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## CROSS-CULTURAL EDUCATIONAL STRATEGY FOR TRAINING FOREIGN STUDENTS

The growth of international relations and the growth of relations between individuals who belong to different cultures in recent decades are of particular relevance in the study of problems of intercultural communication. The aim of the article is to consider the strategies of teaching foreign students using intercultural communication. This article has both practical and theoretical significance, as it is aimed at identifying the main causes of communication failures of foreign students in learning the Russian language. The article deals with issues related to intercultural communication in the training of students of the Flagship program. The authors identify the causes of stylistic, semantic and phonetic communication barriers. The article also reflects the peculiarities of the perception of lexical and grammatical material by American students. The ways of overcoming communication barriers are suggested, taking into account the mentality of students. The article also focuses on issues emerged because of the implementation of cultural and background knowledge in the educational process. The article concludes that the success of communication is determined by various verbal characteristics of communication. In this regard, it is necessary to choose from a wide range of linguistic communication tools that are most suitable for each specific speech situation. The consideration of such issues is of practical importance for research in the field of intercultural communication and methods of teaching Russian as a foreign language.

**Key words:** communication, training, stereotype, ethnos, mentality.

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### Шетелдік студенттерді даярлаудың мәдениетаралық білім беру стратегиясы

Соңғы жылдардағы халықаралық қатынастардың өсуі және әртүрлі мәдениеттер өкілдері арасындағы қарым-қатынастың артуы мәдениетаралық коммуникация мәселелерін зерттеуде ерекше өзектілік тудырады. Бұл мақаланың мақсаты – шетелдік студенттерді мәдениетаралық коммуникация призмасы арқылы оқыту стратегияларын қарастыру. Мақаланың практикалық және теориялық маңызы бар, себебі ол шетелдік студенттердің орыс тілін үйренудегі коммуникативті сәтсіздіктерінің негізгі себептерін анықтауға бағытталған. Мақалада «Флагман» бағдарламасының студенттерін оқытудағы мәдениетаралық қарым-қатынасқа байланысты мәселелер қарастырылған. Авторлар стилистикалық, семантикалық және фонетикалық коммуникативті кедергілердің себептерін анықтайды. Сондай-ақ, мақалада америкалық студенттердің лексикалық және грамматикалық материалды қабылдау ерекшеліктері көрсетілген. Білім алушылардың менталитетін ескере отырып, коммуникативтік кедергілерді еңсеру жолдары ұсынылады. Мақалада сонымен қатар оқу процесінде мәдени және фондық білімді жүзеге асыруға байланысты мәселелерге ерекше назар аударылады. Мақалада қарым-қатынастың сәттілігі қарым-қатынастың әртүрлі ауызша сипаттамасымен анықталады деген қорытынды жасалды. Осыған байланысты әрбір нақты сөйлеу жағдайына ең қолайлы лингвистикалық байланыс құралдарының кең қорынан таңдау қажеттілігі байқалады. Мұндай мәселелерді қарастыру мәдениетаралық коммуникация саласындағы зерттеулер мен орыс тілін шет тілі ретінде оқыту әдістемесі үшін практикалық маңызы бар.

**Түйін сөздер:** коммуникация, білім беру, стереотип, этнос, діл.

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### **Межкультурная образовательная стратегия подготовки иностранных студентов**

Рост международного общения и увеличение коммуникаций между представителями разных культур в последние десятилетия создают особую актуальность в изучении вопросов межкультурной коммуникации. Целью данной статьи является рассмотрение стратегий обучения иностранных студентов через призму межкультурной коммуникации. Статья имеет практическую и теоретическую значимость, поскольку направлена на выявление основных причин коммуникативных неудач студентами-иностранцами при изучении русского языка. В статье рассмотрены проблемы, связанные с межкультурной коммуникацией при обучении студентов программы «Флагман». Авторами обозначаются причины стилистических, семантических и фонетических коммуникативных барьеров. Также в статье выявляются особенности восприятия лексико-грамматического материала студентами-американцами. Предлагаются пути преодоления коммуникативных помех с учетом менталитета обучающихся. В статье также уделяется внимание вопросам, связанным с реализацией культурных и фоновых знаний в учебном процессе. В статье сделан вывод о том, что успешность общения определяется различными вербальными характеристиками коммуникации. В связи с этим наблюдается необходимость выбора из обширного запаса лингвистических средств коммуникации тех, которые являются самыми подходящими для каждой конкретной речевой ситуации. Рассмотрение подобных вопросов имеет практическое значение для исследований в области межкультурной коммуникации и методики преподавания русского языка как иностранного.

