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The technology of communicative training as a means of developing the skills of foreign language intercultural communication of students

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Abstract. The aim of this study was to present a model of a teaching framework aimed at enriching students' knowledge, skills, and abilities in order to form a foreign language intercultural competence in them through the implementation of communicative intercultural training. The study involved fourth-year students from different countries.

Keywords: technology of communicative training, intercultural foreign language communication, multicultural environment, multicultural dialogue, intercultural communication skills development

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Introduction

Because of the presence of representatives from neighboring countries such as Kazakhstan, Uzbekistan, Turkmenistan, Tajikistan, Belarus, Ukraine, Kyrgyzstan, and far abroad, primarily China, India, Indonesia, Egypt, Vietnam, Turkey, and others, the environment of higher professional education institutions in Russia has become multicultural. An analysis of publications on the problem of interpreting the concept of intercultural communication shows that most researchers consider the process of intercultural communication from the micro level of interpersonal interaction (face-to-face) to the macro level, highlighting the relationship between cultures and peoples as intercultural communication in a broad sense [1].

This requires to integrate an international and intercultural perspectives into the teaching process of a university. One of the primary goals of multicultural education is to instill new multicultural thinking in students, which is based on broadening their personal enrichment and increasing their adaptability. In addition to expanding the content of educational programs, based on the principle of multiculturalism, it is necessary to modernize the methodology for teaching a foreign language to students. Based on the research of M. Schuster and S. Van Dyne [2. P. 328], we single out four aspects of multicultural learning at the university: 1) teaching through the students' experience; 2) focusing on the learning process; 3) creating an intercultural environment in the classroom; 4) analyzing conflict situations that arise between students belonging to different cultures as examples for discussions and finding a way out of the problems. In order to organize multicultural teaching, as noted by D. Schoem [3. P. 376], it is necessary to take into account three interrelated components: the content of educational

material, the process of contextually conditioned learning, and student interaction. The content involves the expansion of learning with the right to choose and take into account the multicultural principle, access to a wider range of topics, theories, and facts. The process of teaching a foreign language and communication in the classroom should be based on the foundations of effective interaction and be aimed at demonstrating different ways of obtaining knowledge, features of different communication formats; with the emphasis on creating conditions for effective intercultural communication and recognition of different points of view.

Here a problem arises of how to change educational programs in such a way that every student, who finds himself/herself in a complex multicultural environment of a modern Russian university, could effectively participate in intercultural communication, be a full and self-sufficient participant in a multicultural dialogue, and be a successful student. This, in turn, actualizes the need for a purposeful and consistent formation and development of intercultural communication skills in students (both Russian citizens and foreigners) in order to make their communication effective.

Psychologists studying the features and characteristics of an adult learner suggest that training is one of the most appropriate forms of learning for adults. Training is a teaching method that is used to develop practical skills and experience in a specific area. It is one of the most effective ways of learning, as it ensures that participants are actively involved in the process and also allows them to improve their knowledge and skills through practice [4].

The aim of this article was to present a model of a teaching framework aimed at enriching students' sets of knowledge, skills, and abilities to form a foreign language intercultural competence in them by implementing a communicative training.

Theoretical background

In the *Pedagogical Dictionary* by G.M. Kodzhipirasova, training is considered “a form of interactive learning aimed at developing the competence of interpersonal and professional behavior in communication” [5. P. 176]. N.V. Samoukina defines training as “an integrated method of developmental education aimed at achieving three goals and results: providing information, organizing effective communications, and developing work skills” [6. P. 91]. Due to the novelty and divergence in definitions, the generally accepted concept of the word “training” does not yet exist.

A more complex level of organization for this form of teaching is communicative training. A distinguishing feature of communicative training is that it is aimed at developing the communicative skills and abilities of participants. Unlike traditional methods of teaching a foreign language, which tend to focus on the grammar and vocabulary of the language, communicative training focuses mainly on the practical application of the language in real-life situations.

During communicative training in TEFL, participants work in groups, perform tasks and exercises aimed at developing desirable skill sets, mostly understanding and using a target language to communicate. Training also includes elements of role-playing games and imitation of real-life situations, which allow participants to train practical skills in interpersonal communication in a foreign language.

