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ACCULTURATION STRATEGIES AS DETERMINANTS OF ORGANIZATIONAL COMMUNICATION IN FOREIGN CULTURAL ENVIRONMENT

Danyliuk, I.V., Kurapov, A.O. Acculturation strategies as determinants of organizational communication in foreign cultural environment. The article focuses on the description of acculturation strategies as main determinants of the presence of communication problems within the organization. It uncovers the specifics of working migrants who have been working abroad for a significantly long period of time to show vivid signs of acculturation and who were able to vividly show selected acculturation strategy. The results of the research have shown that integration is the strategy that does not cause problems in organizational communication, while marginalization is the strategy that causes communication problems. Additional details were researched as well: the use of the language and ability to perform certain tasks were included into overall analysis. It should be noted that the strategy of acculturation has almost direct impact on the presence of communication problems within the organization.

Keywords: acculturation, acculturation strategy, organizational communication, barriers of communication, foreign cultural environment, migrants.

Данилюк И.В., Курапов А.А. Стратегии аккультурации как факторы специфики организационной коммуникации в инокультурной среде. В статье раскрыта специфика влияния выбранной стратегии аккультурации на наличие коммуникационных проблем внутри организации. Результаты исследования сфокусированы на мигрантах, которые работали за границей достаточно длительное время, чтобы продемонстрировать очевидные признаки аккультурации и наглядно показать выбранную стратегию аккультурации. Результаты исследования продемонстрировали, что интеграция представляет собою стратегию, которая не создает проблем в организационной коммуникации, в то время как маргинализация – стратегия, вызывающая проблемы в коммуникации. Были также изучены дополнительные детали: использование языка и способность выполнять определенные задачи были включены в общий анализ. Следует отметить, что стратегия аккультурации практически напрямую влияет на наличие проблем коммуникации в организации.

Ключевые слова: аккультурация, стратегий аккультурации, организационная коммуникация, барьеры коммуникации, инокультурная среда, мигранты.

Problem statement. Gradual and constant development of globalization in modern world forces the borders between states and nations to fade. People get a chance to be more flexible and mobile in terms of trans-national movements, or in other words, simply in being able to migrate to

other countries. It does not only concern the problems, but it is also relevant for the working environment since many people tend to take new position overseas, especially while working in some trans-national enterprises. Nevertheless, it is always problematic to find relevant way of communication and behavior in foreign cultural environment. As soon as the person moved to other place or country, he or she undergoes the process of acculturation which results into the choice of specific acculturation strategy. The latter defines the patterns of behavior and patterns of further interaction with colleagues, co-workers and even managers. Since this process is unavoidable, it is necessary to make sure that individual will pick the most productive strategy and that the time spent in foreign environment will be efficient and beneficial for both parties. Consequently, it is necessary to focus on psychological factors that determine the choice of acculturation strategy. This way it would be possible either to select specialists who will be efficient in foreign cultural environment or make psychological corrections of specific traits that might become a barrier for the choice of the most productive strategy. Since nowadays such practice is not common, it is necessary to provide further investigation to find out which psychological determinants lead to the choice of specific strategy and what can be done to enhance productivity while working in foreign cultural environment.

Literature review. Cultures interact and not simply complement each other: they enter into complex relationships in the course of which they mutually adapt by borrowing their best products. The changes caused by these borrowings compel people of this culture to adapt to them, mastering and using these new elements in their lives. As a result, a person to a greater or lesser extent achieves compatibility with the new cultural environment. It is believed that with the interaction of cultures, and when a person adapts to the elements of a new culture, acculturation takes place [7]. The study of acculturation processes began to be dealt with at the beginning of the 20th century. American cultural anthropologists R. Redfield, R. Linton and M. Herskovits were the first to consider acculturation as a result of the prolonged contact of groups representing different cultures, which was expressed in changing initial cultural models in one or both groups (depending on the specific weight of the interacting groups) [12]. However, gradually, the researchers moved away from the concept of acculturation only as a group phenomenon and began to consider it at the level of the individual's psychology, presenting the process of acculturation as a change in the value orientation, role behavior, and social attitudes of the individual [6]. Currently, according to J. Berry, the term "acculturation" is used to describe the process and result of the mutual influence of different cultures, in which all or part of the representatives of one culture (recipients) adopt norms, values and traditions of the other (in donor culture). It can be said that at the level of an individual, acculturation is the process of learning the knowledge and skills necessary for living in a foreign culture [7].