**Ключевые слова:** коммуникация, обучение, стереотип, этнос, менталитет.

#### **Introduction**

In the past decade, questions of intercultural communication have become particularly relevant. This comes as a result of the growth of international interaction and the increase of communication between individuals and groups of people, who belongs to different cultures.

The topic is of particular relevance, due to the possibility of applying the results of the research in the methodology of teaching Russian as a foreign language.

Intercultural communication has a clearly expressed and practical character. It is not simply science, but also a singular set of skills which one needs to have for successful realization of communicative matters. Above all, these skills are essential for those who often interact with different cultures and countries in a professional context.

The problems of intercultural communication are particularly relevant in the age of globalization. Despite the fact that humanity is becoming more and more interconnected and unified, it does not lose its cultural diversity and national identity. Moreover, due to the identity and uniqueness of each people and nation, there is a field of activity for researchers of culture and language.

In the structure of intercultural competency, the difficulties of mutual understanding carry

particular importance. In many practical situations, one communication participant is confronted with the fact that his words and actions are incorrectly understood by the other participant. Because of this, many difficulties and obstacles appear. These obstacles disrupt mutual understanding of the communicants, destroy the process of effective communication, and may even bring conflicts to a head. As usual, the emerged difficulties are caused by those intercultural differences between people which cannot be eliminated during the process of communication. Such difficulties of communication are commonly called “barriers to intercultural communication,” which, due to the strength of their practical meaning, require specific effort and special knowledge to translate. Intercultural barriers are customarily divided into two large groups: barriers of understanding and barriers of interaction.

#### **Material and Methods**

It is very often found in situations of cross-cultural communication that not every participant possesses the same level of language knowledge. This circumstance, according to A. P. Sadokhin, “gives rise to the so-called ‘language barriers’, which are commonly divided into three fundamental types: stylistic, semantic, and phonetic.” (Sadokhin 2008: 5).

We performed a survey and analyzed students' answers from "Speech," "Reading", and "Writing" courses with the goal of detection of language barriers in the practice of Anglophone students.

Let's delve into the survey. Stylistic barriers arise due to the disparity of the language styles of the communicants; these differences include mutually incomprehensible terms and means of communication that do not fit the speech situation. In the speech of American students, high literary style is often used in situations of everyday or household communication. This is caused by the domination of written discourse over oral in class; when oral speech is used, it is primarily employed in monologues and discussions using journalistic style. One such simple stylistic barrier is the wide usage of personal pronouns in the Russian language as opposed to English. For example, the personal pronouns "ТЫ, ВЫ/ВЫ" are used with different communicative goals in Russian, which presents particular difficulty for Anglophone students attempting to translate their sole second-person pronoun "you". Further problems may not only cause stylistic dissonance, but also mistakes in spoken etiquette.

Semantic barriers emerge because of the conferring of misunderstood meanings of symbols and terms which are used in communication. There are many different meanings possessed by these symbols, which may be used in many different modes of communication. If a term has several meanings, the speaker should choose one which the recipient would unambiguously understand. But, since rather often similar terms have different meanings cross-linguistically, situations of misunderstanding and misconception arise. During the communication with American students, one often finds semantic barriers connected with incorrect or narrow understandings of the meanings of some words. One such word is found in the example, "Студенты КазНУ одеваются формально" (Students of KazNU dress <formally>.) In the process of dialogue with the students, they clarified that they wished to show how students of KazNU prefer to wear work clothes (suit, dress shirt, tie) in contrast to the American students' more comfortable attire. In Russian dictionaries the word "формальный" has a few basic meanings: 1. relating to the word "форма", or form (formal indication, formal meaning of the word and so forth). 2. Containing formalism (formal relationship to the matter). 3. Founded on the principles of formalism (formal method). 4. Executed in a correct or lawful manner (formally he is right). 5. Existing only by outward appearance, by form (formal excuse for cancellation, formal cause for attack). In other

words, this word in Russian does not relate to the outward appearance or choice of clothes. The English word "formal" has "official" as one of its meanings, which dictated the choice of the given word for American students.

