







## Psychological and pedagogical conditions conducive to the formation of intercultural competence among students from different countries

Elena I. Tsymbalyuk <sup>a</sup> , Nadezhda M. Romanenko <sup>b</sup> , Anastasyia V. Romanenko <sup>c</sup> ,  
Marina A. Volkova <sup>b</sup> 

<sup>a</sup> "Ion Creangă" State Pedagogical University of Chisinau, Chiinău, Republic of Moldova

<sup>b</sup> Moscow State Institute of International Relations (MGIMO), Moscow, Russian Federation

<sup>c</sup> Peoples' Friendship University of Russia (RUDN University), Moscow, Russian Federation

### APA Citation:

Tsymbalyuk, E.I., Romanenko, N.M., Romanenko, A.V., Volkova, M.A. (2021). Psychological and pedagogical conditions conducive to the formation of intercultural competence among students from different countries. *Journal of Language and Linguistic Studies*, 17(Special Issue 2), 1392-1409.

Submission Date: 04/01/2021

Acceptance Date: 15/03/2021

---

### Abstract

The most important task of modern education is the development of students' skills to successfully interact with representatives of other cultures, to effectively respond to requests, challenges and opportunities arising in intercultural situations. This article presents the formation of intercultural communication of foreign students by means of the Russian language and literature on the example of students of KSPU named after I. Creanga (Republic of Moldova), as well as on an overview of the process of teaching foreign students of MGIMO and the Peoples' Friendship University of Russia. As part of a comparative analysis of the results obtained at the initial and final stages, a quantitatively and qualitatively higher level of IQC was recorded among foreign students of the experimental group at the final, final stage of the study. It was found that specially created psychological and pedagogical conditions, representing the introduction of the model of the formation of intercultural competence into educational activities, significantly improved the result of the experimental group. This testifies to the effectiveness and efficiency of the proposed model.

© 2021 JLLS and the Authors - Published by JLLS.

*Keywords:* intercultural competence; dialogue of cultures; Russian language and literature; foreign students; elective course

---

### 1. Introduction

The increasing flow of foreign students to international universities and their intercultural interaction "mix" national cultures more intensively than before. The most important duty of modern education is to expand students' skills to successful interaction with members of other cultures, that is,

---

<sup>1</sup> Corresponding author.

E-mail address: [tsymbalyuk5025@murdoch.in](mailto:tsymbalyuk5025@murdoch.in)

“properly and effectively respond to requests, challenges and opportunities that arise in intercultural situations” (Competences for Democratic Culture, 2016). Of course, this requires the creation of conditions for subjects of the educational process to get the practice of international communication based on mutual understanding. The solution to this problem can be the creation of intercultural skills among students, since it is, they who will work with culturally different people, correctly understand their similarities and differences, know and accept their values, traditions and lifestyle, be tolerant of them, affirm with their personal deeds and words, cultural pluralism in society (Dmitriev, 1999).

This article presents the creation of intercultural communication of foreign students with help of the Russian language and literature on the example of students of Creanga SPU (Republic of Moldova), as well as on the review material of the process of training foreign students at MGIMO and the Peoples' Friendship University of Russia. The number of foreign students in Russian universities is growing every year. Today, students from 62 countries study at MGIMO, including from the Republic of Korea, Japan, China, Turkey, India, Afghanistan, Vietnam, Cambodia, Belgium, Great Britain, Germany, Canada, France, the USA, Greece, Mongolia, Norway, Syria, Israel, Thailand, Sweden, Switzerland and other states. RUDN University united even more countries – more than 150, which makes it impossible to list them on the pages of the article. This fact means the arrival and “entry” into the university environment of Russian universities of a large number of different cultures and nationalities with their own way of life, traditions, customs, culinary preferences (Kohis et al., 1994).

Founded in 1960, the University of Peoples' Friendship with the name of Patrice Lumumba, the symbol of the struggle of the peoples of Africa for independence, is freely trained and engaged in scientific research outside the political context, firmly following the great principles of friendship and mutual support. The main mission of the Peoples' Friendship University of Russia is to bring together representatives of different cultures and nationalities with knowledge. This association became possible due to the fact that many faculties and taught disciplines are in Russian. Russian language and Russian literature brought together students from one and a half hundred countries of the world, reaching today the number of students up to 27000. Not only students speak Russian, but graduate students, residents, interns from around the world.