Studies in the field of acculturation were particularly intensified at the end of the 20th century. This is due to the migration boom that humanity is experiencing and which is manifested in the ever-growing exchange of students, specialists, and in mass resettlements. According to J. Banks, today more than 100 million people live in the world outside the country of origin [3, p. 26]. In the process of acculturation, a person has to simultaneously solve two problems: the preservation of one's cultural identity and inclusion in another's culture. The combination of possible solutions to these problems provides the main strategies of acculturation [7]:

- Assimilation is a variant of acculturation, in which a person fully accepts the values and norms of another culture, while refusing from personal norms and values;
 - Separation is a denial of another's culture while maintaining identification with own culture. In this case, representatives of the non-dominant group prefer a greater or lesser degree of isolation from the dominant culture. The isolation strategy insisted upon by representatives of the dominant culture is called segregation;
 - Marginalization is a variant of acculturation, manifested in the loss of identity with one's own culture and lack of identification with the culture of the majority. This situation arises from the inability to maintain one's own identity (usually for some external reason) and the lack of interest in obtaining a new identity (perhaps because of discrimination or segregation from this culture);
 - Integration is the identification with both the old culture and the new one.
- Until recently, scientists called full assimilation the best strategy of acculturation with a dominant culture. Today, the goal of acculturation is the achievement of cultural integration,

the result of which is a bicultural or multicultural personality. This is possible if the interacting majority and minority groups voluntarily choose this strategy: the integrating group is ready to accept the attitudes and values of a new culture, and the dominant group is ready to accept these people, respecting their rights and values, adapting social institutions to their needs.

However, not always the members of the non-dominant group are free to choose the strategy of acculturation. The dominant group can restrict choices or force them to certain forms of acculturation [7]. Nevertheless, it is not so common anymore since there is a tendency to be free in the choice of acculturation strategy which is determined by the specific organization of personal behavior or the system of values [10].

The basis of acculturation is the communicative process. Just as local people acquire their cultural characteristics, or in other words, pass inculturation through interaction with each other, and visitors get acquainted with new cultural conditions and master new skills through communication. Therefore, the process of acculturation is the acquisition of communicative abilities in a new culture [13, p. 238]. Any communication, including personal communication, has three interrelated aspects: cognitive, affective and behavioral, because in the process of communication, the processes of perception, processing of information, as well as actions are directed at the objects and people surrounding the person [11]. In this process, the individual, using the information received, adapts to the environment.

The most fundamental changes occur in the structure of cognition, in that picture of the world through which a person receives information from the environment. It is presented in the differences in the picture of the world, in the ways of categorizing and interpreting experience, that differences between cultures are based on. Only by expanding the scope of the adoption and processing of information, a person can comprehend the system of organizing foreign cultures and adjust their knowledge processes to those that are inherent in the bearers of another's culture. A person determines the mentality of "aliens" as difficult and incomprehensible precisely because he/she is unfamiliar with the system of knowledge of another culture.

To develop fruitful relationships with representatives of foreign culture, a person should not only understand it at a rational level, but also understand it on the affective one. It is necessary to know what emotional statements and reactions are acceptable, since in each society a certain criterion of sentimentality and emotionality is adopted. When a person is adapted to another affective orientation, he or she can understand the causes of humor, fun and excitement, anger, pain and frustration as well as the locals do. Decisive in the adaptation of a person to a foreign culture is the acquisition of technical and social skills of behavior for actions in certain situations. Technical skills include skills that are important for every member of society: language proficiency, ability to shop, pay taxes, etc. Social skills are usually less specific than technical skills, but they are more difficult to master. Even the bearers of culture, naturally "playing" their social roles, very rarely can explain what, how and why they do certain things. However, by the application of trial and error method, people constantly improve their behavior through the formation of algorithms and stereotypes, which can be used automatically without any hesitation. Full adaptation of a person to a foreign culture means that all three aspects of communication proceed simultaneously and become coordinated and balanced. Adapting to the conditions of a new culture, people usually feel the underdevelopment of one or more of these aspects of communication, resulting in a poor balance and coordination.

