology;
d) Digital competence;
e) Learning to learn;
f) Social and civic competences;
g) Sense of initiative and entrepreneurship;
h) Cultural awareness and expression.

Professions in multilingual communication have developed rapidly over the last 20 years, both under pressure from technological changes and as a result of the transformation of markets, linked to globalisation, outsourcing and flexibility. The consequences of this two-fold development are felt in the division of work and in the relationships between the members of different nations and translation volume. So now it is time discuss how these key skills and competences are necessary in the fields of multilingualism multiculturalism and proper translation/interpreting, which is necessary to ensure multicultural communication.

a) *Communication in the mother tongue* is interrelated with *language competence* for translators/interpreters, that is stated by the EMT expert group[1]. This competence includes knowing how to understand grammatical, lexical and idiomatic structures as well as the graphic and typographic conventions of language A and one's other working languages (B, C), knowing how to use these same structures and conventions in A and B, developing sensitivity to changes in language and developments in languages (useful for exercising creativity). The same language competence correlates with the competence of communication in foreign languages.

Communication in the mother tongue is the ability to express and interpret concepts, thoughts, feelings, facts and opinions in both oral and written form (includes four skills: listening, speaking, reading and writing), and to interact linguistically in an appropriate and creative way in a full range of societal and cultural contexts; in education and training, work, home and leisure. Essential knowledge, skills and attitudes related to this competence: communicative competence results from the acquisition of the mother tongue, which is intrinsically linked to the development of an individual's cognitive ability to interpret the world and relate to others. Individuals should have the skills to communicate both orally and in writing in a variety of communicative situations and to monitor and adapt their own communication to the requirements of the situation. This competence also includes the abilities to distinguish and use different types of texts, to search for, collect and process information, to use aids, and to formulate and express one's oral and written arguments in a convincing way appropriate to the context. A positive attitude towards communication in the mother tongue involves a disposition to critical and constructive dialogue, an appreciation of

aesthetic qualities and a willingness to strive for them, and an interest in interaction with others. This implies an awareness of the impact of language on others and a need to understand and use language in a positive and socially responsible manner. This competence is especially necessary in terms of multilingualism as it helps to thrive minor European languages and does not let them do disappear. As it was already mentioned, it is this competence that makes the EU what it is – not a "melting pot" that reduces difference, but a place where diversity of languages means the diversity of cultures.

b) *Communication in foreign languages* broadly shares the main skill dimensions of communication in the mother tongue: it is based on the ability to understand, express and interpret concepts, thoughts, feelings, facts and opinions in both oral and written form (listening, speaking, reading and writing) in an appropriate range of societal and cultural contexts (in education and training, work, home and leisure) according to one's wants or needs. Communication in foreign languages also calls for skills such as mediation and intercultural understanding. An individual's level of proficiency will vary between the four dimensions (listening, speaking, reading and writing) and between the different languages, and according to that individual's social and cultural background, environment, needs and/or interests. Essential knowledge, skills and attitudes related to this competence: competence in foreign languages requires knowledge of vocabulary and functional grammar and an awareness of the main types of verbal interaction and registers of language. Knowledge of societal conventions, and the cultural aspect and variability of languages is important. Essential skills for communication in foreign languages consist of the ability to understand spoken messages, to initiate, sustain and conclude conversations and to read, understand and produce texts appropriate to the individual's needs. Individuals should also be able to use aids appropriately, and learn languages also informally as part of lifelong learning.

A positive attitude involves the appreciation of cultural diversity, and an interest and curiosity in languages and intercultural communication.

c) *Mathematical competence and basic competences in science and technology.* Mathematical competence is the ability to develop and apply mathematical thinking in order to solve a range of problems in everyday situations. This is important in interpretation/translation practice, because logical thinking and analysis is an inseparable part of it. Mathematical competence involves, to different degrees, the ability and willingness to use mathematical modes of thought (logical and spatial thinking) and to follow and assess chains of arguments. An individual should be able to reason mathematically, understand mathematical proof. Mathematical reasoning is a part of interpreting/translation. Without the skill to follow the chain of arguments an interpreter/translator would not be able co understand and to render the message in an appropriate way.

Competence in science refers to the ability and willingness to use the body of knowledge and methodology employed to explain the natural world, in order to identify questions and to draw evidence-based conclusions related to values, moral questions, culture, etc. These skills are important in the sphere of general knowledge. Without general understanding of science and technology in the natural world one

would not be able to communicate in global environment or translate/interpret information in a good way.

