

## **CROSS-CULTURAL UNDERSTANDING AS A TOOL FOR REDUCING CULTURAL MISUNDERSTANDINGS**

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### **ABSTRACT**

*In a world that is becoming more connected, people from different cultures interact regularly in everyday life—whether in schools, at work, or through online communication. Such interactions frequently lead to cultural misunderstandings, which stem from differences in values, ways of communicating, and the mental frameworks people use to understand and interpret meaning. This article explores cross-cultural understanding as a strategic approach to reducing cultural misinterpretations, with an emphasis on identifying the reasons behind these misunderstandings, the teaching and communication methods that can help develop cross-cultural understanding, and the beneficial results that come from putting these strategies into practice. This study employs a qualitative method with a descriptive-analytical approach, combining theoretical viewpoints and research outcomes from eighteen academic sources published between 2021 and 2025. These sources are drawn from the fields of intercultural communication, applied linguistics, education, and social research methodology. The results show that cultural misunderstandings are mostly caused by ethnocentrism, problems in communication practices, differences in how people use metaphors and think, and a lack of proper intercultural skills among teachers and communicators. Strategies like training in intercultural communication skills, using games in teaching, adopting multicultural classroom methods, and incorporating technology in learning have been shown to effectively address these gaps. This article states that cross-cultural understanding helps decrease both how often and how serious miscommunication issues occur, and it also promotes inclusion, a sense of psychological safety, creativity, and long-term collaboration among people from different cultural backgrounds. Recommendations are offered to educators, policymakers, and future researchers who aim to enhance intercultural competence in a world that is becoming more diverse and globally connected.*

**Keywords:** *Cross-cultural understanding, cultural misunderstanding, intercultural communicative competence, multicultural education, intercultural competence*

### **A. Introduction**

#### **Background**

Globalization has significantly changed the way people interact with each other around the world. The

borders that previously limited international interactions are now becoming less distinct due to the fast movement of people, global trade, labor movement, and digital

connections that allow people from different parts of the world to communicate and connect instantly. Cross-cultural interactions are becoming more common in social, academic, and professional settings due to this situation (Bokova & Kulich, 2021). International classrooms, multinational work teams, diplomatic forums, and even everyday conversations on social media now bring together people from different cultural backgrounds, each bringing their own values, norms, and ways of thinking.

However, interactions between these diverse groups do not always go smoothly. Differences in how people value things, communicate with each other, and understand the world can lead to what is called cultural misunderstanding. Slinkova and Slinkov (2025) highlight that the source of cross-cultural misunderstandings is not just due to differences in language, but because people from different cultures interpret symbols, actions, and the social environment of communication in varying ways. When two people from different cultural backgrounds communicate without realizing their differing cultural contexts, the

message they intend to send might be misunderstood by the other person, causing disagreement, discomfort, or even arguments that could have been prevented.

This phenomenon is evident in various contexts. In the field of education, Kustati, Deswila, Besral, and Zulfikar (2023) discovered that students learning a foreign language often struggle with communicating across cultures because they don't have enough understanding of the social and cultural rules that native speakers follow. In the business world, Liu (2023) found that when translations in cross-cultural business talks don't work well, it can lead to real money losses and also cause long-term partnerships to fall apart. At the same time, in the areas of thinking and language, Zou, Fuller, and Wang (2025) show that differences in cultural models can affect how people interpret metaphors. This, in turn, impacts the whole process of understanding meaning when communicating across different cultures.

Because of this situation, cross-cultural understanding has become an important strategy that people believe can help avoid these kinds of

misunderstandings. CCU is not just about knowing a country's customs and traditions, but it also includes the ability to think, feel, and act in a way that helps you understand, appreciate, and adjust to different cultures (Byram, 2021). Byram (2021) uses the Intercultural Communicative Competence (ICC) framework to say that real intercultural competence includes five areas: attitudes, knowledge, the ability to understand and connect with others, the ability to explore and engage with different cultures, and having a critical understanding of cultural differences. This framework is one of the main ideas that researchers use a lot in today's studies about teaching across different cultures.