Thus, one of the features of communicative training is the focus on the practical application of the language rather than on the study of discrete language elements. Moreover, training takes into account different communication styles and cultural characteristics that can affect communication between people from different countries and cultures.

In general, communicative training is an effective method of teaching a foreign language, which helps participants develop not only linguistic but also sociocultural competencies.

In this article, we will consider foreign language intercultural communicative training, which we interpret as a method of teaching a foreign language based on the practical use of a foreign language in real situations of communication, taking into account differences in communicants’ linguistic pictures of the world and their communicative behavior in intercultural communication. Intercultural communication is about understanding what happens when people communicate with one another when they come from different cultures. The key learning point in this context is that different national cultures communicate in slightly different ways.

The aim of teaching English in an EFL course is to help students acquire a practical command of the language, which is realized in participants’ communicative competence, i.e. the ability to communicate freely and effectively in a foreign language in various areas of life.

Some features of foreign language communicative training include:

- focus on the practical application of the language in real life situations;
- use of interactive methodologies that promote teacher-student interaction;

- active use of technology and modern educational resources such as interactive whiteboards, computer software and applications, online resources, etc.;

- the collective nature of the classes encouraging pair and group work, exchange of experience and knowledge;

- development of personal qualities of the participants such as self-confidence, a culture of communication, teamwork, etc.;

- an individual approach to each participant, which allows identifying their individual needs and goals based on their language proficiency.

According to Lustig & Koester, “Intercultural communication is a symbolic, interpretive, transactional, and contextual process in which people from different cultures create shared meanings.” [7. P. 46]. Intercultural communication in a native language usually refers specifically to interpersonal and structural communication within a professional business context.

The purpose of foreign language intercultural training is to help students develop skill sets in practice of communication across cultural contexts. It focuses on strategies to try, minimize, and prevent miscommunication and a mismatch of communication styles, creating an awareness of the difference and the reasoning behind it. Intercultural training helps promote more successful interpersonal communication when communicants come from different cultures through a complex of special knowledge, skills, abilities, and strategies of communicative behavior. Teaching a group of students from different countries (near and far abroad) requires complicating the organization of training and designing it as a foreign language intercultural training framework when English is used as a means of communication. Foreign language intercultural training is a teaching method aimed at developing communicative and sociocultural competencies of students in the context of intercultural communication in a foreign language. Its main objective is to help students learn to understand and respect cultural differences, as well as to train them to effectively and competently interact with representatives of other cultures [8. P. 279–305].

The specifics of foreign language intercultural training comprise not only the development of sociocultural knowledge, language skills, and speech skills, but also the awareness of cultural differences and adaptation to a new cultural environment [9. P. 219–232].

During the training, students get acquainted with the features of the mentality, traditions, customs, norms and values of other countries and learn to adequately respond to cultural differences and prevent intercultural conflicts.

The main learning techniques of foreign language intercultural training include situational exercises, role-playing games, discussions, case studies, and intercultural projects. During the training, students actively participate in dialogue and communication, which helps them develop their language and communication skills, strengthen self-confidence, and improve their language proficiency [10. P. 103–128].

Communicative training for the development of foreign language intercultural communication skills has been studied and applied by many specialists in the field of education, language practice, and international

relations. Brian Tomlinson in *Communicative Language Teaching for Foreign Language Learning* [11. P. 192] offers the following teaching methods for developing the skills in foreign language intercultural communication:

– The development of effective speaking and listening. Students can listen to and analyze audio recordings in a foreign language, discuss their content, and express their opinion.

– Teaching to read in a foreign language. Students are invited to read texts in a foreign language, discuss their content and context.

– The development of written language. Students are encouraged to write essays, reports, and reviews in a foreign language.

– Dialogue and communication. Students learn to maintain a dialogue in a foreign language, express their opinion, and discuss topics related to the culture and traditions of other countries.

– Teaching grammar and vocabulary in a foreign language. Students learn grammar and lexical rules in a foreign language and apply them to practical tasks.

– Use of modern technology. Tomlinson suggests using the Internet, social networks, instant messengers, online games, and others, to develop intercultural communication skills in a foreign language [11. P. 192].

Michael Byram, an American expert in the field of intercultural communication, offers several methods for developing foreign language intercultural communication skills:

– Developing learners' knowledge of their own culture: Byram suggests that learners need to have a good understanding of their own culture before they can effectively engage in intercultural communication. This involves developing learners' knowledge of their own cultural norms, values, beliefs, and practices.