Here are some examples related to the concept of political correctness. The word «disabled» ( in Russian «инвалид» from Latin *invalidus* – powerless, weak) Russian means «a person who has lost (fully or partially) the ability to work as a result of injury, wound, illness or old age» (compare.: disabled of war, disabled of labor, disabled since childhood, etc.). English-speaking students do not use this word in communication in Russian, as well as in English, considering it a manifestation of discrimination, infringement of human rights. However, in the texts in Russian, quite often there are sentences like «Disabled people were sitting in the park». In the texts on the topic «Army» there were examples related to the fact of evading conscription by Russian young people using various methods, including imprisonment in a psychiatric clinic. Further, the consequences of such evasion of military duties were explained: a person who spent six months in a psychiatric hospital risks receiving a certificate that does not allow him to work for life in some organizations and government structures. After reading this fact caused a «culture shock» among students from the United States. They attributed their surprise to a more tolerant attitude towards people with mental health problems in the US, in contrast to the examples they read in the text.

Semantic barriers were also noticed in the educational process, because of the background cultural lack of knowledge about the realities of the life of the Russian people. Russian Russian writers often read texts that contain everyday objects that are unfamiliar to them (a chest, bast shoes), and names of unofficial Russian symbols (a birch tree, a round dance). The solution to the problem is to write these words in a glossary and remember the use of the word in the context of the work.

In written speech, the students also were affected by features of English punctuation, in which the comma is much more widespread.

Many speech errors and barriers arise in connection with the synonymous use of words. Russian Russian prepositions *около*, *вокруг* are translated into English by one word *around*; *ли*, *если*-if, which complicates the choice of the Russian word variant when constructing sentences. The pronoun *they* in English can be used in a broader sense than in modern Russian, sometimes instead of the pronouns *hi*, *shi* to denote an indefinite person. This can be shown in the following dialog:

“My cousin is coming this evening.

“Where are they from?”

“He’s from California.

This feature of English grammar has an impact on the oral and written speech of students in Russian. For example, in the sentence “He spoke to a person from the university, they said that March 23 is a day off” (in Russian “Он говорил с человеком из университета, они сказали, что 23 марта – выходной день»), the number category is violated.

Factors of influence of the native language on the foreign language being studied create prerequisites for various semantic barriers and errors in spoken and written communication.

Lexical paronyms of the Russian language present particular difficulty for international students. Many students do not pay enough attention to the existence of meaningful phrases, homophones, or relatives by root which differ semantically. As an example, in a written assignment about religion, a student confused the paronyms *Божественный* – *богобоязненный* (*divine* – *pious*) in the sentence “Божественный человек сам должен прийти к выводам о своем отношении к религии...” (A divine person should come to a conclusion about his own relationship to religion). Paronyms cannot replace each other in sentences without changes to the sentence’s basic meaning (compare *духовный* – *одухотворенный* (*spiritual* – *inspired*), *душевная* – *душевая* (*mental* – *shower*), *соседний* – *соседский* (*neighboring* – *neighbor’s*), *здравица* – *здравица* (*toast* – *health resort*), *генеральный* – *генеральский* (*general* – *general’s*), *дружный* – *дружественный* (*personable* – *friendly*), *экономика* – *экономика* (*economy* – *economics*), *белеть* – *белить* (*to turn white* – *to whitewash*), *охладеть* – *охладить* (*to cool off* – *to chill*), *сытый* – *сытный* (*sated* – *filling*) and so forth.) We explained to the students that the semantics of paronyms are realized in speech thanks to their interaction with the context, for example *земной шар* – *земляной вал* (*the Earth* – *earthworks*), *отчетный год* – *отчетливый звук* (*reported year* – *distinct sound*), *классная работа* – *классовый характер* (*class work* – *class consciousness*) and others. The basic tasks of work on paronyms are: learn the correct meaning of Russian words; understand the differentiation of the semantics of words that form a paronymic pair; and learn how to clearly recognize the borders of associations of considered paronyms and their meaningful connections. It is important to underline that the level of speech culture directly depends on knowledge of use of paronyms, because incorrect use impacts both the accuracy and the perception of speech.