Many universities and colleges worldwide are starting to see the importance of teaching students and teachers how to understand and work well with different cultures. Papadopoulou, Palaiologou, and Karanikola (2022) point out that teachers' skills in understanding and working with different cultures and the world are very important for managing classrooms with many different cultures. They say that teachers serve as examples, and the way they act can

affect how students understand and deal with differences. De Leersnyder, Gündemir, and Airda (2022) concluded that a multicultural approach in international classrooms can both reduce cultural misunderstandings and promote inclusion and a sense of psychological safety among students from diverse backgrounds.

### **Research Gap**

Although the research on intercultural competence and multicultural education is growing quickly, most studies so far have looked at just one part of the topic on its own. For example, some focus only on teaching methods in the classroom (Papadopoulou et al., 2022; Okken, Jansen, Hofman, & Coelen, 2022), others only on language and communication skills (Kustati et al., 2023; Liu, 2023), and some only on thinking and understanding (Zou et al., 2025). There are not many studies that thoroughly connect all three parts—like the main reasons cultural misunderstandings happen, ways to use CCU in different areas such as schools, work, and online chats, and the good results these methods bring. Especially, there are few reviews of literature that bring together ideas

from teaching, language, thinking, and social and cultural views all at once.

Most earlier studies have mostly focused on formal education settings in developed countries. However, the difficulties in studying cultural differences—like how researchers can learn about other cultures without letting their own cultural views affect their understanding—have not been thoroughly explored. Mijić (2025) points out this problem by saying that doing research across different cultures has special difficulties because researchers can't fully separate themselves from their own cultural background when they are trying to understand the data. This article aims to fill this gap by offering a more complete view, connecting different theories and research findings from eighteen recent academic studies to better understand how CCU can help reduce cultural misunderstandings.

### **Research Objectives**

The article was created with three main goals in mind. The first step is to figure out and understand the reasons why cultural misunderstandings happen when people from different cultures interact, whether in schools, work, or regular

conversations. Next, look closely at different methods that have worked well according to science to improve understanding between different cultures and solve these problems. Third, to look into the good effects that come from having cross-cultural understanding at different levels—like for individuals, organizations, and society as a whole—in order to give useful advice to teachers, government officials, and people who do research in the future.

## **LITERATURE REVIEW**

### **The Concepts of Cross-Cultural Understanding and Intercultural Communication Competence.**

Cross-cultural understanding is closely connected to the idea of intercultural communicative competence, which was introduced by Byram in 2021. In this model, cross-cultural competence isn't seen as just one skill. Instead, it's made up of several different parts. These parts include having an open mind about different cultures, knowing your own culture and others' cultures, being able to understand cultural events in their proper context, being able to communicate directly with people from different cultures, and having the

ability to think carefully and reflect on different cultural viewpoints. Byram's model is important because it shows that understanding different cultures isn't just about learning facts about other cultures. Instead, it's about keeping on learning and changing how you think about yourself and how you see other people.

Aririguzoh (2022) points out that the ability to communicate across cultures is important not just for dealing with people but also for helping reach the goals of global development, especially the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). According to him, good communication between different cultures is very important for building friendly international teamwork. Without these skills, working together between countries and communities can face problems because of differences in structure and culture.

From a historical and institutional viewpoint, Bokova and Kulich (2021) show how UNESCO has, for the last seventy-five years, always focused on promoting intercultural dialogue as the key to achieving world peace. UNESCO's work shows that working to understand different cultures isn't a

new idea, but something that has been happening for a long time as part of global cultural diplomacy. In fact, its importance is growing more as the world becomes more connected and complex today.

