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**ФОРМИРОВАНИЕ КРОССКУЛЬТУРНОЙ КОМПЕТЕНЦИИ В СИТУАЦИИ ДИАЛОГА КУЛЬТУР**

В статье подробно описан процесс формирования кросскультурной компетенции в ситуации диалога культур, а также сравнительного анализа языков и культур. Автором рассмотрены различные дидактические средства формирования кросскультурной компетенции, исследуются как традиционные, так и высокотехнологичные инновационные средства обучения иностранному языку. В заключение сделан вывод, что именно комбинирование этих средств на занятиях по иностранному языку дает высокие результаты в формировании кросскультурной компетенции.

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#### ADVANTAGES OF USING PODCASTS IN TEACHING ENGLISH TO SENIOR PUPILS

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The article identifies and analyses educational podcasts as the most efficient means to develop English speaking skills among senior pupils. The paper proposes a definition of the notion “podcast”, provides a brief classification of podcasts according to their content, describes the ways and advantages of using podcasts to improve senior pupils’ English speaking skills. The descriptive method was applied when studying the use of educational podcasts to improve English speaking skills. The comparative analysis of podcasts allowed identifying positive aspects of their usage in educational activity.

*Key words and phrases:* podcasts; English language; methods of teaching English; learners; educational process.

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*The article describes in detail the process of crosscultural competence formation in the context of the dialogue of cultures and the comparative analysis of languages and cultures. The author examines various didactic means for crosscultural competence formation, explores both traditional and high-tech innovative means of teaching a foreign language and comes to the conclusion that it is the combination of these means in foreign language classes that gives positive results in crosscultural competence formation.*

*Key words and phrases:* crosscultural communication; crosscultural competence; dialogue of cultures; authentic materials; variety of didactic means.

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#### CROSSCULTURAL COMPETENCE FORMATION IN THE CONTEXT OF THE DIALOGUE OF CULTURES

The topicality of the problem of crosscultural competence development is conditioned by the growth of international relations and crosscultural contacts in various spheres of life.

Knowledge of a foreign language in the modern society becomes necessary, as we live in the multicultural and multilingual world. The range of crosscultural educational relations has changed. In the framework of the Bologna process, student exchanges have intensified, and possibilities for continuing education abroad have expanded. Students participate in interregional and common-European projects organized with the help of new telecommunication technologies, communicate in a foreign language with their peers over the Internet, and foreign trips are connected for them today with cultural and educational exchange, study abroad and just with tourism [6, c. 124].

Language does not exist outside culture. Culture is a complex phenomenon that determines the system of value orientations of both the society as a whole and an individual personality – a member of a certain culture. In addition, each culture is reflected uniquely in the language – its member [8, c. 18].

Today, countries and peoples exist in the conditions of growing mutual influence, and the high rates of the civilization development raise the question of the inevitability of mutual relations. As a result of the interpenetration of worldviews and cultures, people find themselves in multicultural environment, where the meaning of human existence becomes not only the assimilation of cultural boundaries, but also the desire to go beyond these boundaries, form new spaces, understand a different culture, support its content and create opportunities for free interaction. Culture establishes its own priorities over economics, politics, and becomes the dominant factor in social development. Integration processes and the creation of the world cultural and educational space intensify the trend of cross-cultural interaction. The effective functioning of the society in the situation of crosscultural interaction involves special training of students [4, c. 3].

The Federal State Educational Standards of Higher Vocational Education are focused on academic and professional mobility of future specialists in the conditions of the multicultural society. In this regard, students' training for crosscultural communication partly involves the formation of competencies in the context of the dialogue of cultures and their use in various types of professional activity [5, c. 4].

The process of crosscultural competence formation in the context of the dialogue of cultures requires the use of innovative educational technologies, the use of modern teaching aids. Such aids include both traditional (authentic materials, dialogues, discussions, role-playing and business games, projects) and high-tech (participation in an on-line forum, Skype, working with multimedia videos, presentations) ones.