– Creating opportunities for learners to interact with speakers of the target language in authentic contexts: Byram emphasizes the importance of providing learners with opportunities to engage in real-life communication with native speakers of the target language, whether through study abroad programs, virtual exchanges, or other means.

– Developing learners' ability to interpret and critically analyze cultural texts: Byram argues that learners need to develop critical literacy skills in order to effectively engage with cultural texts in the target language. This involves developing learners' ability to analyze and interpret cultural artifacts such as literature, film, and music.

– Fostering empathy and open-mindedness: Byram emphasizes the importance of developing learners' empathy and open-mindedness towards people from other cultures. This involves encouraging learners to question their own assumptions and biases, and to view the world from multiple perspectives.

– Developing learners' ability to reflect on their own intercultural experiences: Byram suggests that learners need to reflect on their own intercultural experiences in order to develop their intercultural communicative competence. This involves encouraging learners to reflect on their own cultural identities and experiences, and to critically analyze their own intercultural encounters [12. P. 70; 13. P. 2].

Many scholars and practitioners in the field of education and international relations have worked and continue to work in this area, such as D.L. Fried-Booth [14] and H. Holec [15. P. 64], C. Rodrigues [16], A. Thomas [17].

Based on the analysis of research and existing practical experience, the authors' research aim is to present a methodological development of a foreign language intercultural training framework designed as an educational technology that projects a real educational process as a purposeful holistic pedagogical activity tailored to developing foreign students' intercultural competence within an EFL course. The research question is: *What is a new teaching framework which is suited to serve as a comprehensive guideline for intercultural teaching and learning English as a foreign language in a multicultural educational environment of a Russian university?*

Research design

1. Research method

The research methods used include theoretical methods: analysis of philosophical, psychological, pedagogical, methodological literature; methods of comparative language teaching for linguadidactic purposes; modeling of communication situations, as well as empirical methods: case study, generalization of learning experience using communicative training technology, methodological development, testing, participant observation, experimental search work, formative (training) experiment, online survey, qualitative and quantitative analysis.

Theoretical methods involve the development of theoretical models for the development of foreign language intercultural communication skills through reasoning, deduction and analysis of existing theories and literature.

Empirical methods involve the collection and analysis of data through observation, experimentation, or post-training interviews with participants. Due to its nature, this research encompasses a case study with a descriptive scope.

2. Research model

The structure of educational technology includes a certain conceptual framework, content and procedural components. The conceptual framework represents target settings and orientations, the main ideas and principles; it describes the position of the student in the educational process. The content component updates learning objectives (general and specific) and details the content of the educational material, the didactic structure of the educational material, and the forms of its presentation. The procedural component reveals the features of teaching methods and means, motivational characteristics, organizational forms of teaching, and ways to manage the educational process [18].

Let us detail the features of the foreign language intercultural training developed by the authors.

1. *Conceptual framework*: the process of developing the foreign language intercultural competence in students must be built by the teacher, taking into account the associated development of the communicative and cognitive components of these skills. This statement laid the foundation for the model we developed to enhance foreign

language skills in intercultural communication, based on the cognitive-communicative metatechnology of learning.

2. *Content*: goal and objectives of the training: determination of the general goal and specific objectives to be achieved during the training in the context of situations of intercultural interaction in the educational and extracurricular environment of a Russian university.

3. *Procedures*: description of the target audience: determination of the group of participants, their age, level of education, professional background, language proficiency, their sociocultural and linguistic affiliation, etc.

Methods and forms of teaching: active and interactive teaching methods that focus on immersion in communicative situations, analysis of communication success factors, search for effective strategies for communicative behavior (interactive lectures, role-playing games, discussions, case studies, analysis of video materials, etc.).

Description of materials: selection and development of the necessary materials for the training (presentations, videos, texts, assignments, etc.).

Description of the assessment procedure: definition of criteria for assessing the level of achievement of training goals, assessment methods (questionnaires, testing, homework analysis, etc.), and assessment procedure.

Description of organizational issues: venue, dates and times of classes, the number of participants, the necessary equipment, etc.

Description of potential problems: identification of possible problems that may arise during the training and development of an action plan to eliminate them.