The most important goal and result of acculturation is a long-term adaptation to life in a foreign culture. It is characterized by relatively stable changes in individual or group consciousness in response to environmental demands. Adaptation is usually considered in two aspects: psychological and sociocultural [5, p. 363]. Psychological adaptation is an achievement of psychological satisfaction within the framework of a new culture. This is expressed in good health, psychological health, in a clearly and clearly formed sense of personal or cultural identity. Sociocultural adaptation is the ability to freely navigate in a new culture and society, to solve everyday problems in the family, at home, at work [5].

Since one of the most important indicators of successful adaptation is job placement, job satisfaction and the level of professional achievements and, as a result, well-being in a new culture, researchers as an independent aspect of adaptation began to emphasize on economic adaptation. That is why it is necessary to focus on the description of communication within the organization as a

dependent variable. Chosen acculturation strategy may be the key factor in the establishment of both aspects of adaptation and since job placement is important for any person, the process of communication in that placement is important for further success as well. According to T. Persikova, if to talk about the organizations, it is possible to meet the terminological confusion while defining culture. It means that internal corporate culture may interfere culture as the phenomenon of living. In other words, two cultures emerge and the person, who moves to work to another organization or forced to do that enters the zone of conflict which may have an effect on the choice of acculturation strategy [2]. Nevertheless, it is necessary to focus on the specifics of the internal communication within the organization.

To understand the process of information exchange better, the conditions for its effectiveness, it is necessary to indicate the elements and stages of the communication process. In the process of information exchange, four elements are distinguished [8]:

- The sender, the person, conceived to convey information (idea, message) or express emotions, feelings.
 - The message, the information itself, is a clearly articulated idea encoded with the help of symbols. The meaning and meaning of the message are the sender's ideas, facts, values, feelings and attitudes.
 - Channel, the means of information transfer. With its help, it is sent to the specified destination. Channels can be a telephone line, a radio wave, air that transmits oral speech, computer networks, channels for delivery of written correspondence, etc. If the channel at the time of transmission or exchange of information links more than two organizational units, it forms an information network.
 - The recipient, the person to whom the information is intended and who interprets it.
- The stages of information exchange are the following [8]:
- the origin of ideas, messages;
 - coding and channel selection;
 - transfer – using the channel to deliver the message;
 - decoding – translation of the sender's symbols into the recipient's thoughts.

Feedback makes communication a dynamic two-sided process. It can be considered as a message to the sender, which contains data on the effectiveness of the act of communication. If to focus on the communication within the organization, it is necessary to list its main forms [8]:

- communication with the external environment;
- vertical communications within the organization;
- horizontal communication within the organization;
- informal communications;
- communication networks.

Each of these forms involves the use of oral or written forms of communication.

Regarding criteria for evaluating the communicative structure of an organization, the diagnosis of the communicative structure of the organization as a whole implies its evaluation according to six criteria [14]:

- Sensitivity is the ability of the communicative structure of the organization to perceive signals about the slightest changes in the external or internal environment.
- Efficiency is the response time of the communicative structure of the organization to the received signal.
- Centralization is the location of the majority (the center of gravity) of elements and communicative interactions in the space of the organization.
- Viability is the ability of the communicative structure to realize the target, strategic function of the organization in the absence of part of its links and elements.
- Flexibility is the ability of the communicative structure of an organization to change under the influence of internal or external environment.
- Integrity is the amount of real communication in the organization in relation to the maximum possible.

