

ISSN 2520-2073 (print)
ISSN 2521-442X (online)

TRAINING, LANGUAGE AND CULTURE

Finding Culture in Language

Edited by Prof David Crystal

**Vol. 6
Issue 2
2022**

Issue doi: [10.22363/2521-442X-2022-6-2](https://doi.org/10.22363/2521-442X-2022-6-2)

Quarterly journal published by
Peoples' Friendship University of Russia (RUDN University)

TRAINING, LANGUAGE AND CULTURE

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Quarterly journal published by RUDN University

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Training, Language and Culture is accessible online at <https://rudn.tlcjournal.org>
Publication schedule: four issues per year coming out in March, June, September and December

Printing run 100 copies. Order No 22. Open price.
Signed to print 13.06.2022. Date of imprint 26.06.2022. Format 60x84/8.
Offset paper. Offset printing. Typeface "Optima, Impact".
Printer's sheet 10,02

Printed at RUDN University Publishing House:
3 Ordzhonikidze str., 115419 Moscow, Russian Federation
Ph.: +7 (495) 952-04-41; Email: publishing@rudn.ru

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Training, Language and Culture (TLC) is a peer-reviewed journal that aims to promote and disseminate research spanning the spectrum of language and linguistics, education and culture studies with a special focus on professional communication and professional discourse. Editorial Board of Training, Language and Culture invites research-based articles, reviews and editorials covering issues of relevance for the scientific and professional communities.

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Introduction to Issue 6(2)

by Prof David Crystal

Tell me where is culture bred? In reading these papers, I'm reminded of some lines from Shakespeare's *The Merchant of Venice*:

*Tell me where is fancy bred,
Or in the heart or in the head?*

The lines are sung while Bassanio ponders his choice of three caskets, one of which contains the portrait of his love, Portia. If he chooses the right one, he wins her; if not... disaster. The singer avoids the two alternatives, answering his own question: *'It is engendered in the eyes'*.

And so it is with culture. Where is culture to be found? These papers suggest a similar response: look around you. And in looking we see that there are far more options than the two or three offered in the play. Wang finds it in group interaction – specifically, in the way non-verbal and verbal cues (in this study, eye gaze and amount of talk) – differ between home students who have had some intercultural training and those who have not. Tamimy, Zarai and Khaghaninejad also look for it in group interaction, but as manifested in a corpus, using various linguistic criteria (such as pronouns and adjectives) to identify traits of individualism and collectivism in a culture, and to spot changes over time. Swallow and Tomalin find it in classrooms where foreign students settling into another country find themselves having to deal with culture shock and (on returning home) reverse culture shock. Vovou finds it in metaphor, specifically in the way students of a second language encounter difficulty in mediating conceptual metaphors used in a multimodal task. Grigoryeva and Zakirova find it in the way an international language – a global one, in the case of English – has an impact on intercultural communication, helping users to achieve better mutual understanding. This is cultural awareness 'from without'. By contrast, Pavlovskaya and Ksenzenko focus on culture awareness 'from within', using Russian as a case study to explore the historical role of foreign languages in a country as a means of fostering cultural awareness and shaping national identity.

A recurring underlying theme is the way culture is coded directly into a language and the behaviour of its speakers. It raises the question: to what extent is culture encoded in this way? Or, putting this another way: how much of a language is influenced by culture? If we were

to take a bilingual dictionary and ask its compilers to identify those lexical items where they had difficulty finding a translation equivalent, and those where they had no problem, what percentage would be found? I actually had the chance to ask some lexicographers this question a few years ago, when developing the encyclopedia taxonomy I described in the first issue of this periodical. The plan at the time was for the items in the various categories to be translated into several other languages, so I asked the different editors to give me a rough idea of how much cultural influence they expected to encounter. Putting this crudely: in translating 'book' into French, is there a need to take a cultural factor into account, or is there a straightforward equivalent? To what extent is there a problem of the kind expressed by such familiar expressions as 'the French have a word for it'?

My French editor thought for a moment, and suggested 'about 5 percent of the words would give me a cultural problem'. An Arabic editor hazarded '20 percent'. A Chinese editor '50 percent'. Clearly, philological closeness to English was a factor. I didn't have a Russian editor, but I'm struck by the observation of Pavlovskaya and Ksenzenko: *'The Russian people easily digested foreign words, giving them a twist to make them their own'*. I wonder just how many words were treated in this way, and in what contexts. Results would be greatly influenced if the dictionary contained idiom and metaphorical expressions, of the kind explored by Vovou.

These figures have no research validity at all. They are only subjective impressions. But they do indicate a potentially fruitful methodology of enquiry for quantifying cultural difference in the lexicon. At the same time, the message of the papers in this issue is one of caution. There is no absolute notion of similarity or difference. Comparison requires a sociolinguistic and pragmatic perspective. We cannot simply say Language X is different from Language Y. Tamimy et al. point to the importance of genre differences; Wang to gender differences. Swallow and Tomalin sum it up when they talk about the essentialist paradigm of enquiry. *'Essentialism describes the situation where everyone is reduced to their national cultural profile, which inevitably leads to the danger of stereotyping'*. Any historical account immediately demonstrates the essentialist fallacy, as illustrated by Pavlovskaya and Ksenzenko's account of foreign language experiences in Russia. The diachronic dimension is critical: what is culturally significant at one point in time will change.

We have only to look at the copious notes in any edition of a Shakespeare play to see that, or the items identified in a dictionary of culture, where we are talking decades, not centuries. The Longman Dictionary of English Language and Culture, compiled in the 1990s, is an illustration. This has entries that reflect the television programmes of the time, of interest now only to cultural historians. It is no longer being updated: it was a brave enterprise, but the scale of needed revision on a global scale was too demanding for any editorial team to maintain – let alone the question of how to present such increasing global cultural complexity in book form.

Not even decades. Change can take place dramatically within a generation. This was brought home to me when I was writing my *Little Book of Language*, aimed at young teenagers. I got a 12-year-old to read my draft manuscript, and told her to underline anything she didn't understand. When she got to the chapter on pseudonyms, in which I mention several famous people whose public name is not the one they were born with, she underlined John Wayne. She had never heard of him, nor of *Stagecoach*, and his other big films. Once I had got over this unexpected culture shock, it took us some time to find cultural equivalents that were from her world. We settled on some pop stars, such as Eminem. But in another generation's time, will not these be just as opaque to future readers? And even a generation is too long a period, as Swallow and Tomalin point out in their opening remarks about the pandemic, social media, and other factors that have motivated new paradigms of enquiry within a matter of a few years.

There is I think an unconscious assumption that culture, however it is defined, is unchanging. People readily talk about the 'Anglo-Saxon temperament', 'Russian culture', and the like. There are doubtless some features that remain constant across space and time, but I am more struck by the speed and diversity of cultural change, and wonder how that is to be studied. One way is through the use of a historical corpus, which can identify frequency differences in specific words and expressions over time and across genres.

Trends can be seen even in a contemporary corpus, such as the one used by Tamimy et al. They anticipate the future use of a historical corpus, but I would also point to the value of comparative corpora, such as the Corpus of Global Web-based English (GloWbE) which can be used to focus on cultural similarity and difference. Similarity is important. As Swallow and Tomalin say: *'Too much of intercultural practice focuses on what keeps people apart'*.

Another method would be an adaptation of the notion of crowdsourcing, used to great effect in the Urban Dictionary, Twitter, and similar projects, where we see options for people to vote ('like', 'retweet') for topics they consider to be important; and indeed the whole business of 'trending' is now a major feature in social media. Cultural linguists need to make more use of these sources of data, comparing trends in different countries or constituencies. The scale of the problem also demands some sort of crowdsourcing. I'm reminded again of my paper on the need for a cultural dictionary.

Such a project could never succeed without input from innumerable sources; but such large-scale enterprises are routine now in Internet settings, once the relevant website management is in place. This would solve the problem of presentation, as encountered in the Longman dictionary example.

I began with a quotation from Shakespeare, so let me end with another – this time in the closing scene of *The Tempest*, when Miranda sees the visitors to her father's island:

*How beauteous mankind is! O brave new world,
That has such people in't!*

Brave here means 'splendid, excellent', rather than 'courageous'. But when we apply this to our present topic, we need both senses. These papers illustrate the complexity as well as the fascination of studying language in relation to culture, and the challenges that arise when dealing with these issues in the classroom. *'We are entering a new cultural paradigm'*, say Swallow and Tomalin. I agree. It is indeed a brave new world that has such culture in it.

Original Research

Assessing intercultural competence using videotapes: A comparison study of home students' performance

by Zhaoming Wang

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Article history Received December 19, 2021 | Revised April 9, 2022 | Accepted June 3, 2022

Conflicts of interest The author declared no conflicts of interest

Research funding No funding was reported for this research

doi [10.22363/2521-442X-2022-6-2-9-19](https://doi.org/10.22363/2521-442X-2022-6-2-9-19)

For citation Wang, Z. (2022). Assessing intercultural competence using videotapes: A comparison study of home students' performance. *Training, Language and Culture*, 6(2), 9-19.

How to assess intercultural competence is the key to exploring intercultural effectiveness. Although various methods have been developed for assessing intercultural competence (e.g., interviews, self-report questionnaire, critical analysis, etc.), this study assesses intercultural competence using videotapes to observe participants' performance in the multicultural interactions. A comparative study was conducted comparing home students who were interculturally trained and who did not. By examining their performance in group discussion, two specific aspects – eye gaze and amount of talk – were analysed by both quantitative and qualitative techniques. The results show that trained home students not only had more and longer eye gazes than the untrained students during group discussion, but they also used more other-oriented speech than the untrained. Such findings indicate that the trained home students were more interculturally competent than the untrained especially in the multicultural intra-group interaction setting. As there are many other variables to examine (e.g., non-verbal cues such as body gestures and facial expressions), this study demonstrates a way to assess intercultural competence using videotapes in both verbal and non-verbal cues for the future research.

KEYWORDS: *intercultural competence, home student, competence assessment, intercultural training, observation of behaviour, non-verbal behaviour*



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1. INTRODUCTION

How to assess intercultural competence is the key to exploring intercultural effectiveness. Deardorff (2006) suggests that intercultural competence is best assessed through a mixed method including interviews, observation, and judgment by self and others. Fantini (2009) also suggests that intercultural competence is best assessed by multiple measures on multiple dimensions using a mix of qualitative and quantitative methods. These multi-perspective approaches or multi-methods should be focused more on the process of intercultural competence development rather than on an end-result (Deardorff & Edwards, 2012; Gordon & Dear-

dorff, 2013). Deardorff (2016) lists some examples of how intercultural competence is currently assessed which include embedded course assessment, self-report instruments, reflection papers, critical incident analysis, interviews, observations of behaviour in specific contexts (by professors, internship supervisors, host families, group members, etc.), simulations and longitudinal studies. Furthermore, it is also implied that the assessment should go beyond verbal measures to determine whether students can think and act intercultural (Bok, 2006). For intercultural competence is not only about cultural awareness, but also the behavioural aspects of successful interaction (Deardorff, 2016).

‘Furthermore, it is also implied that the assessment should go beyond verbal measures to determine whether students can think and act interculturally. For intercultural competence is not only about cultural awareness, but also the behavioural aspects of successful interaction’

Currently, plenty of studies assess intercultural competence (ICC) using self-assessing tools such as Barnett’s IDI (Hammer et al., 2012) and self-reflection reports and interviews (Young & Schartner, 2014). However few studies provide practical techniques to assess ICC using the behaviour observation approach. The use of non-verbal measures is even less frequent. Another gap in the literature is that the development of native speaker’s ICC is often neglected (Yelenevskaya & Protsasova, 2021). Especially in the higher education setting, most of the attention has been given to the international students or sojourners (Bilá & Ivanova, 2020). Therefore, to fill in these gaps, this study aims to assess home students’ intercultural competence by analysing their performance in group discussion. Videotapes of their performance were analysed with both quantitative and qualitative methods in two aspects, verbal (amount of talk) and non-verbal (eye gaze). By doing so, it aims to specify the difference between trained and untrained home students in ICC. It also aims to provide valuable data in assessing intercultural competence for future research.

2. BACKGROUND

The research goal of assessing intercultural effectiveness using videotapes started from the *Transcultural Communication* intercultural training course running at the author’s affiliated university in the north of England. The training course has been practiced since the 2015 autumn term by the department of education. This term-long (normally 8 weeks) course intends to help the students raise awareness of cultural differences and bring about their cultural and identity shifts as well as changes in perceptions of culture and language.

What is valuable about this course is its assessment. By the end of the course, students were required to construct the criteria for the assessment of transcultural competence and evaluate a range of inter/cultural assessment systems. Then they needed to undertake three tasks:

- participate in a transcultural communicative task (e.g., group discussion mixed with non-transcultural students) and be assessed on their performance (e.g., the ability to engage sensitively with others and to contribute relevant ideas and knowledge);
- write an analytical report (1750 words) on the interactions in the above task based on the video recordings of the previous step;
- write a self-evaluation and reflection report (1750 words) showing what they had learned and discuss the changes in the attitudes and behaviours they may have noticed.

The course involves the use of three methods to assess students’ intercultural competence: self-reflection report, evaluation report of other’s performance, and actual behaviour in the real intercultural interaction which was video-recorded. Since the first two reports were examined and marked by the course leader, this study used videotapes to analyse their intercultural behaviour in the group discussion. The two aspects in focus are eye gaze (which is non-verbal behaviour) and amount of talk (which is verbal behaviour).

3. GAZE IN NONVERBAL COMMUNICATION

In human interaction, nonverbal behaviour is an important symbol system. The importance of nonverbal communication has been asserted by Knapp and Hall (2002), who stated that *‘the list of all the situations where nonverbal communication plays an important role would be interminable’* (Knapp & Hall, 2002, p. 230). Although for most people nonverbal communication refers to *‘communication effected by means other than words’* (Knapp & Hall, 2002, p. 5), the definition of nonverbal communication (similar to that of culture) is more complicated.

For this research, the definition proposed by Samovar et al. (2009) is adopted: *‘nonverbal communication involves all those nonverbal stimuli in a communication setting that are generated by both the source and his or her environment and that have potential message value for the source or receiver’* (Samovar et al., 2009, p. 246).

From this definition, three primary units of nonverbal communication can be identified: the communication environment (e.g., physical environment and spatial environment), the communicators’ physical characteristics (e.g., person’s physical appearance), and body movement and position (e.g., gestures, posture, touching behaviour, facial expressions, eye behaviour, and vocal behaviour) (Knapp et al., 2013). While there is

much to discuss for each of the three units, for this study the focus is on one particular stimulus – that of gaze behaviour.

The eyes and the power of eye contact have been addressed extensively in scientific research. Generally, it is argued that the eyes are important to the communication process as they can send limitless messages (Samovar et al., 2009). As a matter of fact, when one looks, where one looks and how long one looks during interaction are generally studied in the field of gaze. According to Knapp and Hall (2002), gaze refers to *'an individual's looking behaviour, which may or may not be at the other person'*, while mutual gaze refers to *'a situation in which the two interactants are looking at each other, usually in the region of the face'* (Knapp & Hall, 2002, p. 371).

The term *'eye contact'* (looking specifically into each other's eyes) is just one feature in the study of gaze, which is not reliably distinguished by receivers or observers from gazing at the area surrounding the eyes (Cranach & Ellgring, 1973).

During human interaction, no matter what culture it is, people pay attention to gaze behaviour as sometimes it is an indicator of interest, attention, or involvement (Knapp et al., 2013). Kendon (1967) identified four functions of gaze: (1) regulatory, i.e. responses may be demanded or suppressed by looking; (2) monitoring, i.e. people may look at their partner to indicate the conclusion or thought units to check their partner's attentiveness and reactions; (3) cognitive, i.e. people tend to look away when having difficulty processing information or deciding what to say; and (4) expressive, i.e. the degree and nature of involvement or arousal may be signalled through looking. In short, people do not look at the other person during the entire time of talking. But when they do gaze, they are signalling that the communication channel is open, seeking feedback concerning the reaction of others, expressing their emotions/attitudes towards the partner. In terms of interpersonal relationships, back in the 1960s, studies (Exline & Eldbridge, 1967) indicated that the same verbal communication was decoded as being more favourable when it was associated with more eye gaze than when it was presented with less. Generally, people seem to gaze more at people they like (although longer and harder looking may indicate dislike), thus it makes sense to predict that *'we will look more at those who like us, if for no other reason than to observe signs of approval and friendliness'* (Knapp & Hall, 2002, p. 378).

'The term 'eye contact' (looking specifically into each other's eyes) is just one feature in the study of gaze, which is not reliably distinguished by receivers or observers from gazing at the area surrounding the eyes (Cranach & Ellgring, 1973)'

In terms of intercultural communication, different cultures have established a number of eye related norms. For example, in the dominant culture of the USA (which refers to the main culture in a society that is shared and accepted by most of a population), looking another person directly in the eye is not only very common but also highly valued (Triandis, 1994). In fact, it is suggested that gaze avoidance is usually associated with lack of interest, dishonesty, slyness and negative attitudes. Thus, eye contact is regarded as an important interpersonal skill offered by communication textbooks – *'you can improve your eye contact by becoming conscious of looking at people when you are talking to them'* (Verderber & Verderber, 2001, p. 140). While many cultures, such as the dominant US, French, German and British cultures, employ direct eye contact, some other cultures, such as Japanese and Korean, regard direct eye contact as taboo or an insult (Samovar et al., 2009). For example, in Japan prolonged eye contact is considered rude, threatening, disrespectful, and even a sign of belligerence (Nishiyama, 2000). In some parts of Africa, *'making eye contact when communicating with a person who is older or of higher status is considered a sign of disrespect or even aggression'* (Richmond & Gestrin, 1998, p. 88). In short, cultures such as Korean, Japanese, African and East Indians employ nominal eye contact (Samovar et al., 2009). Overall, Knapp et al. (2013) suggest that the differences in gaze patterns between cultures lie in contact and noncontact, the duration of gaze, and where and whom to gaze at. Although misunderstandings or problems may arise between cultures (e.g., an American doing business in Japan), this study is focused only on British students in a UK university. In this context, it is assumed that gaze is valued and important in interpersonal interaction.

Harrigan (2013) summarised several variables that could be measured in gaze behaviour: eye direction (left/right, up/down); eye contact or mutual gaze between interactants; one-sided gaze (one person looks at another who does not return the gaze); glancing (brief looks towards and away from another person or object);

'Thus, in terms of measurement, eye-to-eye contact may be less critical than the direction of one's head in relation to another person. Validity estimates for eye-directed gaze are considered worse than those for face-directed gaze (Exline & Fehr, 1982)'

staring (continual gaze at another); and gaze aversion (looking away from another person) (Kleinke 1986). It is pointed out that these variables are recorded as frequencies or durations, and the most studied are mutual gaze, glance frequency, gaze duration at partner, and proportion of looking during a specified activity (e.g., listening, speaking). Many of these are intercorrelated (Duncan & Fiske, 2015). Harrigan (2013) also pointed out one difficulty in precise measurement is that of face gaze (looking towards another's face) versus eye gaze (looking into another's eyes). It is argued that one moves the head when redirecting gaze, and interactants tend to look at each other or well away (Kendon, 1967). Also as discussed above, eye contact is not reliably distinguished by receivers or observers from gazing at the area surrounding in the eyes (Cranach & Ellgring, 1973). Thus, in terms of measurement, eye-to-eye contact may be less critical than the direction of one's head in relation to another person. Validity estimates for eye-directed gaze are considered worse than those for face-directed gaze (Exline & Fehr, 1982). Therefore, as suggested by Harrigan (2013), it may be more useful to record the extent to which interactants direct their face toward one another, rather than suffer cumbersome intrusions with eye tracking devices. In terms of reliability estimates for gaze variables, it is suggested that live interactions and videotaped records are often quite high because of their advantages of replay, slow motion viewing and resolution of measurement errors (Argyle & Cook, 1976; Exline & Fehr, 1982).

4. AMOUNT OF TALK

The focus on participants' amount of talk came from the feedback of the students who participated in the communicative tasks. In the group discussion, they noticed that some home students who volunteered themselves in the task (interculturally untrained) seemed dominated the discussion with a great amount of talk. To see whether the untrained home students were dominating the conversation and spoke more than the non-natives, measurements were made to analyse their amount of talk. Thus, the study shall assess inter-

cultural competence by comparing home students who took the *Transcultural Communication* course and those who did not. Both non-verbal and verbal cues were focused. Using videotapes of group discussion from the course assessment, eye gaze and amount of talk of both groups were analysed. As mentioned above, it is hypothesised that (1) nonverbally the trained home students had more eye gazes (in terms of frequency) than the untrained home students; and (2) verbally the untrained home students talked more than the trained home students.

5. METHOD

In total, sixteen home students (13 females and 3 males) were involved in the study. Eight of them (all females) were labelled as the trained group. The other eight participants (5 females and 3 males) were volunteers who signed up only for the communicative task of the course. They were labelled as the untrained group. All the participants were full-time students at the university.

One of the main assessments of the course is participating in a communicative task such as a group discussion. In the task, the participants were given a topic to discuss and asked to try to come to an agreement within 20 minutes. Participants' performance was video recorded for later evaluation. In total, 12 videotapes were used for analysis. Participants gave their consent to be recorded. The videotapes were collected from the course leader. Each video comprised one group of participants' performances (usually 4 to 5 people) and lasted 20 to 30 minutes.

As the communicative task involved both international and home students in Stage 1 of the measurement, everyone who appeared in each video was measured individually. One glance was counted no matter whom they were looking at, or when. That is to say, as long as the participant was looking at the group member(s) while he/she was speaking and listening, it counted as one glance. Gaze duration – the length of time in seconds – was counted as long as the participant was looking at someone during discussion (here the short gap when he/she switched away from one to another was dismissed). After everyone's gaze duration and frequency of glances were counted in the group, the proportion of looking during discussion (gaze duration/length of conversation) and average length of glancing (gaze duration/total amount of glances) were calculated. An example of Stage 1 measurement on eye gaze is shown below (Table 1).

Table 1
Example of Stage 1 eye gazing measurement (data from one videotape)

PARTICIPANTS	DURATION (SECONDS)	PROPORTION (OF THE WHOLE CONVERSATION)	GLANCES	MEAN LENGTH OF GLANCES (SECONDS)
T1	824	93%	37	22.27
N1	701	79%	64	10.95
N2(HM)	426	48%	128	3.33
T2 (HM)	632	71%	94	6.72
N3	762	86%	49	15.55

Note: T=Transcultural student (international); T (HM)=Transcultural student (home); N=non-transcultural student; HM=home student

After everyone in all twelve videotapes was measured and listed in the above table, the data of the home students were picked out. Two new groups were generated – participants labelled as THM (where T stands for transcultural students, and HM stands for home students) were grouped as trained; participants labelled as NHM (where N stands for non-transcultural students) were grouped as untrained. The two groups of data were put into SPSS. A t-test was performed to compare the variables between two groups.

Similar to the procedure for eye gaze measurement, participants' amount of talk was analysed in two

stages. In Stage 1, everyone's talking duration and total amount of turns were counted individually within their group. The proportion of each person's talking during discussion (talking duration/length of conversation) and average length of turns (total amount of turns/talking duration) were calculated accordingly.

An example of Stage 1 measurement on the amount of talk is shown below (Table 2).

In Stage 2, home students' data have been allotted to the untrained group and the trained group.

A t-test was performed to compare the variables between the two groups.

Table 2
Example of Stage 1 amount of talk measurement (data from one videotape)

PARTICIPANTS	DURATION (SECONDS)	PROPORTION (OF THE WHOLE CONVERSATION)	TURNS	MEAN LENGTH OF TURNS (SECONDS)
T1 (HM)	244	25%	41	5.95
N1 (HM)	202	20%	52	3.88
T2	222	22%	27	8.23
N2	167	17%	38	4.39
N3	156	16%	31	5.03

Note: T=Transcultural student; N=non-transcultural student; HM=home student; Follow-up Analysis for Amount of Talk

To further examine the differences between the participants' speech, a follow-up analysis was performed using both qualitative and quantitative approaches. Firstly, a qualitative analysis was conducted after the videos had been transcribed. As the purpose of the follow-up analysis was to find out

whether there was any difference in the speech content of the two groups (there was no specific hypothesis), thematic analysis was conducted from an inductive perspective (Braun & Clarke, 2006). It appeared that instead of solely talking about themselves, the trained students often used expressions such as 'What do you

think?, *'Shall we move on?'*, *'That's a good idea'* to address other participants in the group discussion (which is termed as *other-oriented speech* in this study). To test this hypothesis, the contents of home students' talk were coded to look for repeated patterns. Repeated patterns were created as subcategories. For example, all the usages of *'That's a good idea'* and *'That's a good point'* were classified in the 'giving positive feedback' subcategory. Any comment that tried to bring the conversation back to the topic, such as *'Shall we move on to the next point'*, or summarising participants' suggestions were classified in the 'stick to the topic' subcategory. Lastly, one main theme was generated and named as 'other-oriented speech' as they all have the feature that focus or acknowledge other group members comparing to self-oriented which is solely self-expressive (e.g., *'I think we should do xxx'* or talking about their own story). The detailed category and subcategories with examples are presented in the results. After the preliminary coding theme was generated, a quantitative measure on that theme was

performed for both groups. Specifically, the amount of other-oriented speech that appeared in each home students' speech was counted. Then the proportion of other-oriented speech during discussion (turns of other-oriented speech/the total amount of turns) was calculated. These data were then put into SPSS. A t-test was performed to compare the variables between the two groups. Inter-rater reliability analysis (IRR) was performed to assess the degree that coders consistently assigned categorical other-oriented speech rating to subjects in the study. A third-year undergraduate student (observer 2) in psychology department was trained for 20 minutes on the category of other-oriented speech. Four transcripts which was 25% of the entire data (N=16) were selected and coded by observer 2. Then a summary table was drawn up in which all categories used by both observers appear in the same order in both lists. A sample of the table is shown below (Table 3). After filling all the data from both coders in the summary table, Cohen's kappa ($K=.796$) was calculated accordingly (Hallgren, 2012).