The project “Russian language as a means of intercultural communication at RUDN University”, carried out from 2018 to 2019, was aimed at strengthening and expanding the possibilities of using the Russian language as a means of interethnic communication, improving the quality of in-depth knowledge of the Russian language, given that many disciplines are taught at RUDN University in Russian. Within the framework of the project, numerous events were held that made students interested in learning the Russian language: the Olympics (“Russian is the language of friendship of different nations”, “Russian is the language of Pushkin, Dostoevsky and Tolstoy”), quizzes, theatre kaleidoscopes (songs and dialogs from performances), theatrical scenes and images of Russian drama (“Eugene Onegin”, “Three Sisters”, “The Minor”), master classes in speech culture, competitions in Russian calligraphy, student presentations (“My Tolstoy”, “My Beloved fairy tales of Puskin”, “Golden Ring that united us all”), an exhibition dedicated to the Russian language, contests for reading poems in Russian, etc. The implemented project “Russian language as a means of intercultural communication” brought students and teachers a lot of joy and satisfaction. Meanwhile, teachers noted problems with teaching Russian as a foreign language. Numerous proposals and recommendations were made on their solution and consideration in the implementation of subsequent projects.

Since 1946, MGIMO has been providing professional training to international students – future specialists in the field of the international profile. The main task of the Russian language department is the language training of foreign students. Since 1999, the department is a member of the Russian Society of Teachers of Russian Language and Literature, which allows it to be in a single information space that unites all the leading Russian experts in the field of Russian language and literature and to

actively work in scientific cooperation with foreign colleagues. At the scientific and methodological seminars, the work of modern linguists and methodologists, as well as the results of research by teachers of the department are discussed. The main purpose of teaching a foreign student at a university is to master his chosen speciality, and prepare for future professional activities. Achieving this purpose is carried out through the study of the language of professional communication, the creation of professional foreign language skills, which should allow a modern specialist to read professional texts, extract and process information from printed and electronic information sources in accordance with the goal. The teachers of the Russian language department of MGIMO note the special importance of teaching students from another countries the language of the speciality, therefore, creative teams have been created at the department to study the features of the language of professional communication. The results of their work are scientific articles, teaching aids and development, writing and PhD defence (Afanasyeva, 2009; Mogilyova, 1989; Dremov, 1984; Zakharchenko, 2006).

The Ion Creanga State Pedagogical University, founded in 1940, is also no less diverse in its national palette, where representatives of various nationalities are studying – Moldovans, Gypsies, Romanians, Russians, Bulgarians, Ukrainians, Gagauzi, Jews, etc. That is, today Creanga SPU, MGIMO and RUDN University, like other international universities, turned out to be included in intercultural, international processes and contacts of representatives of different cultures, which, of course, have a high potential for international solidarity aimed at cultural mutual enrichment. By the example of the presented universities, with multinational student groups, the Russian language, as one of the official languages of the UN, plays the role of an important mediator connecting the bridge between different traditions, customs, and faiths.

The question of the formation of intercultural competence of students in universities where foreign students study is a legitimate one, due to the historical multiculturalism of countries, the socio-economic and socio-political changes, which took place in Moldova and Russia at the beginning of the 21st century (Kural, 2020; Çiloğlan and Bardakçı, 2019). In this regard, the problem of communication (successful interaction) of representatives of different cultures becomes an important state task. The social order of the Moldovan society is reflected in state regulatory documents: the National Qualifications Framework, University Curricula and Curriculums, which indicate that the graduate should strive to improve interpersonal relations, understand different cultures and their traditions in order to promote multiculturalism, show tolerance in communication and respect for universal, cultural values, that is, to show the capacity and desire to engage intercultural cooperation. Therefore, the goal – the creation of intercultural skills of students – is the answer to the social order of society.

This goal has both external and internal orientation. The external goal of the formation of intercultural competence as a social phenomenon is to stabilise interethnic relations, to take into consideration the cultural peculiarities and interests of each people living in Moldova or Russia, in pursuit of intercultural dialogue. The internal orientation is to form not only certain knowledge of foreign students, but also to educate them as active actors in intercultural communication. In general, the formed intercultural competence implies the presence of such a volume of knowledge, skills, and value relationships that is necessary in order to adapt to the realities of a multicultural environment, and sufficient to be ready and able to actively act in it.

In modern pedagogy, there is a strong opinion that the creation of intercultural skills can be implemented mainly in the framework of linguistic training in the study of foreign languages. In this regard, the principle of “culture through language” is traditionally laid at the heart of the process of its formation, including through the hidden content of education (Shishlova and Kuritsyn, 2017). However, today it is becoming obvious: “knowing what the other person is saying and understanding

her is not the same thing, and the technical absence of a language barrier is not a way to overcome the cultural barrier” (Zwick, 2014). In this regard, the assumption of modern scholars that the successful formation of intercultural competence is possible and even preferable in the study of fiction deserves special attention. Moreover, there is an opinion that the process of studying literature should turn into intercultural education and training. In other words, the implementation of the goal – the creation of intercultural skills of foreign students – should be possible when studying the Russian language and Russian literature.