According to G. S. Nikiforov, distortions in communication within the organization may depend on the following [1]:

- Socio-demographic specifics: gender, age, working experience, education, etc.
- Individual psychological features;
- Somatic state of the person;
- Current emotional state;
- Personal interest;
- Level of awareness regarding the topic of discussion

Most of the studies nowadays mainly focus either on the level of adaptation of migrants, or on the study of the derivatives of the chosen acculturation strategy. That is why the focus of our study was made on the distortions of organizational communication in terms of the chosen acculturation strategy.

Aim of the article. The aim of the current article is to disclose whether acculturation strategy may be defined as a barrier or facilitator of the organizational communication if foreign specialist is included into the system of the set relations within the organization.

Results and discussion. To research indicated question, 279 respondents took part in the study. Most of them were young immigrants who have job and are currently officially employed overseas. The research covered the following countries: United States, Germany, Israel and France. The sample itself consisted of 54 men and 224 women. Such division can be explained by the type of job that is performed by the immigrants: it is difficult to get official employment in the chosen countries and women tend to use marriage as a form of getting citizenship, which results into the ability to get official employment. Men most of the time end up signing official contracts and stay for a significantly long period of time. To search the respondents, they had to be selected according to the following criteria: official employment for more than one month, official stay in the country of employment for more than one month and employment in big organization, preferably local. According to S. Kang, one month is a minimum time of stay that allows to select specific acculturation strategy [9]. In addition, official employment requires constant presence in the organization and that is why it is possible to research the specifics of the communication.

To perform selected research aim, the following methods were used: Sixteen Personality Factor Questionnaire (16PF), The Questionnaire of Complex Acculturation Research developed by J. Berry, Questionnaire regarding the difficulties in current communication system within the organization. Sixteen Personality Factor Questionnaire (16PF) allowed to select the most significant psychological factors that might correlate with the selection of acculturation strategy and impact on the desire to change current chain of communication within the organization of employment. Thus, this instrument was mainly used to cover psychological aspects of the research. The Questionnaire of Complex Acculturation Research developed by J. Berry is dedicated to the research of the selected acculturation strategy, together with the brief diagnostic of the presence of sociocultural dysadaptation and the presence of anxiety and depression. This method is initial one in this research. Finally, Questionnaire regarding the difficulties in current communication system within the organization was designed as a set of questions regarding current situation of employment of the specific immigrant. This way it was possible to define whether the respondent is striving for change or whether he/she is having any problems with communication at work.

Obtained results showed that there is a correlation between selected acculturation strategy and the problems with communication in organizations of employment. The results of correlation analysis are presented in the table 1.

It is necessary to admit that respondents who have chosen integration as a strategy tend to have no problems with communication ($r = 0,199$; $\text{Sig} = 0,001$). Another important aspect is the presence of sociocultural dysadaptation: immigrants who do not have problems with adaptation, also do not have problems with communication ($r = -0,297$; $\text{Sig} = 0,000$); people who have problems with adaptation also experience problems with communication within the organization of employment ($r = 0,287$; $\text{Sig} = 0,000$). In addition, the results have shown that the presence of sociocultural dysadaptation is connected with separation as a strategy of acculturation. Consequently, it can be assumed that if separation is chosen as the strategy, immigrant experiences problems with adaptation and also has problems with communication within the organization of employment.

Another aspect that is pointed out as important for employment abroad, as well as for the selection of acculturation strategy is the language that is spoken most of the time. All of the respondents use English, German or French as their “working” languages, nevertheless, it was necessary to research which language do they mostly use for communication outside the place of employment. In addition, it was important to research its connection with the selection of the acculturation strategy. The results of the analysis are presented in table 2.