This kind of competence includes an attitude of critical appreciation and curiosity, an interest in ethical issues and respect for both safety and sustainability, in particular as regards scientific and technological progress in relation to oneself, family, community and global issues. Vast general knowledge is an inseparable part of multiculturalism so these competences are also important for all the members from the EU.

d) *Digital competence* the EMT calls it technological competence, mastery of tools. Digital competence involves the confident and critical use of Information Society Technology (IST) for work, leisure and communication. It is underpinned by basic skills in IST: the use of computers to retrieve, assess, store, produce, present and exchange information, and to communicate and participate in collaborative networks via the Internet.

Digital competence requires a sound understanding and knowledge of the nature, role and opportunities of IST in everyday contexts: in personal and social life as well as at work. This includes main computer applications such as word processing, spreadsheets, databases, information storage and management, and an understanding of the opportunities and potential risks of the Internet and communication via electronic media (e-mail, network tools) for work, leisure, information sharing and collaborative networking, learning and research. Individuals should also understand how IST can support creativity and innovation, and be aware of issues around the validity and reliability of information available and of the legal and ethical principles involved in the interactive use of IST.

Skills needed include the ability to search, collect and process information and use it in a critical and systematic way, assessing relevance and distinguishing the real from the virtual while recognizing the links. An interest in engaging in communities and networks for cultural, social and/or professional purposes also supports this competence. Today the Internet and Information Technology (IT) are probably the best way to communicate and to live a fully-fledged multicultural life. It is probably one of the best ways to develop the competence of multilingualism.

e) *Learning to learn* is associated with thematic competence, which is described by the EMT expert's group.

It is also very important in the field of multiculturalism. This field is inseparable of the ideal of lifelong learning, thus it is very important to know how to learn.

"Learning to learn" is the ability to pursue and persist in learning, to organize one's own learning, including through effective management of time and information, both individually and in groups. This competence includes awareness of one's learning process and needs, identifying available opportunities, and the ability to overcome obstacles in order to learn successfully. This competence means gaining, processing and assimilating new knowledge and skills as well as seeking and making use of guidance. Learning to learn engages learners to build on prior learning and life experiences in order to use and apply knowledge and skills in a variety of contexts: at home, at work, in education and training. Motivation and confidence are crucial to an

individual's competence. In all cases, learning to learn requires an individual to know and understand his/her preferred learning strategies, the strengths and weaknesses of his/her skills and qualifications, and to be able to search for the education and training opportunities and guidance and/or support available.

Learning to learn skills require firstly the acquisition of the fundamental basic skills such as literacy, numeracy and ICT skills that are necessary for further learning. Building on these skills, an individual should be able to access, gain, process and assimilate new knowledge and skills. This requires effective management of one's learning, career and work patterns, and, in particular, the ability to persevere with learning, to concentrate for extended periods and to reflect critically on the purposes and aims of learning. The desire to apply prior learning and life experiences and the curiosity to look for opportunities to learn and apply learning in a variety of life contexts are essential elements of a positive attitude. In the case of multilingualism this competence can be applied in learning different languages and maintaining an already acquired competence to speak different languages. Every language is some kind of a life organism that needs to be nurtured all the time, otherwise it disappears. So the competence of learning to learn is inseparable from the competence of speaking different languages.

f) *Social and civic competences* include personal, interpersonal and intercultural competence and cover all forms of behaviour that equip individuals to participate in an effective and constructive way in social and working life, and particularly in increasingly diverse societies, and to resolve conflict where necessary. Civic competence equips individuals to fully participate in civic life, based on knowledge of social and political concepts and structures and a commitment to active and democratic participation.

For successful interpersonal and social participation it is essential to understand the codes of conduct and manners generally accepted in different societies and environments (e.g. at work). It is equally important to be aware of basic concepts relating to individuals, groups, work organizations, gender equality and non-discrimination, society and culture. Understanding the multicultural and socio-economic dimensions of European societies and how national cultural identity interacts with the European identity is essential. The core skills of this competence include the ability to communicate constructively in different environments, to show tolerance, express and understand different viewpoints, to negotiate with the ability to create confidence, and to feel empathy. Individuals should be capable of coping with stress and frustration and expressing them in a constructive way and should also distinguish between the personal and professional spheres.