The exceptional importance of studying the Russian language and literature in the intercultural interaction for the population of Moldova is determined by the following judgments. On the one hand, in the republic, the Russian language and Russian literature are non-native for representatives of national minorities, just as the literature of the titular nation is non-native. As the doctor of historical sciences E.V. Ratseeva rightly notes, Moldovan citizen, Bulgarian by nationality is (most often) a student of a school with the Russian language. For him, native literature is Bulgarian, and Russian, Romanian (Moldavian), as well as other, are non-native (Ratseeva, 2010). Consequently, for the representatives of the national minorities of Moldova themselves, their literature is their native language, and the Russian language is non-native, foreign. On the other hand, an important factor in this aspect is the functioning of the Russian language in the territory of Moldova. This is due to the fact that historically a specific linguistic situation has been created in the republic: Moldovan-Russian bilingualism is the main communication tool in our multinational country, which allows Russian-speaking citizens of Moldova not only to integrate into Moldovan society, but also to preserve their cultural identity.

One of the main and basic properties of a language is its universality, which allows to realise not only intra-cultural but also intercultural communication. This feature of the Russian language is implemented in the context of intercultural interaction between Moldavian universities and Russian universities. Despite the fact that in Moldova, the Russian language is officially deprived of the status of a language of interethnic communication, de facto this is a language through which representatives of different nationalities can freely interact with each other (Tsybalyuk, 2019). It is taught in pre-university educational institutions with the Romanian language of education; in many schools, gymnasiums, lyceums of the republic (20%), education is in Russian. The Russian-speaking part of the country's population, which includes not only ethnic Russians, but also Ukrainians, Gagauz, Bulgarians, Jews, Poles, Belarusians, Gypsies, etc., uses the Russian language as equally understandable and equally accessible to communicate with each other as official (in state institutions, educational institutions, services, at work, etc.), and unofficial (in public places, transport, on the streets, etc.). The Russian language is also popular among the titular population – Moldavians (only 1% of the population does not know Russian at all). Moreover, for representatives of national minorities, the Russian language acts as a second along with the language of their nationality. Many of them do not know any other language than Russian. Obviously, for all of them, the Russian language is the only one that unites them. Thus, the Russian language is a means of building intercultural interaction.

In this context, the study of the Russian language and Russian literature will contribute, firstly, to the formation of a person who is ready to become a fully-fledged subject of intercultural communication. Secondly, to build a dialogue of cultures of ethnically different people living in the same territory and in the same historical time, which is of particular importance in a multinational and multicultural state, such as the Republic of Moldova. In light of the foregoing, it is equally important that the spiritual needs of Russian-speaking residents of the country are largely oriented towards Russia and connected with it (Ostapenko et al., 2012). Moreover, in Moldova, the strength of the influence of the Russian language and Russian culture as a whole is explained not by the number of

the Russian-speaking population, but by other, long-term, deep and stable phenomena and processes: the cultural life of Bessarabia in the 19th century. For more than a century, it developed in the Russian context, was built on samples of Russian culture (Voevoda et al., 2017), in the 20th century, Moldova was a part of the Soviet Union and the life of the peoples inhabiting it was also associated with the Russian world and Russian values. The Russian language in Moldova has always served as a conductor of the achievements of world science and culture. This determined its high status in the minds of Moldovans. Thus, participation in the Russian world becomes the support on which it is possible to build effective intercultural communication between representatives of different nationalities in Moldova and on the basis of this achievement of their spiritual and cultural unity.

Russian culture, which largely shapes the worldview, as philologists rightly point out, has been known and is known through fiction (Ionova, 2014). In a literary work, the main medium of cultural information and the spokesman of national mentality is language. Moreover, exactly in the art form language has the ability to be realised in its entirety. It is also indisputable that a deep comprehension of literary works is impossible without appropriate knowledge of the language. Therefore, the Russian language is a basic component in the study of Russian literature. At the same time, as noted above, the functioning of the Russian language and literature is important not only for the Russian-speaking communicative space in the republic, but also for building a dialogue of cultures. In this regard, the most important function of the Russian language and literature as uniting the multinational population of the Republic of Moldova is highlighted – this is the function of intercultural communication. Consequently, the study of the Russian language and Russian literature as parts of Russian culture will contribute to the successful creation of intercultural skills of foreign students and the subsequent building of intercultural dialogue between representatives of all nationalities living in Moldova.

At the same time, according to modern researchers, there is still no integral concept of training competent participants in intercultural communication (Riordan-Karlsson, 2004). The question of how to practically implement this process also remains open. In this regard, the research problem is formulated, which is also the goal of the work. This is the answer to the question “How to ensure the effective creation of intercultural skills of foreign students of Moldovan universities with the help of the Russian language and literature?” As part of the research on the problem of the creation of the ICC of future specialists, the authors pose the research questions for the first time: a) determination of the theoretical and methodological justification and clarification of the concept of the ICC; b) development of substantive and technological support for the creation of the ICC of foreign students with the help of the Russian language and literature; c) the introduction into the educational process of a model for the creation of the studied skills through the method of experiment.