Description of recommendations for participants: development of recommendations for participants to prepare for the training, as well as a description of the rules of conduct and etiquette during classes.

3. Participants

Different faculties and study groups of Tomsk State University were analyzed for the training. The focus group included first-year students enrolled at the Faculty of Foreign Languages. This study is based on a non-probability sampling design. On this account, the researchers followed a convenient sampling procedure since participants were readily and easily available. The criteria for selection were a person's belonging to various cultures other than being Russian. The focus group comprised 16 students from different countries: China (N=6), Turkmenistan (N=7), Egypt (N= 2), Cyprus (N=1). There were 7 males and 9 females among them. Their ages varied from 18 to 22. All of them were studying at Tomsk State University (Russia) at the bachelor's degree in the educational program "Translation and Teaching International Communication".

The participants' level of communicative competence corresponded to Intermediate, which comprises both Pre-intermediate and Upper-intermediate students. The level of their EFL competence was defined by means of a typical EFL entry test (e.g., Placement Test). All the students in the class were invited to fill in the questionnaire on intercultural competence in order to evaluate their language ability and intercultural competence along the four dimensions of attitudes, knowledge, skills, and awareness. The sample of participants was selected randomly.

The study

1. Preparation

This study was conducted to explore a) conceptual features characterizing our teaching framework and b) the structure of the foreign language intercultural training.

We propose to single out the following steps (algorithm) of training preparation for the development of foreign language intercultural communication skills in foreign students:

Step 1. Assessment of students' entry level skills in intercultural communication using tests or other tools, such as questionnaires and interviews.

An assessment of the entry level is carried out to determine students' basic knowledge, skills, and abilities, both in terms of English proficiency and experience in intercultural communication. The information will be used in the further learning process. This helps educators tailor the curriculum to the needs of students, develop tasks and methods that best suit their abilities, as well as evaluate the effectiveness of training and make adjustments to the program, if necessary. The entry assessment can help identify the individual needs of students and determine the most effective methods for their development in intercultural communication.

One of the diagnostic methods is to conduct grammar and vocabulary tests, as well as tests for intercultural communication, which may include questions about cultural differences and similarities, interaction in intercultural communication, problems that may arise when communicating with representatives of other cultures, etc. Other tools, such as student surveys, interviews, reviews, and analysis of intercultural episodes in videos or texts, can also be used. It is important that assessment tools take into account the multicultural environment of a student group, as well as their personal experience in intercultural communication. Based on the results obtained, the entry level of knowledge, skills, and abilities of students are determined and an individual study plan is drawn up and a training program is developed for further development of intercultural communication skills.

Step 2. Development of a training program that includes:

- Listening and reading texts in a foreign language related to the culture and traditions of other countries. This will help students understand the cultural context and develop the ability to listen and read in a foreign language.

- Expressing opinions on various topics related to intercultural communication, for example, discussing cultural differences and similarities, sharing experiences in international communication, etc. This will help students develop self-confidence and the ability to convey their thoughts in a foreign language, as well as understand the distinguishing features of culture and communication in other countries, and develop the ability to work in the intercultural environment.

- Solving problems related to intercultural communication, for example, exchanging emails with foreign students, participating in international web conferences, creating projects in international teams, etc.

This will help students develop the ability to apply knowledge in real situations.

Step 3. Use of game formats, role-playing games, simulations, and other pedagogical technologies aimed at developing students' communication skills and their ability to work in the intercultural environment.

Role plays, for example, can help students become aware of different cultural norms and customs and social roles, and understand how they can influence communication. Simulations can help students learn how to adapt to different cultural situations and develop effective communication skills in them, develop effective strategies for communicative behavior. Games and other pedagogical technologies can also develop presentation and discussion skills, as well as teach speaking and writing in a foreign language.

It is important that such game formats and simulations meet the objectives of the training and are adapted to the specific cultural environment the training is directed at.

Step 4. Use of feedback to analyze and evaluate whether students have learnt the material, as well as to adjust the training program.

Various tools can be used for receiving feedback, such as:

– Self-assessment sheets: students are given the sheets which indicate the assessment criteria and expected results. Students can use these sheets to assess their work and to improve their performance and results.

– Peer assessment: students can assess each other according to various criteria related to foreign language intercultural communication. It helps students learn how successfully they interact in an intercultural environment.