Recent studies have shown the interest of linguists, methodologists and practicing teachers in the problem of using authentic materials in educational process. In the conditions, when teaching a foreign language takes place outside the country of the language being studied, familiarization with the socio-cultural component is possible only with the help of special materials reflecting the reality, in which a representative of the corresponding culture lives and acts. Students' readiness for real communication with a member of this culture is formed through its cognition [7, c. 194]. Authentic materials include printed texts from original sources of informative or reference nature, as well as excerpts from original works of fiction reflecting characteristic pictures, situations from the life of the corresponding national community. Authentic materials, related to life support in this culture, include urban ads, signs in stores and medical institutions, various types of transport tickets, accepted in the given country, train and bus schedules, signs at transport stops; tickets to theaters, museums; theater programs, museum catalogs; menus of cafes and restaurants; checks, forms, banknotes. All these materials correspond to the methodological task of familiarizing students with the real facts of the foreign-language life comparing them with their native culture. Working with authentic materials trains students for the adequate perception of a foreign-language culture, helping to avoid the unpleasant state of uncertainty, constraint, and sometimes even shock that a person often finds himself in for the first time in real foreign-language environment.

The task of acquaintance with the specifics of crosscultural communication is realized when watching television programs, news programs, talk shows, documentary and feature films in a foreign language, while working with audio and video materials available on the Internet, audio recordings of conversations of native speakers, telephone talks, and fragments of the conclusion of contracts, negotiations, discussions, disputes. Students familiarize themselves with standard formulas for addressing, greeting, apologizing, thanking, maintaining conversational contact in connection with the national characteristics of non-verbal communication.

Crosscultural communication skills are formed on the basis of the implementation of communicative, situational exercises, problem tasks. A special role is given to communicative exercises of etiquette content, as in the process of their implementation students master evaluative words, expressions, replicas, intonation models inherent in the conversational etiquette of this foreign-language culture. Situational exercises are aimed at comparing cultures. The ability to compare cultures is considered as one of the important components of crosscultural competence [9, c. 142].

Based on authentic materials, discussions are held, during which opinions are exchanged, and native and foreign cultures are compared. Discussions create situations of the "dialogue of cultures" and thus contribute to the formation of crosscultural competence in students [3, c. 171].

Situational exercises, discussions, dialogic communication are a preparatory stage for role-playing, where spontaneity, fluency and active realization of linguistic and sociocultural knowledge are required. The game can take place in the form of a meeting of Russian and American students telling about education systems in their countries (1<sup>st</sup> semester), as a scientific conference on topical economic issues (4<sup>th</sup> semester). Classes with the original presentation of the material, joint discussion, dispute, polylogue, the flow of new exclusive information contribute to the development of crosscultural communication skills in students.

We conduct role-playing "Meeting Russian and American Students: Comparison of Education Systems", "Linguistic School in London – the Polylogue of Cultures", "Cultural Traditions of Russia and Britain", "Moscow Film Festival", "Economic Forum", "Scientific Conference" with students. In the conditions of role-playing, students acquire the skills and abilities of crosscultural communication (respecting the status of a representative of different culture, behavioral traditions, taking into account the cultural context). Role-playing develops linguistic, sociocultural and crosscultural competences. That is why we consider playing technology a priority in the model of crosscultural competence development.

Project activity is important in order to obtain deeper country specific and sociocultural knowledge (students create prospectuses, booklets, tourist guides for historical places, art albums, books about royal dynasties). Defining an interesting topic, the solution of a problem situation are prerequisites for the implementation of project activity [7, c. 80]. When working on a project, all language skills are developed harmoniously, as students have to discuss and analyze work stages, listen to each other's arguments, search for necessary information in books and reference guides, surf the Internet, record results and prepare written reports. A distinctive feature of project activity in its modern sense

is maximum proximity to real life. Project is not an artificial reproduction of any aspect of life, but a study and reflection of real life in students' inner world [3, c. 176].