### **Factors Contributing to Cultural Misunderstandings.**

Many past studies have found several key reasons why misunderstandings happen when people from different cultures interact. First, pragmatic and linguistic factors. Kustati et al. (2023) discovered that when people learn a foreign language, they sometimes make mistakes because they bring over the social rules from their own language into the new language without realizing there are different social and cultural rules in the target language. Liu (2023) also found something similar in business talks, where mistakes in understanding language across different languages can cause people to miss the real meaning of what someone is saying, which might harm the trust between the people involved in the talks.

Second, cognitive and conceptual factors. Zou, Fuller, and Wang (2025) show that how people understand metaphors is greatly

affected by the cultural beliefs and ideas that each person has. When two people from different cultures hear the same metaphor, they might understand it in very different ways because their cultural backgrounds shape how they think about things. This finding supports the idea that cultural misunderstandings don't always happen on purpose or because someone isn't trying to be respectful. Instead, they can happen without people realizing it, because of differences in how their minds work. These differences are shaped over time from a young age through growing up in a particular culture.

Third, factors related to how we study and understand other cultures, including the methods we use and the ways we know things. Mijić (2025) says that when researchers or people try to learn about other cultures, they always use their own cultural background to understand the social behaviors they observe. If you don't take time to think about your own beliefs and assumptions, your attempts to learn about other cultures might be influenced by ethnocentric bias. This is when you use your own culture's standards to judge others. Instead of helping you

understand differences better, this kind of thinking can actually make misunderstandings worse.

Fourth, institutional and pedagogical factors. Okken, Jansen, Hofman, and Coelen (2022) discovered that how well teachers handle cultural differences in their teaching is greatly affected by the kind of school and classroom they work in, such as how diverse the students are and how much support the school policies provide. When schools don't offer enough support, it becomes easier for cultural misunderstandings to happen in classrooms with many different cultures. This is because teachers may not have the right skills and tools to handle the diversity in their classrooms effectively.

Fifth, generational factors and social change. Yamada (2025) points out that Generation Z, who grew up in a very connected digital world, interacts with different cultures in ways that are not the same as earlier generations. Even though this generation is getting more familiar with different cultures because of digital media, just being exposed doesn't mean they really understand it well. Quick and shallow interactions online can make things seem simpler

than they are, and this can cause people to miss the deeper and more complex parts of other cultures.

### **Strategies for Implementing Cross-Cultural Understanding.**

Because of different reasons that lead to confusion, scientific studies have come up with several ways to carry out CCU, and these methods have been tried in many different situations. First, a multicultural approach in international classrooms. De Leersnyder, Gündemir, and Ağirdağ (2022) showed that using a multicultural approach, which clearly recognizes and respects the different backgrounds of students, helps prevent cultural misunderstandings. It also creates a more inclusive environment and makes international students feel safer and more accepted.

Second, strengthening teachers' intercultural competencies. Papadopoulou, Palaiologou, and Karanikola (2022) highlight that teachers who have strong intercultural and global skills can build a classroom environment that is more accepting of different perspectives and are more prepared to help students have meaningful conversations when cultural differences cause conflicts.

Steele and Leming (2022) support these results by showing that when student teachers learn about different cultures during their teaching practice, it helps them better prepare to handle classrooms with students from various cultural backgrounds.

Third, gamification-based learning. Li (2025) came up with a new teaching method called gamification to help students learn cross-cultural communication in college English classes. This method has been proven to help students better understand different cultures and also spark their creativity. By using game elements, students can try out various cultural viewpoints in a safer setting, which is less risky than dealing with real-life situations.

Fourth, the use of technology and artificial intelligence. Karakas (2023) shows that artificial intelligence (AI) can act as a bridge to help people from different cultures communicate better when learning a foreign language. For example, AI can be used in adaptive cross-cultural conversation simulations, provide contextual translations, and offer personalized feedback. This helps learners spot and correct pragmatic

mistakes before they happen in real-life conversations.

Fifth, working together across different countries in creating language learning curricula. Jamin, Munirah, Asfahani, Prusty, and Palayukan (2024) show how working together between Indonesian and Indian researchers in early childhood education has created valuable cross-cultural teaching ideas that benefit both sides. This partnership also acts as a real example of how international academic work can help teachers learn from different cultures.