– Teacher assessment: the teacher can evaluate students according to various criteria and discuss the results with each student individually. This allows students to receive feedback from a professional and improve their skills.

– Recordings: Students can make audio or video recordings of their presentations and then analyze their mistakes and achievements. This helps them understand what they should pay attention to and improve their skills.

Step 5. Creating conditions for intercultural communication in real life.

Intercultural events: students can participate in intercultural events such as festivals, exhibitions, and conferences where they can meet people from different cultures and communicate with them on various topics [19. P. 70–81].

Online courses: Students can take part in online courses where they can interact with other students from different countries and learn about different cultures and traditions [20. P. 223–232].

Furthermore, it is necessary to adhere to a certain structure while preparing a training program. We opted for a three-stage concept, including informative, interactive, and productive stages [6. P. 311]. At each stage, specific teaching methods are used to perform different tasks. We should note that the same methods can be used at different stages if they suit the purpose of the training and correspond to the capabilities of the group.

The informative stage introduces theoretical information. The interactive stage is built according to the

60:40 ratio [6. P. 311]. 60% of time is allocated to students' speaking practice, whereas 40% is given to a teacher to comment on exercises or give instructions. The productive stage is characterized by a high activity of the training participants. They run the process while the teacher performs a coordinating and controlling function. At this stage, various exercises are used. For example, facilitation, game, case studies, etc. [21. P. 172].

2. Experimental training program

Our training program includes all three stages.

The first stage – informative – includes an assessment of the entry level of students' skills in the field of intercultural communication, primary exercises – acquaintance of the training participants with each other and with the characteristics of different cultures.

Before the training, each participant has to do a test: 20 multiple-choice questions and 1 open-ended question. Test questions 1–6 address the theoretical foundations of intercultural communication; questions 7–12 concern cultural features of various nationalities, whose representatives take part in the training; 13–20 check the knowledge of the characteristics of the target language/language of communication.

Sample questions:

1. What qualities should a participant of intercultural communication have in order to achieve a communicative goal? (multiple options can be selected)

- a) openness,
- b) denial of foreign cultural values,
- c) adaptation to differences
- d) friendliness,
- e) introversion,
- f) low empathy.

2. While in the UAE (Dubai) during Ramadan, where would you prefer to have lunch?

- a) Make snacks at home and have a meal by the sea,
- b) In a street cafe,
- c) At the hotel restaurant,
- d) Prefer not to eat at all.

3. How to correctly address a teacher at a Russian university?

- a) by name,
- b) by name and surname,
- c) by name and patronymic,
- d) no name at all,
- e) using constructions “dear teacher/professor” and similar.

4. What dishes will you order for a gala dinner with business partners from India and Iran? Why did you make this choice?

After processing the test results, analytical work is carried out in order to obtain a primary result regarding the level of intercultural communicative competence.

It includes certain groups of knowledge (knowledge of a foreign language; cultural characteristics – values, traditions, rituals, customs, etc.), skills (knowledge of a foreign language, search and analysis of information about other cultures and national characteristics), and communication skills (use of non-verbal means of communication – gestures, facial expressions, etc., in accordance with cultural norms; correct interpretation of foreign language information, taking

into account cultural characteristics and the context in which this information was created; analysis and comparison of cultures of different countries, finding similarities and differences in their communicative culture).

Exercise 1. Acquaintance. All participants receive an A4 sheet. Everyone writes their name on the sheet. After that, each participant is looking for a partner to exchange sheets and write in a foreign language a pleasant wish to the partner for this training. This goes on for 5–7 rounds.

Exercise 2. The Boastful. Four participants randomly sit at the table. The participant must tell the group about himself/herself in a foreign language: where s/he came from, about his/her strengths, qualities, etc. (the teacher monitors the clarity and correctness of the presentation).

After that, the participants choose one card for themselves, turn it over and occupy the table whose number is indicated on the card (the cards remain on the table). People occupy the specified table and do the Boastful exercise again.

Exercise 3. We Are with You. Participants are randomly divided into two teams. One team forms the outer circle, the other forms the inner circle. The people from the outer circle stand opposite the people from the inner circle. Participants in the outer circle say (using a foreign language) to their partners a phrase that begins with the words: “You and I are similar in ...” (for example, you and I are similar in that we live on planet Earth, study in the same class, etc.). The members of the inner circle answer: “You and I differ in ...” (for example: you and I differ in eye color, long hair, etc.). Then, at the instruction of the teacher, the participants in the inner circle move, changing their partner. The procedure is repeated until every member of the inner circle meets every member of the outer circle.

