

ИНОСТРАННЫЕ ЯЗЫКИ И МЕЖКУЛЬТУРНАЯ КОММУНИКАЦИЯ
(Английский язык) /
FOREIGN LANGUAGES AND INTERCULTURAL COMMUNICATION
(English Language)

10-11 классы / 10th and 11th Grades

Вариант 4 / Version 4

Duration – 80 minutes
Maximum score – 100 points

The test consists of 2 parts: Language and Culture Studies and Analytical Writing.

PART 1. LANGUAGE AND CULTURE STUDIES (50 points)

Task 1. For questions 1-6, read the text below and answer the questions (24 points).

Unveiling Cross-Cultural Communication Styles

Communication serves as the cornerstone of human interaction. It is intricately shaped by cultural nuances and variations. The diversity of communication styles across cultures is a testament to the complex interplay of historical, societal, and cultural factors. From linguistic differences to the differences in gestures and facial expressions, there exists a variety in the distinction of communication styles.

Non-verbal communication nuances vary across cultures, with the potential to trigger misunderstandings or enrich intercultural interactions. When it comes to eye contact, direct eye contact, a staple of Western communication, symbolizes attentiveness and confidence. People who make eye contact are often seen as being more trustworthy and credible. However, in Eastern cultures, prolonged eye contact may be seen as intrusive or aggressive. Individuals in Eastern cultures are also more likely to perceive faces with direct eye contact as being angry, unapproachable or unpleasant.

The way you interact with others might differ as well depending upon the cultural context. For example, the level of physical contact might differ from culture to culture. This has led to the conceptualization of high-contact and low-contact cultures. Generally, close physical contact is more common in contemporary Western societies than in Asian cultures. Similarly, Latin American cultures are considered high-contact while Middle Eastern cultures can be considered low-contact cultures.

One of the most important factors in cross-cultural communication is context. Context refers to the setting in which communication takes place, as well as the shared knowledge and experiences of the communicators. Context can influence the meaning of words, gestures, and other nonverbal

cues. Cultures can therefore be placed on a continuum of high-context to low-context cultures. It is based on how important implicit information is in the communication of that culture. In addition to this, gestures too can have different meanings in different cultures. For example, a smile can have different meanings in different cultures. In Western cultures, a smile is often seen as a **sign** of happiness or pleasure. However, in some Eastern cultures, a smile can also be used to hide sadness or anger. Another example is the gesture of pointing. In Western cultures, pointing is a common way to indicate something or someone. However, in some cultures, pointing is considered rude or disrespectful. Context can also influence the way that people interpret the tone of voice. In some Western cultures, a direct and assertive tone is considered to be polite. However, in Eastern cultures, particularly in Chinese and Japanese society, a more indirect and deferential tone is preferred.

In this day and age, globalization has increased the interconnectedness between different parts of the world. So, with just one swipe we can communicate with anyone around the globe. As a result, people are more likely to be aware of the differences in communication styles elsewhere and be more understanding of them.

by Alison Fernandes

1. According to the author, communication is the primary foundation for human engagement.
 - a) True
 - b) False
2. According to the text, subtle aspects of non-verbal communication
 - a) are irrelevant to human interactions.
 - b) can enhance cross-cultural understanding.
 - c) cannot convey unspoken messages in social settings.
 - d) lead to misinterpretations only.
3. What should everyone know about the communication styles of Western and Eastern cultures, according to the text? Check all that apply.
 - a) People from Western cultures interpret faces that engage in direct eye contact as exhibiting hostility, or a lack of warmth.
 - b) In contemporary Western societies, tactile interactions are less common than in Asian cultures.
 - c) Maintaining eye contact is the expected norm when communicating with others in Western cultural contexts.
 - d) In the West, individuals who engage in eye contact are frequently perceived as more reliable.
4. According to the text, the interpretation of language, bodily movements and other forms of nonverbal communication is shaped by customs and traditions.
 - a) True
 - b) False
 - c) Not stated
5. Match the cultural characteristics with high- and low-contact cultures given in the text.
 - a) A straightforward and confident approach to communication is regarded as respectful. HIGH-CONTACT/LOW-CONTACT

- b) Pointing is frequently regarded as an affront to etiquette or a demonstration of disrespect. HIGH-CONTACT/LOW-CONTACT
 - c) A manner of speaking that exhibits indirectness and deference is typically the preferred mode of communication in these cultures. HIGH-CONTACT/LOW-CONTACT
 - d) The act of pointing serves as a prevalent method for designating a particular object or individual. HIGH-CONTACT/LOW-CONTACT
6. In the paragraph before last, find the word that means ‘respectful, polite’ = _____
(type it in small letters).