The competence is based on an attitude of collaboration, assertiveness and integrity. Individuals should have an interest in socio-economic developments and intercultural communication and should value diversity and respect others, and be prepared both to overcome prejudices and to compromise. This competence is one of the basic ones in terms of multiculturalism, as well as civic competence, which is based on knowledge of the concepts of democracy, justice, equality, citizenship, and civil rights, including

how they are expressed in the *Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union*[4] and international declarations and how they are applied by various institutions at the local, regional, national, European and international levels. It includes knowledge of contemporary events, as well as the main events and trends in national, European and world history. In addition, an awareness of the aims, values and policies of social and political movements should be developed. Knowledge of European integration and of the EU's structures, main objectives and values is also essential, as well as an awareness of diversity and cultural identities in Europe.

Skills for civic competence relate to the ability to engage effectively with others in the public domain, and to display solidarity and interest in solving problems affecting the local and wider community. This involves critical and creative reflection and constructive participation in community or neighbourhood activities as well as decision-making at all levels, from local to national and European level, in particular through voting. Full respect for human rights including equality as a basis for democracy, appreciation and understanding of differences between value systems of different religious or ethnic groups lay the foundations for a positive attitude. This means displaying both a sense of belonging to one's locality, country, the EU and Europe in general and to the world, and a willingness to participate in democratic decision-making at all levels. It also includes demonstrating a sense of responsibility, as well as showing understanding of and respect for the shared values that are necessary to ensure community cohesion, such as respect for democratic principles. Constructive participation also involves civic activities, support for social diversity and cohesion and sustainable development, and a readiness to respect the values and privacy of others.

g) *Sense of initiative and entrepreneurship* refers to an individual's ability to turn ideas into action. It includes creativity, innovation and risk-taking, as well as the ability to plan and manage projects in order to achieve objectives. This supports individuals, not only in their everyday lives at home and in society, but also in the workplace in being aware of the context of their work and being able to seize opportunities, and is a foundation for more specific skills and knowledge needed by those establishing or contributing to social or commercial activity. This should include awareness of ethical values and promote good governance. Essential knowledge, skills and attitudes related to this competence: necessary knowledge includes the ability to identify available opportunities for personal, professional and/or business activities, including 'bigger picture' issues that provide the context in which people live and work, such as a broad understanding of the workings of the economy, and the opportunities and challenges facing an employer or organization. Individuals should also be aware of the ethical position of enterprises, and how they can be a force for good, for example through fair trade or through social enterprise.

Skills relate to proactive project management (involving, for example the ability to plan, organize, manage, lead and delegate, analyse, communicate, de-brief, evaluate and record) are the following: effective representation and negotiation, and the ability

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[4] See *http://www.europarl.europa.eu/charter/default_en.htm*

to work both as an individual and collaboratively in teams. The ability to judge and identify one's strengths and weaknesses, and to assess and take risks as and when warranted, is essential. An entrepreneurial attitude is characterized by initiative, pro-activity, independence and innovation in personal and social life, as much as at work. It also includes motivation and determination to meet objectives, whether personal goals or aims held in common with others, including at work. We increasingly face situations where we have to speak languages other than our own as Europe's market becomes increasingly integrated, such businesses as tourism add to general global-ization, and thus the competence of entrepreneurship is very tightly associated with multilingualism and multiculturalism.

h) *Cultural awareness and expression* (EMT expert's group call it intercultural competence). This competence is similar to social and civic competences. It is impor-tant in the issues mentioned mentioned, because European citizens deal with cultural issues and cultural heritage. For translations/interpreters it is also one of the most im-portant competences, as it includes such cases as:
  – Knowing how to recognise function and meaning in language variations (social, geographical, historical, stylistic);
  – Knowing how to identify the rules for interaction relating to a specific commu-nity, including non-verbal elements (useful knowledge for negotiation);
  – Knowing how to produce a register appropriate to a given situation, for a par-ticular document (written) or speech (oral);
  – Knowing how to grasp the presuppositions, the implicit, allusions, stereotypes and intertextual nature of a document;
  – Knowing how to recognise and identify elements, values and references proper to the cultures represented;
  – Knowing how to bring together and compare cultural elements and methods of composition.

Cultural awareness and expression is appreciation of the importance of the creative expression of ideas, experiences and emotions in a range of media, including music, performing arts, literature, and the visual arts.

