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**Understanding foreign issues:
intercultural competence in the German language teaching**

Summary

The dissertation consists of four main chapters which include an analysis of the relevant literature and the state of research, an empirical part and the potential for possible further use of the research results.

The main assumption of the dissertation is that in order to communicate well with the representatives of other cultures it is insufficient to master language skills. The intercultural competence involving, among other things, sensitizing language learners to foreign cultures as well as the awareness of the impact of our cultural standards, and a set of values on the way in which we perceive other cultures, is crucial.

Therefore, in language teaching, it is necessary to develop language and cultural skills at the same time, as well as to support the process of understanding foreign cultures. The author argues at this point that specific phenomena and different cultural realities ought to be incorporated into foreign language teaching – at least in the form of examples.

The theoretical section of the thesis is devoted to the terminology connected with the subject of the dissertation and the range of research conducted. In the first instance, the author focuses on the explanation of the two terms: the competence and on the relationships between them. Presented are also: the component elements of intercultural competence and the multidimensional aspect of intercultural teaching, as well as the ways in which the process of understanding foreign cultures can be supported among students.

The empirical part of the dissertation encompasses an analysis of textbooks *Aspekte* and *em neu* used for a few years in the subject Practical German Language Learning, among others, in the Institute of German Philology at the University of Rzeszów.

On the bases of the author's set of research questions it was analyzed how these textbooks can support the parallel development of language skills and intercultural competence by students. There was a cross-sectional study of the textbooks which was of a descriptive and analytical

nature – according to the current guidelines of WILCZYŃSKA and MICHONSKA-STADNIK (2010).

After summarizing and interpreting the results of research it was intended to conclude the work and to provide an outlook for its further potential usage.

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