Sixth, improving communication skills is an important part of the sustainable development goals. Aririguzoh (2022) highlights the need to include cross-cultural communication skills within a larger context, specifically the goals of the SDGs. This means seeing cross-cultural understanding not just as something individuals can learn, but as a key part of the social system that helps create fairer and more sustainable global partnerships.

### **The Positive Impact of Cross-Cultural Understanding.**

Various studies have demonstrated that consistently applying CCU leads to several positive

outcomes. De Leersnyder and their team in 2022 showed that students who studied in settings with a strong emphasis on multiculturalism experienced greater feelings of belonging and a stronger sense of psychological safety. Li (2025) discovered that incorporating gamification in cross-cultural learning helps improve students' abilities to think creatively. Meanwhile, Yamada (2025) points out that suitable engagement methods can help Generation Z build more advanced intercultural skills, despite the fact that they are growing up in a rapidly evolving digital environment. Overall, these findings show that CCU acts as more than just a way to prevent conflicts; it also helps create learning and work environments that are more inclusive, innovative, and effective.

## **B. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY**

This study uses a qualitative method and follows a descriptive-analytical structure. The qualitative approach was selected because the main goal of this study is to thoroughly explore the phenomenon of cultural misunderstanding and the part that cross-cultural understanding plays as a remedy. From an epistemological

perspective, this topic is more effectively examined by focusing on meaning, context, and interpretation rather than relying solely on statistical data. As highlighted by Mijić (2025), cross-cultural research requires a strong awareness of the sociocultural context; therefore, a qualitative approach, which is reflective and interpretive, is seen as better suited for understanding the complexity of this phenomenon compared to a quantitative approach, which often simplifies cultural aspects into measurable variables.

The descriptive-analytical design in this study is carried out in two primary phases. The initial phase is known as the descriptive stage, during which the researcher thoroughly outlines the results from different scientific sources about the reasons behind cultural misunderstandings, methods for applying cross-cultural understanding, and the beneficial effects it can bring. The second stage is the analytical stage, during which the researcher carefully combines and evaluates the findings to recognize recurring themes, connections, and any missing areas within the different theoretical and practical viewpoints that are already available.

The data used in this study comes from secondary sources, including eighteen scholarly articles and books published between 2021 and 2025. These sources are from well-known indexed journals like \*Studies in Higher Education\*, \*Education Sciences\*, \*Cogent Education\*, \*Frontiers in Psychology\*, \*Intercultural Education\*, \*Journal of Peace Education\*, \*International Journal of Qualitative Methods\*, and \*Humanities and Social Sciences Communications\*. There's also a main reference book on intercultural communication by Byram from 2021. This time frame was chosen to make sure the study shows the most up-to-date information in intercultural communication and education.

Data was gathered by doing library research, which involved looking for, reading, and organizing the key points from each source into three main groups: (1) things that cause cultural misunderstandings, (2) ways to improve understanding between different cultures, and (3) the good outcomes that result from better cultural understanding. Once the data was sorted into different groups, the researcher used thematic analysis to

find shared themes and connections between these groups.

The data analysis used a qualitative content analysis method, which involves steps like reducing the data, organizing it into themes through stories, and then making and checking the conclusions. To make sure the analysis results are trustworthy, the researcher used source triangulation. This means they compared findings from different literature sources that come from various places, fields of study, and research methods. By doing this, the conclusions aren't based on just one viewpoint, but instead show a more complete and solid understanding based on multiple perspectives.

## **C. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION**

### **Factors Contributing to Cultural Misunderstandings: An In-Depth Analysis**

The findings from the literature review show that cultural misunderstandings don't happen on their own, but come from a mix of different factors that are connected in complicated ways. Looking closely at the eighteen sources in this study, four key groups of reasons for cultural misunderstandings come up:

language and communication issues, thinking and perception differences, problems with education and institutions, and changes due to different generations and technology.