In recent years, there has been an active introduction of multimedia technologies in the process of foreign languages teaching. A variety of multimedia educational materials include colorful illustrations, authentic information materials of websites, video and audio materials aimed at acquiring culturological knowledge, including the knowledge of speech etiquette, cultural characteristics, traditions of the country of the language being studied.

In connection with the informatization of higher education, the use of the Internet is mandatory. Due to the development and availability of information and communication technologies, students' interactions via the Internet make it possible to reach the international level. The use of the pedagogical potential of the Internet technologies is necessary in the process of shaping the culture of international business communication among students, since this phenomenon contributes to establishing contacts without borders [2, c. 5].

Video materials become indispensable for acquaintance with oral speech communication, since they can reflect adequately the complex multicomponent speech activity. They present almost unlimited possibilities for conducting an analysis built on the comparison and contrast of cultural realities and peculiarities of people's behavior in various situations of crosscultural communication [7, c. 93]. At the same time, it is important to take into account that socio-cultural knowledge is used not only as a means of communication at the interpersonal level, but also as a means of enriching the spiritual world of an individual through the acquisition of knowledge about the culture of the country of the language being studied [1, c. 3]. Working with authentic video materials provides another culture comprehending, prepares for more active dialogue of cultures in business and professional spheres in the future. Video recordings make it possible to understand the content of various contexts of professional and business communication, to introduce business ethics [Ibidem, c. 6].

Authentic video materials provide both the filling of certain gaps in the information aspect and a set of linguistic and speech means necessary for cross-cultural communication. They allow students to develop lexical, grammatical and phonetic skills simultaneously. Dialectal features of the spoken language are widely represented in video courses. Videos develop the ability to understand authentic speech and the general meaning of what is happening on the screen, help to understand a lot and learn about the culture of the country of the language being studied, about the life of people in this country. They are especially useful for cross-cultural comparisons, as students see and hear how people behave in the country of the studied language in various situations of communication (everyday life, interpersonal relationships and etiquette peculiarities).

Video materials are characterized by the naturalness of lexical content and grammatical forms, situational adequacy of the used linguistic means. They bring the external "real" world into the audience creating conditions for involuntary memorization of material conditioned by emotional empathy with what is happening on the screen [7, c. 31].

One of the effective means of crosscultural competence developing is the creation of presentations. Presentations include general information about the country, its history, traditions, customs, culture, education system. Presentations can be based on the comparative analysis of various aspects of the native culture and the models of cultural development of other countries. When preparing presentations, students turn to the media, scientific publications, and Internet resources. Interesting, exciting presentations contribute to the discussion, comparative analysis of the cultural characteristics of different countries.

Solving the problems of crosscultural teaching, it would be erroneous to limit the educational and cognitive activity of students to the linguocultural boundaries of the country of the studied language. Comprehending a wider range of world cultures contributes to enriching students' crosscultural knowledge since in the XXI century – the century of multicultural dialogue, it is important to train a multicultural personality studying and mastering the traditions of the European and world cultures and civilizations [Ibidem, c. 75].

We share E. N. Solovova's opinion and believe that when selecting linguistic and country specific material, we should not limit ourselves to information only about the country of the language being studied, ignore other countries and their culture, but it is necessary to ensure the possibility of the comparative analysis in the framework of crosscultural communication.

We use this new methodological principle in our model of developing crosscultural competence in students of the Faculty of Economics at Moscow Region State University. In the 1<sup>st</sup> semester, studying the topic "Education", students compare not only the education systems of Russia, Great Britain, the USA, Canada, but also analyze the features of educational services in the global space. Students are invited to choose any country in the world and prepare a presentation that includes general information about the country, its history, traditions, customs, culture, education system. As a background for presentations, students select the country's musical, architectural, natural coloring, the episodes of feature films.

Studying the state system of Great Britain in the 2<sup>nd</sup> semester, students analyze advantages and disadvantages of the constitutional monarchy, interrelation of the monarchy and the standard of living in the country, prepare presentations about various monarchist states, royal dynasties of Spain, Sweden, Denmark and Holland. This topic provokes a stormy, interesting discussion, collision of opinions and views, undoubtedly tackling the history of the Russian state, forcing students to think, reflect, compare, express and defend their points of view.