Phonetic barriers of perception include lack of differentiation of or incorrect pronunciation of sounds as well as uncertain division of the basic elements of language, those being sentences, words and morphemes. The understanding of oral foreign-language speech assumes correct discernment of sounds and words. Difficulties here are caused by accents, mistaken placement of stress, mixing of words in phrases and sentences, all of which create difficulty in the understanding of verbal information. One problem which students face in the learning process is listening comprehension. Often, the process of listening gets increasingly difficult due to the diction of the speaker, the timbre of the voice and the tempo of speech, all of which cause lack of understanding of spoken speech and mistakes during the filling out of writing assignments after listening.

More widespread phonetic mistakes in the speech of English-speaking students are hard and soft pronunciations in words with [л] and [л’], [т’] in the endings of infinitives, and so on, caused by historical characteristics of the construction of the speech apparatus. “For example, typical Russian articulation assumes a characteristic structure with outstretched lips and the tip of the tongue on the teeth, whereas English has flat lips and alveolar placement of the tongue.” (Sadoxkhin, 2008: 6) All of these are naturally reflected in the quality of communication. Words in the Russian language which have several consonants in a row create can as a result create even more phonetic problems (see *marshrut*, *kontrstrategiya*, *userdstvovaniye*, *vsplash*, *vprysk*, *vzglyad*, *vzdremnut’* and so on).

One important problem of intercultural communication is sexism – the ideologies and practice of discrimination against people due to their gender, combined with the idea of superiority of one gender above the other in differing spheres of life and with prejudice towards representatives of a certain gender. The movement to combat sexism arose in the early 1960s along with second-wave feminism and continues to this day. Internet publication “Modny Peterburg [Modern Petersburg]” states “the battle for gender equality in Silicon Valley continues, which requires colossal resources and rather specific solutions. For example, Google decided to spend up to 20% of working time on thinking up solutions to the problems of gender inequality in the company. Intel set aside \$300 million on computer science education and job creation for women. At Apple, they have calculated that 30% of their workforce consisted of women, but among the managerial/directorial class only 28%, and in the scientific-technical

sphere – only 20%. Tim Cook is very unhappy with these figures, the company needs more women!” (Modnyy Peterburg 2015: 1) Several recent Internet publications also dealt with the scandal and blame of sexual harassment that have arisen around famous Hollywood personalities.

The problem of sexism is reflected in classes on the theme of “Family, Upbringing, Education.” In the opinions of American students, the role of women in the family and in society is not the same in the United States, in Russia, and in Kazakhstan. According to their answers on surveys, in Russia and Kazakhstan women do not have absolute freedom in family life and rarely have leadership positions. In the United States, however, women have the same rights as men (with exceptions: for example, “hidden sexism”, which crops up, for example, in differences in salary). Women also have leadership positions in government. Students underlined the presence of difficulties and problems placed solely on women in Russia and in Kazakhstan. There are clear and visible differences between the roles of mother and father. Women are assigned all the decisions about domestic matters and problems of raising children, whereas the father is only supposed to earn money. However, concerning positive government support of the family, long maternity leave and allowances paid for the care of the child in Russia and Kazakhstan were noted as things that the United States did not have.

One similar notable moment is the example of the Soviet film “Moscow Does Not Believe in Tears”, describing life in the Soviet capital in the 1950s. Many students reacted positively to the film; those reactions boiled down to the conclusion “Overall the film isn’t bad, and we learned a lot about the Soviet Union...” However, some of them, mostly girls, noted the negative appearance of the character Gosha, played by Alexei Batalov. Students noticed elements of sexism in the authoritarian attitude of Gosha to Katya, like to a weaker creature. Among the answers given: “[Gosha] did not offer to go to a picnic, but rather insisted”; “[he] forbade her to decide, advise, criticize, or speak in a raised voice based on the fact that she is a woman”, “he asserted his independence of making decisions using the phrase ‘due to the simple fact that I am a man’”. All of these seemed unpleasant to the students, according to American culture. Due to all this, Katya’s attachment to Gosha, in spite of his “impudent” conduct and “inferiority complex” “due to the fact that Katya earns more money than him, seemed absurd to the students.