Table 1

The results of the correlation analysis
Correlations

		Separation	Marginalization	Integration	Assimilation	No communication problems	Communication problems	Sociocultural dysadaptation
Spearman's rho	Separation	1,000	,086	-,179**	-,090	-,038	,051	,176**
	Correlation Coefficient							
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.	,152	,003	,134	,532	,397	,003
	N	279	279	279	279	279	279	279
	Marginalization	,086	1,000	-,417**	,322**	,022	-,061	-,002
	Correlation Coefficient							
	Sig. (2-tailed)	,152	.	,000	,000	,715	,307	,973
	N	279	279	279	279	279	279	279
	Integration	-,179**	-,417**	1,000	-,159**	,199**	-,138*	-,178**
	Correlation Coefficient							
	Sig. (2-tailed)	,003	,000	.	,008	,001	,021	,003
	N	279	279	279	279	279	279	279
	Assimilation	-,090	,322**	-,159**	1,000	-,055	-,072	,017
	Correlation Coefficient							
Sig. (2-tailed)	,134	,000	,008	.	,360	,233	,778	
N	279	279	279	279	279	279	279	
No communication problems	-,038	,022	,199**	-,055	1,000	-,776**	-,297**	
Correlation Coefficient								
Sig. (2-tailed)	,532	,715	,001	,360	.	,000	,000	
N	279	279	279	279	279	279	279	
Communication problem	,051	-,061	-,138*	-,072	-,776**	1,000	,287**	
Correlation Coefficient								
Sig. (2-tailed)	,397	,307	,021	,233	,000	.	,000	
N	279	279	279	279	279	279	279	
Sociocultural dysadaptation	,176**	-,002	-,178**	,017	-,297**	,287**	1,000	
Correlation Coefficient								
Sig. (2-tailed)	,003	,973	,003	,778	,000	,000	.	
N	279	279	279	279	279	279	279	

Table 2

Dependency of the language use and acculturation strategy

		N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error
Marginalization	Russian	144	3,1771	,94141	,07845
	Ukrainian	108	2,9583	,97904	,09421
	English	24	3,0000	,36116	,07372
	German	3	4,5000	,00000	,00000
	Total	279	3,0914	,93189	,05579
Assimilation	Russian	144	3,8750	1,26477	,10540
	Ukrainian	108	4,1111	1,04643	,10069
	English	24	3,8125	1,16854	,23853
	German	3	4,0000	,00000	,00000
	Total	279	3,9624	1,17123	,07012
No communication problems	Russian	144	-5,4285	1,64729	,13727
	Ukrainian	108	-5,1467	1,48619	,14301
	English	24	-5,8325	1,33231	,27196
	German	3	-4,1700	,00000	,00000
	Total	279	-5,3406	1,56432	,09365
Communication problem	Russian	144	5,9598	1,93988	,16166
	Ukrainian	108	5,6647	1,94911	,18755
	English	24	6,5179	1,15006	,23476
	German	3	3,9286	,00000	,00000
	Total	279	5,8717	1,89864	,11367

According to the obtained results, it is not possible to state that language that is used outside of the place of employment has impact on the presence of problems with communication and that it has significant impact on the selection of the acculturation strategy. It is possible to admit that majority of the respondents tend to choose integration as the main acculturation strategy and thus, have no problems with communication at work.

To research more details, it was necessary to uncover the problem of the social environment and whether there are people who actually have the same nationality as the respondents do. Details are shown in the table 3: it covers the most significant results that require further explanation.

Basing on the provided information it can be stated that marginalization tends to be selected when the social environment is divided in half, meaning that there is an almost equal number of the representatives of similar and foreign nationality. Also, communication problem tends to emerge if people around the respondent tend to have the same nationality, however, no significant differences regarding the use of the language were detected. The same is common for the situation when almost equal number of people of similar and foreign nationality surround the respondent. As a result, it can be stated that social environment plays certain part in the presence of communication problems within the employment organization and social environment also tends to impact the selection of acculturation strategy.

Table 3

Variety of social environment

		N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error
Marginalization	Almost equal number of people of my and foreign nationality	33	2,8636	,75284	,13105
	Total	279	3,0914	,93189	,05579
Communication problem	Most of the people around me have the same nationality	90	6,0952	1,75683	,18519
	Almost all people around me are foreigners	72	5,8333	1,87934	,22148
	Almost equal number of people of my and foreign nationality	33	6,2662	1,52595	,26563
	Total	279	5,8717	1,89864	,11367

Finally, it is necessary to focus on the differences between men and women. According to the obtained results, no significant differences regarding the gender were found. It means that both, men and women, generally do not experience problems with communication depending on their gender. Differences were present in the selection of acculturation strategy. For more details, please refer to figures 1 and 2.