The study of country specific topics "Great Britain", "The USA" in the 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> semesters is based on the comparison of cultures, national peculiarities, traditions, customs and stereotypes of behavior. Students make presentations about countries, castles, cities, British historical monuments, London sights, features of life in various American states, the US cultural life (theater, music, movies), American phenomena that have spread throughout the world.

The presentation of the National Gallery in London is performed in connection with other famous museums of the world – the Dresden Gallery, the Tretyakov Gallery, the Louvre, the Hermitage. English castles are compared

with the castles of Scotland, France (The Châteaux of the Loire Valley), Germany (the Rhine River Valley castles). Luxurious palaces of St. Petersburg are compared with rather strict architecture of the European palaces.

The business game “Scientific Conference” is held in the 4<sup>th</sup> semester. For this conference, students prepare presentations on the impact of the global economic crisis on the economies of various countries of the world. They choose their country of interest independently. A large number of students in groups of the Faculty of Economics gives the opportunity to present many countries of the world (the USA, Britain, Ireland, Canada, Australia, Germany, Austria, France, Italy, Spain, Greece, Holland, Sweden, Denmark, Norway, Croatia, Montenegro, Turkey, Japan, China, India, Mongolia, The Republic of South Africa, Brazil, Argentina). Topical economic problems cause serious discussion. As future economists, students express their vision of the current state of the economy of various countries, their understanding of the global economic crisis and suggest very reasonable ways out of the current situation.

Each country is presented taking into account the national coloring (carnival in Brazil), national music, dancing (Greece, Spain, India), characteristic architecture (China, Japan), natural landscapes, historical monuments, works of art, national costumes. Presentations include material on the economic situation of the country, the development of industry, living standards, culture and education. During the preparation of presentations, students turn to the mass media, scientific publications, economic journals, Internet resources.

Classes with the use of playing and multimedia technologies give students the opportunity for self-expression, self-realization, form the skills of conducting scientific dialogue, public speaking, discussion of various problems. But most importantly, they broaden students’ general horizons, increase their cultural level, erudition, and bring them into the real crosscultural context of communication.

The study has shown that this model, based on the combination of traditional and high-tech didactic means, has considerable potential in developing students’ crosscultural competence. Students are involved in the active handling of verbal and non-verbal activities based on the simulation of crosscultural communication situations, role-playing and business games, in which they learn patterns of communicative behavior of people from different cultures. Simulation of crosscultural communication situations, close to real ones, involves performing specific verbal and non-verbal actions necessary for the implementation of crosscultural communication (norms of behavior in everyday life, making personal contacts, conducting telephone conversations, possible topics of conversations, business negotiations, participation in conferences). Students take part in scientific discussions, webinars, communicate via Skype with native speakers and make presentations. The required set of linguistic and speech means is provided with authentic audio and video materials, country specific, documentary and feature films.

Thus, our study proves that the integration of traditional and high-tech didactic means of teaching a foreign language ensures that students have the necessary level of crosscultural competence that allows them to function in the modern multicultural society.

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#### ФОРМИРОВАНИЕ КРОССКУЛЬТУРНОЙ КОМПЕТЕНЦИИ В СИТУАЦИИ ДИАЛОГА КУЛЬТУР

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В статье подробно описан процесс формирования кросскультурной компетенции в ситуации диалога культур, а также сравнительного анализа языков и культур. Автором рассмотрены различные дидактические средства формирования кросскультурной компетенции, исследуются как традиционные, так и высокотехнологичные инновационные средства обучения иностранному языку. В заключение сделан вывод, что именно комбинирование этих средств на занятиях по иностранному языку дает высокие результаты в формировании кросскультурной компетенции.

*Ключевые слова и фразы:* кросскультурная коммуникация; кросскультурная компетенция; диалог культур; аутентичные материалы; разнообразие дидактических средств.