Table 3
 Example of IRR analysis

	OBSERVER 2		
	Self-oriented	Other-oriented	Total
OBSERVER 2			
Self-oriented			
Other-oriented			
Total			

6. RESULTS

6.1. Eye gaze

Four variables (duration, proportion, glancing and average length of glancing) in eye gaze were compared between the trained group (N=8) and the untrained group (N=8). There was no difference between two groups in duration (untrained mean = 451.8, $SD = 299.5$, trained mean = 718.0, $SD = 219.8$; $t(14) = -2.027$, $p = .062$) or the frequency of glancing (untrained mean = 99.5, $SD = 38.6$, trained mean = 80.6, $SD = 34.6$; $t(14) = 1.03$, $p = .321$).

However, the mean of proportion of looking during discussion was significantly different ($t(14) = -2.182$, $p = .047$). For the trained group, they looked at the other participant(s) 67% of the entire discussion time (mean = 67.0%, $SD = 19.0$). That was significantly

larger than the untrained group (mean = 43.0%, $SD = 24.5$). Also, the mean of average length of glancing was significantly different ($t(14) = -2.323$, $p = .036$). The trained group shows longer average length of glances than the untrained group: the mean length of each glancing of the trained group was up to 10.48 seconds ($SD = 6.01$), whereas the untrained group was just 4.91 seconds ($SD = 3.2$) (Table 4).

6.2. Amount of talk

6.2.1. T-test on overall amount of talk

Four variables were compared in the amount of talk (duration, proportion, turns and average length of turns). Surprisingly, there was no difference between the untrained and trained groups for any of these variables (Table 5).

Table 4
Means and standard deviation (untrained and trained) of eye gaze for various measure

	MEAN (SD)		t	Sig.
	Untrained (N=8)	Trained (N=8)		
Duration	451.8 (299.5)	718.0 (219.8)	-2.027	.062
Proportion	43.0% (24.5)	67.0% (19.0)	-2.182	.047
Glancing	99.5 (38.6)	80.6 (34.6)	1.030	.321
Average length of glancing	4.91 (3.2)	0.48 (6.01)	-2.323	.036

Table 5
Means and standard deviation (untrained and trained) of amount of talk for various measure

	MEAN (SD)		t	Sig.
	Untrained (N=8)	Trained (N=8)		
Duration	286.4 (145)	316.1 (110)	-.460	.653
Proportion	28.3% (13.8)	30.8% (13.7)	-.367	.719
Turns	46 (23)	48 (13)	-.213	.835
Average length of turns	7.20 (4.95)	7.14 (3.39)	.029	.977

6.2.2. Qualitative results

As the above results obtained via the t-tests suggest that the untrained home students spoke no more than the trained home students, further analysis was conducted on the quality of their speech. Following the thematic analysis (Clarke et al., 2015), we conclude that the trained home students used a lot of other-oriented speech during group discussion. Here the theme 'other oriented speech' contains five subcategories: (1) stick to the topic (of group discussion); (2) acknowledging other person; (3) paraphrasing/asking for clarification; (4) giving positive feedback to other person; and (5) showing interest to another person. A detailed description of the theme and examples of each of the five subcategories are reported below (Table 6).

6.2.3. T-test on other-oriented speech

The results indicate a significant difference in the proportion of other-oriented speech ($t(14) = -4.205$, $p = .001$). Trained home students had a larger proportion

of other-oriented speech (mean = 46.2%, SD = 14.6) than the untrained home students (mean = 18.8%, SD = 11.3) (Table 7).

6.2.4. IRR analysis

An inter-rater reliability analysis using the Kappa statistic was performed to determine consistency among coders. Inter-rater reliability was determined using 25% of the data acquired by the two coders (4 trials). The inter-rater reliability for the two coders was found to be Kappa = .796, indicating that coders had satisfactory or even substantial agreement (as the result was closed to $K = .80$).

7. DISCUSSION

Although there are numerous aspects to look at through videos in terms of nonverbal behaviour, this study only focused on eye gaze. The results confirmed the prediction proposed previously that the trained home students had more eye gaze towards other person(s) during the group discussion than the

Table 6
Subcategories and examples for other-oriented speech

PRELIMINARY CODING THEMES	SUBCATEGORIES	EXAMPLES
Other-oriented speech	Stick to the topic	'Shall we start with introducing ourselves?' Summarising the topic and participant's suggestions 'Shall we move on to the next facilities?'
	Acknowledging another person	'Jiayu, do you have any suggestions on food?' 'Do you think we should have xxx?' 'What do you suggest Josh?'
	Paraphrasing/asking for clarification	'Do you mean like colourful walls and pictures?' 'Sorry, what were you going to say?'
	Giving positive feedback	'That's really good idea!' 'That's a good point.'
	Showing interest to other participants (personal)	'Where are you from?' 'Have you been there?'

Table 7
Means and standard deviation (untrained and trained) of other-oriented speech

	MEAN (SD)		t	Sig.
	Untrained (N=8)	Trained (N=8)		
Proportion	18.8% (11.3)	46.2% (14.6)	-4.205	.001

untrained group. Not only so, their average length of each glance was also much longer than with the untrained home students. As suggested by the literature above, greater gazes give signs of approval and friendliness (especially in the British culture). With more and longer eye gaze, the trained home students might give the impression of more involvement and friendliness than the untrained home students towards other group members. A more frequent and longer eye gaze could also indicate that the trained home students were more confident or comfortable in communicating during the group discussion. As being friendly and confident are important factors in motivation, such results suggest trained home students had higher motivation than the untrained ones. Furthermore, the results also suggested that the trained home students performed better in terms of skill. The results of eye gaze measurement provide good support for the effectiveness of intercultural training, indicating that trained home students were more interculturally

competent than the untrained home students, especially in terms of motivation and skill in the multicultural interaction setting.

In terms of the amount of talk, it was predicted that the untrained home students might talk more than the trained home students. This prediction was drawn from the testimonies from the feedback of the participants commenting on some untrained home students' performance in the group discussion. There was one untrained home student who spoke 52% of the whole conversation and each turn was up to 18.6 sec on average. This participant was just an extreme case. As matter of fact, the results suggest that the untrained home students talked no more than the trained home students during group discussion. However, after further analysis the results did show a significant difference in the amount of other-oriented speech between the two groups. This result showed that although the trained and untrained groups produced similar amounts of talk, their content was different. For

the trained home students, the focus was more on the other group members rather than just talking about their own opinion. For example, they showed interest in other participants by asking 'Where are you from?', acknowledged them by explicitly asking their opinion, gave positive feedback when they tried to contribute to the discussion, and paraphrased whenever needed. Besides, the trained home students also demonstrated good management skills: they opened the discussion by introducing each other, structured the discussion by summarising group member's suggestions, and tried to bring back the conversation to the topic when needed. This other-oriented speech suggested that the trained home students were more skilled in intra-group communication. As proposed by Hargie (2021), the key skills in small group leadership are 'preparing, opening the discussion, structuring and guiding discussion, naming conflict, regulating participation and closing' (Hargie, 2021, p. 472). As a result, although there is no difference in the total duration of the talk in both groups, it is the content of the talk that makes it different. By the ear of the listener, the self-centred speech may psychotically bore the listener and give the impression of the speaking being too long.

The results for other-oriented speech also indicate the role that trained home students played in the multicultural interaction. Having mastered the use of English, the trained home students are more in the role of a medium or mediator who tried to lead the conversation without dominating it. That could not be done without a level of self-awareness. This supports Håkansson and Montgomery's (2005) argument suggesting that '*being other-oriented involves a conscious effort to consider the world from the point of view of those with whom you interact*' (Håkansson & Montgomery, 2005, p. 267). Being other-oriented is not a single skill but a rather a set thereof, including essential communication skills, self-awareness, awareness of others, using and interpreting verbal and nonverbal messages, and listening and responding to others (Argyle, 1994).

In all, as suggested by Beebe et al. (2015), being other-oriented means '*focusing on the interests, needs and goals of others while being true to your own principles and ethical credo*' (Beebe et al., 2015, p. 26). The results for the amount of talk, especially other-oriented speech, provide good support for the value of intercultural training, as trained home students were more skilful and mindful in multicultural communication.

Finally, this study provides valid and approachable techniques in assessing intercultural competence. According to Deardorff (2011), one's intercultural performance is the direct evidence of their intercultural competence. Just as the second task of the course (writing an evaluation report of others and their own performance), the observation of students' performance in intercultural situation is becoming a way to assess their intercultural appropriateness. Although such assessment is an opportunity for students to apply their intercultural knowledge and skills in relevant contexts, they are still based on a subjective evaluation. This study, on the other hand, provides a new direction to assess intercultural behaviour via the relatively objective measures. Although the evaluation reports from the students were not focused on in this study, it will be worth comparing the differences between their reports and the findings of this study.

This study also provides important data on the assessing of non-verbal behaviour in intercultural interactions. Although only one non-verbal cue – eye gaze – is analysed in this study, there are numerous other cues to look at for the future research, such as facial expressions, postures and gesture, physical distance, sitting positions, and seating arrangements. It will also be worthwhile examining any sex difference in these variables.

In terms of the limitations of this study, one concern is the possible existence of the 'demand characteristics' phenomenon (Orne, 1962). The students of the course knew that their performance in group discussion contributed to their course assessment and to their study. They had also been exposed to theories of intercultural communication in the course and may have wished to reflect these in their performance. Comparing to the volunteers for the group discussion, they might have had greater incentives to perform as well as they could. Without being told the real purpose of the group discussion as well as the pressure to earn course credit, volunteers might not be motivated as well as the students actually taking the course. Thus, their performance might be under evaluated. It would be less biased if they could receive the same information as the course students. That requires an improvement of the assessment design for the course leader.

Another issue of this study is the sample size. The quantitative portions of the comparison study were limited due to the low participation of home students. It was also impossible to control the sample type and

gender differences in this study. However, there were more female students participating in the communicative tasks. Especially for the home students who signed up for the course, they were all females. Further studies are needed to enrich our understanding of whether females and males perform differently in intercultural interaction. For example, due to the lack of trained male home students, it is still unclear which gender uses more other-oriented speech during interaction.

8. CONCLUSION

The study aimed to fill in the gap of current intercultural competence assessment especially on the home students. Home students' performance in the real

intercultural interaction was analysed using videotapes. Eye gaze and amount of talk were measured and compared between the groups of trained and untrained home students. The results showed that trained home students not only employed more and longer eye gazes than the untrained students during group discussion, but also used more other-oriented speech.

Such findings indicate that the trained home students were more interculturally competent than the untrained ones, especially in the multicultural intra-group interaction setting. The quantitative and qualitative techniques used in this study provide a new direction for further intercultural competence assessment.

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Original Research

Collectivism and individualism in US culture: An analysis of attitudes to group work

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Article history Received November 10, 2021 | Revised March 12, 2022 | Accepted June 3, 2022

Conflicts of interest The authors declared no conflicts of interest

Research funding No funding was reported for this research

doi [10.22363/2521-442X-2022-6-2-20-34](https://doi.org/10.22363/2521-442X-2022-6-2-20-34)

For citation Tamimy, M., Setayesh Zarei, L., & Khaghaninejad, M. S. (2022). Collectivism and individualism in US culture: An analysis of attitudes to group work. *Training, Language and Culture*, 6(2), 20-34.

Group work has recently gained attention in educational settings, and culture is an important factor influencing group work so the connection between the American culture and attitudes towards group work is worth studying. The present corpus-based study utilises the Corpus of Contemporary American English (COCA) to determine the current and the longitudinal traits of American cultural attitudes, which could influence the Americans' disposition towards collective activities including group work. Analysing the American discourse of different academic genres, it was revealed that while the American culture is predominantly individualistic, it has some potential for collectivism. Interestingly, it was observed that the American cultural is getting slightly less individualistic over time, especially after its individualistic soar in the second half of the 90s.

KEYWORDS: American culture, group work, individualism, collectivism, COCA



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1. INTRODUCTION

Group work, whether instantiated as cooperative learning or collaborative learning, is the staple of many recent educational recommendations because plenty of research undergirds its effectiveness in terms of cognitive, affective, and social gains (see Baye et al., 2019; Kyndt et al., 2013; Slavin, 2013; Swanson et al., 2017; Van Ryzin & Roseth, 2019). Despite its experimental repute, it is generally underutilised in classrooms (see Abramczyk & Jurkowski, 2020; Buchs et al., 2017; Gillies, 2003; Gillies & Boyle, 2010; Howe, 2014; Le et al., 2018; Mulisa & Mekonnen, 2019; Popov et al., 2012). This paradox is commonly attributed to factors

including student preparation, teachers' beliefs, task construction, group composition, communicative skills, and curriculum (Abramczyk & Jurkowski, 2020; Abrami et al., 2004; Buchs et al., 2017; Gillies & Boyle, 2010).

Aside from those factors, culture is another factor whose role in cooperative learning has drawn attention. As an instance, Inns and Slavin (2018) maintained that 'culture has an impact on how cooperative learning is enacted and how students benefit. The differences across groups that are evident in the literature may be related to how well cooperative learning methods mesh with existing cultural norms and values' (Inns & Slavin, 2018, p. 258). Tamimy (2019) through a study of lin-

guistic ethnography found that culture influences cooperative learning and group work. Mulisa and Mekonnen (2019) also pointed out '*in Ethiopia, community views cooperative work both as an asset and a liability*', acknowledging the fact that cooperative learning is culturally influenced (Mulisa & Mekonnen, 2019, p. 503). Highlighting the role of culture in cooperative learning, Thanh (2014) noted that East Asian culture is not readily consistent with cooperative learning. Given the import of this newly found factor on cooperative learning, calls can be heard for more attention to be paid to the role of culture (see Ghahraman & Tamimy, 2017; Ghaith, 2018; Hennebry & Fordyce, 2018; Vasileva & Ivanova, 2021).

Although these works have evidenced the impact of culture on cooperative learning, they were mostly concerned with the East Asian countries, or what is called the Confucian Heritage Culture (see Flowerdew, 1998; Inns & Slavin, 2018; Nguyen et al., 2005, 2009, 2012; Thanh, 2014), and thus have assumed that group work is readily compatible with American culture. This is evident in Inns and Slavin (2018), where they uphold that '*while cooperative learning is widely accepted in Western societies, how might it work in Asian cultures?*' (Inns & Slavin, 2018, p. 235) or in the fact that Nguyen et al. (2012) simply identify the origination of cooperative learning in some Western universities with its congruity with the American culture.

Moreover, while studies purport that essentialisation and stereotyping of Asian cultures should be defied, they fall into the trap of essentialism by seeking recourse to the concept of the West, which is explanatorily inadequate due to its indeterminacy (Vignoles, 2018).

While the compatibility of group learning with American culture is taken for granted and thus, virtually no study has vetted it, the complexity with which American culture is played out might pose more doubts regarding group work. This convolution lies in the fact that there is contradictory evidence regarding both the individualism and collectivism of American culture. On the one hand, a growing body of scholarship shows that American culture is marked by individualism or rugged individualism, even culminating in stereotype formation (see Bazzi et al., 2020; Hofstede, 1986; Hsu & Barker, 2013; Myers, 2000; Twenge et al., 2013). In fact, this strand considers American culture as competitive, agentive, prioritising the self over the group, and seeking individual pleasure. On the other hand, there are thought provoking reports (see Fischer, 2008; Tamimy

& Sahragard, 2021) which maintain that American culture is not monolithically individualistic and includes a considerable amount of collectivism as well. This is reified in the coexistence of proverbs denoting individualism (e.g., 'every man for himself') and collectivism (e.g., 'every little helps') within American culture. Fischer (2008) surmised, based upon a sociological reflection, that this ambivalence might be due to the fact that different areas of activities, better called discourses, might have their own specific contingencies, demanding varying degrees of individualism. However, this argument needs more empirical scrutiny (Fischer, 2008). Adding more to the complexity of American culture, it must be remembered that cultures are dynamic and can change longitudinally (DeWall et al., 2011; Twenge et al., 2013), so it is vital to study the quality of these changes (Ogihara, 2017). These contradictions show that the compatibility of group work with American culture cannot be taken for granted.

Before recapitulating this preamble to state the problem, it must be mentioned that culturality and historicity have undeniable impact on people's behaviour and learning styles (Lantolf & Poehner, 2014). However, the interaction between American culture and group work is still understudied. This inattention gets more serious when one notices that there are reports which gainsay the stereotyping of American culture as individualistic. Addressing these issues and untangling the Americans' cultural disposition towards group work warrants that the status of American culture in terms of individualism and collectivism be revisited through multiple methodologies.

So, this study draws upon corpus analyses to unravel (a) how collectivistic and/or individualistic American culture is, (b) if there are variations in terms of the preference for individualism across different genres of American discourse, and (c) how American culture's preference for individualism/collectivism has possibly changed over time. This study answers the recommendation of Fischer and Poortinga (2018) to use a mixed-method research into cultural matters to arrive at more convincing findings and heeds the criticism of Schwartz (2011) of the statistical integration of individual level data at a culture level by opting for the scrutiny of a comprehensive corpus of natural language use, which is already integrated.

This study can also provide a nuanced understanding of American culture which can contribute to the honing of social mediation environments such as educational group work and cooperative learning.

It must be mentioned that Hogg and Levine (2010) suggest that human interpersonal behaviour can be placed on a continuum ranging from competition and individualism to cooperation. Cooperation is any state wherein people lend each other a hand to reach a mutual goal. The opposite of cooperation is competition, also described as rugged individualism, wherein any individual seeks only his or her benefit, necessarily at the cost of others' gains. Between the two extremes, there is a state recognised as individualism, which maintains that sometimes people neither compete nor cooperate. They are simply in pursuit of their own benefit, with no regard, either positive or negative, for the others. Similarly, social interdependence theory maintains that individuals can be independent, or alternatively positively or negatively interdependent, resembling cooperation and competition (Johnson et al., 2007).

These psychological issues when translated into the cultural realm correspond to individualism/collectivism. Individualism denotes that individuals are separate with substantial differences, so they prioritise their personal needs, ideas, values over the group, but collectivism includes closely intertwined links between the individuals and social entities so that shared values and norms are preferred to individual benefits and values (Cheng et al., 2020). The self-concept theory also is associated with these discussions. It relates that people can have independent and/or interdependent understanding of themselves.

In fact, *'people with an independent construal of the self view the self as unique, private, and autonomous, whereas people with an interdependent construal of the self view the self as related to others, incorporating and referencing the views of other people'* (Cheek & Cheek, 2020, p. 257). This fleshes out its kin theories by classifying interdependence into relational, public, and collective selves, respectively representing relationships, public image, and group membership.

Since Social interdependence theory and Self-concept theory explain human behaviour in terms of the ideas closely similar to those brought up by individualism and collectivism, it would not be unwise to study the Americans' cultural orientations in terms of the characterisations these theories provide. Within these theories, attention to individuality, rather than commonality, is known as a defining characteristic which can differentiate subcultures (Cheek & Cheek, 2020; Cheng et al., 2020). Therefore, these notions, consistent with the procedure suggested by some empirical re-

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search (see DeWalt et al., 2011; Twenge et al., 2013), would be operationally defined as the frequency of first person singular /plural pronouns in social interactions.

2. THEORETICAL BACKGROUND

2.1. Language and culture

Awareness of the association between language and culture is significant in educational settings (Atkinson, 2015; Kramsch, 2014). Language and culture are not distinct from each other, and language can portray culture which can be inferred from different perspectives. From the sociolinguistic perspective, language cannot be separated from its sociocultural context (Dubin & Olshain, 1986). The Sapir-Whorf hypothesis, concerning the connection between language and culture, includes the principles of language determinism and language relativity. The first suggests that language determines individuals' thinking or cognition (Hussein, 2012; Leavitt, 2010). Based on the latter, human thinking is dependent on language and each language holds a specific world view for its speakers that differs from the way in which speakers of other languages perceive the world (Carroll, 1956), and the distinctions between languages are related to cultural differences (Denisova et al., 2019). Sapir Whorf represents the view that language is not dissociated from culture, *'that is, from the socially inherited assemblage of practices and beliefs that determines the texture of our lives'* (Sapir, 1970, p. 207), and understanding one of them is not possible in isolation from another. From the cognitive linguistic point of view, language represents the cultural experience of its speakers (Geeraerts, 2006). Based on this perspective, *'all cognition is embodied in cultural situations'* (Gibbs, 1999, p. 156), and meaning making, reflection, and emotion are dependent on biological, social, and cultural experience (Yu, 2014). Considering embodied cognition, language is perceived to represent culture, and its conceptualisations are shaped within the cultural settings (Palmer, 1996; Bugaeva, 2021). In fact, the metaphorical expressions used in each lan-

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guage convey essential linguistic meaning and have a cultural basis. In addition, considering Vygotsky's (1978) perspective, culture offers conceptual categories to arrange and sort out the objects and phenomena within the world. These concepts are reflected in the linguistic signs that transfer across generations, and people within different cultures think about the world differently based on these concepts. This claim also implies an interconnection between language and culture. Furthermore, Byram (1989) explained that *'the language holds the culture through the denotations and connotations of its semantics'* (Byram, 1989, p. 94).

2.2. Educational group work

Educational group work is a teaching approach in which the students with different proficiency levels join small groups and cooperate with each other to achieve a particular goal. Hammar Chiriac (2014) explained the group work as a way to learn how to think for yourself, as well as developing the students' argumentative abilities and critical thinking within students' collaboration which leads to higher productivity and greater results. According to Kirschner et al. (2009), group work has economic, social, and specifically academic benefits. It provides *'the opportunity to develop student's learning skills and abilities and helps students to gain more knowledge'* (Meiramova & Zhanysbayeva, 2020, p. 383). It also promotes learners' achievement (Al-Sheedi, 2009), improves learning (Smialek & Boburka, 2006), assists learners to comprehend concepts well (Al-Sheedi, 2009; Li et al., 2010), increases discussion among individuals (Arumugam et al., 2013; Ibranian, 2012), and engages the learners completely in the content of the course (Yazedjian & Kolkhorst, 2007).

Collaboration improves activities such as *'elaboration, justification and argumentation that trigger learning mechanisms'*, which are not easily achievable in individual learning (Yadin & Or-Back, 2010, p. 186). In addition, it helps the achievement of intrinsic and extrinsic goals, brings the feeling of satisfaction from performance, provides the opportunity to influence others,

and promotes friendship (Decker et al., 2015). Students' social skills and self-confidence develop, and their stress decreases through group study (Petress, 2004). Cooperative learning lowers foreign language anxiety (Bailey et al., 1999) as well as performance anxiety (De Saint Leger & Storch, 2009). Finally, cooperative learning is a benefit because, as Vygotsky (1978) asserted, learners learn to do what they are unable to accomplish individually through interaction with an expert person or their peers within the group.

3. METHODOLOGY

3.1. Corpus

The design of this study can best be described as corpus-based because it draws upon a corpus as a tool to answer the research questions (Biber, 2010). A corpus is a large collection of naturally occurring language usage, representative of a language (McEnery et al., 2006) whereby research questions can be empirically answered (Pérez-Paredes, 2021). Corpus studies are appropriate for focusing on the culture because *'culture is more than a collection of individuals. Culture includes assumptions and patterns shared by members; these patterns are often reflected in cultural products such as TV shows, song lyrics, and books'* (Twenge et al., 2013, p. 406). Moreover, corpora are not diluted with biases involved in self-reported measurement of beliefs (Twenge et al., 2013).

The Corpus of Contemporary American English (COCA) is a large corpus of American English which is updated biannually and at the time of writing includes more than one billion syntactically and semantically tagged words used in different genres since 1990 up to 2021. The data, based on their origin, are divided into eight genres, including Conversation, Fiction, Magazine, Newspaper, Academic, Web (general), web (blog), and TV/Movies. So, COCA is not only a balanced corpus as including different genres, but also each of its genres is balanced internally because it includes different types of material within that genre. For instance, the Newspaper genre includes a balanced array of language data from different sections of different newspapers such as local, news, opinion, etc. The data available in COCA is truly naturally occurring language and no part of it is fabricated for this corpus.

3.2. Data collection procedure

It was noticed that a determining difference between various psychosocial and cultural theories, including social interdependence theory, self-concept

theory, and individualism/collectivism introduced for the classification of people and cultures, is the weight and attention they assign to the self versus others. Self-oriented independent people consider themselves as the centre or focus of different phenomena with little or no regard for the communality with others whereas an interdependent people define themselves as relative to others, giving them a collective vantage and thinking point (Cheng et al., 2020; Hogg & Levine, 2010). Thus, the individualist self-oriented cultures tend to use first person pronouns, I and me, more than first person plural pronouns, we and us (DeWall et al., 2011; Twenge et al., 2013).