Cultural knowledge includes an awareness of local, national and European cultural heritage and their place in the world. It covers a basic knowledge of major cultural works, including popular contemporary culture. It is essential to understand the cul-tural and linguistic diversity in Europe and other regions of the world, the need to preserve it and the importance of aesthetic factors in daily life. Skills relate to both appreciation and expression: the appreciation and enjoyment of works of art and per-formances as well as self-expression through a variety of media using one's innate capacities. Skills include also the ability to relate one's own creative and expressive points of view to the opinions of others and to identify and realize social and eco-nomic opportunities in cultural activity. Cultural expression is essential to the devel-opment of creative skills, which can be transferred to a variety of professional con-texts. A solid understanding of one's own culture and a sense of identity can be the basis for an open attitude towards and respect for diversity of cultural expression.

A positive attitude also covers creativity, and the willingness to cultivate aesthetic capacity through artistic self-expression and participation in cultural life.

Conclusions

There is a lively interest in language-related issues in the EU. Languages as a theme touch directly or indirectly on a variety of EU policy areas. The range can be very wide, from the latest initiatives to encourage EU citizens to learn languages, up to the addition of new official languages when new Member States join.

Learning languages can bring major benefits. Activating our natural aptitude for language acquisition provides us with a linguistic and cultural experience that can enhance our overall multicultural life and the competence of multilingualism. Lifelong languages learning has become a necessity for all citizens. We need to develop our skills and competences throughout our lives, not only for our personal fulfillment and our ability to actively engage with the society in which we live, but for our ability to be successful in a constantly changing world and our exposure to different cultures.

The knowledge, skills and aptitudes of different languages are a major factor in the EU's innovation, productivity and competitiveness. Growing internationalization, the rapid pace of change, and the continuous roll-out of new technologies mean that Europeans must not only keep their specific culture-related skills up-to-date, but also possess the generic competences that will enable them to adapt to change. We need new competences to master a deeper understanding of the opportunities, challenges and even ethical questions posed by multiculturalism. In this climate of rapid change, there is increasing concern about our social cohesion. There is a risk that many Europeans feel left behind and marginalised by globalisation and multilingualism. The resulting threat of alienation implies a need to nurture democratic and multilingual citizenship; it requires people to be informed and concerned about their society, other societies, and be active in them. The knowledge, skills and competences that everyone needs are the competences that help us to communicate in wide, multicultural and multilingual Europe.

The European Commission is strongly in favour of teaching modern languages to EU citizens, to help them not just develop language competence but also gain a wider sense of belonging, citizenship and community, and an understanding of how they can realise the opportunities open to them in a multilingual Europe.

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PAGRINDINIAI DAUGIAKALBIŠKUMO ĮGŪDŽIAI IR KOMPETENCIJOS EUROPOS SĄJUNGOS KONTEKSTE

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Santrauka

Straipsnyje parodomas daugiakalbiškumas ir daugiakultūriškumas kaip vienas iš pagrindinių Europos Sąjungos tikslų bei analizuojama politinės ir kultūrinės globalizacijos problema. Vis daugiau jaunų žmonių save apibūdina kosmopolitais. Daugiakultūriškumas ypač pastebimas kalbų srityje. Kalbos labai svarbios europiečiams, norintiems bendradarbiauti. Būtent kalbos sudaro Europos vientisumo ir skirtingumo ašį. Todėl visos Europos Sąjungos (ES) šalys narės privalo ne tik tausoti ir plėtoti savo kalbos paveldą, bet ir stengtis suprasti vienos kitas, savo kaimynes, ES partneres. Gebėjimas bendrauti keliomis kalbomis padeda plėtotis ne tik verslo sričiai, jis padeda ES piliečiams tapti konkurencingesniems ir mobilesniems. ES valdžios taikoma oficialaus daugiakultūriškumo politika – vienintelė pasaulyje. ES valstybinių kalbų vartojimą laiko vienu iš šalies skaidrumo, didesnio teisingumo ir produktyvumo veiksnių. Kultūros ir gyvenimo kokybės stiprinimo lygmeniu ES aktyviai dirba skatindama mokymąsi ir visų Sąjungos valstybinių kalbų vartojimą. Gebėjimas kalbėti keliomis kalbomis bei daugiakultūriškumas – neatsiejama eurointegracijos dalis. Yra tam tikrų gabumų ir kompetencijų, kurios privalomos daugiakultūriam, daugiakalbiam europiečiui, norinčiam tapti visaverčiu ES piliečiu.

Reikšminiai žodžiai: tarptautiškumas, daugiakalbiškumas, daugiakultūriškumas, daugiakalbiškumo įgūdžiai ir kompetencijos.