The article proposes special psychological and pedagogical terms that ensure the creation of a higher and more qualitative level of international students' ICC through the introduction of the course "Russian language and literature through a prism of a national character", including an innovative and comprehensive methodology for studying the Russian language and literature, as well as training for playing out intercultural situations and case studies using audio-visual and interactive technologies, which together were effective prognostic tools that promote the formation of the ICC among international students. This study is devoted to the development and implementation of a model for the formation of the ICC of foreign students with the help of the Russian language and literature, for which the structural-component composition of the studied construct (cognitive, communicative-activity, and value-emotional components) was initially determined. The obtained results endorsed the authors' hypothesis that specially created psychological and pedagogical terms, the development and implementation of a model, and the author's elective course contribute to the creation of a higher and more qualitative level of international students' ICC.

### *1.1. Literature review*

The concept “intercultural competence” entered the scientific discourse in the early 1970s, when intercultural communication was developing as an independent scientific field. Intercultural competence is formed in the process of mastering a particular type of communication – intercultural communication, which is regarded as “a process of communication and interaction between representatives of different cultures or cultural communities” (Sadokhin, 2006). One of the key concepts in the theory of intercultural communication is the concept of “dialogue of cultures”, the interpretation of which is widely represented in the philosophy and history of culture (Losev, 1999; Likhachev, 1983), literary criticism and semiotics (Bakhtin, 1996, Lotman, 2010), linguistics (Ter-Minasova, 2000) and pedagogy (Bibler, 1991; Passov, 2003). The central importance of dialogue in culture and the special role of the polyphony of cultures were confirmed in their works by the Russian philosopher, culturologist, theorist of European culture and art M.M. Bakhtin (1996). The ideas of the scientist were deepened and expanded by V.S. Bibler, who has laid the dialogue of cultures at the core of his pedagogical system. Scientists are unanimous in that “the dialogue understood in the idea of culture is <...> always a dialogue of different cultures” (Boldyrev; 2009); cultural identity is revealed only in dialogue; through dialogue mutual understanding can be achieved (Bakhtin, 1996; Bibler, 1991).

The dialogue of cultures acts as the main characteristic of the modern education system. The concept of intercultural dialogue is one of the theories on the basis of which an analysis of modern trends in the development of pedagogy of higher education (Kasatkin and Ivkina, 2018) is possible, which are aimed at the formation of means, conditions and mechanisms of personality self-awareness. Introducing students to the dialogue of cultures is very important from the point of view of their education and upbringing, since “the formation of a person of culture, a person of spirituality always occurs due to the dialogue of cultures” (Passov, 2003). At the same time, the dialogue of cultures is a means of forming and developing intercultural competence. Intercultural competence as a subject of scientific understanding is widely represented in the research of modern scientists: Western (Byram, 2000; Knapp, 2003), Russian (Galskova and Gez, 2004; Sadokhin, 2006; Safonova, 2004; Elizarova, 2001; Pluzhnik, 2003) and Moldavian (Zvik, 2014; Barbenyagre, 2011; Gerlovan, 2011).

According to the pedagogical tradition, in the framework of vocational training, the formation of intercultural competence is carried out in the context of linguistic disciplines, that is, language education, with an artistic text playing the supporting role (Ter-Minasova, 2000; Khaleeva, 2000; Sadokhin, 2006; Safonova, 2004; Elizarova, 2001; etc.). However, modern studies show that for the formation of intercultural competence, the literary work is the beneficial material, since the literary text of the national literary work is a “capacitor of cultural memory” (Lotman, 2010). The analysis of a literary text as a means of creating intercultural competence is considered by few scholars, including Ibragimova (2008), Tokareva (2010), Fedotova (2015), Zaikovski (2003), Tswik (2014) and others. However, it should be noted that currently there is a lack of research in which the intercultural competence of foreign students would be formed by means of the Russian language and literature.

Thus, despite the impressive list of domestic and foreign studies on the problem of the formation of intercultural competence in higher education, its degree of development is not fully presented. It can be stated that a) there is no unified structural-component composition of the studied construct; b) the theoretical aspects are insufficiently studied and the practical aspects of the formation of the ICC in general and in the study of the Russian language and literature, in particular, are not fully represented; c) the substantive and technological support of the process of the formation of the ICC has not been developed, which can significantly change its effectiveness and involve the pedagogical and

educational and didactic potential of the university; d) a complete understanding by foreign students of the need for an ICC in their professional luggage has not been achieved (Gagnon and Collay, 2006).