At the level of language and how it's used in real situations, the research by Kustati et al.(2023) and Liu (2023) shows a common problem: people often get confused not because they make clear grammar mistakes, but because they don't understand the hidden meanings in what others say, which are influenced by cultural differences. In business talks, like the ones Liu looked at in 2023, it's important for interpreters to not just translate words exactly as they are. They also need to think about how the message fits in both the original culture and the new one. If they don't, the translation might be correct in grammar but miss the real meaning the speaker wanted to share. This shows that just knowing how to structure sentences in a language isn't enough to communicate well with people from different cultures; you also need to understand the social and cultural rules that shape how people use that language.

At the cognitive level, the study by Zou, Fuller, and Wang (2025) adds

important insight by showing that cultural differences are not just seen in how people act, but also in how deeply they think—specifically, in the way they understand and work with metaphors. When people from different cultures hear the same metaphorical expressions in a language, but those expressions mean different things in their own cultures, the misunderstandings that happen are harder to notice and more tricky to catch than mistakes that come from clearly wrong language use. A very important result of this finding is that programs aimed at improving understanding between different cultures should focus on deeper thinking levels. These programs shouldn't just teach basic cultural information in a simple way, but also help people become more aware of the different ways people understand and think about the world, which affects how they see and interpret things.

At the institutional and teaching level, the study by Okken and others in 2022 found that teachers' ability to teach across cultures is greatly affected by the school and classroom environments they are part of. This shows that cultural misunderstandings

in the classroom aren't just because teachers aren't good enough, but also because schools don't have enough support systems in place. For example, there might be no regular training for teachers, the school's lessons don't include different cultures, or the rules and policies of the school don't clearly encourage respect for all cultures. This finding matches what Papadopoulou and others wrote in 2022. They say that teachers' abilities to work with different cultures come from both their personal skills and the bigger system they're part of. So, improving teachers' cultural competence can't just depend on what individual teachers do. It also needs changes in school policies and rules at a higher level.

Yamada's 2025 research provides a fresh and important view on how we talk about cultural confusion today. Even though Generation Z has grown up in a world that's closely connected through the internet and digital technology, they don't naturally have a strong understanding of different cultures around the world. Looking at cultural diversity quickly through social media can give people a false sense of understanding. They might think they know another culture

well just because they see a lot of its content, but this understanding is really shallow and can lead to wrong generalizations and stereotypes. This situation presents a special problem for teachers and those who make education policies, because the strategies used to help earlier generations with college and career readiness might not work well for Generation Z without some changes.

Methodologically, Mijić's (2025) findings add another important way to look at things that hasn't been talked about much before: when people try to understand other cultures—whether they're researchers or teachers with good intentions—it's easy to fall into thinking their own culture is better, unless they take time to think carefully about their own assumptions. This shows that cultural mistakes can happen even during the process of trying to understand, when people only see another culture through their own cultural views and don't really try to understand how that culture works from the point of view of its own people.

### **Strategies for Implementing Cross-Cultural Understanding: A Critical Analysis.**

First, teaching methods that rely on teachers' abilities to understand and work with different cultures. Papadopoulou et al.(2022) and Steele and Leming (2022) both stress that improving teachers' intercultural skills is the most important way to make a difference in a multicultural education setting. Teachers who have a good understanding of different cultures, as described in Byram's (2021) framework, can spot possible misunderstandings early, help talk things through when cultural issues come up, and use cultural differences as a way to learn instead of causing problems. Steele and Leming (2022) bring up another key point: this skill needs to be built during the training teachers receive before they start teaching, not just through short sessions after they begin working. Developing intercultural attitudes and understanding takes time and needs ongoing reflection.