More attention to personal benefit in contrast to a shared goal is another characteristic by which cultures can be distinguished. This feature occurs in the frequency of ‘my’ versus ‘our’ and ‘personal/individual’ versus ‘common/shared’. Preference for competition or cooperation, as another difference between cultures (Cheek & Cheek, 2020; Cheng et al., 2020), appears as the frequency of ‘competition/rivalry’ versus ‘cooperation/collaboration’.

Consistent with the conceptualisations offered by the theories, empirical linguistic ethnographies (Tamimy, 2019; Tamimy & Sahragard, 2021) also suggest that egoism/self-interest/selfishness are predictors of individualism, whereas altruism/selflessness are among the drivers of collectivism, so the frequency of their use is an indication of their operational meaning. It should not be forgotten that (inter)dependence versus independence and autonomy versus conformity are key

distinguishing concepts (Cheek & Cheek, 2020; Cheng et al., 2020). So, the number of examples of use can be considered operationally meaningful.

To improve the credibility of the research through theoretical triangulation (Ary et al., 2019), self-theory was also drawn upon to collect the data because it, consistent with the social interdependence theory and collectivism/individualism model, maintains that individuals can be culturally different in terms of their view of themselves as independent of or dependent on others (Cheek & Cheek, 2020). It defines independent self-construal as preference for autonomy over connections with others while dependent self-construal ‘views the self as related to others, incorporating and referencing the views of other people and groups in their identity’ (Cheek & Cheek, 2020, p. 257). Based on this distinction, it is believed that emotions can be socially disengaging or engaging, respectively representing independent self-construal and dependent self-construal. Socially engaging emotions, which are normally created as result of social ties, represent dependence and socially disengaging ones, more personally oriented such as pride, are reflective of independence (Cheek & Cheek, 2020). These emotions can be evident in the ways pronouns and adjectives are used. For example, adjectives such as ‘self-reliant’, ‘introspective’, and ‘strong’ when used in a ‘I TO BE adj [independence]’ construction can herald independent self-construal whereas adjectives like ‘sympathetic’, ‘popular’, and ‘beloved’ used in such a construction denote engaging emotions and dependent self-construal.

Table 1
 The keywords researched in the COCA and their justifying theories/models

THEORY	INDIVIDUALISM	COLLECTIVISM
Collectivism/Individualism Model & Social Interdependence Theory	I/me my personal/individual competition/rivalry egoism/self-interest/selfishness independence autonomy	we/us our common/shared cooperation/collaboration altruism/sacrifice/selflessness dependence conformity
Self-Concept Theory	socially disengaging emotions (e.g., pride, anger)	socially engaging emotions (e.g., guilt, shame, friendliness)

In order to collect the data demanded by the first research question, enquiring about the current status of American culture in terms of collectivism and/or individualism, the corpus of COCA, as a proxy to American culture, was searched for the keywords listed in Table 1 within the period from 2015-2019 and their frequencies were reported. Apropos of the second question, asking about cross-generic cultural differences, the keywords were again searched within the same time span but their frequencies were cross-tabulated across eight genres of the COCA, namely, TV/Movie, Spoken word, Fiction, Magazine, Newspaper, Academic, Web, and Blog. For the third research question, enquiring about the trend of changes in American culture, the keywords were searched within five-year time spans provided by COCA (1990-1994, 1995-1999, 2000-2004, 2005-2009, 2010-2014, 2015-2019) and their frequencies were shortlisted. It is worth mentioning, wherever the search words had more than one element, for example, as with individualism which requires I and me to be both searched, their average frequency was counted in order to balance the unequal quantity.

Although the frequency count for the keywords suggested by the individualism/collectivism model and social interdependence theory was important, data collection extended beyond them to include metaphor analysis regarding the American expression of emotions. As emotions are usually expressed using adjectives, 'I am ADJ' was looked up in the COCA. The results including 500 records and their frequencies were then fed into qualitative analysis and coding. This search produced phrases like 'I'm ready', 'I'm tired', 'I am grateful', 'I am ashamed', in which the adjectives used could be marked either as socially engaging or disengaging. They were coded independently by two assessors who were doctorate candidates in applied linguistics. Emotions '*that are derived from social interdependence and relationally embedded nature of self are referred to as socially engaging*' and the emotions '*that are grounded in independence and autonomy of self and its separateness from others in a relationship may be said to be socially disengaging*' (Kitayama et al., 2006, p. 891). The reliability of the assessors was found to be satisfactory (Kohen's Kappa= 0.87).

In order to know how individualistic/collective American culture currently is, measures of individualism and collectivism as of 1990-2019 were reported separately. The 500 records which showed how people can describe themselves, either as dependent or independent, were coded deductively either as socially en-

gaging, disengaging, or not applicable. The subtotal of frequency for each of these categories was calculated and was added to the other measures of individualism and collectivism. All these measures, according to their types, were averaged to arrive at two integrated measures of the frequency of individualistic and collectivistic linguistic clues. For the second research question, the data were cross tabulated based on their genres and a chi-square test was used to determine the significance of cross-genre variations. And finally, for the third research question, the data was cross-tabulated across five-year periods and the difference between each period with the others was tested using the chi-square.

4. RESULTS

The analysis of the data representing individualism and collectivism from COCA revealed that American culture is overall significantly more individualistic than collectivistic (Table 2). Table 3, evincing more details, provides evidence that American culture is currently on average at least twice as individualistic as collectivistic. Among different measures, the first and the second conspicuous differences were related to the frequency of autonomy in comparison to conformity (ratio= 7.41, std. residual > ∓ 1.96) and independence in comparison to dependence (ratio= 3.05, std. residual > ∓ 1.96). This suggests that American culture is individualistic and within its individualism, autonomy is of great importance. This can have an important bearing on the concept of American life-style and American liberty, which will be touched upon later in the Discussion section. Interestingly, competition was only 40% more frequently used than cooperation (Table 3), suggesting that American culture has also considerable potential for collectivism. How this collectivism is born out of the individualism and what motivates it will be further be discussed below.

To find out if there are any cross-generic differences in terms of individualism and collectivism, a 2 x 8 chi-square test was conducted and as Table 4 demonstrates, there were significant differences between the genres in terms of the cultural pattern, individualistic or collectivistic ($\chi^2(7) = 91282.494$, $p = .00$). The existence of individualism was significantly different across almost all the genres, save for the blogs (Table 5). The blog genre showed no significant differences in terms of individualism or collectivism (Std. Residualindiv.= -0.3, Std. Residualcollec.= 0.5). Within the other genres, the TV/Movies was the most individualistic (81.7%) and the academic was the most collectivistic (49.1%). The least

individualistic genre was the Academic and the least collectivistic was TV/Movie. Suffice it to mention that the amount of collectivism and individualism in the academic genre is almost equal.

The trends of change in individualism and collectivism from 1990 to 2019 were also focused on. The Chi-square test, represented in Table 6, revealed that time and the instantiation of individualism/collectivism are not independent ($\chi^2(5)= 511.66, p= .00$). This suggests that over time significant differences in the amount of individualism have occurred in American culture. As Table 7 shows, this significance is mostly driven by the changes in 1990-1994, 1995-1999, and 2015-2019, but the amount of individualism and collectivism in 2000-2014 does not seem to have changed significantly (Standard residual $< \pm 1.96$). According to Table 7, individualism reached to its maximum in 1995-1999 (17.6%, Std. Residual $> \pm 1.96$) and was at its lowest level in 1990-1994 (15.4%, Std. Residual $> \pm 1.96$). Al-

though collectivism has not varied significantly over the period studied, it can be seen that it was at its peak in 2015-2019 with a significant rise (17.1%, Std. Residual $> \pm 1.96$). Figure 1 also illustrates the trend of change and it can be clearly seen that American culture has undergone a relatively radical rise in individualism and then a moderate fall, ending in an estimate of individuality higher than 1990-1994. However, collectivism generally evinced a significant rise, but its slope is very low, heralding a very gradual change in American culture towards higher collectivism within the individualistic milieu (Figure 1).

This can happen due to the advent of social networks or even increased immigration. The very fact that slopes of changes in individualism are not equal to the changes in collectivism shows there is no trade-off between them, suggesting that individualism and collectivism are not at each end of the same variable, rather two distinct variables.

Table 2
The difference between the measures of individualism and collectivism since 2015 till 2019

	VALUE	df	ASYMP. SIG. (2-SIDED)
Pearson Chi-Square	4611.005 ^a	3	.000
Likelihood Ratio	4550.743	3	.000
Linear-by-Linear Association	4435.696	1	.000
N of Valid Cases	2134586	16%	31

Table 3
American culture as represented in COCA since 2015-2019

	SELF-CONSTRUAL		BENEFIT PREFERENCE		BEHAVIOUR		PERSONALITY	
	I/me vs we/us	emotions (engaging vs disengaging)	my vs our	personal/individual vs common/shared	competition/rivalry vs cooperation/collaboration	independence vs dependence	autonomy vs conformity	self-interest/selfishness vs altruism/selflessness
INDIVIDUALISM	1111988	3514	381789	15478	3234	3024	1520	175
	Std. Residual= 19.2*		-30.80*		-2.9*		-1.0	
COLLECTIVISM	420544	1474	176350	11898	2311	992	205	90
	Std. Residual= 30.3*		48.40*		4.6*		1.6	
RATIO*	2.64	2.38	2.16	1.30	1.40	3.05	7.41	1.94

*Note: ratio = the individualism divided by the collectivism; *= significant difference

Table 4
The difference between overall frequency of individualism and collectivism across genres

	VALUE	df	ASYMP. SIG. (2-SIDED)
Pearson Chi-Square	91282.494	7	.000
Likelihood Ratio	89934.318	7	.000
Linear-by-Linear Association	16898.831	1	.000
N of Valid Cases	2364404		

Table 5
Individualism and collectivism across different genres

		BLOG	WEB	TV/MOV	SPOKEN	FICTION	MAGAZINE	NEWSPAPER	ACADEMIC
INDIVIDUALISM	Count	230441	183472	575489	242991	278159	111410	81158	42027
	% within type	13.2%	10.5%	33.0%	13.9%	15.9%	6.4%	4.7%	2.4%
	% within genre	73.8%	71.7%	81.7%	64.7%	83.2%	65.9%	62.4%	50.9%
	% of total	9.7%	7.8%	24.3%	10.3%	11.8%	4.7%	3.4%	1.8%
	Std. Residual	-0.3	-12.6	76.9	-64.8	63.5	-38.1	-48.1	-76.5
COLLECTIVISM	Count	81977	72540	129098	132414	55989	57761	48985	40493
	% within type	13.2%	11.7%	20.8%	21.4%	9.0%	9.3%	7.9%	6.5%
	% within genre	26.2%	28.3%	18.3%	35.3%	16.8%	34.1%	37.6%	49.1%
	% of total	3.5%	3.1%	5.5%	5.6%	2.4%	2.4%	2.1%	1.7%
	Std. Residual	0.5	21.2	-129.1	108.7	-106.6	63.9	80.7	128.4

Table 6
The difference between individualism and collectivism across different time spans

	VALUE	df	ASYMP. SIG. (2-SIDED)
Pearson Chi-Square	511.660	5	.000
Likelihood Ratio	512.024	5	.000
Linear-by-Linear Association	1.794	1	.180
N of Valid Cases	1803454		

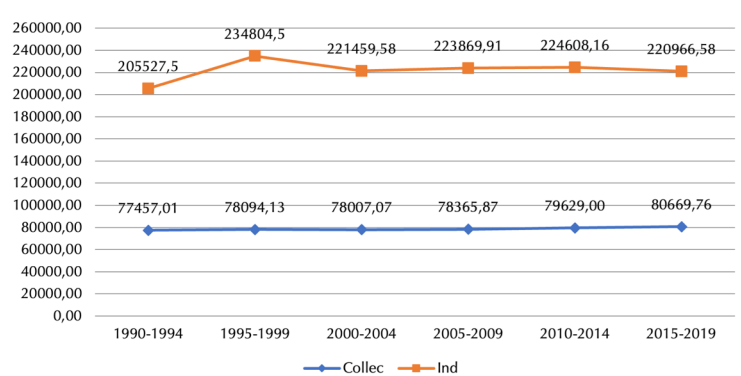


Figure 1. The trend of change in individualism and collectivism

Table 7
The trend of changes in individualism and collectivism over time

		1990-1994	1995-1999	2000-2004	2005-2009	2010-2014	2015-2019
INDIVIDUALISTIC	Count	205527	234804	221459	223869	224608	220966
	Expected count	208886.7	230968.0	221053.1	223096.3	224574.8	222654.1
	% within type	15.4%	17.6%	16.6%	16.8%	16.9%	16.6%
	% within time	72.6%	75.0%	74.0%	74.1%	73.8%	73.3%
	% of total	11.4%	13.0%	12.3%	12.4%	12.5%	12.3%
	Std. Residual	-7.4*	8.0*	.9	1.6	.1	-3.6*
COLLECTIVISTIC	Count	77457	78094	78007	78365	79629	80669
	Expected count	74097.3	81930.0	78412.9	79137.7	79662.2	78980.9
	% within type	16.4%	16.5%	16.5%	16.6%	16.9%	17.1%
	% within time	27.4%	25.0%	26.0%	25.9%	26.2%	26.7%
	% of total	4.3%	4.3%	4.3%	4.3%	4.4%	4.5%
	Std. Residual	12.3*	-13.4*	-1.4	-2.7*	-1	6.0*

5. DISCUSSION

The literature has demonstrated the effective role of collectivism, sometimes regarded as cooperative learning, in educational settings, and culture is considered as a significant factor affecting cooperative learning. The findings related to the analysis of the corpus from 2015 to 2019 revealed that American culture tended to be more individualistic rather than collectivist as a tendency toward autonomy and independence is salient throughout these years. This implies that American culture emphasises the individuality of the people, and it is not readily consistent with group work or cooperative learning by design (Myers, 2000). American people are more willing to perceive the world through the lens of independence, relying on their own selves (Fischer, 2008). Similarly, Schwartz (2011), through the analysis of the US samples, found that Americans value autonomy primarily, suggesting individualism. Individualism is at *'the core of American culture and the most representative integral part of American values. It is a moral, political and social philosophy, emphasising the importance of personal, self-contained virtue as well as personal independence'* (Zhang, 2013, p. 36).

In addition, the scrutiny of the unpacked elements of culture showed that American culture is relatively more competitive than cooperative. Americans reckon that competition promotes individuality, and it is a progressive belief in life (Zhang, 2013). This finding

demonstrated that the cultural representations regarding group work within American discourse is mixed rather than monolithic. Although indicating the potential for cooperation, it is individualistic and competitive to a larger extent. However, in line with Fischer (2008) and Tamimy and Sahragard (2021), the study indicated that American culture is not purely individualistic, and that it has the possibility to be collectivist. As cultures, like the individual selves, encompass contradictions (Archer, 1985), American culture employs individualism in some aspects rather than all (Cerulo, 2002), expecting commitment to the group.

Considering different genres of American discourse, representing different social institutions, all categories except blogs, were determined as mostly representing a significant tendency toward individualism. The greatest preference for individualism was evident within the TV/Movie genre while the academic genre tended to be the most collectivist. Nevertheless, the academic genre encompassed almost an equal degree of individualism. This might suggest neutrality within the academic genre, which might have been transpired due to the different degrees of objectivity or subjectivity across different disciplines. Overall, The cultural products mentioned prioritise the significance of the individual over the group. However, the extent of individualism varied across different genres, which might be due to the dissimilar nature of those cultural

discourses. In line with the findings, Twenge et al. (2012) investigated the words and phrases used in a corpus of the American books that concerned individualism and found a cultural tendency toward the increase of individualism with a focus on self and uniqueness. While their study revealed the remarkable position of individualism within American culture, it did not take the cross-generic differences into consideration, unlike the current study, and thus, its findings should be used with caution. Moreover, Hsu and Barker (2013) also found a higher degree of individualism in comparison with collectivism in American television advertisements, and American literature showed a greater focus on self (DeWall et al., 2011). According to Bianchi (2016), economic conditions affect peoples' perspectives as well as the cultural products and added that the economic growth is associated with social change and subsequently with greater individualism and self-focus within American society. Hence, one reason for the changes in the amount of individualism within different genres such as TV and newspapers may be due to the economic issues.

The study also revealed considerable changes regarding individualism within American culture over the passage of time, especially during 1990-1999 and 2015-2019. In agreement with Twenge et al. (2012, 2013), the study indicated the dynamism of American culture and its augmented orientation toward individualism throughout the time under study. The tendency toward individualism was considered the lowest throughout 1990-1994, and it was the highest within 1995-1999. Individualism underwent a remarkable rise within American culture, then, it experienced a moderate decrease in 2000-2004, albeit higher than the previous lowest range. But, the change of collectivism within the American culture has been trivial and progressed at the same rate during the time studied. Although differences related to collectivism were not salient during that time, it reached its highest level between 2015 and 2019. Based on the study, individualism and collectivism can be considered as two discrete variables rather than the two opposite poles of a dichotomous variable that is in contrast with Hofstede (1984). This contributes to the hotly debated controversy regarding the unidimensionality of individualism/collectivism as a single construct or their independence as two constructs (Taras et al., 2013). Consistent with Taras et al. (2013), the findings showed clearly that at the national level, as is the case with our study, individualism and collectivism appear as independent constructs. According to

Hofstede, the shifts in the cultural values can be associated with '*the form of forces of nature or forces of human beings: trade, conquest, economic or political dominance, and technological breakthroughs*' (Hofstede, 2001, p. 34) and language use (Hua, 2010).

Furthermore, it was observed that collectivism, notwithstanding its low growth rate, has significantly increased between 1990 and 2019. This interesting phenomenon can be explained from different vantage points. Based on an ecological framework, Vandello and Cohen (1999) stated that the individualism/collectivism orientation in US is associated with the environment and regional history. Therefore, the American people had a tendency toward individualism in the regions where the economy was more concerned with self-reliant businesses while in the regions where the focus of the economy was on agriculture, people had a tendency toward collectivism as they needed to work together.

Moreover, Carter (2018) found that political ideology, socioeconomic status, and sociodemographic status are more representative of the collectivist values in America. Political ideology and socioeconomic status influence trust in the government to a great extent, and the higher trust rate is associated with more collectivist perspectives since constructing democratic political institutions was due to the need for collective problem-solving at a broad level (Carter, 2018). In addition, Americans consider themselves to be collectivist when it includes seeking advice as a way to interact and connect as well as the sense of belonging to in-groups (Oyserman et al., 2002). Furthermore, American culture can be influenced by immigrants, especially the second generation, who have inherited collectivistic values from their own culture. Decker et al. (2015) found that the Americans are developing a higher tendency for group work because they are getting more involved in a global economy, so their manifest should be adapted to the business requirements. Business students may focus on group work to study and resolve business problems and to promote social interaction that deals with the collectivist orientation (Decker et al., 2015). While American students and businesses tend to focus more on group work, their orientation toward individualistic values seems strong (Sosik & Jung, 2002).

It was found that American culture, despite its sluggish move towards collectivism, is dominantly individualistic, but how this translates into the use of group work in classes merits attention. Although it might intuitively be presumed that collectivism sits better with

group work than individualism (see Flowerdew, 1998; Kyndt et al., 2013), their relationship is not this straightforward because Brown (2007) noted that group/pair work, regardless of its surface similarities with collectivism, demands some qualities including active learning, expressiveness, openness, and low power distance to perform effectively, qualities which are not strongly embraced much by collectivistic societies. Similarly, Ghahraman and Tamimy (2017) highlighted that 'there are complex relations between culture and CL [cooperative learning]. ...it was evident that cultural dimensions differently affected different processes of CL' (Ghahraman & Tamimy, 2017, p.108) and observed that although collectivism can partially enhance group work through its effect on task cohesion, there are stronger factors such as uncertainty avoidance, assertiveness, and power distance which advantage individualism over collectivism in its positive influence on group work. These findings together suggest that individualism, and in turn American culture, is fertile for group work.

6. CONCLUSION

Considering the increasing significance of group work within academic contexts in recent years and the role that culture plays in cooperative learning, the present study employed a corpus-based analysis to investigate the position of individualism and collectivism within American culture to unveil its trend toward group work. The study revealed a cultural tendency to-

ward greater individualism and competitiveness with a lower potentiality for cooperation, which indicated that to a considerable extent Americans do not have a favourable attitude toward group work. This is due to a great emphasis that is devoted to autonomy and independence in American culture in contrast to conformity and dependence. In cultures where individualism gains a great importance and dominance, 'the self is regarded as independent and autonomous and defined by a unique constellation of attributes, preferences, and values' (Bianchi, 2016, p. 567). Moreover, examining different genres within COCA represented that the cultural products (i.e. TV/Movie, Spoken, Fiction, Magazine, Newspaper) more or less include greater degrees of individualism. However, the academic genre has almost an equal preference for both individualism and collectivism. The changes within the American corpus throughout the time studied have also displayed a cultural orientation toward individualism. The study suggests that the implementation of group work or cooperative learning is culture-dependent, and American culture has an ambivalent attitude toward it.

This study involves some delimitations and limitations. In the trend analysis it was confined to 1990-2019 so it only shows the contemporary changes, but it is certain that culture, by its nature, undergoes more salient transformation in the long run. The future research is recommended to triangulate the data from COCA with those available from the Corpus of Historical American English (COHA).

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Original Research

Culture shock and student engagement

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Article history Received January 5, 2022 | Revised April 11, 2022 | Accepted June 3, 2022

Conflicts of interest The authors declared no conflicts of interest

Research funding No funding was reported for this research

doi 10.22363/2521-442X-2022-6-2-35-44

For citation Swallow, D., & Tomalin, B. (2022). Culture shock and student engagement. *Training, Language and Culture*, 6(2), 35-44.

This paper explores research into how to get foreign students studying overseas engaged with their work and how to deal with psychological difficulties in their new environment which can affect the quality of their studies. The paper is based on a presentation to HEURO (The Association of Higher Education European Officers) at a conference on the topic of Re-imagining Mobility for the Post-Pandemic World. The paper discusses how our understanding of international cultures needs to change, the difficulties faced by foreign students settling into another country, the impact of culture shock and how to deal with it and how to manage when faced with reverse culture shock when returning to your own country.

KEYWORDS: culture shock, student engagement, cultural due diligence, study abroad, intercultural awareness



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1. INTRODUCTION

We are living in a new world in which all the world's cultures are open to us. As Wilber (2007) points out, because of breakthroughs in global telecommunications and social media, knowledge is now global – knowledge, experience, wisdom, and reflection are open to study by all. However, students are still pursuing their university studies abroad and experiencing the difficulties of adapting to their new environment while completing their studies successfully (Mouhoubi-Mes-sadh & Khaldi, 2022). Living in another country has been made more difficult by the pandemic, climate change and by international disagreement affecting visas and ease of travel but a new paradigm has opened. Faced with the threat of climate change and world pandemic and with the huge spread of in-

ternational communication via social media and information and communications technology, we are entering a new paradigm (Tkachenko & Khukhlaev, 2022). We are inhabitants of one planet, members of one species with diverse expression, facing common problems which eventually will determine our survival. How do we incorporate this new cultural paradigm into our teaching?

2. THEORETICAL BACKGROUND

2.1. A new cultural paradigm

First, what is a paradigm and how does it apply to culture? Kuhn (1962), in his ground-breaking and influential work into the structure of scientific thinking defined a paradigm as 'an epistemological world view that assigns and limits the accessibility of theories, concepts,

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models and methods of enquiry' (Kuhn, 1962, p. 33). Bennett (2020), the cultural studies writer and trainer, stressed the importance of a new constructive paradigm in cultural studies recognising the importance of humility (one culture is not better than another), tolerance, respect, awareness of what brings us together and areas of difference and empathy, seeking mutual understanding. He compared this constructivist paradigm with what he described as the cultural conflict of our age between the Newtonian universalist paradigm and the Einstein relativistic paradigm. The Newtonian universalist paradigm, named after the British scientist Isaac Newton, who discovered the principle of gravity, posits that facts exist objectively and focuses on objective evidence of what happens and encourages balanced objective reporting. The universalist paradigm conflicts with the Einstein relativistic paradigm. Named after the discoverer of relativity, it posits that facts exist only in context, and focuses on narrative, the manipulation of arguments to create a powerful narrative and the proliferation of what we describe as 'fake news' and 'disinformation' depending on the subjectivity of the narrative (Bennett, 2020).

How does a constructive paradigm apply to the study of culture in language learning and training? There are five key points.

2.2. Perception and harmonisation

As researchers and teachers in intercultural studies, we need to recognise what brings us together, not the differences that might drive us apart. We need to recognise our tendency to see the world through our own filters, and often we are not aware of what that filter is. Put a card showing the number 9 between two people. The person standing at the foot of the card will see the number 9 but the person at the top of the card will see it as the number 6. In other words, the same card seen from different angles may mean something completely different. If we can be aware of our *own* filters (how we see things) and also be aware of the *other's* filters (variations in the way others see things), we have a much

better perception and a better chance of harmonising our views and behaviours (Hanukaev, 2022). We need to recognise that we are one planet, one species with a diversity of beliefs and ways of behaving and we need to focus on what joins us together, not what drives us apart (Swallow, 2020). Too much of intercultural practice focuses on what keeps people apart.

2.3. People not cultures

As Dignen and Wollmann (2016) described it, you do business with people not cultures. This refers to the topic of essentialism, studied by Hua (2018). Essentialism describes the situation where everyone is reduced to their national cultural profile, which inevitably leads to the danger of stereotyping (Grigoryev, 2022). People are influenced by a number of factors which we can broadly describe as their nationality, their region, their job, their own social background, and their personal experience. We are all influenced by culture, but not just national culture, and our job is to break through the cultural differences to the person themselves and what they are like and having perceived that to find harmony with it. If we can teach that, we have achieved something important.