## **2. Materials and methods**

The study was conducted on the basis of the philological faculty of the Creanga State Pedagogical University of the Republic of Moldova. The control and experimental groups were formed from first and second year students studying in the speciality “Russian language and literature. English language” (curriculum code according to the list of areas of vocational training and specialities in higher education RM 0114.9/0114.10). When selecting parallel groups of subjects, the requirements of sample uniformity were taken into account. The methodology for the formation of the ICC of foreign students includes three stages. At the first, ascertaining stage, students of the EG and CG participated in identifying the initial level of the IWC.

At the second, formative stage, students of the CG were involved in the educational process for the study of pedagogical disciplines, in accordance with the curriculum of Creanga SPU. Students of EG at the formative stage were included, in addition to the specified educational process, in specially organised conditions for the formation of the ICC by means of the Russian language and literature. The third, control, stage was carried out by analogy with the first, that is, students from both groups were involved in it. At the first stage, to identify the initial levels of each of the components (cognitive, communicative-active, and value-emotional) of the ICC, the following were used:

1. The author's “Diagnostics of intercultural erudition of students”, which is a questionnaire consisting of 60 statements with which respondents could agree or not. Interpretation of results: for each correct answer 1 point was assigned, for statements No. 1, 2, 7, 9, 10, 12, 13, 14, 15, 19, 20, 21, 26, 28, 29, 30, 31, 32, 35, 36, 39, 40, 45, 47, 48, 50, 53, 55, 57, 58 the correct answer was “yes”, for the others – “no”. The more the student scored, the higher the level of his intercultural erudition.

2. The “Written interview” questionnaire, which includes 6 questions that were aimed at identifying students' knowledge gained from the Russian language and literature, that is, signs of national cultural life, manifestations of a Russian character, motivation of the elements and decisions of the author expressing Russian identity and etc. According to the instructions, the subjects had to independently give complete detailed answers, each of which was evaluated from 0 to 3 points.

3. Self-assessment questionnaire “Intercultural communication skills”, in which respondents were asked to rate these statements on a five-point scale, depending on the degree of their agreement/disagreement or the severity of their stated qualities. Depending on the number of points scored (significance indicators were summed up), the level of demonstrated skills was determined.

4. A test by the method of diagnostic cards, which allowed not only to accurately identify the skills that a student is able to demonstrate in the process of interaction with representatives of other cultures, but also to assess his ability to cope with intercultural situations. Assessment of the test results was carried out according to a specially developed scale for the analysis of diagnostic cards, in which the severity of the seven parameters was determined in numerical indicators from 0 to 5 points.

5. The methodology for diagnosing the level of empathic abilities of V.V. Boyko, the peculiarity of which is that its use allows to measure not only the level of empathy of respondents, but also the settings that promote or impede it. The methodology consists of 36 statements with which respondents should either agree or not. The total score is determined on the basis of counting

the number of answers corresponding to the “key”. The higher the total score, the higher the level of empathic abilities of the respondent.

6. The modified and adapted methodology "Value Orientations" by M. Rokich, which is associated with the study of the system of value orientations of foreign students, since it determines the content side of the personality's orientation, forms the basis of her relationship to the world, to other people, to itself, her worldview foundation, life concept, "philosophy of life", the core of the motivation of life activity. The technique is based on the direct ranking of the list of terminal and instrumental values. Its advantage is versatility, convenience and cost-effectiveness in conducting research, processing results, as well as flexibility – the ability to vary stimulus material (lists of values). Students were provided with two lists of values arranged in alphabetical order, and instrumental values were presented as important for building an intercultural dialogue. Respondents should distribute the values in each group in order of their importance to them as the principles, by which they are guided in life, and assign a rank number (from 1 to 9) to each value.

7. Situational modelling “Rearrangement of roles”, involving the creation of a situation in which a participant in the educational process can gain real sensory experience, emotionally experience the state of representatives of a different culture, experience one or another of their roles. In this case, the basic principle was the answer to the question “What do I feel in a situation of a hero?” Students received a task, for the assessment of which a special scale was developed with 10 parameters, each of which was evaluated by an expert group from 0 to 5 points.

The procedure for processing the results was carried out by calculating the algebraic sum of points scored by each foreign student. To distribute the results obtained at the appropriate levels (basic, intermediate, advanced), the authors used the three-level diagnostic technique proposed by L. Mitina and E.S. Askomovets (2001), according to which the coefficient of 0.45 is assigned to the upper boundary of the base level and 0.75 to the upper boundary of the middle level. To determine the boundaries of the levels, the formulas were used:  $U_1 = \Sigma_{min} + (\Sigma_{max} - \Sigma_{min}) \cdot 0.45$ ;  $U_2 = \Sigma_{min} + (\Sigma_{max} - \Sigma_{min}) \cdot 0.75$ , where  $U_1$  and  $U_2$  are quantitative indicators of the upper boundaries of the base and middle levels;  $\Sigma_{min}$  and  $\Sigma_{max}$  – the minimum and maximum possible total points for the block.