Discussions in connection with the theme “Family, Upbringing, Education”, showed several differences in traditional perceptions of upbringing between representatives of the post-Soviet space and Americans. In an essay about family, students analyzed the situations in Russia, Kazakhstan, and the USA and compared the distribution of civil marriages, support of homosexual marriages, the functioning of incomplete families, the differences in treatment of biological and adopted children, and so on. The opinions of American students about the fact that school and university are exclusively educational spaces, excluding functions of upbringing which are the exclusive prerogative of parents, presents particular interest. These factors explain the peculiarities of intercultural communication between teachers and American students, in which both comments and compliments made in public are practically excluded.

The dichotomy of “collective vs. individual” merits particular attention. In Russian reality, just like in Kazakh, the concept of the collective dominates (compare classes in schools, student groups, organizations and businesses). In American traditions of education, however, classes are formed only in the beginning; later on, students don’t study in specially formed collectives but instead choose their courses individually. This causes American students to form a notion about the role of each person in counterbalance to the collective creation.

### Literature review

The most detailed issues of cross-cultural communication are reflected in the works of S. G. Ter-Minasova. Her works indicate the importance of the applied nature of research on the problems of cross-cultural communication. According to her statement: “The close relationship and interdependence of foreign language teaching and cross-cultural communication are so obvious that they hardly need extensive explanations “ (Ter-Minasova 2001: 30).

The fact that it is important to consider international and national elements in the study of languages, since “two national cultures never completely coincide” was mentioned in their fundamental works by E.M. Vereshchagin, V.G. Kostomarov (Vereshchagin 1990: 41).

In addition, the paper presents the data of A.P. Sadokhin’s research on intercultural barriers, which he divides into barriers of understanding and barriers of communication.

The issues of linguistic and cultural aspects of the formation of language consciousness are addressed in the works of V.P. Sinyachkin, M.A. Bragina, V.V. Dronov and others. Makeeva E., Lopukhova Y. reviewed course of cross-cultural communication as a form of home internationalisation within Russian higher education institutions. Nikitaev S., Ter-Minasova S. analyzed modern theories and methods of teaching foreign languages.

Various aspects of communication between cultures, problems of communicative competencies are considered in the works of foreign scientists Byram M., Samovar L., Porter R., Lustig M.W., Koester J., Piller I., Bredella L., Fisher G., Maloof V., Rubin D., Miller A.

### Results and discussion

Thus, the detection of characteristics of intercultural communication testify to the fact that basic problems that arise in the process of education of Russian to American students are due to language barriers and differences in mentality.

By mastering language, a person simultaneously penetrates a new national culture and receives enormous spiritual riches, which are saved in the learned language. Without understanding the cultural characteristics, implicit meanings in the read text, it is impossible to learn a foreign language.

Among the more striking features discovered by observing and surveying, it's possible to pick out the following: the "collective-individual" dichotomy, aspects of gender in society, questions of upbringing, theorization of the educational process in Kazakh universities and so forth. Among the differing cultural characteristics of Kazakhstan, the students noticed: inter-ethnic and interfaith tolerance of ethnic Kazakhs towards other peoples; hospitality towards foreigners, and diversity and beauty of Kazakh food and nature.

### Conclusion

To sum up what was said, one can conclude that the educational process should be carried out with the position of a communicative-cognitive approach to education. This includes the importance of taking into account individual and psychological characteristics of the student during the process of learning Russian as a foreign language (Kryuchkova, Moshchinskaya, 2014: 3). The communicative-cognitive conclusion assumes, on the one hand, communicative technologies of education – that is, the decision of such systematic questions as sampling, organization, and consistency of language material and the means of its presentation and training, taking into account all communicative needs; on the other hand, mastering knowledge and information of linguistic, cultural, regional, and social character, as well as fulfilling and developing educational interests and inquiries of students. In order to develop nationality-oriented educational technology for international students learning Russian language and taking into account characteristics of their ethnic mentalities, we must pay attention to the system of instructive and individual methodical principles, as well as the theoretical and methodical foundations of education.

Our goal was to consider the main cross-cultural strategies of teaching foreign students. This goal has practical and theoretical significance. In the course of analyzing the written works of American students, questionnaires and oral responses, we came to the following conclusions. which identify the main causes of communication failures in the learning of the Russian language. As a conclusion, it should be noted that each lesson with foreign students is a "crossroads of cultures". Each lesson in Russian as a foreign language touches on the issues of intercultural communication, because behind each word there is an idea of the world, conditioned by the national consciousness and mentality.

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