2.4. Concepts not countries

Much of intercultural training focuses on concepts evolved by theorists such as Hall (1960), Hofstede (1984), Trompenaars (1996), Lewis (2019) and Meyer (2014). Each of these has developed intercultural concepts of tremendous value to researchers, teachers, and trainers and each has attributed each concept to a range of countries. This is undoubtedly a useful shorthand, but it is no longer relevant. In a multinational community in a globalised economy, national differences are no longer definitive ways of describing individuals, if they ever were (Malyuga et al., 2016). The concepts, however, derived from the study of intercultural communities are extremely useful.

Let us take the example of Richard Lewis, Chair of Richard Lewis Communications, and author of *When Cultures Collide* (Lewis, 2018) as well as many other books. As a leading international intercultural trainer and language teacher he runs courses for international political and commercial organisations and has noted how being born into one nationality doesn't mean you behave according to the concepts applied to that nationality. The Lewis model divides people according to how they see their use of time (following the work of Hall, 1984). Lewis (2018) identified three key areas –

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linear-actives, multi-actives, and re-actives. Linear-actives do things according to timetable, deliver on time and plan ahead. Multi-actives focus on priorities (often personal) and their timetables can alter according to those priorities. They may do many things at the same time, which can lead to delays which are frustrating to partners, particularly linear-actives, until they understand the diverse principles at play and learn how to get the results they need. Re-actives are people who value silence and reflection before reaction. This means contact and agreement may take longer than elsewhere.

Lewis (2018) gave delegates on his courses a test before they began work to identify their dominant style. He found that even in courses with people from the same nationality the course delegates represented different styles and attitudes, some being linear-active, some being multi-active and some being re-active. In other words, your nationality does not define your values and attitudes or how you behave.

So, the conclusion is, use the concepts, which are useful observations of the diversity of human behaviour, but don't assume a French, or a German, or a Russian or a Japanese student will necessarily conform to a national attribution. A useful shorthand but not to be applied rigidly.

2.5. Do your cultural due diligence

Due diligence is an accounting term. It describes the assessment of the financial feasibility of a potential business partner prior to agreement to a joint venture or merger and acquisition. Lewis (2018) argues the importance of cultural due diligence, examining the expectations and operational management of a potential partner. This process can really develop the perception and harmony between new partners. Failure to do so can lead to disaster.

The features to study in the cultural due diligence process are the partner's/participant's expectations of the relationship, their communication style and how they manage themselves. Tomalin and Nicks (2014)

have broken this down into five categories under the acronym ECOLE: E = Expectations; C = Communication style; O = Organisation (time, team, and routines); L = Leadership style (management style, decision making and diversity management); E = Etiquette (how to show politeness, dress code, gift giving and hospitality). Our job is to identify our own styles, compare it with the style of the people we are dealing with and how to harmonise the relationship to get results (Tomalin & Nicks, 2013). This paper will suggest classroom activities for achieving this in Section 5.

2.6. Develop your multicultural qualities

It is not enough to think who 'we' are and who 'they' are. Our job is to think of 'us' as a unit with core interests in common and to manage diversity of expectations, communication, and behaviour to develop an agreed common approach. The European Union has taken a key interest in this and in 2009 published its INCA project research, developed by Professor Michael Byram of Durham University in the UK, a noted intercultural analyst. Byram (2014) developed his Intercultural Assessment profile at three levels – Basic, Intermediate and Full – each stage describing the qualities to be achieved at each level. In doing so he identified 6 key intercultural skills: (1) tolerance of ambiguity; (2) behavioural flexibility; (3) communicative awareness; (4) knowledge discovery; (5) respect for otherness; and (6) empathy.

These six pieces of advice can help improve your relationships with those you are dealing with internationally and for teachers of intercultural relations and language a useful classroom exercise is to ask which qualities participants feel they have developed and which they need to work on. These qualities can be defined as multicultural skills and will be explained in detail and in Section 5.

2.7. Local language

One way to build empathy is to learn a few words and expressions in the language of the person you are dealing with. Even ten words or expressions, showing familiarity and appreciation of the language of the person you are working with, can improve relationships and is not difficult to do (Vishnyakova & Vishnyakova, 2022). However, our work with overseas students studying in university colleges in London in the UK has shown there are a few issues discouraging students from intercultural integration and affecting their commitment to and success in their university courses.

3. ISSUES OF STUDYING ABROAD

Based on our experience of teaching in the UK and in Europe we identified several issues faced by foreign students abroad. Some were language students, but others were university students or professionals living and studying abroad for periods from three weeks up to a year or more. The key issues identified were distance from the study centre, living with a family, mixing with others, understanding your teacher, not mixing with other nationalities, burnout, and culture shock. In this section we discuss each issue in turn and suggest solutions.

Distance. Some students overseas are allocated places in an educational establishment's hall of residence, but others may find themselves on the outskirts of the town where their college is situated. The difficulties of transport and the time it takes means students do not feel able to join with other students after class or to take part in student clubs or the student union and as a result they feel isolated and lonely and not part of the student community.

Living with a family. This ought to be a wonderful opportunity to get to know people personally and integrate the local community but sometimes the student just gets a room and meals but no real social contact with the family. Students sit in their rooms and on weekends are left on their own and feel very lonely.

I don't mix easily. As a result of the above many students don't socialise with their classmates or fellow students and they feel excluded.

I don't understand my teacher. This a common problem, addressed by Yuges (2020). Students speak and write the language to the required standard but have difficulty with the delivery of lecturers who speak very fast and in unfamiliar accents. They also use humour students don't understand and acronyms without explanations.

My nationality only. Where there are many students of one nationality they sometimes don't mix outside their group. Many students revise in national groups, sit together in class and experience difficulty in working with other nationalities.

Burnout. Burnout is common among students working extremely hard, leading to late delivery or non-delivery of assignments and poor marks in exams. Students suffering from burnout can withdraw from their studies altogether.

Culture shock and reverse culture shock. Culture shock is a state that occurs among students living abroad where they feel they don't fit in, they feel de-

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pressed, they miss their family and friends, and it affects the quality of their work. The stages and treatment of culture shock will be discussed below.

Despite the pressure of time, class size and curriculum, teachers need to try and find the time to address and respond to the needs of students overseas who need support. Just taking students aside during breaks can be an effective way of checking on what might be causing problems and holding them back. It may be helpful to consider referring them to the college pastoral officer or even the student representative if you feel they can help. Simply, showing personal interest and concern can often be all that is needed to restore students' engagement and commitment to their studies.

Another issue raised above was the teacher's classroom management. Using the four-point ARCS model for developing motivation (Keller, 2010), Min and Chon (2021) at Hanjany University in South Korea analysed student responses to their teacher's classroom management. ARCS stands for: A = Attention getting; R = Relevance promoting; C = Confidence Building; S = Satisfaction-generating. They devised a questionnaire based on the ARCS which they distributed to 246 high school students and 12 teachers in South Korea. The results are interesting. Many students referred to their teachers' non-communicative style creating 'sleep-inducing' conditions. Many felt that their teachers tended to focus on the more proficient students in their classes. As a result, lower-level students felt apathetic and demotivated. The authors suggest that knowing the students' personal motivations and giving them greater control of their learning may help weaker students. Another factor was that some students interpreted 'relevance promoting' differently to their teachers. There was a lack of 'motive-matching'.

The research showed that teachers tended to focus on academic motivation, achieving college entrance, while many of the students were focused on vocational goals. Students also noticed failures in attention-getting due to there being no changes in lesson presentation

style and content. The use of mixed media, using videos, pictures and print to illustrate lectures and offer a different approach that involves students is important as is personal interaction through pair and groupwork. Above all, where possible, invite students to share their own experiences, in relation to the topic being presented.

4. DEALING WITH CULTURE SHOCK AND REVERSE CULTURE SHOCK

Everyone living or spending time in another country is likely to experience culture shock at some point and students studying overseas are no exception. Culture shock refers to disorientation experienced when suddenly subjected to an unfamiliar culture or way of life. The term was attributed to Oberg (1960), who identified four stages in the culture shock process: (1) honeymoon; (2) crisis (complaining about the new en-

vironment); (3) recovery (wanting things to be like they are at home; and (4) adjustment. Honeymoon refers to the pleasure and excitement of a new venture in a new destination. But after a while, some things begin to go wrong. This leads to complaints about the new environment and the locals' different ways of doing things. This leads in turn to Crisis, a longing for home and what the student abroad is used to and where they feel most comfortable. Home, as Storti (1997) defined it, is *'the place where you were born and raised, where people speak of your native language and behave more or less the way you do'* (Storti, 1997, p. 10). Finally, the student overseas finds ways of managing the new environment, building good relationships, and getting good results (Recovery leading to Adjustment). Oberg (1960) laid out his four stages as a U-curve, with Honeymoon and Adjustment at each end at the top and Crisis and Recovery at the bottom (Figure 1).

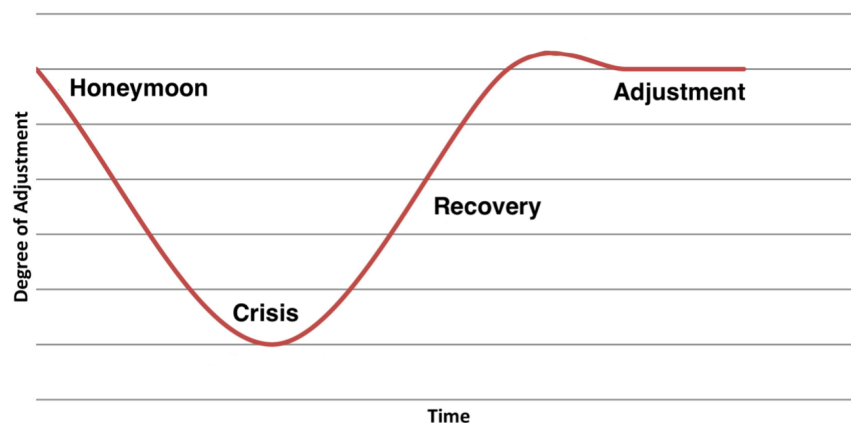


Figure 1. The culture shock U-curve

What happens during the culture shock process? When does it start and how long does it last? According to Oberg (1960), culture shock can take hold anytime from two weeks to six months in the new environment and the process can take six months to work through until a new equilibrium is established. It can start with something going wrong where you are starting, equipment not working, for example, and can progress into feeling there are too many things to learn and that it takes too long to learn them.

Culture shock can also be induced by loneliness, having no one to talk to about your problems, which can lead to rejection and regression until a new balance is established. It is a difficult and uncomfortable process with a noticeable effect on studies and on results.

In her book *Breaking Through Culture Shock*, Marx (2011) restated the stages of culture shock as Honeymoon, Culture shock, Recovery, Adaptation and Integration but said that each stage could recur many times. She presented Oberg's (1960) U-curve as a W-curve with each stage recurring (Figure 2). However, the dominant way of understanding the process of culture shock today is the paradigm called the DMIS Model presented by Bennett (1998). He introduced The Developmental Model of Intercultural Sensitivity, DMIS for short, which presents culture shock as a process of development from ethnocentrism (being based mainly on our own culture and experience) to ethnorelativism (acceptance of and adaptation to the new environment). He divided the process into six stages and presented them in the paradigm (Figure 3).

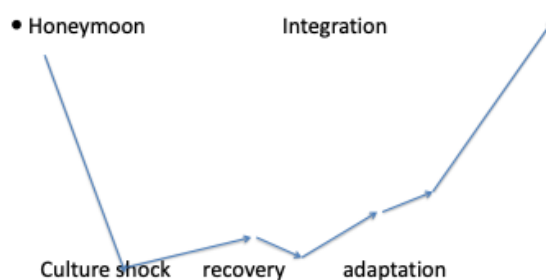


Figure 2. The culture shock W-curve

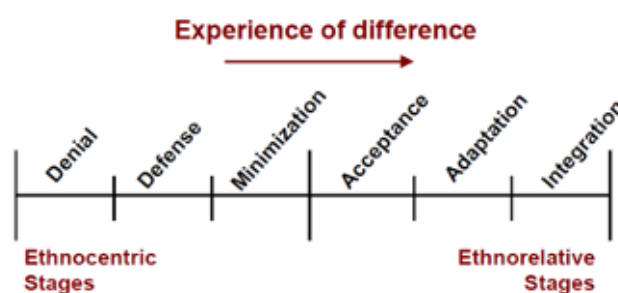


Figure 3. The DMIS paradigm

Stage 1, Denial, can mean you reject your new environment and embrace the environment you have left, or it can mean the opposite, you love your new environment so much, you reject your home environment.

Stage 2, Defence, is the stage where things begin to cause problems in the new environment and cause a withdrawal into yourself and your own home environment and your way of doing things at home. Alternatively, it can manifest as a love for your new environment to the degree that you reject contact with your home.

Stage 3, Minimisation, is the first part of the evolution process, refusing to accept any differences and just focusing what needs to be done and assuming everyone is the same and conforms to the same way of doing things.

Stage 4, Acceptance, is the breakthrough point where we accept the differences in expectations and the way people operate and is the first stage in moving from an essentially ethnocentric viewpoint to an appreciation of the new environment. This leads to a gradual process of Adaptation (Stage 5) and eventually Integration (Stage 6) into where you are living and working and feel like you belong.

Teachers and lecturers should recognise this process and help their students through the difficult process of adapting to a new environment where they can. But students can also be given preparation for

what they might expect during their study period abroad and learn coping strategies to ease their adaptation.

First, teachers and lecturers can use workshops to explain what culture shock is and how it works and let students know what to expect. Secondly, they can advise students not to get too busy too quickly when they are abroad while they settle in. Also, it can help a lot if when students get depressed abroad, they can understand it's culture shock, like getting the flu. Tell them to take things a bit easier and not get stressed and if they need help, not to hesitate to ask.

While they are preparing to go abroad, get them to pack some favourite things, not just photos but maybe a duvet cover they like or a poster or favourite mug something else from their home that is easy to pack and gives them pleasure. When they are abroad, encourage them to find the equivalent of comfortable places in their own environment at home and visit them. Encourage them to do comfort activities and not to neglect any sports they play or regular exercise they do.

A lot of students, especially on language learning programmes abroad, cut off contact with their own country and language to immerse themselves in their new environment. Encourage them to network with home and friends, especially as Facebook, WhatsApp and other technologies have made it so much easier, quicker, and cheaper.

Finally, at an appropriate time remember to remind them that they will experience the same process once they return home. Anecdotal evidence suggests that students returning home from a study period abroad undergo even greater stress than they had going abroad in the first place, and this too can affect their engagement with their studies. Why? First, the student has changed. He or she has had new experiences, acquired new knowledge and finds it difficult to re-adapt even to a once familiar environment. In fact, depending on how long the student has been away the home environment may have changed – organisation and arrangements may be different and former friends may have drifted off in different directions while the student was away. Above all, students who have studied abroad for a while find people at home have little interest in their adventures abroad.

Reverse culture shock can be quite depressing, and students go through four stages. First is leave-taking and departure and second is the honeymoon stage, ‘vacation land home’ as Storti (1997) describes it. Stage 3 is the reverse culture shock stage when the student encounters difficulties he or she may not have expected on returning home and finally, the re-adjustment stage where they gradually re-integrate their home environment and learn to manage any changes in themselves, their environment and their friends and colleagues while they have been away.

Teachers and lectures can help the process of re-integration by advising students on how best to manage reverse culture shock. First and most important is not to lose contact with friends and family when abroad and equally to maintain contact with friends abroad after the student leaves. Taking the opportunity to say goodbye and to keep in touch is an important part of leave taking and departure. Also important is being in touch with family and friends at home so the student knows about changes and will be prepared for them on arrival. The honeymoon period is enjoying being home but also the student being aware that he or she may have matured by spending time abroad while those at home may not have. The key is to notice changes but not to judge. This is an important point for the teacher to emphasise.

Stage 3, the reverse culture shock stage, can leave students depressed and demotivated. They can feel marginalised. Therefore, it’s important for the teacher or lecturer to give students who have studied for a time abroad an opportunity to share their experiences with their colleagues in class or in workshops. That way the

students can feel their experience and opinions are recognised and they no longer feel marginalised and irrelevant. Giving students an opportunity to discuss their experiences abroad and to reflect on them is an important step in re-integration. As a result, in the final stage of Re-adjustment the students feel they have achieved balance. They have re-established routines and adapted to new routines. Above all, they will feel engaged with their teachers, their friends and colleagues and their studies with a commitment to achieve better results.

5. ENCOURAGING INTERCULTURAL AWARENESS AND MAINTAINING STUDENT ENGAGEMENT

In a global society all of us experience intercultural exchanges whether or not we have travelled or studied abroad. It is important as part of classroom activity to allow these experiences to be discussed, as they can support the students and increase their engagement with the course they are studying and get better results in their assignments or exams.

Using mixed media in the classroom. ‘Open your books at page xx’ is no longer sufficient to encourage student commitment, if it ever was. However, if you can find video clips to illustrate a particular point or stimulate discussion it will increase student involvement. Also, taking the opportunity to get students to re-search topics online using social media and discussing what they have discovered through mini-presentations or groupwork can really increase motivation (Smyshlyak, 2022). We live in an age of visual and social media. Bringing these into the classroom can create a livelier and more involving environment.

Using the critical incident technique (CIT). We all have experiences of intercultural diversity which can show misunderstandings which may happen in the way we communicate and how we behave. These encounters can be written down and presented to the class by the teacher or by students themselves as critical incidents. The critical incident can also be a photo, a newspaper headline or a video clip that promotes analysis and discussion. The Critical Incident Technique was introduced by a US psychologist John Flanagan in 1954. A written critical incident should be short – five or six lines and tell a story highlighting the difference the presenter wants to discuss. Here’s an example.

X was living in France and was moving house. She needed some large cartons to store things for removal and went to her local supermarket and asked, ‘Can I have some large cartons, please?’ to her surprise and anger the response was ‘Non’ (no). She left and vowed

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never to shop in that supermarket again. The teacher or student reads out the critical incident and asks the class what they advise X to do and why. The class responds. At the end of the discussion the teacher or presenter can present their answer. In X's case the advice was simple. Don't just ask the question. Explain the situation. X understood, went back to the supermarket, and explained why she needed the empty cartons. The answer was once again 'Non' but followed by, 'But we have a delivery tomorrow so come back then and you can have all the empty cartons you need.' A simple misunderstanding resolved in a sentence. Collecting critical incidents should be part of teachers' and students' intercultural practice, allowing opportunities for presentation, analysis and increased engagement with the learning process.

The MBI process. A very important follow-up to the presentation of a critical incident is the MBI process. MBI stands for Map, Bridge, Integrate, a process introduced by Maznevski and Distefano (2000). Each has two stages. In Stage 1, Map, you observe what the other is doing and compare it with what you do in your own environment. In Stage 2, Bridge, you ask why they are behaving in this way and what they probably think of you. You use empathy to understand what is going on. In Stage 3, Integrate, you think what you need to change in your behaviour to get a successful result and decide what changes you need to make in what you say, what you do and what you think in future. The MBI process is an excellent technique to practise when using Critical Incident Technique.

INCA and multiculturality. In preparing the INCA programme, Byram (2014) identified six intercultural skills which promote international understanding and facilitate communication. The six skills are as follows.

1. Avoid othering. Be inclusive. Don't exclude people because you don't know them or because their way of communicating or behaving isn't the same as yours. Use the MBI process to show understanding.

2. Exercise patience. Be tolerant of ambiguity. If you don't know what is going on, stop and be patient. Don't react negatively. Give yourself time to appreciate the situation before you respond. Impatience is not a good way to get cooperation and build relationships.

3. Be flexible. Recognise that local solutions may be better. This is especially important as people from diverse backgrounds may have better understanding of certain issues than you do. So, practise to being open to alternative solutions.

4. Show empathy. Put yourself in the other person's shoes. This is important as it shows understanding and builds positive relationships.

5. Show interest. Show interest in your fellow student's experience and culture. Showing interest and asking questions can be an important classroom activity that helps build mutual understanding.

6. Local language. Learn a few words. If you are studying abroad, even if the course is being taught in English, learning a few words and expressions (say 10) in the local language is a great way to show appreciation, build confidence and encourage positive relationships.

In class, the teacher can explain the six skills and ask the students (or get them to ask each other) which skills they consider themselves good at and which they need to improve. Get them to write down their conclusions and encourage them to work to improve the ones they feel less good at. It is a good idea to encourage the students to identify a 'buddy' (friend) in the class who they can compare notes with at regular intervals to monitor their improvement. Once again, this personal interest will increase students' intercultural skills but also their engagement with the academic programme they are following.

6. CONCLUSION

The paper has explained how the experience of studying abroad can raise psychological issues through culture shock which may lead to depression and disengagement from the course they are studying and negatively affect course results. In doing so we have described some of the key issues that arise and how best to respond to them. Two of the key areas which cause problems for students studying abroad are often unrecognised until too late, culture shock and reverse culture shock. In describing these we have also suggested ways in which teachers and school authorities as well as the students themselves can understand what is happening and resolve specific problems that arise. Finally,

we suggested classroom activities that provide students with skills to develop their intercultural awareness and provide ways of resolving possible misunderstandings. In doing so we have emphasised the importance of using a mixed media approach to involve students in the learning process.

We recognise that teachers and lecturers are busy people, pre-occupied with time, the curriculum, setting and marking assignments and the process of knowledge transfer. But we feel strongly that the teacher is in the

best position to recognise issues of disengagement from the learning process, raise them with the student concerned in the break or on an online zoom call and recommend solutions.

The results will be committed students, a livelier class and, more positive exam results during and at the end of the course. After all, we are all one species, on one planet with a rich diversity of communication and organisation patterns and beliefs. Encouraging mutual understanding is a crucial aim of education.

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Original Research

The role of English in intercultural communication: Past, modernity and future global perspectives

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Article history Received January 27, 2022 | Revised April 29, 2022 | Accepted June 3, 2022

Conflicts of interest The authors declared no conflicts of interest

Research funding No funding was reported for this research

doi [10.22363/2521-442X-2022-6-2-45-55](https://doi.org/10.22363/2521-442X-2022-6-2-45-55)

For citation Grigoryeva, L. L., & Zakirova, R. R. (2022). The role of English in intercultural communication: Past, modernity and future global perspectives. *Training, Language and Culture*, 6(2), 45-55.

The problem of interconnection between language and intercultural relations has been widely discussed by researchers worldwide. This article studies the relationships between culture and language, examining the reasons for English dominance in the world, defining the current status of its global spread, and highlighting its future perspectives as a global language in intercultural communication. The research is based on the analysis and generalisation of contemporary studies on the related topics and compares the most recent statistical data. Study results suggest that although English is not in first place, judged by the number of native speakers in the world, it is by far the most learnt foreign language in the world due to both linguistic and extralinguistic factors. As far as future global perspectives are concerned, English is likely to remain a global language in the near future, but it will probably acquire new forms and experience many changes in its syntactic, grammatical, and semantic structures. The study concludes that the use of English helps users achieve better intercultural understanding, making intercultural relations clear, productive, and timesaving. The study contributes to the development of the essence of the concept of an international language in its relation to culture, the formulation of factors for a particular language to acquire global status, the development of the notion of a lingua franca, and the promotion of intercultural understanding.

KEYWORDS: intercultural communication, globalisation, linguistic factor, extralinguistic factor, language and culture, lingua franca, English teaching, global language, pandemic



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1. INTRODUCTION

The problem of intercultural communication has been widely discussed in recent interdisciplinary studies. The role of language – English, in particular – in intercultural communication has been researched by Crystal (2017), Ter-Minasova (2000), Yusupova and Pesina (2015), House (2018), Rao (2019), Rajprasit and Hemchua (2015) and many other scholars. Despite a

considerable number of studies dealing with English as an international language, there is a need for comprehensive research in this field to consider the most recent statistical data and findings from different parts of the world. This article aims to investigate the role of the English language in intercultural communication in terms of its past (reasons for English dominance), contemporary (its spread into different spheres of social,

‘Intercultural relations remain a widely discussed topic, since in a rapidly developing world cultural awareness is what drives amicable and productive communication. A human’s ability to accept a different point of view is what sets them apart from animals, and from this perspective, language as a means of productive communication plays a vital role in intercultural relations’

economic, and cultural life) and future perspectives (hypothesis about the future of English as a global language). To that end, the article will (1) give existing definitions of culture; (2) define culture in its relation to language; (3) study the current status of English as a foreign language; (4) examine the reasons for the dominance of English in international relations; (5) define future perspectives of English as the most widely spread foreign language in the world; and (6) explore the role of English in intercultural communication.

2. MATERIAL AND METHODS

The article is based on the study of the most recent research in the fields of culture studies, linguistics, and history. Its primary aim is to describe intercultural communication in connection with language, define the role of English in intercultural relations, specify linguistic and extralinguistic reasons for the dominance of English in the world, and review future perspectives for English as a global language. Statistical data on the number of native speakers of English, the number of English learners and the number of countries in which English is an official language are used to describe the spread of English around the world. The article offers definitions of the key notions related to the study, analyses data on organisations using English as their official language, summarises the existing views on the correlation between English and intercultural communication, and contributes to the research in the corresponding fields. The method of prediction based on observation of the spread of English and its use by non-native speakers is employed to offer a hypothesis about future perspectives of English as a global language.