The results of the data obtained at the first stage for both groups of students (control and experimental) showed a certain similarity in the levels of ICC for them, and most of the respondents demonstrated compliance with the basic level, which is insufficient for successful interaction in a multicultural society. This led to the need to create special conditions for the experimental group that could, in the future, increase the level of ICC among international students. In this regard, at the second stage, as the main technology contributing to the formation of a higher level of the ICC of foreign students, an elective course “Russian language and literature through the prism of a national character” was introduced, which included an innovative methodology for studying Russian literature, trainings for playing intercultural situations (“Constellation of cultures”, “How and why?”, “Through time and space”, “Getting into dialogue”), case studies using audio-visual and interactive technologies (“Original Russian issues”, “Method of solution”, “Position”, “Emotions or rationality”, “But am I not Russian myself?”).

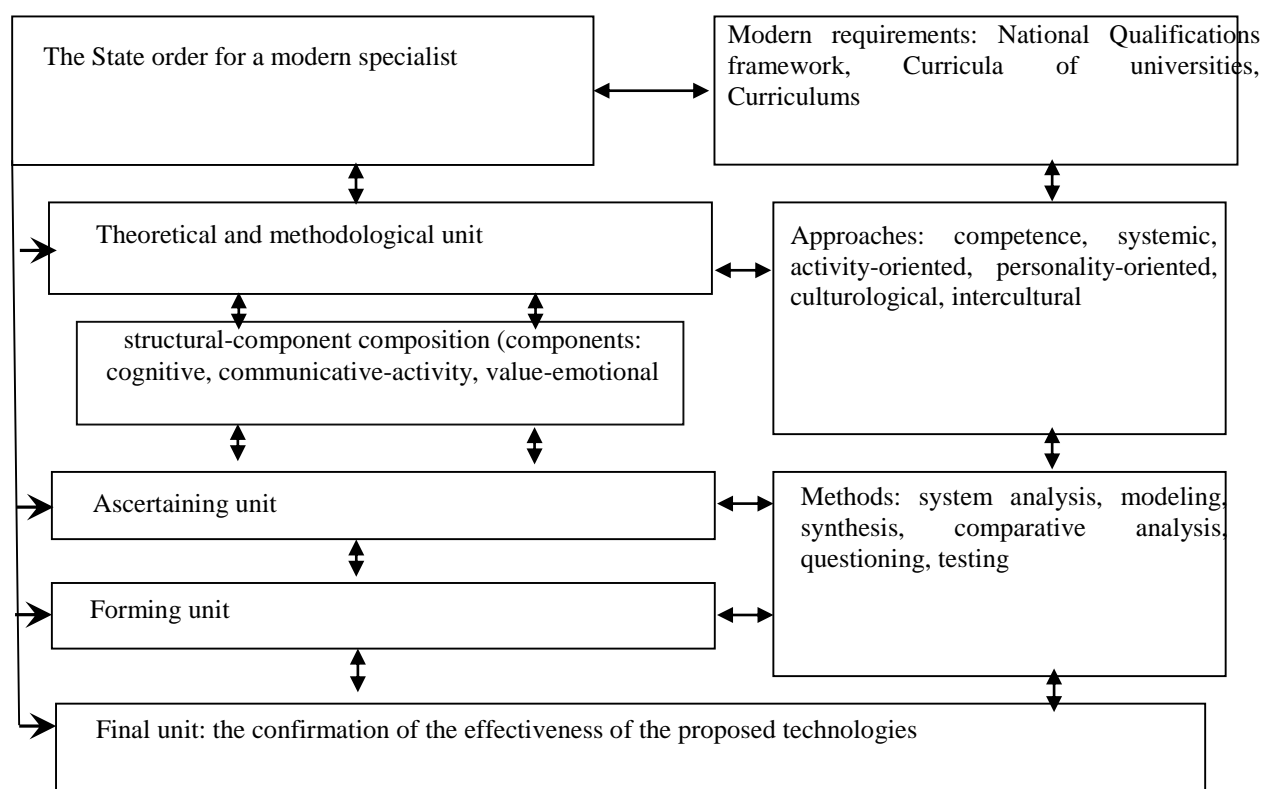
It is worth noting that the students of the control group during the experiment studied according to standard programs in accordance with the LAVTS HE (list of areas of vocational training and specialities in higher education) (0114.9/0114.10) and did not participate in the formative stage, were not placed in special conditions as students of the experimental group, which made it possible to further compare their results with the results of the experimental group. At the third stage, using the same methods as at the first stage, a diagnosis was made of the level of formation of intercultural



competence of foreign students participating in the experiment, which allowed a comparative analysis of the results obtained. To visualise the results obtained, tabulation methods and diagrams were used. In the framework of the comparative analysis, the obtained final results of identifying the levels of ICC formation in foreign students of the experimental and control groups were correlated with the data of the ascertaining stage. This made it possible to fix a quantitatively and qualitatively higher level of ICC among foreign students of the experimental group at the control stage.