Second, strategies that are based on a multicultural approach within institutions. The research by De Leersnyder, Gündemir, and Ağirdağ (2022) shows that a multicultural approach, which openly recognizes, values, and includes cultural differences in both the curriculum and

the school environment, is much better at avoiding misunderstandings than an assimilationist approach, which asks international students to fit in with the main culture. This method is important because it works at the level of the whole organization, not just for individuals, which means its effects are usually more far-reaching and long-lasting. This kind of support also deals with the concern that Okken and others mentioned in 2022, which is about how the features of schools and classrooms play a key role in developing intercultural skills for both teachers and students.

Third, innovative gamification-based pedagogical strategies. Li (2025) suggests a method that works well for younger students, where game elements are used to make a safe environment for learners to try out different cultural views without facing real-life social problems. This method matches what Yamada (2025) says about Generation Z, who are more likely to learn well when the methods are hands-on, include real experiences, and use digital tools. A close look at this method shows that gamification does more than just encourage learning; it also acts as a way to simulate situations where

students can “try and fail” in cultural contexts without facing the actual problems that might happen in real life.

Additionally, fourth, strategies that use technology and artificial intelligence are also important. Karakas (2023) points out that AI technology has a big role to play in helping people communicate across different cultures, especially when it comes to learning foreign languages. AI can act as a constant practice partner that is always available, offering tailored feedback on mistakes learners make in real-life situations, and also helping to create many different cultural communication situations. It’s important to remember that this technology helps make things possible, but it doesn’t replace the real experience of interacting with people from different cultures. True cultural understanding still comes from actual relationships and experiences with people from other backgrounds.

Fifth, a strategy for cross-national academic collaboration. Jamin et al.(2024) show that working together across countries in research and teaching programs, like between Indonesian and Indian scholars, can create a real opportunity for cultural

learning among the academics involved. It also helps make teaching resources more diverse and comprehensive in their viewpoints. This approach shows that improving CCU is important not just for students, but also for the teachers and researchers who take part in creating knowledge across different cultures.

When analyzed holistically, these five strategic groups reveal a key pattern: the best way to reduce cultural misunderstandings isn't just one approach. Instead, it's using different methods at three levels — personal (like teachers and students' skills), school rules and lessons, and using technology tools. Aririguzoh (2022) supports this idea by saying that cross-cultural communication skills are part of a larger social system that helps reach global goals for sustainable development. So, improving these skills should be seen as a long-term investment, not just a quick fix.

### **The Positive Impact of Cross-Cultural Understanding.**

Looking at the studies that have been reviewed, it's clear that the benefits of using CCU can be grouped into three main areas: personal

benefits, organizational benefits, and benefits for society as a whole.

At the individual level, using CCU has been found to improve psychological safety and make international students feel more included, as shown by De Leersnyder et al. (2022). This psychological safety is very important because it's the first thing students need to feel sure enough to take part in class talks, share their different views, and get more involved in learning. They can do this without worrying about being criticized or not understood because of where they come from. Furthermore, Li (2025) shows that using gamification in cross-cultural learning helps improve students' creative thinking skills. This suggests that the impact of cross-cultural understanding goes beyond emotional factors like feeling safe and being included, and also affects how well students think and reason.

At the institutional level, improving teachers' ability to work with different cultures, as highlighted by Papadopoulou et al. (2022) and Steele and Leming (2022), helps create a school or campus environment that is more welcoming and supportive of diversity. Schools that effectively build

a culture of cultural understanding and inclusion are more likely to attract and keep international students and teachers. This is because these environments are seen as more friendly and supportive of different backgrounds and perspectives. Okken and others in 2022 also highlight that when schools have features that help teachers be more culturally aware, it leads to a chain reaction that also benefits the students in the classes those teachers teach.

At the broader societal level, Bokova and Kulich (2021) show, through a look at UNESCO's history, that ongoing efforts to promote intercultural dialogue and cooperation help build global peace and stability over time. Aririguzoh (2022) supports this view by clearly connecting the ability to communicate across different cultures to achieving the SDGs, which aim to reduce inequalities, promote peace, ensure justice, and build inclusive global partnerships. So, the good effects of CCU go beyond just how people interact with each other; it also helps with a wider range of global development goals.

