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**FEATURES OF THE DEVELOPMENT OF CULTURAL COMPETENCE IN STUDENTS
IN THE PROCESS OF TEACHING A FOREIGN LANGUAGE**

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Abstract. The aims of the pilot course included raising intercultural awareness, building cross-cultural communication and English language skills. Ways of tackling these problems and students' post-course feedback are analyzed and explicated in this paper. The characteristic features of content and forms of realization of a course «Skills of intercultural communication in international environment» are given in the article.

Keywords: traditions, language, social, cultural, religious preferences, interests.

The growing dynamism of international relations and business, the internationalization of business contacts, the need to compete effectively in the international arena create a need for more coordinated interaction, the ability to conduct an effective dialogue with representatives of various cultures. In the modern world, when the environment is becoming increasingly international, multiculturalism is part of everyday life and requires mutual respect, acceptance and understanding from all participants in the communication process.

At the same time, the trend of internationalization of business along with the widespread use of English as an international business language can create the illusion of the existence of universal business practice. However, in real life, the participation in the interaction of an increasing number of people belonging to different cultures can cause misunderstanding, lead to contradictions and even conflicts.

The cultures of different countries have many differences in communication, including traditions, language, social, cultural, religious preferences, interests. People are brought up and develop in different cultural and social environments, have different values and views, which cannot but be reflected in their different perception of information.

The differences also lie in the different understanding of certain actions, values, attitudes towards people, work, time. The perception of other cultures occurs mainly through the prism of one's own culture, which is an obstacle to effective communication and mutual understanding between people.

Successful interaction is impossible or ineffective if there is no mutual understanding between the parties, if representatives of different countries do not have knowledge of the characteristics and cultural differences of their business partners. Understanding and awareness of the culture and cultural characteristics of different nations do not happen by themselves; it is necessary to make the process of understanding and studying different cultures purposeful and consciously develop intercultural communication skills (ICS). This is especially relevant for such specialties as "Management", for which ICS is part of the professional qualification.

There is a need for adaptation, and possibly a purposeful process of preparation for intercultural communication, the creation of special programs, training courses in

order to develop communication skills with representatives of different cultures both in other countries and within one's own country. At the same time, the most productive seems to be the integration of foreign language teaching and ICS within the framework of the CLIL approach - Content and Language Integrated Learning (integrated teaching of subject content and foreign language). Moreover, in the context of globalization of economic, cultural and social life, integrated language and intercultural competencies are the key to successful functioning in modern reality. Foreign language teaching becomes a fundamental component of the ICS competence. The inseparable relationship between language and culture offers great educational opportunities.

The purpose of the article is to describe and analyze the conducted experiment on the implementation of integrated training in intercultural communication and improving English language skills.

The term "intercultural communication" was first formulated in 1954 by E. Hall and D. Trager in the book "Culture as Communication. A Model and Analysis". The authors of the book proposed a definition of intercultural communication as a special area of human relations - an ideal goal that a person should strive for in his desire to adapt to the surrounding world as best as possible [1]. According to the definition of E.M. Vereshchagin and V.G. Kostomarov [2], intercultural communication is an adequate understanding of two participants in a communicative act belonging to different national cultures.

Communication with another culture creates a stressful situation in which a person begins to behave the way he is used to behaving in his environment. This happens when a person does not have the necessary competencies, has no experience of communication in such a situation, especially if he has never had contact with representatives of another culture before. In other words, he has a low level of "cultural intelligence". In foreign literature, the term "cultural intelligence" (CQ) means a person's ability to effectively adapt to a new cultural context [3].

Cultural intelligence, firstly, implies knowledge of the target culture and the basic principles of intercultural interaction: what is culture, how cultures differ and how culture determines human behavior. Understanding national and cultural identities, values, positions, behavioral practices allows us to more accurately identify and predict situations of cross-cultural communication. Secondly, the concept of cultural intelligence can include the concept of awareness, which links knowledge and action in communication and is realized through recognizing the obvious characteristics of another and "adjusting" to his behavior, perceiving the situation from different sides, paying attention to the context of the situation, using empathy, which is the basis for successful intercultural communication.

Methods of teaching a foreign language in the post-communicative era are closely related to a student-centered approach to learning, task-oriented strategies and project work. The main emphasis is on learning language as a communication tool. Such a learning environment serves to develop autonomy in constructing one's own knowledge. Subject-oriented immersion in language using materials that reveal foreign cultural positions allows one to create, reconstruct and interpret their basis.