3. THEORETICAL BACKGROUND

For the purposes of this study, intercultural communication refers to ‘communication between peoples of different nations as opposed to communication be-

tween official representatives of one nation’ (Weaver, 2000, p. 23). Culture, as a term, may hold a variety of interpretations with an array of existing definitions and approaches construing it as a mixture of material and spiritual values (Gosden & Knowles, 2020); something that makes a human different from an animal (Galli, 2018); a means of information transfer over generations (Alo, 2020); everything connected to human activity (Rahman & Singh, 2021), whereas some researchers say that only creative activity is counted as culture (Nguyen-Phuong-Mai, 2021); or a system of signs (Lotman, 2020).

Kuznetsova (2013) lays out the following approaches to the definition of the term ‘culture’: (1) subject definition, which defines culture as a form of the reflection of the results of labour, whereas the human is regarded as a creator; (2) a processual approach that pretty much ignores the material side of culture, focusing mainly on its spiritual essence; (3) a semiotic approach, whereby culture is a system of signs and a mechanism of social inheritance, preserving human experience in words, notions, and art; (4) a functional approach interpreting culture through the lens of the functions it serves within the society.

This study posits that culture should be interpreted in view of both its spiritual and materialistic sides and regarded as a notion that sets peoples and individuals apart as different from one another. It includes a conceptual picture of a world moulded by a set of beliefs about different phenomena in its surroundings. Intercultural relations remain a widely discussed topic, since in a rapidly developing world cultural awareness is what drives amicable and productive communication. A human’s ability to accept a different point of view is what sets them apart from animals, and from this perspective, language as a means of productive communication plays a vital role in intercultural relations (Grigoryeva et al., 2020).

4. STUDY AND RESULTS

4.1. English as the most popular language among foreign language learners

According to a study published in the Washington post based on a 15-year research of the University of Dusseldorf, in 2015 English was among the most widely spread languages in the world as a native language, with bilingual speakers also included in the data search (Noack & Gamio, 2015). Table 1 presents statistics of the languages with the largest number of native speakers.

Table 1
Native speakers of the world's top ten most widespread languages

NO.	LANGUAGE	NUMBER OF NATIVE SPEAKERS
1.	Chinese	1.39 bln
2.	Hindu-Urdu	588 mln
3.	English	527 mln
4.	Arabic	467 mln
5.	Spanish	389 mln
6.	Russian	254 mln
7.	Bengali	250 mln
8.	Portuguese	193 mln
9.	German	132 mln
10.	Japanese	123 mln

English is in the top three languages spoken in the world as a native language. The number of English speakers is close to the number of Hindu-Urdu speakers and Arabic speakers. The question arises: what makes English a worldwide-recognised language of intercultural

communication? As Table 2 below shows, the English language is spoken in over a hundred countries, which outnumber the speakers of all other languages. These English-speaking countries are dispersed all over the world.

Table 2
The number of countries in which the language is spoken officially

NO.	LANGUAGE	NUMBER OF COUNTRIES WHERE THE LANGUAGE IS SPOKEN
1.	English	101
2.	Arabic	60
3.	French	51
4.	Chinese	33
5.	Spanish	31
6.	Persian	29
7.	German	18
8.	Russian	16
9.	Malay	13
10.	Portuguese	12

As the data comparison shows, English is in fourth place in the number of native speakers and is spoken in almost twice as many countries as Chinese, being the

most widely spoken language in the world. That said, the number of people learning English as a foreign language is beyond any comparison (Table 3).

Table 3
The number of people learning a foreign language all over the world

NO.	LANGUAGE	NUMBER OF LEARNERS
1.	English	1.5 bln
2.	French	82 mln
3.	Chinese	30 mln
4.	German	14.5 mln
5.	Spanish	14.5 mln
6.	Italian	8 mln
7.	Japanese	3 mln

The unprecedented number of English learners in comparison with other languages shows that English plays the most significant role in intercultural communication nowadays, for, as Trubina (2017) states, learning a foreign language is aimed at successful social adaptation in life. 83% of respondents in Trubina's (2017) study confirmed they had been learning a foreign language to understand the culture of another nation and broaden personal contacts. Thus, with the largest number of learners, English serves as the main language of intercultural communication contributing to 'social adaptation' and 'understanding of a foreign culture' (Baker, 2018).

4.2. Reasons for English dominance in the world

In his study of English national idioms, Khizhnyak (2013) examines external factors for the rise of English in the world by considering the social and economic factors in its spread and concludes that the key reason for English dominance lies in its overwhelming application in all spheres of human activity, including business, education, art, sport, etc. (Malyuga & McCarthy, 2020). English has also become a language of science with up to 80% of all research being published in English.

Historically, English has been on the fast track towards becoming an international language. Since the 17th century, England has become a coloniser, a lead-

ing trading nation, which contributed to the spread of English around the world. Even when colonised countries gained freedom, English retained the status of their official language. The establishment of a new English-speaking country across the Atlantic Ocean strengthened the influence of the English language on different nations and cultures. The leading positions of the USA in economics, technology and culture have also led to the popularity of English among foreign language learners.

To explore the linguistic factors in this context, Lobkovskaya (2013) turns to the issue of the use of loan words such as *hospice*, *scotch*, *digest*, *fast food*, *grant*, and many others, in Russian to name new notions, make the existing notions more detailed, distinguish between the semantics of native and foreign notions; substitute native collocations with single loan words for language saving purposes, and use an already existing foreign terminology instead of creating a native one. As posited by Lobkovskaya (2013), the reason why a language becomes a world language is a combination of linguistic and extralinguistic factors.

One of the key reasons why English gained its position as a global language lies in the language itself, for its vocabulary of over 60,000 words is undeniably among the richest in the world. Its grammatical system, in turn, is simpler compared to some other languages, with conversion and unchangeable personal pronouns

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making it somewhat easier to learn (Zhernovaya et al., 2015), especially in view of the authentic material available (e.g., films, books, blogs, press, songs), which strongly motivate learners to achieve at least the B1/B2 level and become integrated into the world community.

A combination of these factors has made English more 'competitive' to learn in comparison with other languages.

4.3. The role of English in the modern world

Recent research has shown that 75% of emails across the world are written in English (Spiryaeva, 2015), which testifies to the significant role of English in intercultural communication with different nations. In the sphere of international relations, it has a dominant role, being an official language of a variety of international organisations, international research conferences, business meetings, and sports events. No other language has experienced such spread in such a short period of time (Spiryaeva, 2015). Table 4 summarises data on the most influential international organisations using English as an official language.

Table 4
International organisations in which English is an official language

NAME OF AN INTERNATIONAL ORGANISATION	OFFICIAL LANGUAGES
Antarctic Treaty Secretariat	English, French, Spanish, Russian
International Criminal Court	Arabic, Chinese, English, French, Russian, Spanish
International Criminal Police Organization	Arabic, English, French, Spanish
International Energy Agency	English, French
International Federation of Journalists	English, French, Spanish
International Labour Organization	English, French, Spanish
International Monetary Fund	English
International Olympic Committee	French and English
International Telecommunication Union	English, French, Spanish
International Union for Conservation of Nature	English, French, Spanish
Organization for Economic Cooperation and development	English and French
United Nations	Chinese, English, French, Russian, Spanish, Arabic
World Bank	English
World Health Organization	English, French, Spanish
World Trade Organization	English, French, Spanish

‘English has also become the language of business, allowing for an ongoing business contact across continents, which would also mean a large cultural shift for an organisation. Using a single language is much more convenient and timesaving than translating to many different national languages. Business English is likely to become a lingua franca for international business companies’

The list above is not complete and names only 15 most notable organisations with English as an official language. Other foreign languages used by international organisations are French, Spanish, Chinese, Arabic, and Russian.

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Rao (2019) mentions science and technology as an extensively English-dominated sphere, noting that scientists across the world can share their knowledge through communication and publications in English. In some countries, academic publications in English by non-native speakers outnumber those published by native English speakers (Rao, 2019). Academic English has become a separate well-developed language form. Today, scientists master Academic English to be recognised in the scholarly community, disseminate their research, make their results clear and accessible by a large audience.

English has also become a language of education. Since recent research is being published mostly in English, it is impossible to achieve a high standard of education without a review of literature written in English. At least B1/B2 levels of English proficiency are required to enter most international universities. A variety of online courses provided by high-profile universities is also delivered in English.

Popova and Petrova (2017) suggest that the reality of globalisation has influenced the need to teach English for specific purposes in many countries to form an

English cultural and professional communication medium. The market for teaching and learning English for specific purposes is growing all around the world in all professional spheres, since the knowledge of English in professional communication contributes immensely to getting a dream job, communicating across borders, building a career, and running one’s own business (Rajeswari et al., 2020).

Not only are social and economic spheres dominated by English. Cultural life is also largely transmitted through English-language media – such as books, films and music – to reach as many people around the world as possible. The Internet has also started a new era in the rise of English as a global language of online communication.

As many researchers claim, English has become a *lingua franca*, an Italian term that means a functional type of language used by representatives of different nations in a restricted number of social spheres (Jenkins, 2019; Suzina, 2021; Taguchi & Ishihara, 2018; Wu et al., 2020; Canagarajah, 2018). English is similar to a mixed language in the Mediterranean based on French, Italian and Provençal vocabulary that was widely used in the crusades and then in trade up to the 19th century. The term *lingua franca* has now changed its meaning and frequently refers to an international language used to ease communication between speakers of different national or regional languages (Lopez, 2019).

The Covid-19 pandemic has accentuated the importance of English as a medium of communication. With the growing demand for remote work and online learning, businesses soon realised they could hire top level professionals from around the world with the knowledge of English being one of the key employee skills. Thus, English is bound to grow into even more of a global language as the willingness to hire across borders increases.

According to a 2012 survey by the Economist Intelligence Unit, presented in Financial Express, 70% of executives said their workforce will need to master English to realise corporate expansion plans (Chaudhary, 2020). Even then, only 4% of men and 2% of women in wage employment in India were reported as speaking fluent English (Chaudhary, 2020). As internationalisation grows, accelerated by events such as Covid-19, the demand for language skills increases. Multilingualism opens up more opportunities for professionals, and businesses are entering a wider market. Companies rely on international communication to form international

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partnerships, serve customers abroad and help their employees develop, which will further strengthen the position of English as a global language.

Education First has found that the demand for people who speak English still significantly exceeds the supply. The 2021 report indicates that people working in production and office positions, as well as average technical staff, demonstrate a much lower level of English language proficiency. They cannot become part of a multinational team, and this limits their career prospects (Education First, 2021).

ACTFL, an American organisation serving teachers of all languages at all levels, found in 2019 that almost every fourth employer in the United States either lost or could not realise business opportunities because their employees did not know a foreign language (ACTFL, 2019). Multilingual and diverse staff can help businesses close the gap between current and potential customers. In its report, ACTFL mentions that American companies need multilingual employees to remain competitive. Most employers (56%) believe that the need for a foreign language has increased over the past 5 years and will continue to grow. Essential services such as healthcare, professional services and construction will rely more on multilingual professionals in the coming years (ACTFL, 2019).

As a result of the pandemic, face-to-face communication has been sacrificed for social distancing purposes. More people started learning foreign languages during Covid-19. Language learning apps like Duolingo have seen a 67% increase in new users worldwide in 2020 compared to 2019 (Blanco, 2020). Preply has observed a similar growth trend in the number of new users over the past year, as well as the number of hours they spent learning the language with tutors. When the lockdown happened in March 2020, Preply saw a huge increase in the number of new users who wanted to learn languages with an online tutor (Mascarenhas, 2021).

The pandemic became the match that lit the fire of foreign language learning. VCIOM research shows that the need to learn foreign languages in Russia is most often mentioned by residents of Moscow and St. Petersburg (75%), people with higher or undergraduate education (66%), as well as people aged 60 and older (71%) (VCIOM, 2019). Coronavirus has caused an educational boom: more free time to learn new things has led to a sharp rise in language learning vividly reflected in the statistical records.

4.4. The dominance of English: future perspectives

Considering the above, the question arises whether English is going to remain a lingua franca in the near future. History knows examples of other languages being used for communication between different nations yet later losing their dominant positions. For example, for more than a thousand years, Latin was used in Christian culture for worship, religious discussions, and in sacred texts, but lost its privileged status, being increasingly supplanted by the use of national languages. Another example is 18-19th century Russia, which witnessed a period of great popularity of French, when most of the aristocracy did not speak Russian and preferred to communicate in French. This was due to close relationships between Russian and French rulers and cultural interaction, for French was the language of popular literature and science. This dominance started to fade after the defeat of Napoleon Bonaparte (Valeev et al., 2019). Because of this temporary influence of French, Russian still contains lexical units of French origin. French is present in 18-19th century literature, which is considered the Golden Age of literature.

Despite the growing popularity of English during the pandemic, some believe that the torch will soon be passed to other languages spoken in developing economies such as India or China, while the population in English-speaking countries is getting older and decreasing.

Back in 2000, Graddol (2000) predicted that the next 20 years would become crucial for English and English learners. The global role of English would not be in danger, but that didn't mean that its position would not be argued over due to the transformation of political and demographic global landscapes. The author suggested that during the transition period the English language would acquire new forms. Because of its reflection of local cultures and languages, the American and British versions of English would also become more diverse, and people who spoke English as a second lan-

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guage would outnumber native speakers, while British and American television would lose their influence (Graddol, 2000).

On the one hand, the use of English worldwide requires the establishment of and keeping up with language standards. On the other hand, the acceptance by English of new forms of expression would lead to enormous diversity. There were no other precedents in the world history to make a clear prognosis of the changes that English might encounter, but Graddol (2000) advanced the hypothesis that English would be more diverse while at the same time losing a part of its global significance.

As far as changing forms in English are concerned, English is likely to experience such effects of globalisation as a loss of uniformity, disregard of linguistic forms and styles, richness and diversity. These changes have been typical for all 'big' languages during the era of globalisation (Todorova & Todorova, 2018). English as a lingua franca is even taught differently, when communicative efficiency is prioritised over correctness (Todorova & Todorova, 2018). The widespread use of one language as an international medium of communication in various spheres could not but lead to transformational processes in the language itself (Ivanova, 2020). One of the most important consequences of these linguistic transformations is simplification, which manifests itself at various levels of language functioning. Having begun artificially, with the aim of teaching English to foreigners (Smith, 1998) based on certain linguistic and methodological concepts, the process of simplifying the language in the conditions of its worldwide spread has lost its controllability. However, the functions of a language in modern international communication require not only a detailed linguistic study of these transformations, but also their specific unification, focusing on the needs of those who are not native English speakers, but actively participate in various spheres of international life such as oil production, banking, show business, industrial production, air transportation, etc. The interests

of consumers around the world in the results of this activity are considered: food and computer products, household appliances and telephones, etc., the target group to which advertising and show business products are directed. This led to the need for the creation, scientific linguistic description, and introduction of a new style of scientific and business communication in international English, which is understandable for its users all over the world. In many ways, this concept is based on previous projects of creating a reduced English language for foreigners.

Researchers have already identified such changes as a shift in the use of articles; invariant question tags; 'who' and 'which' being interchangeable; a shift in the use of prepositions; extension of the use of the infinitive over the use of gerund; extension of the colloquial field of words; increased explicitness, etc. (Todorova & Todorova, 2018).

Despite the positive effect of the spread of English (ability to become integrated into world cultural, economic, social trends), many people blame English for linguistic imperialism, causing minor languages and cultures to disappear, to homogenise people's identities (Todorova & Todorova, 2018). Aponte (2018) states that the spread of English as a global language has positive and negative effects. It is beneficial in the way that it allows people who do not share a native language to communicate. Therefore, information that is transmitted in contexts where effective communication would normally be impossible, due to an absence of a world language, is possible thanks to the use of English. Ultimately, this results in increased interconnectedness. Because of the spread of English as an international language, more countries have decided to teach English as a second language. Currently, English is spoken in some capacity by more non-native than native speakers. However, a hazardous consequence of this is that minority languages can seem irrelevant in the presence of English as a global language. In this way, English as an international language could cause languages to die. Dead languages unfortunately result in a loss of knowledge and diversity. To take against some of the negative side effects, such as the death of culture through language loss, it is necessary to know both sides of the use of English as a global language.

5. DISCUSSION

The problem of the role of English in intercultural communication has been widely discussed by researchers. The situation when one language is spoken

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by millions of people cannot be ignored in academic literature. This research contributes to the study of this topic by offering a different perspective and considering (1) the number of native speakers and English learners; (2) the number of countries in which English is an official language; (3) reasons for the dominance of English in the world; (4) the popularity of English as a foreign language in different spheres, including education, science, business, etc.; and (5) the future perspectives for English as a global language.

The paper summarises the statistical data and the existing research on the topic and presents a detailed view on why English has gained a leading position in the world. According to the statistical data presented in the article, English holds the position of a global language with the largest number of learners and its ceaseless social, cultural, and economic influence. The dominance of this international language is unrivalled, so clearly it will not lose its position as the easiest and most effective mode of intercultural communication anytime soon. In this aspect, we agree with the researchers who claim that the impact of English on world culture is likely to stay intact for decades, although the growing population and economies of some other countries might challenge its status in one way or another. Moreover, English is likely to acquire new forms because of its diversity. It will probably not stay a language which reflects only the culture of English-speaking countries. As we are now witnessing the creation of a completely new world, often referred to as 'a global village', the birth of this new world is influenced by a single language – English. Therefore, the role of English in modern intercultural relations can hardly be underestimated.

As far as the reasons for English dominance are concerned, this study's findings are in line with the historical (extralinguistic) and linguistic factors of language functioning. Despite favourable conditions for learning

English in terms of its grammar, special focus is placed on its lexical diversity. Only a combination of factors can lead to the spread of one lingua franca. An existence of a lingua franca in many ways has a positive effect on the global society, since it makes communication easier, faster, and more productive.

Other studies of the role of English have considered the negative effects of globalisation, such as the death of minor languages, and the loss of the cultural behaviour of different ethnic groups. The main difference in the approach of this research is that it concentrates on the English language itself and the changes that are likely to happen within English. The negative effects of globalisation, the existence of a global language and its negative role in the global community have not been a topic for investigation in this specific study.

The results of this study will be helpful for students and researchers in the fields of linguistics, cultural linguistics, historical linguistics, and promote future research into the influence of English within the global community. We have obtained comprehensive results highlighting the role of global English in the modern world. More experimental data is needed to make a clearer prognosis of the change in the forms of English and different variants of English worldwide. Furthermore, this research contributes to the development of the creation of productive international communication and motivation among students worldwide to achieve a high standard in the knowledge of English.

6. CONCLUSION

Language and culture are closely interrelated, and English now holds a leading role in intercultural communication around the world with the largest number of learners who choose to learn English for successful social adaptation and to develop intercultural awareness. The dominance of English is due to linguistic and extralinguistic factors, a combination of which has made English a modern lingua franca. Linguistic factors lie in its grammatical simplicity and rich vocabulary. English is a dominant language in various spheres, including politics, media, science, the economy, education, and recreation, which is why both businesses and individuals choose to learn and use English to achieve a high standard of intercultural communication. However, due to the changing situation in the world, the position of English is likely to change. Its superior status might be challenged in the near future, although it is more likely to diversify and acquire new forms due to the influence of local cultures.

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Original Research

The role and place of foreign languages in Russian culture

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Article history Received January 19, 2022 | Revised May 1, 2022 | Accepted June 3, 2022

Conflicts of interest The authors declared no conflicts of interest

Research funding This research has been supported by the Interdisciplinary Scientific and Educational School of Moscow University 'Preservation of the World Cultural and Historical Heritage'

doi 10.22363/2521-442X-2022-6-2-56-67

For citation Pavlovskaya, A. V., & Ksenzenko, O. A. (2022). The role and place of foreign languages in Russian culture. *Training, Language and Culture*, 6(2), 56-67.

Foreign languages have always occupied a prominent place in Russia and the Russian culture. The paper states that despite being seemingly isolated from the outside world, Russia has always been closely connected with it, and not only by trade and political relations, but also by spirit and culture. The research contributes to the discussion of the role of foreign languages in Russian culture and reviews the development of the foreign languages teaching system in Russia. Adoption of Christianity was the first significant reason for the spread of foreign languages in the society, and that brought not only a new religion, but also the Greek language along with the theological books. Over time, more and more foreign languages began to spread in the society, sometimes even entering into conflict with one another: Latin with Greek (in the theological field), German with French (in the sphere of politics), and French with English (in the literary field). In certain historical periods (for example, in the first half of the 19th century), foreign languages even displaced the Russian language in some social strata. The contribution underlines the importance of analysing such historical periods with special reference to the interconnection between language as a means of communication and national identity. The investigation also argues that at times, for example, like in Soviet times, foreign languages acquired the status of 'dead' languages and became an exclusive tribute to tradition and a means of reading. In conclusion, the paper declares that foreign languages have always retained their important role, opening up new horizons for the Russian people and connecting them with the outside world.

KEYWORDS: Russian culture, intercultural communication, history of education, national mentalities, interaction of cultures, foreign language learning, means of cognition



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1. INTRODUCTION

The importance of foreign language learning has been recognised in Russia since books and knowledge first began to spread in Ancient Rus'. One can say that religion, books, and foreign languages came to Rus' together with adopting Christianity. Nikolay Karamzin

wrote that in those early days 'knowledge of the Hellenic language constituted scholarism' (Karamzin, 1993, p. 220). This approach to education lasted for a surprisingly long time: the first (basic) stage of education consisted in learning how to read, and the next (advanced) level involved learning a foreign language,

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however, also for the purpose of reading. For quite a long period of time, the notion of an *educated person* was comprised of two components – knowledge of books and proficiency in foreign languages, and the more languages people knew, the more educated they were considered to be. It took several centuries before the concept of education grew broader, and the Russian society began to treat foreign languages as a learning tool, rather than a goal in itself.

2. THEORETICAL BACKGROUND

Throughout Russian history, the role of foreign languages was closely associated with books. Of course, the development of international contacts in the diplomatic, political and cultural spheres, as well as the expansion of trade, served as important driving factors in language learning. Yet, books remained the main reason for Russians to learn foreign languages. In the early 18th century, Pososhkov (1985) opened his famous *Paternal Testament* with the following advice: *‘At the beginning of your adolescence, my son, study language and literature before other subjects, and read not only Slavic books, but also Greek or Latin, or even Polish, because there are many books in Polish, which we do not find in the Slavic language’* (Pososhkov, 1985, p. 64). In Russia, foreign language learning was oriented towards reading books rather than communicating, and one of the major reasons for the popularity of foreign languages in the country was the love and respect for books.

Another reason was the nation’s interest in the outside world is the desire to explore and understand it, so typical of the Russian culture. Russia’s remote geographic location, its political isolation during certain (in fact, quite numerous) periods, and almost permanent closedness more psychological in nature, perceived rather than real – made foreign languages and books in

foreign languages the main guides to other worlds and cultures. This resulted in a peculiar phenomenon: people who had never left their homes often knew more about the world outside than professional diplomats or travellers. As early as in the 12th century, Monomakh (1978) mentioned in his instruction to his children that his father had learned five languages while sitting at home. Klyuchevsky (1990b) cites an anecdote from the late 18th century about Count Buturlin, who impressed a French tourist with his detailed knowledge of Paris, its streets, hotels, theatres, and monuments. The guest’s surprise turned into shock when he learned that Buturlin himself had never been to France, and all this extensive knowledge had been drawn exclusively from books (Klyuchevsky, 1990b, p. 159).

In the Soviet times, when ordinary Russians could not even dream of going abroad, many of them knew a lot about the most remote corners of the world, though in most cases their knowledge was not about real modern London, but about the London of *Sherlock Holmes*, or the Paris of the *Three Musketeers*, or the Latin America of *Jules Verne*. Thus, throughout the entire Russian history, books and foreign languages helped the Russian people to explore the outside world, and it was no less successful than tedious and expensive travels which were not always even feasible for various reasons.

3. HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

The arrival of foreign books and manuscripts in Russia in the 10-12th centuries prompted the need to study foreign languages. Naturally, Greek was the first choice due to the connections with Byzantium, which went far beyond religion and were of paramount importance during that period. In the early 15th century Latin started to challenge the primacy of Greek. The fall of Constantinople, which complicated relations with the Christian East, the developing contacts with Western Europe, the emergence of book printing and, consequently, the growing number of books available – all this led to an increased inflow of literature in Latin, primarily from Germany.

The establishment of the Ambassadorial Chancellery in 1549, which played a leading role in the system of state administration under Ivan the Terrible, as well as the increasingly intensive and broad contacts with European countries, created an acute need for translators to facilitate international communication. It is known that Boris Godunov tried to organise schools to teach foreign languages to Russians. Interestingly,

‘Some noticeable changes took place in the 17th century. The number of people with foreign language skills had increased; the number of languages being learned had expanded beyond the traditional Latin and Greek and there appeared more opportunities for foreign language learning, including the opening of various educational language institutions’

this was opposed by the clergy, who, according to Solovyov (1993a), *‘said that their vast country was united in religion, customs, and language; if there are many languages, there will be chaos in this land’* (Solovyov, 1993a, p. 373). The way this comment is worded is quite telling: religion, morals, and foreign languages are presented as inextricably intertwined. If one of these elements is being threatened, others will inevitably be affected. Boris Godunov nevertheless continued with his attempts to provide young Russians with foreign language learning opportunities by sending selected boyars’ children abroad, but the result of this endeavour was disappointing: having mastered a foreign language, the young people never came back. Language learning during that period remained the privilege of scholars and scribes, and the language was mostly used for reading books or translating them into Russian.