Task 2. For questions 7-12, think of one word which can be used appropriately in all three idioms, proverbs, or expressions from around the world. Type the word in small letters (12 points).

- 7. You cannot pick up salt with dry _____. (Chinese proverb)
If I have lost the ring, I still have the _____. (Italian proverb)
Without _____ the hand would be a spoon. (Moroccan proverb)
- 8. Every man is the best interpreter of his own _____. (German proverb)
Spend _____ as efficiently as money. (Japanese proverb)
_____ that come from the heart stay warm three winters long. (Chinese proverb)
- 9. He who hurts his nose, hurts his _____. (Dutch proverb)
The wind in one’s _____ makes one wise. (English proverb)
Sometimes the _____ can tell what the lips can’t say. (African proverb)
- 10. _____ is food for the soul. (Mexican proverb)
A single _____ across the table with a wise man is worth a month’s study of books. (Chinese proverb)
_____ shortens the distance, singing lightens the road. (Russian proverb)
- 11. _____ yourself, and you will get it back. (African proverb)
Never spend time with people who don’t _____ you. (New Zealand proverb)
_____ flies away for the one who pursues it and hunts the person who is fleeing from it. (Hebrew proverb)
- 12. When anger blinds the _____, truth disappears. (Danish proverb)
The best looking-glass is the _____ of a friend. (Irish proverb)
The _____ have one language everywhere. (Romanian proverb)

Task 3. For questions 13-19, match the sociocultural facts with their countries of origin. There are more countries than you will need (14 points).

A	New Zealand	D	Russia	G	the USA
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B	Germany	E	the Philippines	H	Iceland
C	India	F	South Korea	I	Hungary

13. If you share a joke online, your friend from this vast country might reply with ‘LOL’ or ‘hahaha’.
14. But if you tell a joke to a resident of this European country, he might respond with ‘g’ as it represents the word ‘grinsen’ which means grinning.
15. In this populous country people may use elaborate greetings and show respect through formal language.
16. In this country, residents demonstrate their reverence for older individuals by lightly touching the knuckles of their hand to their forehead as a form of greeting.
17. In this country individuals smile sincerely to convey a positive mood or personal regard for someone they know; smiling when seeing an unfamiliar person would be considered untruthful.
18. In this country people bow when first meeting someone, as well as to express ‘Hello’, ‘Goodbye’, ‘Thank you’ and ‘I apologize’.
19. Unlike most English-speaking countries, the OK gesture is associated with laziness in this island country.

PART 2. ANALYTICAL WRITING (50 points)

Task 4. Now you have learned about communication styles in different cultures. Write an essay analysing the importance of understanding the rules of communication from the perspective of your cultural experience and background. Your essay should have an introduction, two/three body paragraphs, and a conclusion.

You must:

- define the cultural phenomenon using your own words;
- explain how this cultural phenomenon impacts cross-cultural communication;
- analyse how this cultural phenomenon is reflected in your culture in the given sphere providing examples.

You can receive a maximum of 50 points for this task.

ANSWER KEY

TASK 1

- 1) A
- 2) B
- 3) C, D
- 4) C
- 5) a - HIGH-CONTACT; b - LOW-CONTACT; c - LOW-CONTACT; d - HIGH-CONTACT
- 6) deferential

TASK 2

- 7) fingers
- 8) words
- 9) face
- 10) conversation
- 11) respect
- 12) eyes

TASK 3

- 13) G
- 14) B
- 15) C
- 16) E
- 17) D
- 18) F
- 19) A