### 3. Results

Theoretical and methodological analysis determined the strict logic of the study in the form of modelling the four-stage process of the formation of the ICC of foreign students, which is interconnected and interdependent blocks (Fig. 1).



**Figure 1.** Model of the process of formation of intercultural competence of international students

#### 3.1. Theoretical and methodological unit

The first unit of the model assumed a theoretical justification of the essence and content of the main subject of the study – “intercultural competence of foreign students”, the development of its structural-component composition. To understand the degree of development of this problem, a theoretical and methodological study was conducted in the field of pedagogy, intercultural education, literary criticism: the theory of intercultural communication (Hall, 1959; Vereshchagin, 2005; Kostomarov, 2005); intercultural competence (Byram, 2000; Knapp, 2003; Galskova and Gez, 2004; Sadokhin, 2006; Safonova, 2004; Elizarova, 2001; Pluzhnik, 2003; Tsvik, 2014; Ibragimova, 2008; etc.); the specifics of the educational activity of a teacher in a multicultural environment (Gukalenko, 2013.), the theory of dialogue of cultures (Bakhtin, 1996; Bibler, 1991; Safonova, 2004); the concepts of a secondary linguistic personality (Elizarova, 2001; Furmanova, 2009) and intercultural personality (Pluzhnik, 2003; Zwick, 2014); theories and methods of forming intercultural competence (Elizarova,

2001; Pluzhnik, 2003); methods of analysis of a literary text as a means of forming intercultural competence (Ibragimova, 2008; Tokareva, 2010; Fedotova, 2015; Tsvik, 2014).

Clarification of the content of the concept of “intercultural competence” directly affects the transforming stage of research and its content, selection and implementation of technologies. After analysing an impressive number of works, the authors concluded that studies of intercultural competence take place in different areas of scientific and humanitarian knowledge and are often interdisciplinary in nature. Despite the fact that today this concept is one of the most frequently used in the scientific pedagogical literature, many researchers put different contents into it. In accordance with this, there is still no single definition of intercultural competence, which is explained by the multidimensionality, versatility of this concept, as well as differences in the author's approaches to its study.

An analysis of the definitions presented in the scientific literature allows to draw the following conclusion. Intercultural competence is the ability of a person to understand and accept a foreign culture and, on the basis of this, achieve successful interaction in a multicultural society and mediate between one's own culture and the interlocutor's culture – a mediator of cultures, while preserving their own identity. It is based on a cognitive basis – knowledge of the specifics of cultures, their differences and the characteristics of their interaction – in conjunction with a complex of skills to discover, absorb and use this knowledge, as well as value relationships based on openness, respect, tolerance, empathy, emotional mood to overcome a different kind of prejudices and stereotypes.

Clarification of the concept of “intercultural competence” allowed to come to the conclusion that the structural component of the intercultural competence of a foreign student includes three components: cognitive knowledge, communicative-active and value-emotional. Each of them reveals the essence of intercultural competence in a certain aspect (Tsybalyuk, 2018). The first reflects its normative basis, the second fixes the personality's ability to solve typical and non-standard tasks of intercultural interaction, the third is meaning-forming, and its functioning provides a combination of cognitive-knowledge and communicative-active personality traits into a single whole. Moreover, the presence of individual links in this system cannot guarantee the effective implementation of the goals of intercultural communication. A truly successful intercultural interaction and understanding are possible only if all components of intercultural competence are integrated.

### *3.2. Ascertaining unit*

This unit was supposed to identify the initial level of formation of intercultural competence of foreign students in the control and experimental groups, the content of which is represented by three components: cognitive, communicative-active and value-emotional. To identify the level of the cognitive component, the “Diagnostics of intercultural erudition of students” and the “Written interview” questionnaires were used, which were specially developed by the authors for this study. As a result, it was found that 52% of students in the EG and 31% in the CG completed the tasks according to the criteria of the basic level of the cognitive component of the ICC, 30% of the respondents in the EG and 46% in the CG completed the tasks at a middle level, and 18% in the EG and 23% in the CG found knowledge corresponding to advance the level of this component ICC.