The second stage – interactive – consists of tasks that focus on the development of ethnocultural sensitivity, increase intercultural competence in situations of intercultural communication, form management strategies and overcome negative ethnic attitudes, develop and consolidate the skills necessary for successful intercultural interaction.

After getting acquainted, the participants are divided into groups of four people in each group (it is desirable that each group has representatives of different nationalities) and proceed to the main work.

The teacher tells the rules for participation in the training: start talking only after s/he raised their hand and received the teacher’s approval; when one speaks, others are silent.

Exercise 4. The teacher asks the participants to tell them what, in their opinion, intercultural communication is. The facilitator writes it down on the board. After that, a general definition is formed.

Exercise 5. It Has Happened to Me. The participants in the group discuss the difficulties that they may have and what experience they have had in situations of intercultural communication. One member of the team voices the situations indicated by the group.

Exercise 6. About My Culture. Each participant is given a sheet on which s/he writes “We ... (indicates nationality) and writes five stereotypes about representatives of another nationality. For example,

“Russian people are evil, they never smile” or “all Japanese love sushi and anime”, “all Koreans eat dogs”, “Americans cannot live without fast food”. After that, the participants are asked the question “What new have you heard about your culture?”.

Exercise 8. Story. Each member of the group prepares a short story about the features of the culture to which s/he belongs. The story can be written in free form, but must include answers to the following points:

– traditions and norms (for example: do not use the number 19, do not cross the road in red, give money for a birthday, bring pineapples to the hospital, smoke while eating, slurp, (do not) use the right/left hand for any activity, talk loudly in a public place, greet with a special gesture in the street, others in the family, etc.)

– popular and frequently consumed dishes (for example, typical and atypical for other cultures),

– national characteristics (for example: smiling, modesty, social distance),

– attitude towards work/study/religion (for example: workaholism, labor migration, the importance of education for the family (society) and further employment, dominant religion, religious practices),

– basic norms of behavior (prohibitions and preferences) for communicating with people of different sexes, social status (for example: conversations with a stranger, help for women, help from/for a stranger, addresses and signs of respect for people of a different social status, etc.)

After each participant of the training prepares their story, s/he voices it aloud. The teacher, if necessary, suggests the missing vocabulary, corrects mistakes. When all participants have finished answering, a discussion takes place; everyone has the opportunity to ask a question to another.

The teacher also asks the participants questions (for example: what expressions/constructions are usually used in your native language when greeting/saying goodbye to people of different ages, social status; how different it is from the rules adopted in the target language; how much tone and voice expression matter in conveying meaning in your native language, how important tone is in the studied foreign language, etc.).

The third stage – productive – includes the application of the case study. It is an active learning technique that consists of the use of specific learning situations in the organization of the learning process, aimed at formulating a problem and finding options for solving it. Problem solving is followed by analysis in the classroom. The method is great for teaching a foreign language because it contains all types of speech activities. The essence of the case study in teaching a language is the independent foreign language activity of students in an artificially created environment.

Exercise 9. Negotiation. The teacher invites the participants to find a solution for the next case. Imagine that the group members will live in the same room in a student hostel and they need to agree on comfortable accommodation for each tenant in the room. The group receives a sheet with the information about the purpose of the case and its tasks.

The goal is to achieve a comfortable living in the room for each tenant.

Tasks: establishing rules for cleanliness, silence, cooking and eating food, inviting guests.

In addition, the teacher gives individual input data to each participant. The participants must adhere to them while searching for a solution to the case. The teacher gives time for the participants to study the conditions and, if necessary, answers their questions.

An example of input data for each participant:

Participant 1 – You prefer to sleep from 00:00 to 07:00. At 8:00 you leave for classes and return from classes at 14:30. You are a first-year master's student. You have a friend (girl- or boyfriend) who lives in a hostel and you would like him/her to come to your room.