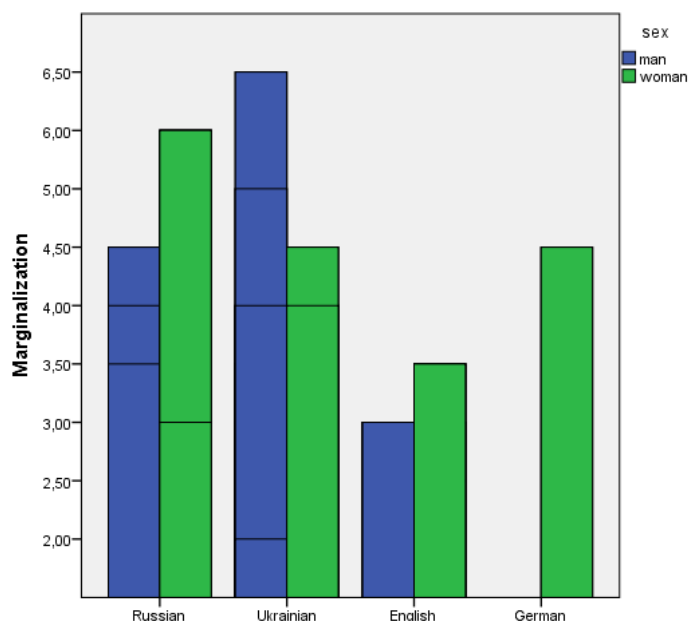


Fig. 1. Results according to marginalization as the chosen strategy

It can be seen that Russian-speaking men are less prone to choosing marginalization as acculturation strategy. Women in general do not prefer this strategy. That is why it is necessary to focus on the selection of integration as the most common strategy for the entire sample.

According to obtained results, English-speaking immigrants (those, who do not use English outside of the working place) have a tendency to “less integrated” than those who use Russian or Ukrainian as the main language outside the place of employment. German sample, unfortunately, is too low to be taken into consideration. These results provide some idea about the problems of communication that are common for people who leave the culture of origin to work abroad.

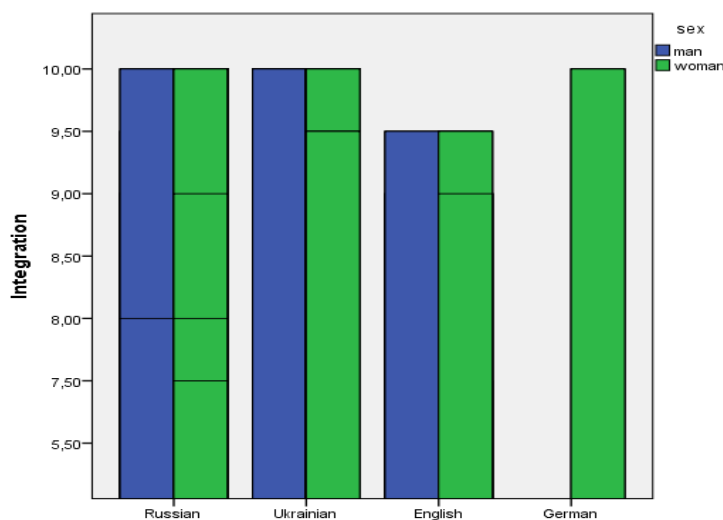


Fig. 2. Results of integration as the chosen strategy

Nowadays it is quite common to see people who leave home country to work abroad. People who do that undergo the process of acculturation which is characterized by the selection of the specific strategy that might impact further development of communication patterns within the host-community and at the work place in turn. As a result, specific problems in organizational communication may arise. According to the obtained results, it was possible to find out that integration is the most efficient strategy since respondents who have chosen it as acculturation strategy do not experience problems in communication at the workplace. Marginalization tends to be chosen as a result of social dysadaptation, meaning that the respondents who have selected this strategy have a tendency to have problems in communication at the workplace, mainly due to the presence of inability to adapt to social environment. In addition, the results have shown that social environment of these people is not diverse and mainly is divided in half: there are people who come from the immigrant's domestic culture and half of them come from the host-culture. No other significant differences were found regarding other variables that were selected for the research.