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In the mid-17th century, English found its way into the Russian society. One of the documents remaining from that period is a manuscript of a Yaroslavl townsman that contained the English alphabet, an English-Russian glossary and a phrasebook, which indicates an interest in languages among townspeople – apparently, those who engaged in trade with foreigners. One of the earliest translations from English dates from the first quarter of the 17th century – the *Land Surveying Books*. Knowledge about the country of the *Anglo Germans* spread across Russia along with the English language. A Russian source from the mid-17th century gives a description of the inhabitants of the distant island, obviously written by a Russian Anglophile: *‘The English*

people are of good character and in good spirit; they have pale skin and light eyes. They love to live in abundance, just like the Italians. Their manners and traditions are decorous and orderly, there is nothing you can shame them for. They are skilful, brave, and courageous soldiers. They stay united against the enemy without any reservation, holding their head high up. They are very skilful in seafaring, more so than other nations; their food consists of mostly meat, cold appetizers, and good beer, which they also export to other countries. They dress like French. Their wives are beautiful, they wear their clothes in a certain way typical only of them...’ (Alekseev, 1982, p. 49). A kind of rosy eulogy to a country which the author had probably never visited, but which he envisaged, based on European books and probably personal meetings with Englishmen in Moscow (at that time the English trading company, established a hundred years earlier, was very active in Moscow).

The inflow of foreigners to Russia intensified during that period. Many of them came to the country to enter the Moscow sovereign’s service, in search of a better life and high rank. Some were implementing the instructions of their governments to collect data on the state that was gaining strength and international weight. Others came out of sheer curiosity, to learn more about the country. Some of the foreigners were hired by wealthy families, mainly for the purpose of teaching languages to the children.

The establishment of the Slavic-Greek-Latin Academy in the 1680s took the teaching of foreign languages to another level. The school’s opening was preceded by a fight between Latin (the language of European science), and Greek (the language of the Russian Church), and the issue was certainly much bigger than just the language itself. As Klyuchevsky (1990a) stated, *‘these languages were not just different grammars and lexicons, but different education systems, hostile cultures, irreconcilable worldviews’* (Klyuchevsky, 1990a, p. 296) The Hellenistic tradition prevailed, while the Latin teaching was considered harmful and dangerous.

This, however, did not affect the use of Latin, which remained an important means of communication with European countries. The administration of the new educational institution was entrusted to two Greek monks, the Likhud Brothers. The students studied Greek, Latin and Slavic languages, and some subjects were also taught in foreign languages – grammar and poetics were taught in Greek, while rhetoric and

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physics were taught in Greek and Latin. Upon graduation, the students became translators or proofreaders at the Printing House, or teachers, among other areas, meaning that they used their knowledge of foreign languages to meet the needs of the state. Interestingly, when the Likhud Brothers fell out of favour, they were sent to a print shop, where they were to teach Italian to children. A special tsar's edict ordered the children of boyars and other noblemen to learn this language from the Greek monks.

By the end of the 17th century, the number of people with foreign language skills had grown significantly. Now this group included not only members of the clergy, scribes, translators, diplomats, interpreters and statesmen, but also townspeople (who engaged in trade or were somehow affiliated with educational institutions), nobles seeking to make a career, as well as ordinary people who had the time and opportunity to learn a foreign language. The range of languages also expanded considerably: In addition to Greek and Latin, which retained their leading positions, and, understandably, Slavic languages, other European languages, such as German, English, Italian, French, and Dutch, gradually began to gain popularity in Russia. There were different ways of learning a new language, including home schooling, often by foreign teachers, self-education based on books, private schools, and the emerging state educational institutions. However, a true revolution in foreign language learning only occurred in the next century.

The reforms of Peter the Great were largely based on Western models, and his vision of Russia's future was closely linked to Europe, and that inevitably increased the importance of foreign languages. They were the only means to learn the secrets of Western crafts, military art and state government. And how could one

travel to Europe to gain the necessary experience (which had become quite common practice by then) without being able to speak a European language? Besides, adopting foreign manners and way of life also required foreign language skills. It was clear not only to Peter, but to many of his courtiers as well. Now languages were used to meet some practical needs; books were translated to draw relevant information, and this process was assisted by the publication of various grammar guides and dictionaries. In accordance with the tsar's political preferences and personal sympathies, the German language grew in importance, followed by other living European languages – Italian, French, Dutch and English. Latin and Greek began to lose their leading positions, with the former still being practised in science, and the latter being used in church.

Learning languages became an indispensable tool for obtaining knowledge. All the new types of education introduced by the tsar required foreign language proficiency. Obviously, those who were sent to study abroad (one of the first measures to promote education at the turn of the 18th century), were expected to speak a foreign language, but those who studied in Russia also needed some foreign language skills, as most of the teachers at the newly established schools were foreigners with no knowledge of Russian. To give an example, among the first teachers at the famous School of Mathematics and Navigation were three Englishmen.

Since the early 18th century, all projects to reorganise the education system in Russia were necessarily associated with the acquisition of foreign languages. An interesting scheme was proposed by Fyodor Saltykov, a prominent statesman and supporter of socio-political and cultural reforms. He was a highly educated man, who spent three years in England and Holland at the end of the 17th century, studying shipbuilding and sea navigation, and then returned to Russia to supervise the construction of military ships. In 1711, he was again sent to England to purchase ships for the Russian fleet, and there he wrote two letters to Peter I, which he called *Propositions*, presenting his project to reform Russia: accelerated development of the education system, including for women, book printing, the opening of libraries, construction of factories, expansion of trade, searching for the Northern sea route to India and China, colonisation of Central Asia and Siberia. Saltykov did not return to Russia. According to some sources, Peter found his proposals too radical, so Saltykov chose to stay in England, fearing disgrace and arrest.

Saltykov (1985) emphasised the need to create educational institutions (*academies*) in each of the seven Russian provinces, using monastic buildings for that purpose, and the problem of financing was to be solved by using monastic revenues. Each academy was to have a library with books *'in different languages and from different sciences like in England – at Oxford or Cambridge'* (Saltykov, 1985, p. 57-58). The primary focus in the curriculum was to be on foreign languages: *'And in those academies, students must learn languages to be able to converse with different peoples – Latin, Greek, German, English and French'* (Saltykov, 1985, p. 57-58). In addition, students were to study *liberal arts*, i.e. general education subjects, and *'to learn, for their own defence and for grace, how to ride horses, fight with swords and dance'* (Saltykov, 1985, p. 57-58). Saltykov (1985) supported women's education, arguing that living in their parents' home before marriage, where girls grew up *'not knowing how to behave in company and converse'* (Saltykov, 1985, p. 57-58), was harmful to them. He proposed to introduce compulsory education for them (which implied punishing the unwilling fathers with a fine) and develop a special set of women's sciences: *'for home economics'* (reading, writing, counting), *'for elegance in languages'* (French and German), *'for fun'* and *'for their own amusement and to make a good company'* (Saltykov, 1985, p. 57-58). Notably, already in the early 18th century French was described as the main language of communication in society.

Having stayed in Europe for a long time, Saltykov (1985) found that many of the books published there distorted Russian history and gave a false image of Russia. Eventually, this patriotically minded émigré concluded that it was necessary to write a history of the Russian state, translate it into German and French and send the books to Europe to disseminate the correct information about the country. Peter himself realised this and spared no expense to publish books on Russia in German and other languages abroad, trying to oppose foreigners' views by presenting a Russian perspective and disseminating knowledge about the country.

The role of foreign languages in social life kept growing throughout the 18th century, as it became increasingly more sophisticated, diverse and Europeanised. The early stage of the dominance of the French language and culture is usually associated with the era of Empress Elizabeth, but as was noted above, the trend had started much earlier. A new type of books, French and English love novels, appeared in

Russia, rapidly growing in popularity, which provided an additional stimulus, especially for women, to learn foreign languages.

When young Denis Fonvizin, then a student at the gymnasium of Moscow University, was first exposed to St. Petersburg's high society in a theatre, he immediately realised the importance of being able to speak French. He found a way out of an embarrassing situation using his native wit, but he remembered that first lesson very well. *'Standing in the stalls,'* the writer recalled, *'I made acquaintance with the son of a noble gentleman who liked my physiognomy; but as soon as he asked me if I knew French, and I told him that I didn't, a change passed over his face and he became cold towards me; he immediately considered me to be badly brought up and ignorant, and he began to make fun of me; and I, having realised from talking to him that he, apart from knowing French which he also spoke poorly, did not know much else, began to get my own back throwing punches at him with my epigrams, so that he, to avoid ridicule, invited me over to his house'* (Fonvizin, 1989, p. 51). That incident stuck in his memory, and on returning to the gymnasium, Fonvizin (1989) began to take lessons in French, which he soon mastered to perfection.

The most common way of learning languages in those times was home schooling with foreign teachers. Entrusting foreigners with the upbringing of their offspring, the parents hoped that their children would speak foreign languages perfectly. Remarkably, the teacher's pedagogical abilities and educational background did not really matter. The most important thing was fluency in a foreign language. A good example of such a typical teacher can be found in Fonvizin's comedy *The Minor*. One of the central characters is Mitrofan, a young man, and his highest-paid teacher, who even enjoys some respect from Mitrofan's arrogant mother, is a foreigner hired on the following terms: *'A German gentleman Adam Adamich Vralman teaches him all subjects in French. We pay him three hundred roubles a year. We sit him down at the table with us. Our women wash his clothes. Wherever he needs to go—we give him a horse. At dinner – a glass of wine. At night, we give him a tallow candle, and our Fomka curls his wig for him for free. To tell you the truth, we are very happy with him, dear brother. He doesn't put much pressure on the child'* (Fonvizin, 1959, p. 114). The fact that Vralman, a former coachman, did not put much pressure on the child, was one of his main pedagogical techniques, and this was true for many other

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teachers like him. And how could he have forced his pupil to study anything, if his own knowledge was limited to the stables? Vralman himself would have preferred to return to his former occupation, but the problem was that there were enough coachmen in Russia, while the demand for foreign teachers was huge.

There were also funny stories. One anecdote from the 18th century tells of some simple-minded parents hiring a teacher, who they believed to be French, to teach French to their children. It later turned out that he was a pure Finn, and instead of French he taught Finnish to his pupils (Klyuchevsky, 1990c, p. 35).

4. DISCUSSION

By the mid-1800s, foreign languages had not only become a standard means of communication among the upper-class people but had also begun to push out the native tongue. In 1803, a three-volume dictionary was published in St. Petersburg which was titled *New Word Explainer: Containing Foreign Phrases and Technical Terms Found in the Russian Language, Whose Meaning is not Known to Everyone* (Yanovsky, 1803). Among other things, it noted that many of the borrowed foreign words quickly acquired the Russian meaning. Thus, the entry for 'club' said that *'in England, this word means groups of people who gather together on certain appointed days to discuss state affairs and gather opinions about the current events, but in our society, clubs are formed solely for fun and pleasure'* (Yanovsky, 1803, p. 863). The Russian people easily digested foreign words, giving them a twist to make them their own. However, the issue of foreign languages littering the Russian language remained extremely acute for a long time.

As Klyuchevsky (1990b) aptly described it, during the times of Catherine the Great a nobleman was *'a stranger among his own folk, he tried to belong among*

strangers, and of course he didn't succeed: in the West, abroad, they saw him as a disguised Tatar, and in Russia they took him as a Frenchman who was accidentally born in Russia' (Klyuchevsky, 1990b, p. 167).

The dominance of foreign languages in Russian society and the nobility's obsession with them were popular points of criticism and ridicule. As early as in the 1750s, Alexander Sumarokov wrote: *'There is one gentleman – Mr. Taubert. He is laughing at Betsky because he is raising his children to speak French. Betsky is laughing at Taubert because he sent his kids to school (which had recently opened at the Academy) to study German; but it seems to me that both Betsky and Taubert are idiots: children in Russia should be raised speaking the Russian language'* (as cited in Solovyov, 1993b, p. 542).

Russian society continued to be critical of this foreign-language frenzy. Gogol (1948), for example, made some sharp comments in his novel *Dead Souls*: *'...the readers of the higher social strata: they are in the van of those from whom one will not hear a single decent Russian word, but when it comes to words in French, German, and English they will, likely as not, dish them out to you in such quantity that you'll actually get fed up with them, and they'll dish them out without spilling a drop of all the possible pronunciations: French they'll snaffle through their noses and with a lisp; English they'll chirp as well as any bird could, even to the extent of making their physiognomies bird-like, and will even mock him who is unable to assume a bird-like physiognomy; while German they'll grunt as gruffly as any boar. And the only thing they won't dish out to you is any good, plain Russian thing—save that, out of patriotism, they may build a log-cabin in the Russian style for a summer house'* (Gogol, 1948, p. 161). In fact, many Russians fiercely opposed the excessive fascination with foreign languages, believing that they could even disfigure the speakers' faces. Thus, in Odoevsky (1844) wrote in his short novel *Princess Mimi*: *'I know that the French language is beginning to fall into disuse but what kind of demon spirit had whispered to you to replace it not with Russian, but with this damned English language, for which you have to twist your tongue, clench your mouth, and stick your lower jaw forward? And with that necessity, say farewell to a pretty mouth with pink, fresh Slavic lips! It would have been better if it never existed!'* (Odoevsky, 1844, p. 330).

The abundance of comic Francophiles in the literature of the late 18th and early 19th centuries is a proof of their existence in real life, an illustration of the indig-

nation and contempt that they aroused in society, and of the desire to lance the boil and stop further spread of the disease. However, these were the extreme cases, and generally, the knowledge of foreign languages and cultures and reading foreign books helped Russians to broaden their horizons, sharpen their minds, and make them get used to systematic intellectual work.

A letter by Alexander Gorchakov (1798-1883), at that time a student at the Imperial Lyceum (Alexander Pushkin's classmate) who later became the chancellor of the Russian Empire, demonstrates a rather calm and pragmatic attitude towards the French language which was common among young people. He wrote to his uncle on 14th August, 1815: *'It brings me pleasure to read in your letter, dear uncle, that you want to make a Russian out of a Francophile who you think I am, but allow me to say that you are a little mistaken here; I love the French language because of how indispensable it has become in our society (due to its excessive use, of course), and for it having become a magic wand, at the wave of which every chubby porter reverently opens the door and welcomes you, and because without knowing French it is impossible to appear anywhere in public, as, simply put, it has become a true sign of proper upbringing. That being said, I am not crazy about it to the extent that I will neglect our own Russian literature'* (as cited in Andreev, 1999, p. 96).

The English language came into vogue in the early 19th century, along with English culture and fashion, bringing many English teachers, governesses and even nannies to Russia. In *An Amateur Peasant Girl* Pushkin (1916) gives a humorous, but sympathetic description of the English governess of Liza, whose father is a true Anglophile. Miss Jackson was *'an affected old maid of forty, who powdered her face and darkened her eyebrows, read through 'Pamela' twice a year, for which she received two thousand roubles, and felt almost bored to death in this barbarous Russia of ours', who, painted and bedecked, entered the room with downcast eyes and with a low bow'* (Pushkin, 1916, p. 33). She did neither harm nor any good to her pupil's education. Liza was mostly brought up by nature, the maids' room and books, while the English governess was a tribute to fashion and her father's passions.

Here is a real-life story which provides an excellent illustration of the barriers that foreign languages created between different social classes in the Russia of that time. In 1812, Nikita Muravyov, a future Decembrist who then was a child, ran away from home to join the Russian army, but *'since he only spoke English and*

'The English language came into vogue in the early 19th century, along with English culture and fashion, bringing many English teachers, governesses and even nannies to Russia'

spoke in his native language like a foreigner, peasants mistook him for a Frenchman and brought him to General Rostopchine. And Rostopchine brought him back to his mother' (Kern, 1989, p. 123).

However, it was the French language that still ruled the minds of the Russian nobility. Its influence did not weaken during the years of Napoleon's invasion, showing that political events do not always directly affect society's spiritual life. Russian nobility's proficiency in French had reached an amazing level. Describing Tatyana, a country girl, Pushkin (1881, p. 102) wrote: *'At Russ she was by no means clever / And read our newspapers scarce ever, / And in her native language she / Possessed nor ease nor fluency...'* Tolstoy (1973) in his *War and Peace* wrote that Prince Vasily Kuragin *'spoke in that refined French in which our grandfathers not only spoke but thought'* (Tolstoy, 1973, p. 1), while his son Prince Ippolit *'began to tell his story in such Russian as a Frenchman would speak after spending about a year in Russia'* (Tolstoy, 1973, p. 10-11).

Fluency in French as demonstrated by the Russian people was astonishing to foreigners. Jacques-François Ancelot (1794-1854), a French poet and playwright, whose light dramas and vaudevilles were staged both in Paris and St. Petersburg, visited Russia in 1826 as part of the French delegation to attend the coronation celebrations. His memoirs are, to a large extent, based on the accounts of the previous French travellers, however, the author's comments on the barbarian country are quite moderate in tone. He even goes as far as to express a pleasant surprise at certain achievements of Russian society – in particular, good foreign language skills. Here is what he writes about his own experience, permitting himself to disagree with his compatriots, whose opinions largely shaped his impressions: *'Some travellers... wrote about how ignorant Russian women were. <...> I found most of them to be quite erudite, with exceptional subtlety of mind, often acquainted with European literature and elegant in expressing thoughts so that many French women would envy. This is mostly inherent in young ladies, based on which we can conclude that in this century, the education of women in Russia has taken a new direction and what was true thirty years ago is not true today. In St. Peters-*

burg, one can meet ladies who speak French, German, English, and Russian with equal ease, and I can name those who could write in these four languages just as well as they could speak them. Perhaps, this vastness of knowledge and moral high ground of these young ladies is why the young men expressed lack of attention and unwillingness to approach them' (Ancelet, 2001, p. 48-49). This real-life counterpart of Griboyedov's *Frenchman from Bordeaux* even complains that he found too little national distinctiveness in Russia: 'Our national pride should be flattered by this attention given to our language, literature, and customs, but, judging this system from a philosophical point of view, wouldn't we find some grossest flaws in it? Of course, my friend, I must admit that it is a pleasant surprise for a French traveller to discover French manners, the French language, and even French jokes seven hundred leagues away from his homeland. But did I travel to Russia for that?' (Ancelet, 2001, p. 57-58).

Alexandre Dumas, who was generally quite critical of life in Russia, also expressed his admiration for Russian women. On his voyage down the Volga River, he met three ladies – the wife of a garrison officer from Baku, the wife of a navy lieutenant and a general's daughter. According to Dumas, 'all three ladies spoke and wrote French like French women. <...> These ladies were not only well-educated and well-mannered, but also very knowledgeable about our literature. <...> It is simply unbelievable how accurate and fair their opinions and judgments were about our outstanding people; moreover, their assessments were intuitive, and the oldest of them was only twenty-two years old' (Dumas, 1993, p. 269).

Representatives of other cultures also gave the palm to Russians in the knowledge of foreign languages. For example, one American traveller amazed by his experience, told the American reader in the second half of the 19th century about a Russian family he met, whose youngest son, a ten-year-old boy, was fluent in four languages – Russian, French, German and English. Americans, who themselves had little inclination to learn languages and were content with English at home and abroad, sometimes fell into pardonable exaggeration about the widespread dissemination of knowledge of foreign languages in all social strata of Russian society. Maria Mitchell, an American woman astronomer, noted that even the commoners in Russia tended to know more than one language, and to prove this, she described meeting a street vendor and a cab driver in St. Petersburg who were able to talk to her in

'Thus, in the 19th century the use of foreign languages in Russia was primarily associated with home schooling, fashionable lifestyles, high-society socialising, day-to-day communication, including among compatriots, and served as a marker of belonging to the upper crust. While books, in a way, unified Russians, foreign languages, quite obviously, created divisions'

English fairly well (Mitchell, 1896). The fact that the street vendor and the cab driver were both dealing with tourists on a daily basis, apparently, didn't change her overall impression.

However, one should not believe that advanced language skills, including in French, were really widespread. Even Tatyana from Pushkin's *Eugene Onegin*, who wrote exclusively in French, had a purely Russian soul and was very different from the French in the ways she felt and behaved. In addition, it is doubtful that her sister Olga was equally fluent in this language. French was mostly spoken by the aristocracy living in the country's capital city, while many Russians spoke the kind of French that is represented by a quote from one of Pushkin's characters: 'I can't dormir in the dark' (Pushkin, 1881).

Thus, in the 19th century the use of foreign languages in Russia was primarily associated with home schooling, fashionable lifestyles, high-society socialising, day-to-day communication, including among compatriots, and served as a marker of belonging to the upper crust. While books, in a way, unified Russians, foreign languages, quite obviously, created divisions. Languages also played a significant role in the education system. Greek and Latin continued to be an indispensable part of the university education. Fascination with ancient languages at Russian gymnasiums throughout the 19th century has been described above. European languages were still used as means of obtaining knowledge, though their role in learning significantly declined over time. Thus, in higher education institutions languages were not taught as separate subjects, as students were expected to already have a sufficient level of proficiency, which was tested at the entrance exams. Pushkin (1949) even suggested reducing foreign language instruction at gymnasiums, arguing that most students developed the required skills much earlier: 'It seems, however, that languages take up too much

time,' he wrote in a memo on education commissioned by Nicholas I. 'Why, for example, study French for 6 years at school when the need to speak in French in social life develops skills that are more than sufficient?' (Pushkin, 1949, p. 46).

From the mid-1800s, Russian society gradually developed a more sober and balanced attitude towards languages. They remained a necessary attribute of a well-mannered person, an indispensable component of education, a means of getting access to world literature, as well as a divider separating different layers of Russian society (the introduction of foreign languages in the popular education system was never even considered – apparently, because their influence on people's minds was believed to be pernicious).

The revolution of 1917 brought about major changes in people's attitude towards languages, at least at first glance. Initially, foreign languages, like many other things, were perceived as something alien to the grassroots population, something bourgeois and hostile. The proletarians of other countries were expected to learn the Russian language themselves to communicate with the Soviet people. But gradually, the need to study foreign languages became obvious, first at the university level, then more widely. In 1925, the Department of Romance and Germanic Philology was established at Moscow State University, marking a turn towards a serious scientific approach to foreign language acquisition. In the run-up to WWII, steps were taken to promote the study of languages, primarily German, not without political overtones, and in the post-war period German became an obligatory component of the school curriculum. And again, we are faced here with a unique situation – in complete isolation from the outside world, with no real contacts with foreigners in daily life, the government continued to support foreign language learning, making it an essential part of the Soviet education system, both at university and in secondary school.

In the Soviet period, opportunities to learn foreign languages became finally available to a cross-section of the Russian population. Not everyone saw that as an advantage, though. Foreign language classes were seen as something inevitable but having little to do with real life. The chances to have direct contacts with foreigners were very small, and the best works of world literature had long been translated and continued to be translated into Russian. A vivid illustration of a common perception was given by Soviet writer Valentin Rasputin in his story *French Lessons*. It depicts a remote Siberian vil-

lage in 1948, a hungry post-war childhood, and a mother giving up her last penny to ensure a better future for her son, who is sent to the region's central city to study at a secondary school. He is talented and dedicated, and, finally, the teacher of French takes pity on the hard-working teenager and tries to help him. The French language is the only stumbling block for the village boy, perhaps precisely because the point of learning it is not quite clear. French pronunciation is especially difficult for him, betraying his 'Angaran origin, right down to the last generation, where no one ever pronounces foreign words, if at all suspected of their existence...' (Rasputin, 1984, p. 292). Learning French turns into an ordeal. 'Well, what for if not for mockery, would one merge three vowels into one thick viscous sound. Take o, for example, in the word *beaucoup* (a lot), which you can choke on. Why would you use the nose to make some moaning nasal sounds if, since the beginning of time, it has served us a completely different purpose? What for? There must be some reasonable limits to this' (Rasputin, 1984, p. 307). Interestingly, despite having little idea about Western culture, a Siberian schoolboy has a clear-cut, albeit hard-to-explain, perception of foreign languages, and a differentiated one at that. For example, he says that he 'has always been of the opinion that girls who learn French or Spanish become women earlier than their peers who learn, let's say, Russian or German' (Rasputin, 1984, p. 308).

By the 1970s, foreign languages had become an integral part of the Soviet education system. The content and quality of teaching on a nation-wide level is a different issue but the fact that languages were taught as part of compulsory education in the country's most remote areas speaks for itself. Writing about the curriculum at his model school, renowned Soviet educator Sukhomlinsky (1980) said: 'Foreign languages play a significant role in one's intellectual upbringing. We strive for our students to feel the language and understand the ideas and connotations of the foreign language words and phrases as they were intended by its native speakers. We also see the educational role of a foreign language in that the word of the language of another people lives in the child's thoughts, so that translation is not always required to understand the meaning of what is read or heard. That is why we strive to ensure that our children learn the words and phrases through live communication' (Sukhomlinsky, 1980, p. 237-238). Foreign languages were a thin thread that connected Soviet people with the outside world and gave them a sense of engagement in the global processes.