Participant 2 – You prefer to sleep from 20:00 to 05:20 because you leave for work at 6:00 and return at 11:00. You leave for class at 2:00 pm and return at 7:00 pm. You are the oldest in the room, but you are a third-year undergraduate student. You do not eat pork and cannot stand the smell of it. You stain the bathroom mirror and hoard your dirty socks on the chair.

Participant 3 – You need to sleep from 5:00 to 11:00 because you have classes from 12:25 to 20:00. At 23:00 you leave for work and return at 4:30. You are a second-year master's student and you need special rest because you sleep the least. You love cleanliness and order.

Participant 4 – You prefer to sleep from 10:00 to 18:00. You are a first-year bachelor's student. You do not attend classes; you play computer games all the time in the room, and you prefer to eat in the room. You love KFC and boiled pork very much.

Participants are invited to speak in turn on each of the points of the rules and give their suggestions. You can also create a common table and fill it out together, discussing each point.

The teacher also sets the rules of communication. It is necessary to explain to the participants that everyone is entitled to express their opinion; it is important to listen to all points of view and agree on the best option for everyone. For communication, it is allowed to use only the foreign language being studied, taking into account the specifics of the context: an informal style of communication, the absence of inappropriate language, national and cultural characteristics of other group members. The result of the solution of the case should be specifically formulated in writing (outlined/in the form of a table) in a foreign language; the piece of writing must include the rules of cleanliness and silence, the rules for preparing and consuming food, and the rules for inviting guests.

The teacher announces the time given to the group for discussion and making agreements (20 minutes). When the time is up, s/he announces the beginning of the discussion and takes the position of an observer evaluating the progress of the discussion according to the following criteria:

- compliance with the given individual conditions of each participant;
- compliance with the conditions of communication (use of a foreign language, communication style, cultural norms, etc.);
- presence or absence of the fact of agreement as a result of the discussion;

- amount of time spent on negotiations (faster/on time/failed);

- emotional state of the participants during the negotiations.

- assessment of agreement: whether all group members are satisfied with the result.

While one group is voicing the case, the participants from other groups assess the performance: they carefully observe the actions of their colleagues, which will enable the teacher to more deeply assess the skills of the intercultural communication among all participants in the training.

At the end of the training, a reflection of experience is required, which must include the following elements:

1. Analysis of the results: participants must analyze how successfully they coped with the solution of the case, identify their strengths and weaknesses, and determine what could have been done better.

2. Process evaluation: participants must evaluate the process of discussing and solving the case, identify what methods and approaches were used, how they worked, what could have been done differently.

3. Evaluation of the experience gained: participants must reflect on what lessons they have learned from the process of solving the case, how this experience can be useful for them in the future.

4. Planning for the way forward: based on the analysis of the results and the process, participants must determine what actions they can take to improve their intercultural communication skills and effectiveness in working in an intercultural environment.

5. Exchange of opinions: participants must exchange their opinions and ideas about the process of solving the case, discuss what was useful and interesting, what could be improved next time.

The developed training includes a variety of methods and technologies: game formats, role-playing games, simulations, feedback, and reflection, which help participants learn effectively and practice their skills in real life.

After completing the training, participants will be able to interact more successfully and effectively with people from other cultures, which can increase their chances of career success and achieving their goals in an international environment. Moreover, the training contributes to increasing cultural literacy and provides deeper insight into cultural differences, which can lead to a more tolerant and harmonious society as a whole. It should also be noted that each participant will be able to enrich the vocabulary, test their skills in a foreign language, and identify what should be improved.

Thus, we can conclude that training in the development of foreign language intercultural communication skills for foreign students is of great importance, since it helps to develop the key skills necessary for successful interaction in an international dynamically developing environment. It teaches participants effective communication in a foreign language with representatives of other cultures, helps to understand cultural differences, and reduces the risk of conflicts in intercultural communications. Therefore, it can be recommended for teaching students at a modern university.

Study Results

The formative experiment has allowed us to accumulate extensive materials: teacher lesson notes on the training frameworks, compiled catalogs of errors made by students while communicating with each other and the teacher in a foreign language and multicultural environment, the difficulties encountered by students.

The qualitative analysis was applied to get a better understanding of human behavior from the participant's perspective in the context of the implemented teaching framework based on communication training. It allowed for a detailed examination of the learners' opinions and experiences, tailored to the particular educational context.