Nevertheless, it is necessary to admit that specific acculturation strategy surely has an impact on the presence of communication problems in organization that individual is working in. It is connected to psychological features that require further investigation. Current study may be considered as the base for further research since more psychological features need to be researched. As for now, main focus was set on the strategy of acculturation and whether it causes any problems with communication. More variables need to be implemented in terms of the type of the problem that individual may experience and in terms of psychological factors that might have an impact on specific type of the problem. Such barriers may affect entire chain of communication within the organization and that is why current problem still remains an acute issue for many employers who invite people from different cultures and with various cultural background. Nevertheless, specific acculturation strategy can become a barrier or facilitator of communication within the organization. The results of the research are presented in figure 3.

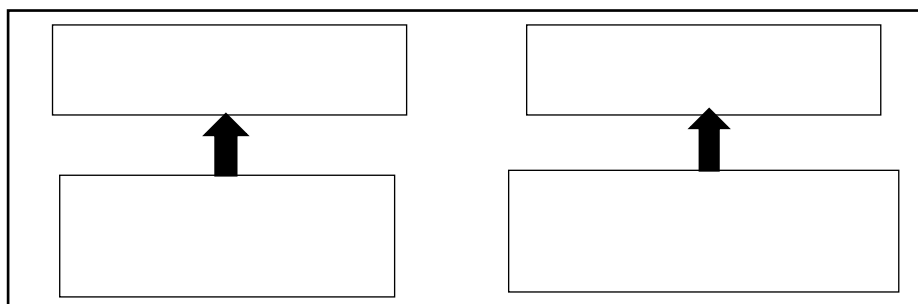


Fig. 3. Impact of acculturation strategy on the presence of communication problems

It can be regarded as a generalized model for the relation between acculturation strategy and the presence of problems with the organizational communication.

Conclusion. It has been noted that the strategy of acculturation has almost direct impact on the presence of communication problems within the organization. The results of the research have shown that integration is the strategy that does not cause problems in organizational communication, while marginalization is the strategy that causes communication problems.

Further research may focus on the analysis of migrants' psychological features related to the acculturation strategies and the presence of communication problems in organization that individual is working in.

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Данилюк І.В., Курапов А.О. Стратегії акультурації як чинники специфіки організаційної комунікації в чужорідному культурному середовищі. Поступовий і постійний розвиток глобалізації в сучасному світі стирає межі між державами та народами. Люди отримують можливість бути більш гнучкими та мобільними з точки зору транскордонних рухів, тобто просто перебувати в іншій країні. Це стосується не лише проблем, але й робочого середовища, оскільки багато людей прагнуть займати нові посади за кордоном, особливо під час роботи на деяких транснаціональних підприємствах. Тим не менше, завжди проблематично знайти відповідний спосіб спілкування та поведінки у зарубіжному культурному середовищі. Щойно особа переселяється в інше місце чи країну, він або вона проходить процес акультурації, який приводить до вибору конкретної стратегії акультурації. Останні визначають закономірності поведінки та закономірності подальшої взаємодії з колегами та навіть керівниками. У статті розкрито специфіку впливу обраної стратегії акультурації на наявність комунікаційних проблем усередині організації. Результати дослідження сфокусовані на мігрантах, або тих людях, які вимушено або добровільно переїхали на роботу до чужорідного культурного середовища. Було розкрито, який саме вплив має стратегія акультурації на наявність комунікаційних проблем та в чому саме полягає причина вибору саме такої стратегії. До того ж, у статті представлено можливі причини, які призводять як до проблем в комунікації при роботі в організації, яка сформована більшою мірою із представників чужих етнокультурних груп, так і до вибору певної стратегії акультурації.

Ключові слова: акультурація, стратегії акультурації, організаційна комунікація, бар'єри комунікації, чужорідне культурне середовище, мігранти.

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