'By the 1970s, foreign languages had become an integral part of the Soviet education system. The content and quality of teaching on a nation-wide level is a different issue but the fact that languages were taught as part of compulsory education in the country's most remote areas speaks for itself'

5. FOREIGN LANGUAGES AND NATIONAL IDENTITY ISSUES

Discussing foreign language learning, we cannot leave out a major related issue: its influence on a person's national identity. Foreign languages, and especially the culture that they represent, will always have an impact on the learners' native culture, especially when the fascination with languages reaches such enormous proportions as have been seen in Russian history. This has been recognised in all historic periods and has always caused concern. Ivan Martynov (1771-1833), a public educator, publisher and statesman, a poet and translator with a profound knowledge of foreign languages, spoke at the Russian Academy in 1807, highlighting the danger posed by excessive passion for languages. He said: '*... a future officer, judge, city governor or minister in Russia first learns how to speak well with a Frenchman, rather than with their own compatriots; he turns a foreign language into his native one, overloading his memory with non-Russian phrases, instead of developing his intelligence through knowledge and feelings that are useful for the public good. <...> It is well known what major influence languages have on mores! The evidence of this can be seen in our own country. Instead of the firm and righteous character peculiar to Russians, in pupils of French teachers we only see self-indulgence, interest in trivial things, light-mindedness, mendacity, neglect of their civil duties, indifference to their fellow citizens and relatives who had not been raised in those fashionable ways, and a false notion of enlightenment. In their behaviour, propensities, habits, passions – in fact, in every way such Russian citizens become foreign citizens'* (Martynov, 1856, p. 37-38). His ideas were echoed by Shevyrev (1987, p. 344): '*Russians today easily turn into the French, Germans, Englishmen, etc.'*

In different time periods different languages acquired a central role in Russia, depending on a range of factors. Foreign languages brought with them the customs of other peoples. Ivan Bogdanovich (1758-1831),

a graduate of Moscow University, who served for many years as governor of the city of Sumy and then the region's marshal of nobility, wrote a book *On the Education of Youth*, which immediately became a bibliographic rarity due to the small number of copies published. Bogdanovich (1987), who did not leave a big mark on history but was certainly a highly respected man, expressed his indignation at the empty-headedness of Russians. '*Have many years passed since the times when we imitated the Germans in everything?*' he wrote bitterly. '*Using their knowledge, we educated our children along the German lines, trying to be as cool-headed as they are, trying to be German-like in every little aspect. Their food, manners, wriggling dances – everything German was seen as graceful. But the charm was lost as soon as the French appeared. Their joyful nature, relaxed manners, bold and sharp ideas, agility and flexibility fascinated everyone. Everyone wanted to have a French teacher, everyone wanted to raise their children to be like the French. <...> We wanted up-bringing to work a wonder – to make us exact copies of the original model. A few years later the obsession waned. We began to be more attached to the British, wishing to raise our children according to their rules'* (Bogdanovich, 1987, p. 102-103).

Indeed, the fascination with foreign languages sometimes produced peculiar results. Sergey Glinka, a student at a cadet military school, '*having got infatuated with the French language <...>, tried to persuade others that he was born in France, not in Russia'* (Glinka, 1996, p. 74). The life story of Vladimir Pecherin (1807-1885) is even more striking, resembling an adventure novel, and a rather tragic one. He graduated from the university with honours and had every opportunity to make an excellent academic career but chose the difficult life of an émigré, full of hardships and wanderings. He worshipped the educated Europe but suffered disappointment on getting first-hand experience with it. He became a Catholic priest but realised the falsity of this move twenty years later, when it was already too late to change anything, and wrote a book entitled *Sepulchral Notes*, filled with thoughts about Russia. Looking back on his life, Pecherin concluded that he had taken his step towards this life of wanderings at the age of 12, when he firmly decided to flee to France, explaining this decision by his love for the French language and literature, and for his first French teacher.

The need to spread knowledge about Russia was recognised in different time periods. Indeed, sometimes the knowledge that a Russian nobleman had of other

cultures and countries exceeded his knowledge of his own country. Glinka (1996) noted that *'we were learning about America and the Americans, while Russia was still hiding from us in some distant mist'* (Glinka, 1996, p. 76). All this made it difficult to implement one of the most important functions of education in Russia – serving its homeland. Academic curricula were constantly reviewed to include courses aimed at providing knowledge about Russia. Pushkin (1949) noted that *'Russia is too little known to the Russians. Russian studies should be taught predominantly during the final years of training of the young noblemen who are preparing to serve their homeland faithfully and loyally'* (Pushkin, 1949, p. 47).

However, these fears were largely ungrounded. It is true that in certain time periods and in certain groups of Russian society, the fascination with foreign languages, manners, and fashions acquired excessive forms, but this did not damage national distinctiveness – it rather enriched the spiritual and cultural life of the country.

The obsession that Russians had with French culture in the early 19th century was an object of both ridicule and concern. However, it did not stop the development of national literature and culture, and, perhaps, even contributed to its unprecedented flourishing. Russian writers, who had been raised by French lackeys, were able to write in perfect Russian, while Russian composers created music that was deeply rooted in folk melodies. Tatyana Larina's mother, a romantic and French-minded girl in her youth, quickly turned into a typical Russian landowner, a guardian of Russian traditions, once she got married. Tatyana herself preferred to write in French but was Russian in her soul and acted in a purely Russian way. This is, perhaps,

one of the mysteries of the Russian national spirit: the language, manners, clothes, and everything else could be foreign, but the essence, the soul remained Russian. This was brilliantly illustrated in Tolstoy's (1973) *War and Peace* in the famous scene of Natasha's dance in her uncle's house: *'Where, how, and when had this young countess, educated by an emigree French governess, imbibed from the Russian air she breathed that spirit and obtained that manner which the pas de chale would, one would have supposed, long ago have effaced? But the spirit and the movements were those inimitable and unteachable Russian ones that 'Uncle' had expected of her. As soon as she had struck her pose, and smiled triumphantly, proudly, and with sly merriment, the fear that had at first seized Nicholas and the others that she might not do the right thing was at an end, and they were already admiring her'* (Tolstoy's, 1973, p. 289).

6. CONCLUSION

'It does not matter what nations borrow from one another and then turn to their own use. The English way of doing things is not so special that it cannot be adopted by other people, provided it is similar to their nature and thinking' (Popovsky, 1985, p. 133). This is what Nikolai Popovsky, one of the first Russian professors at Moscow University, an educator and translator, wrote in his *Preface to a Collection of Writings by John Locke*. A special attitude to foreign languages in Russia has never meant loss of national identity or national spirit. Foreign languages have carried knowledge, opened up the world, broadened the horizons, provided access to world literature and an opportunity to satisfy the passion for reading inherent in Russian people.

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Original Research

The cultural environment of metaphors: A study of German as a Second/Foreign Language

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Article history Received March 1, 2022 | Revised May 25, 2022 | Accepted June 3, 2022

Conflicts of interest The author declared no conflicts of interest

Research funding No funding was reported for this research

doi 10.22363/2521-442X-2022-6-2-68-75

For citation Vovou, E. (2022). The cultural environment of metaphors: A study of German as a Second/Foreign Language. *Training, Language and Culture*, 6(2), 68-75.

This paper aims to empirically show that mediation of metaphor in a second language is more than a competence. Metaphor is an ecosystemic construct combining linguistic, cultural and semiotic symbols that may instigate different cognitive functions within the minds of language users in different languages. In order to empirically study the above, a metaphor mediation task was given to Greek speakers of German as a Second Language, where participants had to identify metaphors mediating the content of visual stimuli. The results of the study show that, although the analysed conceptual metaphors proved to be similar between the two languages, the participants could not identify the metaphoric mediation in their second language in more than half the cases. The findings suggest that more parameters should be addressed regarding the mediation of metaphor in a second language, and that triangulation of theories and methodologies is in order for safely analysing an ecosystemic construct such as metaphor.

KEYWORDS: *metaphor, metaphoricity, culture, within-culture variation, German as a Second Language, German as a Foreign Language*



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1. INTRODUCTION

Metaphor research has brought about many valuable insights into the works of mind and language, especially in the field of cognitive linguistics. From the 1980 seminal work of Lakoff and Johnson (1980) until today's distributed (Carston, 2010; Bambini et al., 2019; Bolognesi & Aina, 2019; McGregor et al., 2019; Kossarik, 2018; Murashova, 2021) and embodied approaches (Wilson & Golonka, 2013; Hellmann et al., 2013; Casasanto & Gijssels, 2015; Jensen, 2015; Jensen & Greve, 2019; Kramsch, 2008; Solopova & Chudinov, 2021) to metaphor and metaphoricity, cognitive linguistics has a long tradition of studying metaphor as well as other known forms of figurative speech. Another field of

linguistic research that has incorporated the study of metaphor is second/foreign language acquisition (Littlemore & Low, 2006a, 2006b) for the simple reason that metaphor is a means of communication, most often anchored in culture and, since language and language learning is so closely knitted to culture and cultural awareness in the target language, metaphor is a carrier of our environment – including our cultural environment (Kövecses, 2005) – which in turns shapes the way we view and express reality. Alongside the developments in those fields, however, there is no significant implementation of the findings of language acquisition related studies in curriculum design and praxis in language teaching. This means that although a lot is being

said and empirically proven about the importance of incorporating this and other forms of figurative speech into teaching practice, the lack of detailed curricular guidelines makes the incorporation of this knowledge from the teacher side difficult and, most of all, optional (Abdullaev, 2022). This creates a hiatus not only between research and practice but also in the essence of language teaching and learning that is reduced to the teaching more of form and less of meaning, and particularly of complex structures of meaning, such as metaphors. This paper briefly discusses the didactic approaches to metaphor regarding second/foreign language teaching that have been implemented to this day, argues about the complex nature of metaphor and its negotiation in the second/foreign language and aims to empirically reveal the dynamic parameters of this complex construct that build its semantic environment and take place when metaphoric meaning is mediated in a second/foreign language.

2. FROM COGNITION TO COMMUNICATION AND BACK

In order to address the lack of curricular guidelines described and the resulting lack in the direct teaching of metaphors, we first need to discuss second/foreign languages policies as well as the sociopolitical dimensions of these policies, since they create the environment in which metaphors are constructed, used and negotiated. Coined by Halliday (1970) and established with the introduction of the Common European Framework for Languages (CEFR, 2001), the Communicative Approach (CA) is still considered the dominant strategy used in language teaching today. Before this, the approach to language teaching and learning was a cognitive one. Language could be learned through the memorisation of linguistic structures. Linguistic forms were the centre of interest and not the cultural semantics and pragmatics behind the forms, since the aims of language teaching and learning were not mainly to interact with the speakers of the target language but simply to understand the patterns of the language and be able to reproduce them through repetition. Real-life usage of the linguistic patterns taught was not a pedagogical-didactical objective at the time. The sequencing of linguistic patterns – as in pattern drills – provided the learner with an insight into how native speakers organise their thinking, but this process occurred unconsciously and was of little value in the foreign language classroom. Metaphor, being the less formative structure of language, not reproducible and memorisable through

repetition, non-recursive and unique, was overlooked.

This cognitive approach later evolved into a socio-cognitive one, recognising that language can be learned through social interaction. Real-life usage was now an objective, as it is nowadays. What was different then is that social interaction was considered to be a one-on-one thing, from the mother tongue to the target language. Culture was introduced as the environment where language occurs, but the duality remained (Khramova et al., 2021). The learner, having a specific mother tongue/culture, should be immersed in the target language/culture (hence, intercultural approach to language learning). This implies that the target language/culture was considered superior in comparison to the mother tongue/culture. Of course, other factors contributed to this superiority, especially within the European Union. The languages mostly taught represented the more powerful states, which the less powerful had to (at least) approach by learning the language/culture. Since the teaching of culture now became an objective, the teaching materials, especially for advanced learners, were enriched by literature. And since literature is a playground for figurative speech, learners came across metaphorical structures and metaphorical meaning. That is the historical turning point for the teaching objective of *Sprachbewusstsein* – the German term for ‘language awareness’ that became a popular objective for language policy makers and teachers alike in the 1970s and the 1980s and facilitated the transition from the socio-cognitive to the communicative approach. Although it translates as *language awareness*, it implies the socio-cultural aspects of language. The learner had to become aware of the environment of the target language. Language teaching was considered effective when the learner could approach the native speaker’s way of speaking, thinking and doing. The more aware the learner and the more they could analyse the deep culture embedded in the literary readings, the more they could decipher connotative meaning. ‘*In metaphors we actualise language awareness*’ (Kurz, 1993, p. 73). Regarding the teaching of German as a Second/Foreign Language at the time, metaphor was primarily taught implicitly through working with the literature of the target language/culture, whereas other forms of figurative speech like idioms and proverbs were taught explicitly, as linguistic artifacts of the target culture.

As discussed, *Sprachbewusstsein* remained an objective of the Communicative Approach to the teaching and learning of languages. As such, *Sprachbewusstsein*

'By treating metaphor in second/foreign language teaching for what it is, a complex construct rooted in cognition, requiring socio-cognitive approaches to teaching and learning, we move away from metaphoric competence as a language ability that can be taught and trained. Instead, we need to view metaphor from a distributed point of view, as having an ecosystemic existence'

is included in the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR) as an important part of language teaching (CEFR, 2001, p. 134). Although the CEFR is the primary tool for language curriculum and assessment design of European languages, it touches on the subject of figurative language only implicitly and superficially. This does not mean that figurative speech is not given a place in the CEFR and thus in the teaching of European Languages, the curricula, the materials, etc. It rather means that figurative language is included in the competences and thus the levels of language knowledge but not directly described. This has been criticised implicitly regarding descriptor vagueness (Barkowski, 2003) and, lately, explicitly regarding figurative language (Galantomos, 2021). This apparently lead to the incorporation of figurative language and especially metaphorical language in the 2018 and 2020 Companion Volumes to the CEFR, where metaphor is included in the C2-level descriptors for *Analysing and Criticising Creative Texts* (CEFR, 2018, p. 117), *Building on Plurilingual Repertoire* (CEFR, 2018, p. 162) and in the description of strategies like breaking down complicated information (CEFR, 2018, p. 127), mediation of concepts (CEFR, 2020, p.126), and lastly regarding sign language repertoire (CEFR, 2020, p. 146). Both Companion Volumes address the under-description of metaphor and figurative language together by including the use of metaphor in the text mediating activities and the respective descriptor of *Analysing and Criticising Creative Texts*. This allows language teachers and other practitioners to operationalise the teaching and assessment of metaphor and metaphorical usage of language through the incorporation of literary texts at the C2-level. However, some might argue that figurative language is still under-described and that the descriptor *Building on Plurilingual Repertoire* is still vague. What can clearly be observed in the Companion Volumes is that there

is an underlying pedagogical turn towards a more socio-cognitive approach to language teaching, as opposed to the one used before the CA, but through the prism of plurilingualism and not through the duality of target language/target culture. This, in turn, could mean that the distributed and embodied approaches to language are influencing our language pedagogy in a more direct manner, yet still unclear in its implementation.

3. METAPHOR AND COMPETENCE

What the CEFR does not propose, and rightfully so, is the categorisation of effective metaphor usage or – more broadly – of effective usage of figurative speech among the known competences (linguistic, lexical, pragmatic competence, etc.). Littlemore and Low (2006a, 2006b) propose the term *metaphoric competence* as the knowledge of, and ability to use metaphor, although the authors themselves use the term in a rather limited sense and only in relation to Bachman's (1990) model of communicative language. One could argue that the term *metaphoric competence* is in itself a metaphor, in order for the reader to think of it in a specific competence-oriented framework and thus consider metaphor a more teachable construct.

By treating metaphor in second/foreign language teaching for what it is, a complex construct rooted in cognition, requiring socio-cognitive approaches to teaching and learning, we move away from metaphoric competence as a language ability that can be taught and trained. Instead, we need to view metaphor from a distributed point of view, as having an ecosystemic existence (Cowley, 2011). It combines cultural, linguistic and semiotic symbols that instigate specific cognitive functions. Acquiring and/or mediating – as in the CEFR – metaphor in the second/foreign language is not a mere competence but the outcome of a complex universal cognitive process that draws upon cultural, linguistic and semiotic resources, and thus varies from language/culture to language/culture (Kövecses, 2005). This paper tries to elaborate further on this notion by utilising experimental data based on the work of Bachman (1990).

4. THE STUDY

4.1. Premise

The aim of the study was to assess two things: first, whether multimodal (visual and textual) stimuli containing metaphoric information were mediated by speakers/learners of German as a Second Language in German in the same way as in their mother tongue,

Greek, and secondly, how culture-specific variations influenced the two languages in the metaphors examined, and what degree of similarity lay between them. The survey also aimed to discover whether culture-specific variations influence the identification of metaphor by the speakers/learners in their second language, and whether this influence occurs in the identification of metaphor in the mother tongue. More specifically, the aim was to see if metaphoric information in German, the second language, could be identified in the same degree as in Greek, the mother tongue. The framework to compare the identification and mediation of metaphor in Greek and German is Lakoff and Johnson's (1980) conceptual metaphor theory.

4.2. Participants

The participants were 45 undergraduate students, ages 20-23 (M=22, F=38) of the Department of German Language and Literature, National and Kapodistrian University of Athens (Greece). All participants reported that they were native speakers of Greek. All have been accredited the C1-Level of German through either in-university procedures or examinations by independent yet internationally certified organisations. The membership of the group was determined by the socialisation conditions in which the students acquired German as a Second Language. Undergraduate students of the Department of German Language and Literature are immersed in the second language/culture by being lectured in German, studying in German, interacting with staff and colleagues in German, and more importantly, are immersed in German through literature and analysis of literary texts. All participants have studied literary

'Acquiring and/or mediating – as in the CEFR – metaphor in the second/foreign language is not a mere competence but the outcome of a complex universal cognitive process that draws upon cultural, linguistic and semiotic resources'

texts in German extensively and have a working knowledge of how to mediate metaphorical content from between one language and the other, as far as their textual competence is concerned. This last parameter could offer an insight regarding the description of metaphor use in the CEFR Companion Volumes. The outcomes of the study could show to what extent language immersion through literature in the second language guarantees the identification of metaphor in this language.

4.3. Materials

Five multimodal stimuli were presented to the participants, all containing visual and linguistic metaphors. Both modalities were represented equally in each and every stimulus and therefore modality-specific errors were minimised. Each multimodal stimulus contained 2 visual and 2 linguistic metaphors in total, that anchored semantically to one another in a 1:1 ratio. The textual information of all stimuli was removed. All stimuli were political cartoons (see Figure 1) that depicted contemporary real-life situations, so that the world knowledge parameter could be minimised as well. The stimuli were shown to the participants in paper form with no specific exposure time limit.

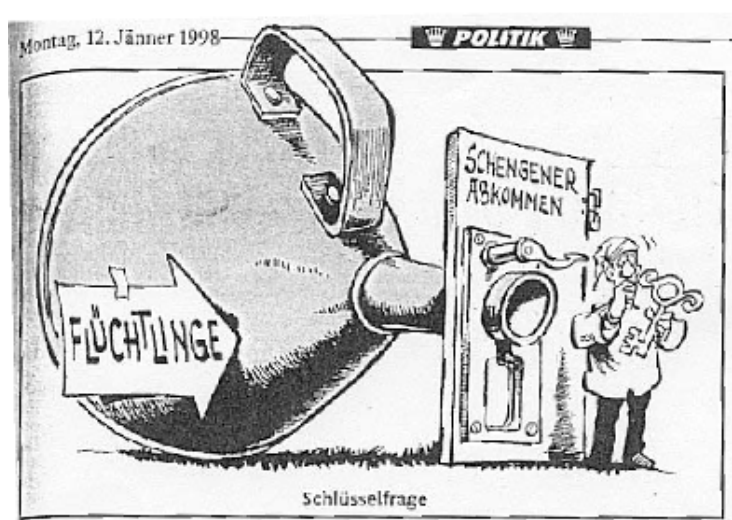


Figure 1. Stimulus A (visual and textual)

Apart from the multimodal stimuli (in its visual form), participants were given textual material for each stimulus both in German and in Greek. All textual material mediated the content of each stimulus. For each stimulus each participant was given 3 short texts (2 sentences) in German and 3 short texts with equal-length sentences in Greek. One text mediated the visual stimulus in a metaphorical way, one in a literal way and one text was a filler, which means that it did not mediate the visual stimulus. Both the Greek and the German

texts were presented at the same time together with the visual stimuli. Participants were then asked to choose which short texts (one in Greek, one in German) mediated the information of the visual stimulus appropriately and precisely, that is, they were asked which wording was the best to express the situation they saw in the cartoon. The role assigned to each short text (metaphorical, literal or filler) was not identifiable by the participants. The task had no specific time limit, but no participant exceeded the norm (≈ 15 minutes) (Table 1).

Table 1
Short texts for Stimulus A

GERMAN	
Metaphorical mediation of meaning	EU an Flüchtlinge: 'Besser wenig als gar nicht!'
Literal mediation of meaning	EU an Flüchtlinge: 'Schlussendlich werden wir eine geringere Anzahl von Flüchtlingen empfangen als erwartet'.
Filler	EU an Flüchtlinge: 'Die Migration bringt unangenehme Folgen an sich'.
GREEK	
Metaphorical mediation of meaning	ΕΕ προς πρόσφυγες: 'Απ' τα ολότελα, καλή και η Παναγιώταινα!'
Literal mediation of meaning	ΕΕ προς πρόσφυγες: 'θα δεχτούμε εν τέλει μικρότερο αριθμό προσφύγων απ' ότι περιμέναμε'.
Filler	ΕΕ προς πρόσφυγες: 'Η προσφυγιά προκαλεί δυσάρεστες συνέπειες'.

4.4. Data analysis

The analysis was conducted in two parts. The first part included a quantitative measurement of the short texts chosen. The assessment process measured which stimulus the participants chose for which text (the metaphorical, the literal or the filler) in each language as the most appropriate way of conveying the meaning of the cartoon. In the second part of the analysis, only the metaphorical expressions in the two languages were grouped under their source and their target domain (Lakoff & Johnson, 1980). Then, this set of data was qualitatively reviewed to establish the degree of similarity and within-culture variation between the two languages. The second part of the analysis drew upon the results of the first part to justify why some short texts mediating the metaphorical meaning were not chosen.

4.5. Study results

By conveying the meaning of the same stimulus, the study aimed to show if the participants adopted a metaphorical or a literal way of mediating in their mother tongue and in their second language. If the metaphorical short text in the second language was chosen over the literal short text in the second language as a more appropriate way to convey metaphoric meaning, this implies that the participants could identify metaphoricity appropriately.

This was the case in less than half of the participants. 20 out of 45 participants chose the literal short text in their second language as the most appropriate to match the visual stimulus. The literal mediation of meaning was preferred as far as the second language was concerned.

The opposite was to be seen in the short text chosen in Greek. 39 out of 45 participants chose the metaphorical short text as the most appropriate to mediate the content of the stimulus. This implies that metaphoricity in the mother tongue is considered more identifiable and thus more appropriate than the literal meaning, when the participant is confronted with a genre (political cartoon) where metaphor is visually depicted. 39 out of 45 participants matched the visual to the textual metaphor, when the latter was in their mother tongue, while 20 out of 45 did not match the visual to the textual metaphor, when the latter was in their second language.

The qualitative analysis served as a confirmation or not of the quantitative results. As discussed, the qualitative analysis based on the framework of Lakoff and Johnson (1980) grouped the metaphoric short texts in Greek and German – whether chosen by the participants as most appropriate for mediating the visual metaphor or not – according to the source and the target domain of the given conceptual metaphors in Greek and German. As both Littlemore and Low (2006a) and Wright (1999) describe, the target domain of a conceptual metaphor represents the semantic field under discussion and the source domain the semantic field that is being used to describe, understand and evaluate the target. In all cases where Greek had a metaphorical expression, German also had a metaphorical expression. This means, that the perception of a concept was similar in both languages. German, the second language of the participants, shares the same metaphorical expressions for a conceptual metaphor as Greek, the participants' mother tongue. Cognitive universality is present in the metaphors analysed. The question that arises here is whether the demonstrated similarity in the conceptualisation between the two languages in the metaphors examined is in itself an indicator that cultural variation is minimal to zero or if it is the sole indicator. Kövecses (2005) extensively dealt with this question and argued that one must distinguish between cross-cultural and within-culture variation. This perspective allows us to suggest, based on study results, that similarity between the metaphorical expressions analysed in German and in Greek occurs cross-culturally, which means cross-cultural variation is minimal to zero.

6. DISCUSSION

Universality of conceptual metaphors across languages has been empirically proven in the past. For example, Pérez (2008) found the conceptual metaphors

for *heart* showed similar target and source domains in French, Italian, Spanish, English and German. What makes the results of this study interesting in their interpretation is that, although the conceptual metaphors analysed had a very high degree of cross-linguistic and cross-cultural similarity, the participants found the metaphorical mediations of the visual stimuli far less appropriate in their second language than in their mother tongue. Since the qualitative analysis showed that the conceptualisations of the specific metaphors had no significant cross-cultural variation, the number of participants that chose the metaphorical mediated text in German should have been equal to the number who chose the one in Greek. This means that some other factor is at play: either at a cognitive level (in this case a frame semantics analysis could prove fruitful) or at a level of within-culture variation, e.g., at a social, (sub)cultural, ethnic, or regional level (Kövecses, 2005), and that, again, further research is in order.

Another reason might be that there are semiotic discrepancies in the visual stimuli that trigger different cognitive resources in the minds of the participants and set the stage for them to not identify the metaphorical mediation in their second language in reference to the specific visual stimulus. In this case, the similarity in conceptualisation between Greek and German of the metaphors analysed could mean that universality was incited by the medium. Political cartoons – especially those that refer to socio-political situations in the same geographical region, in this case Europe – aim at including semiotic symbols that can be interpreted in the same way by a wide audience. Cognitive universality, as observed here, could be due to semiotic universality.