A careful look at these results should also take into account the related issues and difficulties. Yamada

(2025) says that ways to connect with Generation Z need to keep changing because how people use digital tools is always shifting. So, the good results from CCU aren't something that lasts forever or happens just once. Instead, they need to be checked regularly and plans should be updated as needed. Mijić (2025) also says that learning about other cultures is always changing and never really finished. Because of this, we need to always practice epistemic humility. This helps make cross-cultural understanding something that keeps growing, not something that's done once and then forgotten. It should be a continuous journey of learning throughout life.

### **Synthesis: A Conceptual Model of Cross-Cultural Understanding.**

Based on the analysis provided earlier, this study suggests that the connection between the factors leading to cultural misunderstandings, the methods used to implement cultural competence and understanding (CCU), and the positive outcomes that result from these efforts forms a cycle where each element influences the others. This relationship is not straightforward or one-directional but instead operates in a

way that each part affects and is affected by the others. Cultural misunderstandings that arise due to differences in language use, thinking patterns, organizational structures, and technology across generations can be minimized by using a mix of teaching methods, institutional support, technological tools, and cooperative efforts between different countries. The use of these strategies leads to positive effects at the individual, organizational, and community levels, which together enhance the group's ability to deal with future cross-cultural issues. This conceptual model highlights that cross-cultural understanding should not be seen as a final destination, but rather as a continuous process that evolves with the changing social, technological, and demographic factors in the global community.

#### **D. CONCLUSION**

After carefully reviewing and analyzing eighteen scientific studies, this research comes to some key findings. Cultural misunderstandings are complex and come from four main areas: language and communication factors, thinking and understanding

factors, education and system factors, and factors related to different generations and technology. These four factors are connected and can't be looked at separately, so reducing cultural misunderstandings needs a complete and thoughtful approach.

Second, understanding different cultures has been shown to be a good strategy for avoiding cultural misunderstandings. This can be done by improving teachers' ability to work with different cultures, using a multicultural approach at the school or organization level, using game-based teaching methods, using technology and AI as tools, and encouraging academic work between countries. These five groups of strategies work well together and should best be used as part of a complete plan, not as separate choices on their own.

Third, when CCU is applied consistently, it has a positive effect at three levels: on an individual level, it improves psychological safety, inclusion, and creativity; at the institutional level, it creates a better and more competitive educational environment globally; and at the societal level, it promotes peace, international collaboration, and progress toward the sustainable

development goals. So, understanding different cultures isn't just about learning skills—it's really about making a long-term effort that helps build a more welcoming, peaceful, and lasting world for everyone.

### **Recommendations**

Based on the conclusions from above, this study suggests a few key recommendations. For teachers, it's best to make sure they include the different parts of intercultural communication skills, as explained by Byram (2021), in their everyday lessons. This means not just teaching about cultures directly, but also making learning activities that help students think deeply and interact with different cultures in real situations.

For education policymakers, it's suggested to create policies and lesson plans that clearly support a multicultural approach at the school level, as advised by De Leersnyder et al. (2022) and Okken et al. (2022). This should involve giving teachers regular training and enough support from the school structure to help build a welcoming and inclusive classroom environment.

For educational technology creators, it's advised to keep looking into how artificial intelligence can help with learning across different cultures, as Karakas (2023) suggested. However, it's important to remember that this technology should support, not replace, real human connections.

For future researchers, it's suggested to do real-world studies using case studies or action research that check how well different CCU strategies work in more specific places and organizations. They should also think about the method problems Mijić (2025) talked about, like the danger of having too much bias based on one's own culture in cross-cultural research. More study is needed to look closely at how the traits of Generation Z and the upcoming generation, Generation Alpha, affect how well CCU strategies work in a constantly changing digital world. Yamada's 2025 research shows that a method that works well for one generation might not be just as effective when used the same way for the next.

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