The dual nature of CLIL naturally promotes the use of language as a tool for working with material when completing assignments on the subject. Thus, this strategy has great potential for developing intercultural knowledge and skills, making it possible to simultaneously achieve three goals: (1) learn a foreign language, (2) gain knowledge about the subject and (3) develop ICC skills [4]. The success of CLIL should be ensured by a number of pedagogical tactics that imply a reassessment of the role of the teacher in the learning process and the achievement of a productive balance between forms of activity that are controlled and directed jointly by the teacher and the student. High-quality authentic material, gradual progression from simple to complex, constant interaction, feedback and stimulation of achieving results, training in effective educational tactics (autonomy, self-discipline, critical thinking, time management) contribute to the mastery of disciplines.

Teaching of the discipline included a variety of forms and methods of work on the formation and development of intercultural and foreign language communicative competence of students, including: work with authentic materials, conducting discussions in groups and pairs, solving specific situations (case studies), project work, modeling situations of intercultural communication, composing and reproducing dialogic and monologue statements (reports, messages, presentations), watching videos, listening to audio recordings of both native speakers and representatives of other cultures and peoples with subsequent discussion of what they saw and heard.

Independent work of the student was both individual and group in nature and was focused on developing skills in working with authentic material, autonomous learning, critical thinking, as well as organizing joint work on projects.

The course began with introductory lectures (4 hours), during which students interactively familiarized themselves with the results of research into cultural characteristics by scientists from different countries. Introduction to the theories of G. Hofstede, R. Lewis, E.T. Hall allows students to gain the basic criteria on the basis of which scientific analysis and comparison of countries by various parameters is carried out, for example: individualism/collectivism, uncertainty avoidance, poly/monochromes, mono/poly/reactivity. The purpose of the introductory part was to broaden the horizons of the students, to help them think more broadly, including analyzing the culture of their country, to understand the diversity of cultural differences within the country and beyond.

Knowledge about the cultures of the studied countries was not transmitted by the teacher, but was constructed by the students themselves: the students themselves prepared presentations about the cultural characteristics of a particular country, and presented them in class. The presentations were offered in the format of communication with the audience in English, which gave the speakers the opportunity to practice their professional and communication skills. At the end of the presentation, the presenters asked the audience several questions about the content of their speech, which was a test of understanding and control of the material presented. Students regularly completed tests, the purpose of which was to monitor the assimilation of subject and linguistic material.

To practice the development of intercultural communication skills and practice communicating in English, students were offered different types of communication training, for example:

1. Establishing business contacts (representatives of different countries meet for the first time and try to establish relationships for subsequent business). In this situation, it is necessary to use the knowledge of cultural features obtained earlier and apply them in practice;

2. Negotiating (representatives of different countries imitate the behavior and principles of doing business characteristic of a particular country);

3. Team competitions on knowledge of cultural features of different countries (in the form of a game, talk show, quiz);

4. Cases - solving problematic tasks in pairs, small groups and with the involvement of the entire audience (information/text containing a problematic situation that must be solved using intercultural communication skills).

In order to intensify the educational process, students were connected to the corporate information and educational environment (IEE), which allowed for the most efficient use of study time, helped students in searching and structuring material for the lesson, and received assignments and recommendations for their completion. All course content, including authentic materials, video materials, and additional assignments, was offered in the IEE. Presentations prepared by students were also uploaded to the system, which allowed the group to use them in preparation for tests, classes, and final assessments. Such tools as the “notice board,” “class schedule,” “chat,” and “forum” were also used. Students could ask questions to the teacher through the system and receive explanations and recommendations regarding the educational process.

The results of the study showed the feasibility of using the strategy of integrating teaching a subject through a foreign language and improving communicative competence. CLIL allows students with different levels of language proficiency to achieve the goal of obtaining the necessary information, developing intercultural communication skills and simultaneously improving their proficiency in English.

The most effective seems to be modeling intercultural communication situations that imitate real communication. Role-playing games, talk shows, cases create a safe environment for students, where they can develop communication skills, try out different forms of behavior, respond to any kind of attitude and behavior of participants and see the reaction to their behavior, which allows everyone to learn from their mistakes and the mistakes of others.

The short duration of the course only allowed us to create a platform for further development of intercultural competence. Upon completion of the course, the students noted an increased interest in the problem of intercultural communication in general and in the culture of different countries in particular. The students developed motivation to study the cultures of other countries, they realized that communication skills can be developed and that they need to be purposefully trained. It became clear that the ability to communicate at an intercultural level is part of a manager's

professional qualifications; there was confidence that much depends on one's own motivation, desire to understand others, and the desire to establish a dialogue.

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