The quantitative analysis based on the empirical data received has revealed that 100% of the participants improved their skills in foreign language intercultural communication due to the implemented teaching framework, while at the stage of entrance testing only 18.75% of participants were able to communicate successfully. The following troubles have been identified: 1) the majority of the learners were not able to identify gender and use appropriate language means for that; 2) a lot of learners were not aware of various national cultural peculiarities; 3) a greater part failed to understand values favorable to a particular culture. According to participants' self-evaluation at the end of the experimental teaching, 81.25% have learned a lot of new things about other countries and changed their attitude to cultural differences for the better.

At the end of training, each participant was evaluated according to the criteria described above. All students complied with the given conditions, showed respect and attention to each other. English was chosen as the language of the training. Five people out of sixteen had some difficulties choosing the appropriate vocabulary, but, in spite of that, they were able to express their thoughts without losing their meaning. One person had significant difficulty formulating sentences. Each participant was able to maintain their communication style and cultural norms.

Potentially conflicting situations arose within each group during task 9, which were nonetheless resolved within the given timeframe. The students (N=5), who were the most active in solving problem situations, received the highest marks for this exercise. Two people who showed excessive emotional reactions received lower scores. At the end of the activity, all participants expressed their satisfaction with the arrangement. Therefore, the case was considered successfully solved.

The exercise aimed at presenting oneself and one's culture improved the attitudes of five students, who initially felt that they were being negatively treated. The teacher, who conducted the training, made observations all the time and noted who faced troubles and what strategies helped promote better understanding and better relationships among the focus group members.

Discussion and Conclusion

This study was conducted to investigate the effect of an intercultural training framework in a foreign language on international students' ability to communicate effectively with representatives of various cultures. The

purpose of this study was to gain a better understanding of what an intercultural training should include, in order to provide a multicultural dialogue between students as representatives of various cultures.

Answering the research question posed in this study, we propose that the structure of the teaching framework design should be based on three components: (1) a conceptual framework, (2) content, and (3) procedural components. The authors suggest that several distinctive conceptual features characterize our framework: (1) interpersonal interaction, (2) real-life situations and reflection on intercultural differences to facilitate a change of attitude and intercultural awareness that is considered conducive for learning. (3) the learning process is emphasized by means of adaptive feedback based on individual analyses.

The training scenarios presented in this article include real-life-oriented conflict management, student-centered cross-cultural discussions, and solving problems related to intercultural communication in English as a foreign language. Primarily, evaluation studies indicate that the suggested scenarios may be well-suited for real educational situations in a multicultural university environment. Due to its flexible architecture, our framework and approach can easily be tailored to different settings and thus serve as a basis for future research focusing on the adaptation of foreign students to various educational contexts. On the basis of these developments, we elaborate important design dimensions, reflect general issues and major challenges, and identify opportunities for integrating on intercultural training into an EFL course at university.

The results of the present study support the hypothesis that communicative training can be an effective means of developing not only skills of foreign languages but also knowledge and skills of intercultural communication. One of the advantages of this type of training is that it focuses on the development of language skills in real-life situations.

Another positive feature is that communicative training helps students to develop their intercultural communication skills by providing them with opportunities to interact with speakers of the target language in authentic communication situations. Through these interactions, students develop their ability to understand and interpret cultural differences, as well as to negotiate meaning and communicate effectively in the target language.

The results of this research provide supporting evidence that communicative training also helps students develop a deeper understanding of cultural values, norms, and beliefs that underpin communication in a foreign language. This can help students become more effective communicators and develop more positive and meaningful relationships with speakers of the target language.

Our results highlight the benefits of training as a form of learning and the importance of each of its parts described in this article. Our case study into experimental learning confirms that the methodology of communicative intercultural training allows teachers to engage international students in active learning and accomplish high-quality and meaningful work. It offers opportunities for every student, regardless of their language proficiency levels and cultural background, to learn verbal and non-verbal communication strategies

aimed at overcoming difficulties and misunderstanding each other in a multicultural educational environment of the university. Moreover, our framework teaches students to think beyond common classroom tasks and increase their desire to communicate effectively in social life.

This study represents a first attempt to address these issues. We feel that further research examining the

content and the procedural issues of intercultural communicative training may shed light on the complex nature of intercultural communication in the educational environment.

Therefore, further research into the reasons for possible positive results of this teaching framework implementation is needed.

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