Lastly, one must not overlook the fact that, in the competence sense, a third reason may be that the level of linguistic knowledge of the second language (C1) prompted the participants not to identify the metaphoric mediation of some visual stimuli in German and hence choose the metaphoric mediation in their mother tongue. So, although the specific group of participants was accustomed to literary texts and conveying literary meanings in the second language, the participants fell behind on the identification of metaphor because they did not possess the C2-level of linguistic competence in this language. This empirically supports the CEFR descriptor choice to include the mediating of metaphors regarding creative texts at the C2 and not at the C1-level, although both are considered within the scope of advanced knowledge and proficiency. Overall, the findings of this study support the notion that acquiring

and/or mediating metaphor in a second language is a much more complex process than linguistic ability on its own would suggest.

7. CONCLUSION

The main finding of the study was that target and source domains of the examined metaphors were similar in the mother tongue (Greek) and the second language (German) of the participants. But this similarity did not lead to the participants identifying the metaphor in German with the same degree of appropriateness and precision as the metaphor in Greek for the same stimulus, as expected. On the contrary, less than half of the participants identified the German metaphor as more appropriate and precise to convey the meaning of each visual stimulus, while more than half – and almost all – participants identified the metaphor in Greek as more appropriate than the literal meaning. This means that although semantic cross-cultural similarity was very high, metaphoric meaning in the second language was less identifiable than literal meaning in the same language. As discussed, this is a strong indicator that within-culture variation is present and that dimensions of within-culture variation for the examined metaphors should be further analysed. One next step of the study will therefore be to construct a framework of analysis that includes the within-culture parameters illustrated in Kövecses (2005).

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The discussed incongruity in the findings could also be due to cross-cultural differences in semiotics. Gupta-Biener (2015) recently proposed a methodological framework for the analysis of semiotic differences between languages/cultures, while criticising the fact that the semiotic perspective of culture had been neglected in past empirical cross-cultural analyses. A cross-cultural semiotic analysis of the visual/textual stimuli used, triangulated with the findings presented in this paper, could offer more elaborate results. In this case, not only the medium (political cartoon) will play a role but also the ethnological environment of the medium. Political cartoons can be seen as ethnographic material whose syntagmatic connections (Greimas & Courtés, 1982) could undergo semiotic analysis. Such an analysis should take into consideration that the stimuli examined here derive from German language sources, which should in turn be taken into account upon triangulation of the results.

Overall, the findings of the study suggest that within-culture variations build – together with cross-cultural variations – the cultural environment of a given metaphor in a given language, with within-culture variations being the inner shell of the metaphor. The results of this study suggest that inner and outer shell of a metaphor may not influence each other since cross-cultural variation was minimal in the metaphors examined while within-culture variation was substantial.

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Book Reviews

Bridge the culture gaps: A toolkit for effective collaboration in the diverse, global workplace (a review)

Original work by Robert Gibson published by Nicholas Brealey Publishing 2021

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Article history Received May 13, 2022 | Revised May 29, 2022 | Accepted June 3, 2022

Conflicts of interest The author declared no conflicts of interest

Research funding No funding was reported for this research

doi 10.22363/2521-442X-2022-6-2-76-78

For citation Vouillemin, D. (2022). Bridge the culture gaps: A toolkit for effective collaboration in the diverse, global workplace (a review). *Training, Language and Culture*, 6(2), 76-78.



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Described in the cover blurb as ‘a book on culture for the 21st century’ Robert Gibson’s new book offers a toolkit for effective collaboration in the diverse, global workplace. In its twelve chapters it covers the impact of culture on international business, intercultural competence, diversity, managing global change and international assignments together with down-to-earth discussions of culture and communication, decision making, leadership and managing global change. The former head of cultural training at Siemens in Germany, Robert Gibson has also worked for the Business University at Bologna and is a member of SIETAR (the Society for Intercultural Education Training and Research).

Bridge the Culture Gaps is written as a self-help guide but is eminently suitable for use on training courses both in company and in college. Each chapter begins with key questions to provoke thought and contains exercises based on critical incidents and case studies to develop awareness and critical skills.

An answer key to the exercises and activities at the end of the book offers additional support as does Robert Gibson’s recommended OAR methodology:

O = Observe and describe the situation;

A = Analyse the issues raised by the situation; and

R = Recommend options for dealing with the situation described.

The author has removed references to company identities and nationalities to avoid risks of stereotyping but includes them at the end of the book.

The key question is how we optimise collaboration, and the book contains a few tools for doing so, hence the toolkit for bridging culture gaps in international business.

As Gibson says, globalisation means that more people than ever before are encountering other cultures and technology has created global hyper-connectivity. In addition, offshoring, the internationalisation of supply chains and global infrastructure projects such as China’s Belt and Road Initiative have caused increasing levels of interdependency. More and more people are being posted abroad in international assignments, there are more multinational teams and more and more of us are affected by cross-border business affecting marketing, human resources, finance, procurement, production, engineering, and shipping among other business activities. Shipping is now one of the most globalised industries in the world. Therefore, culture is now at the centre of global business and, as Gibson points out,

'An interesting and important chapter deals with cultural bias, which can affect our attitudes to and relations with our multinational colleagues and clients. In particular, Gibson draws our attention to unconscious bias, which can be a major barrier to inclusion and good decision making. This can affect who you employ, who you choose not to work with and other decisions and are based in prejudice you may not even be consciously aware of. Gibson explains how the defensive brain works and how we are motivated by our memory'

some business disasters are the result of international business partners failing to understand and adapt to each other's cultures.

One of the strengths of *Bridge the Culture Gaps* is its ability to match the understanding of culture and cultural competence to the business process. It does so by combining intercultural principles with business management principles. An interesting example is Chapter 9 *Oiling the Works* which deals with international negotiation.

Gibson explains the steps in negotiation and cites William Ury, as co-author of the influential *Getting to Yes*, in presenting steps to resolve a difficult negotiation. He amplifies it with Glasl's nine steps from what Gibson describes as *'light tension to destruction'*. The chapter ends with key references listed and all references are listed in the bibliography at the end of the book.

It is particularly useful to combine management theory with intercultural theory, as we can see in Chapter 8 *Inclusive Leadership*. Looking at different leadership styles and basing his analysis on Hofstede's power distance dimension he explores decision-making styles and goes on to look at how a manager can get a team working together using Tuckman's management theory of the four stages of successful team building: *forming*, *storming*, *norming* and *performing*. Any team coming together may be formed of many different nationalities working face-to-face or virtually. Any team goes through a process of *storming*, working out their differences in expectations and operations management. That leads hopefully to the third stage, *norming*, where procedures are agreed ensuring successful *performing*. Gib-

son doesn't mention that Tuckman introduced a fifth stage, *mourning*, which is what happens when storming and norming don't work, leading to poor performance. He does, however, mention *adjourning*, the stage where the team completes its project and breaks up and *swarming*, where different teams come together on an informal basis to address a specific issue or problem. This a very practical management tool for use in training international teams.

An interesting and important chapter deals with cultural bias, which can affect our attitudes to and relations with our multinational colleagues and clients. In particular, Gibson draws our attention to unconscious bias, which can be a major barrier to inclusion and good decision making. This can affect who you employ, who you choose not to work with and other decisions and are based in prejudice you may not even be consciously aware of. Gibson explains how the defensive brain works and how we are motivated by our memory. If our memory is positive, we will respond positively but if negative we will retreat into fear, which is culturally conditioned.

Gibson goes on to identify two types of cultural bias and offers several ways of addressing bias that might occur. The two types of cultural bias are cognitive bias and micro-aggression. Ways of addressing bias include building a circle of trust, watching your use of language, connecting with diverse stakeholders, becoming an ally of the person you are dealing with and reviewing your recruiting and staff development processes.

The final chapter examines *Strategies for Success*, commencing with a line from the wonderful Persian poet Jalaluddin Rumi, *'beyond our ideas of right-doing and wrong-doing, there is a field. I'll meet you there'*. What is the middle ground which enables executives from diverse backgrounds with different expectations of the business relationship, different operations management and communication styles work together successfully? Where is the field and how do we access it and train our students and training course participants to deal with it? Gibson offers ten keys to success: be curious, challenge stereotypes, observe don't judge, empathise, switch codes and adapt, never over- or underestimate the role of culture, be mindful, celebrate the differences in style, bridge cultures and never stop learning. Use these principles, in your teaching and you will help build a more positive and understanding cultural relationship, ensuring success for your students both in their academic studies and in business.

All these qualities are manifest and evident in *Bridge the Culture Gap*. This is a practical and readable book, combining management theory and intercultural theory with real life examples and case studies to develop intercultural critical thinking skills. If you are an in-

tercultural trainer or a teacher or student of business administration and intercultural management then this book should be in your library and indeed should be in use in your classroom or training room. It certainly is in mine.

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Book Reviews

Field guide to intercultural research (a review)

Original work by D. Guttormsen, J. Lauring and M. Chapman (Eds.) published by Edward Elgar Publishing 2022

Reviewed by Peter McGee

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Article history Received April 14, 2022 | Revised March 27, 2022 | Accepted June 3, 2022

Conflicts of interest The author declared no conflicts of interest

Research funding No funding was reported for this research

doi 10.22363/2521-442X-2022-6-2-79-81

For citation McGee, P. (2022). Field guide to intercultural research (a review). *Training, Language and Culture*, 6(2), 79-81.



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As befits an issue devoted to intercultural studies, the *Field Guide to Intercultural Research* is an appropriate opportunity to introduce a collection of 26 essays by over 40 authors representing over 20 nationalities, sharing their research in East Asia, Africa, the Middle East and Europe and discussing questions of fieldwork research theory, organisation and management. Divided into three sections, the book focuses on intercultural research into international business differences. Part 1 deals with practical issues, such as interviewing research subjects and collecting and processing data. Part 2 examines theoretical themes, and Part 3 addresses regional themes, reporting on research projects on China, Thailand and Vietnam, Africa, including Nigeria, and the Middle East, including Lebanon and the Arabian Gulf. Overall, the book is a useful resource for post-graduate research students undertaking intercultural fieldwork as part of their studies or their work.

But what do we mean by fieldwork and international business studies? As Malcom Chapman says in his foreword, fieldwork is a method of study derived from social anthropology. Social anthropology is defined as the study of human societies, cultures, and their development in the Oxford Dictionary. International business studies are about the differences in business management styles in different nation states around the world. Chapman argues that fieldwork

needs to examine not just the theories of business but particularly the views of experienced business practitioners, as is amply illustrated in the book.

Part 1 contains an interesting review of how to interview successful business 'elites' by William Harvey. Elites, in this context, are senior managers and officials in organisations. Especially, if you are interviewing senior people for fieldwork for an MA dissertation or PhD thesis, Harvey can provide excellent advice based on theory and his own experience. Harvey identifies three types of interviewing technique, neo-positive, romantic and localist. Neo-positive focuses on the facts. Romantic focuses on social interaction and building rapport. Localist focuses on the interaction and the social context in which the interview happens. In preparing the interview be sure you state what you want to achieve and how it will benefit the interviewee and their organisation. Be prepared to adapt to the environment of the interviewee be it formal or informal. The aim is to be in an environment where you as interviewer can build a rapport with the interviewee.

In conducting the interview it's important to consider the interviewee's time availability and to ask before you start if they have any questions or concerns. It will be helpful if you frame the interview at the beginning by giving an overview of the research and explaining why their insights are important and how you think

'In concluding a fieldwork interview Harvey observes three principles. First, is there any further information the interviewee would like to share? Secondly, he explains the next steps and offers to share with them the final presentation. Finally, he makes sure he sends an email saying thank you for the time spent and the insights gained. He also, where appropriate, adds a timeline of next steps. This helps to ensure ongoing cooperation, if needed. This excellent and very practical paper is of use not just in contacting 'elites' but anyone you are interviewing as part of your fieldwork'

your research can benefit them. This ensures the person you are interviewing understands what you need and provides a clear structure. It also gives the interviewee the opportunity to have the last word on the subject under discussion and make sure they make any final points they need.

It's important to remember that many senior executives travel a lot. Harvey notes Hillary Clinton, as US Secretary of State, was alleged to have travelled 956,733 air miles during her time in office. That's equivalent to flying around the world 38 times.

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This excellent and very practical paper is of use not just in contacting 'elites' but anyone you are interviewing as part of your fieldwork. As Harvey emphasises, pay attention to the preparation, conduct and conclusion phases of your fieldwork interviews and show gratitude for the interviewee's participation.

In Part 2, Professor Christoph Barmeyer addresses the key issue of building intercultural rapport to ensure successful research. Together with Eric Davoine, a French colleague and co-researcher, he addresses rapport between German and French researchers. In doing

so they draw on Helen Spencer Oatey's three dimensions of rapport management: behavioural expectations, face sensitivities and international wants or goals. By face sensitivities Spencer-Oatey means recognising the value of the other through showing respect for social and cultural values and attributes.

In their chapter Barmeyer and Davoine examine the differences between German and French attitudes to research and to managing the relationship between their relative academic positions and seniority and how it affects the field research interview process.

They also point out that a good rapport can diminish research quality, especially when confidential information is offered leading to subsequent interview withdrawal or wiping the recording. Another factor is that a positive experience with the organisation researched or person interviewed may mean that potentially negative information and data is ignored. In conclusion, Barmeyer and Davoine stress the importance of appreciating that the type of intercultural reaction can vary in the course of the research and to act accordingly.

Part 3 is devoted to reports on regional fieldwork surveys. All the chapters make interesting reference to the challenges of fieldwork but the chapter on interviewing Vietnamese nurses and doctors by a Vietnamese and a German researcher raised points of particular importance for any researcher. First is timing. When is the best time to schedule an interview and how long should it last? In Vietnam the authors found breakfast/coffee time and fairly late evening were good, but no interview should last longer than one and a half hours maximum. If one and a half hours seems long remember that an introduction of fifteen minutes or so is usually part of the interview warm-up. Second is local support. If you are interviewing in a new country or a different region of a country, the support of locals who know the area and can help with any cultural or language difficulties due to regional differences will be worthwhile. Third is how to ask questions. Vietnamese interviewees are fairly 'high context' and don't like giving wrong answers that might be corrected. Therefore, they may prefer to give indirect answers. It is important to learn about the local communication style and frame your questions accordingly to get a response you can use. Fourth, how do you thank your interviewees? William Harvey stressed the importance of 'thank you' emails but in some environments a small present, even small amounts of money, may be preferable. All these will help build a climate of mutual trust that will get you the information you need.

In her afterword at the end of the book, Fiona Moore of Royal Holloway College, University of London, offers advice to researchers examining the cultures of business communities and business practitioners. She identifies three points. First, she refers to the gap between academia and business practice, endorsing Michael Chapman's argument that international business is detached from academic reality although, as can be seen in the previous book review, intercultural researchers, and writers like Robert Gibson link intercultural theory closely with business management methodology and examples from international business practice. In Fiona Moore's view it is important for the researcher to approach the case study of business practice honestly and with reflexivity. Her second point refers to business culture itself. We need to remember

that many of the business practice principles and methodologies, such as human resource management, originated in the United States, the world's first industrialised country, but may be interpreted differently in different business environments. Her third and final point refers to the distinction between tacit knowledge, based on personal impressions and specific cultural approaches, and data based explicit knowledge which itself may be subject to the researcher's own opinions. In summary, she says both the fieldwork researcher and the subject of the research need to develop a critical mindset to analyse the meanings attributed to knowledge.

All in all, then a useful and comprehensive guide for academic researchers, particularly into international business practice and its relationship to culture, covering principles and practice of effective fieldwork.

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News & Events

RUDN University News

10th International Research Conference Topical Issues of Linguistics and Teaching Methods in Business and Professional Communication

April 22-23, 2022 the Department of Foreign Languages at the Faculty of Economics held the 10th International research conference *Topical Issues of Linguistics and Teaching Methods in Business and Professional Communication*.

The total number of participants amounted to 126 people, including 37 international and 89 regional attendees presenting about 90 reports. The conference welcomed leading Russian and international scholars and was supported by Glasgow Caledonian University (UK), Tor Vergata University of Rome (Italy), University of Bonn (Germany), University of Salamanca (Spain), Nuh Naci Yazgan University (Turkey), Education First International Educational Centre (Italy), Alpha BK University (Serbia), National Ilan University (Taiwan), PeopleCert International Limited, Lomonosov Moscow State University (Russia), MGIMO University (Russia), Saint Petersburg State University (Russia), Samara National Research University (Russia), Novosibirsk State Technical University (Russia), Siberian Federal University (Russia), Financial University under the Government of the Russian Federation (Russia), Russian Presidential Academy of National Economy and Public Administration (Russia), Moscow Pedagogical State University (Russia), Pushkin State Russian Language Institute (Russia), Maxim Gorky Literature Institute (Russia) and other higher educational institutions.

Over the course of two days, six sections brought together experts in business communication, theoretical and applied linguistics, translation, and methodology of foreign language teaching. Conference participants had the opportunity to participate in master classes on language certification exams, the Spanish language, and effective reading skills.

Round table participants presented reports on *Contextual interpretation of the term 'buzzwords' as a component of manipulative rhetoric in professional commu-*

nication (by Elena N. Malyuga of RUDN University); *Specialised translation: optimisation of the learning process* (by Alexandra G. Anisimova of Lomonosov Moscow State University); *The most significant problems of linguodidactics of a foreign language for business and professional communication in the context of the digitalisation of language education* (by Tatiana A. Dmitrenko of Moscow Pedagogical State University); *On the correlation of reproductive and productive forms of teaching business dialogic communication* (by Svetlana N. Ledeneva and Evgenia V. Ponomarenko of MGIMO University).

The scientific forum marked the anniversary of the conference. The participants noted the value of the experience exchange and the never-ceasing relevance of the issues raised.

RUDN University Wins the Press Service of the Year Competition

The Faculty of Economics at Peoples' Friendship University of Russia is the winner of the Press Service of the Year international competition for public relations specialists. *'We were awarded a statuette and a diploma for the first place in the Best Student PR Project nomination on May 20, in Moscow, at the ART MOSCOW,'* – said a faculty representative. – *'This is the story of how a team of students and teachers, using the tools of integrated marketing communications, for the first time in four years, successfully addressed the urgent problem of a shortage in the faculty's unfunded openings. We are very pleased that the jury of this prestigious competition gave such a high rating to our work. According to the organisers of the competition, the project offered by RUDN University turned out exceptionally interesting and different from others. We appreciate our friends and mentors who helped us achieve such an impressive victory'.*

Young Scientist School 2022

May 19-20, 2022 the Young Scientist School 2022 was held at RUDN University. Its goal is to involve young people in the scientific and innovative environment, support young scientists, develop professional

competencies in the field of participation in research and publication of articles in high-ranking journals. The school is focused on preparing young scientists and graduate students to participate in competitions for scientific and innovative projects. Organised by the Science Directorate of Peoples' Friendship University of Russia with support from the Council of Young Scientists and faculty administration, the project is intended for graduate students and young scientists.

Night at Uni

May 20, 2022 RUDN University hosted the Night at Uni event for the first time. In the main building of RUDN University, the guests were welcomed by the communities of Burundi, Mexico, Cuba, Peru, Lebanon and Turkey and introduced to the culture of their countries. In the lobby, school and university students played foosball, mini-golf, cornhole and board games – Jenga, chess and Monopoly.

Next stop – a concert commencing with the performance of the Interclub team to the song 'Unlike'.

The official part of Night at Uni was led off by the Vice-Rector for Educational Activities Dr Yulia Ebzeeva, who noted that events like these are an opportunity to learn not only about the educational activities offered at the university, but also about its extracurricular life.

'I usually start with 'good morning', but it is so refreshing to be able to say 'good night' for a change. Clearly, there are a lot of us, and we are all so different. I believe RUDN University is the first one to host an event such as this one. I envy the applicants, for you have so many activities ahead of you. Before midnight you will discover an entire new world, which just might considerably change your plans,' – said Dr Ebzeeva.

Night at Uni at RUDN University is a VR trip to the Microsoft office and an excursion to Rome or Peru, insights into the presentation of a business idea to investors, the opportunity to try on the role of an investigator, forensic expert, judge, the search for life balance and the development of emotional intelligence.

The Faculty of Economics and the Institute of World Economy and Business held the Bank Robbery immersive action quest based on the Paper House TV series, where applicants could play both the roles of robbers and those of protectors.

Quests were divided into 3 types: economic, logical, and active.

The quest welcomed 50 applicants divided into three teams. The winners were given certificates and souvenirs as prizes.

TLC News

TLC Welcomes New Members of the Editorial and Advisory Boards

Training, Language and Culture is proud to welcome new members of the Editorial and Advisory Boards: Dr Wayne Rimmer of University of Manchester (UK), Dr Zrinka Friganović Sain of Rochester Institute of Technology (Croatia), and Dr Jean Langlois of Sciences Po (France).

Dr Wayne Rimmer is coordinator of International Association of Teachers of English as a Foreign Language (IATEFL), author of teaching materials and resource books published by Cambridge University Press. Doctor of Philology in Applied Linguistics at the University of Manchester, UK.

Dr Zrinka Friganović Sain is CSc in Linguistics, Professor at Rochester Institute of Technology Croatia, Dpt of Modern Languages and Cultures. Master of Science in Comparative Literature, University of Zagreb, Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences. Research interests cover foreign language teaching, comparative literature, and migrant literature.

Dr Jean Langlois is former associate researcher at CHART Research Centre (Human & Artificial Cognition, EPHE/Paris VI/Paris VIII), and a researcher at the National Institute for Research in Digital Sciences and Technology-INRIA. Taught one of the first courses in France on the impact of language on decision making, New Trends in Decision Making Science: Transdisciplinary and Transcultural Perspectives, with Zydney Wong at Sciences Po (2019). Currently works on the translation of several Chinese classics on strategy. Holds a Certification in Sanskrit from Karl Jaspers Centre for Advanced Transcultural Studies (Heidelberg University), a Masters in Cognitive Science and Psychology from Paris VIII University and a PhD in Mathematical Economics from PSL/ EHESS. Currently a student of the Executive Global Master in Management from LSE (London/Beijing/Bangalore). Research interests cover cognitive science, languages and culture.

TLC Editorial Board is composed of prominent international scholars who help oversee procedures for manuscript submission, acceptance, release, and publication, as well as the criteria for peer review and other editorial matters. This is a highly experienced and well-respected team of experts who take an active part in defining and following the journal's aims, scope, policies and editorial coverage. TLC editorial team is

happy to welcome the new members of the Editorial and Advisory Boards and are looking forward to future fruitful cooperation.

Applying to TLC Review Panel

Authors who have benefited from the peer review process are invited to consider becoming peer reviewers as a part of their professional responsibilities.

Training, Language and Culture requires a semi-formal process of appointment to the review panel, meaning that anyone interested in becoming a reviewer for Training, Language and Culture can do so by sending a request in free form to tlcjournal@rudn.ru.

Aspiring reviewers need to include in their request the general information about their professional background, affiliation, the scope of their expertise, their recent and/or most notable publications, as well as any personal and professional information that is accurate and a fair representation of their expertise, including verifiable and accurate contact information.

At Training, Language and Culture, we are always looking forward to extend our expert reviewer pool for the benefit of a more expedient, thorough and comprehensive publication process.

Submitting Book Reviews to TLC

Training, Language and Culture invites contributors to submit book reviews on relevant issues. A book review should present an objective critical assessment of the books revealing their merits and/or drawbacks in terms of their contribution to the relevant field of science within the range of the journal focus areas. Book reviews should follow the same format and style requirements as articles, the length being 1,500 to 2,000 words.

The review should introduce the reader to the book's content and focus on the subject of the book being reviewed. Reviewers need to include an exposition of how the book fits into the current thinking on the subject (e.g., a novel approach, an introduction, a magisterial review, the finest book on the subject ever written, etc.) and avoid repeating its table of contents; rather, give the reader some idea of the author's thesis and how they develop it.

If the book is an edited collection of essays, or chapters by different individuals, reviewers need to give some idea of the overall theme and content, but be free to focus on specific chapters they consider particularly significant or worthwhile. A review should inform the reader about what is happening in the area of academic activity the book addresses; what the state of knowledge is in the subject; and how this new book adds, changes, or breaks new ground in our knowledge of this subject. The review should be fair to the author, convey the content of the book (not chapter by chapter so much as the entire book), include pungent or revealing quotations from the book or notable findings.

Reviewers are expected to establish their authority to write the review, not point out the author's flaws, but display in a detailed and instructive way their expertise on the subject. It is essential to keep in mind the reader of the review or the audience of the book and focus on what this readership might be looking for. Judgments can be made more convincing by quoting examples from the book. It is also imperative for reviewers to be honest while writing a review and whilst concluding it.

Training, Language and Culture encourages the reviewers to acknowledge their work as big responsibility because it can influence a reader's decision of either choosing or rejecting the book.

TRAINING, LANGUAGE AND CULTURE

Published by
Federal State Autonomous Educational Institution of Higher Education
Peoples' Friendship University of Russia (RUDN University)
17923, GSP117198, Moscow, Russia, 6 Miklukho-Maklay Str.
tlcjournal@rudn.ru
<https://rudn.tlcjournal.org>



June 2022

ISSN 2520-2073 (Print)

ISSN 2521-442X (Online)

Volume 6 Issue 2

doi: [10.22363/2521-442X-2022-6-2](https://doi.org/10.22363/2521-442X-2022-6-2)

Quarterly journal published by

Peoples' Friendship University of Russia (RUDN University)