

Abstract

Theoretical part of this Ph.D. thesis deals with the latest findings about intercultural communication and with important intercultural theories focused on two examined countries: the Czech Republic and Japan. It compares Czech and Japanese ways of thinking and behaviors using theory of cultural standards. An overview of current intercultural competence theories is followed by a description of specifics of intercultural competence and of possible ways of developing it. The theoretical part of the thesis is concluded by an overview of benefits and risks of intercultural research in general.

The empirical part of the thesis compares intercultural competence of Czech and Japanese university students. The main aim of the study is to construct a questionnaire of intercultural competence, to design an observed situation measuring intercultural competence and to determinate a relationship between components of the questionnaire and the observation criteria. Next aims of the study are to determine differences in intercultural competence of Czech and Japanese university students, to compare them and to find out whether these differences can be explained by the components of the questionnaire. We were interested to what extent is the intercultural competence related to intracultural competence and whether there is a link between flexibility in the observed situation and between intercultural competences. The intercultural competence questionnaire was analyzed by the help of PCA, other analysis and it was subsequently cross-validated by additional validation criteria on a larger research sample of university students.

In both studies Czechs scored higher than Japanese in all intercultural competence questionnaire subscales. However, the differences between Czech and Japanese observed intercultural competence were smaller. One of the key empirical findings of Ph.D. theses is that the developed questionnaire is able to predict certain behavioral manifestations of intercultural competence, which could be observed in the model situation, and that intercultural competence is related to intracultural competence. The thesis analyses in which substantial areas of intercultural competence do Czechs and Japanese differ, and in that way it helps to improve mutual understanding of both studied groups.