The level of the communicative-active component of the ICC was determined through a self-assessment questionnaire “Intercultural communication skills” and testing using the diagnostic card method. After processing the data of the measuring materials, the authors obtained the following results. The basic level of the studied component of the ICC was found by 79% of foreign students in the EG and 71% in the CG; results corresponding to the middle level showed 15% in the EG and 26%

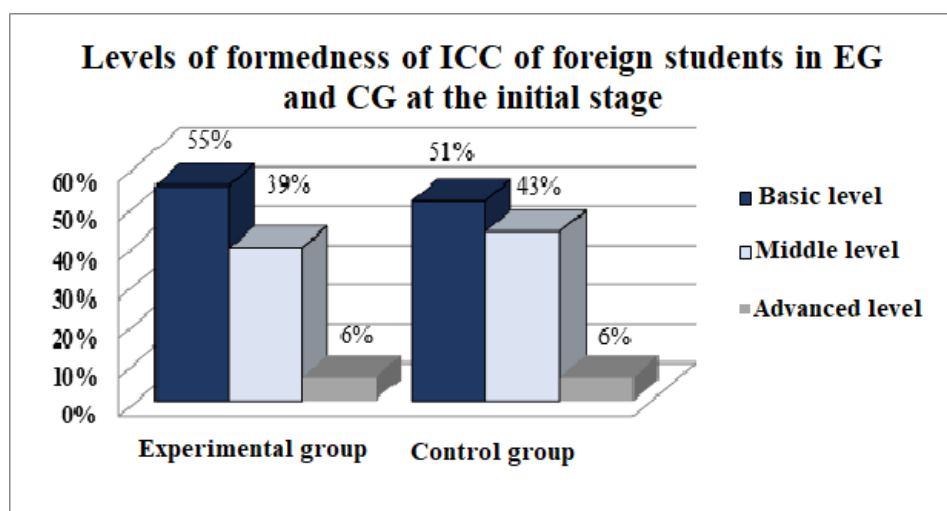
in the CG; skills corresponding to an advanced level in the EG were demonstrated by 6% of the subjects, and in the CG 3%.

In order to identify the level of the value-emotional component, authors used V.V. Boyko’s Method for diagnosing the level of empathic abilities, M. Rokich’s “Value Orientations” methodology and "Rearrangement of roles" situation modelling. The conjugate application of these methods allowed to record the following results. The basic level in the EG is 64% of future specialists and 57% in the CG; medium – 27% in the EG and 31% in the CG; advanced – 9% in the EG and 11% in the CG. For greater clarity, the authors used the tabulation method, placing the results in a table (Table 1).

**Table 1.** Indicators of the level of formation of components of intercultural competence among international students of the EG and the CG at an ascertaining stage of 100%

Levels	Components of intercultural competence among international students					
	Cognitive		Communicative-active		Value-emotional	
	EG	CG	EG	CG	EG	CG
Basic	52	31	79	71	64	57
Middle	30	46	15	26	27	31
Advanced	18	23	6	3	9	11

The determination of the levels of intercultural competence in general among foreign students in the EG and CG was carried out by calculating the algebraic sum of points scored by each student and distributing the results obtained at the appropriate levels, the boundaries of which were determined using the method of L. Mitina and E.S. Askomovets. Authors demonstrated the identified levels using the method of diagrams (Fig. 2).



**Figure 2.** Levels of formation of intercultural competence of international students EG and CG in the initial stage

Having received the results on the formation of the main intercultural competence of foreign students in general and its components in particular, authors concluded that it is necessary to organize special and consistent training that can change the initial indicators in the future and ensure the dynamics of the formed qualities, that is, increase the level of the ICC. The introduction of techniques

and technologies into the educational process was carried out as part of the next transformative stage of the study.

### *3.3. Forming unit*

This unit suggested the introduction of the elective course "Russian language and literature through a prism of a national character", which includes an innovative methodology for studying the Russian language and Russian literature, training for playing intercultural situations, case studies using audio-visual and interactive technologies. The concept of the course was based on the following provisions:

1. The literary text is considered as a source of culture, an expression of the national character and mentality of the people.
2. Cultural components bearing a specific national coloring are presented in the content of the literary text.
3. The study of literary text and work with it contains great potential and a wide field for activities aimed at the formation of intercultural competence of students.

Processing a work of art is implemented using an innovative methodology for studying Russian literature. It includes a detailed methodological apparatus, reflecting the stages of work, its features and sequence, offering a system of exercises, tasks, questions, various techniques and methods aimed at identifying, perceiving, understanding and comprehending the national-cultural component of the studied works. The course content includes:

Topic 1. An artistic text as a unit of national-cultural discourse reveals a) the basic concepts of national culture, including those used in the study of works; b) the concept of Russian national culture; c) the history of the formation of the Russian national character and its features.

Theme 2. National world and Russian character in the novel by A.S. Pushkin "The Captain's Daughter" (analysis of a passage of the work using the specified methodology).

Theme 3. Novel of M. Yu. Lermontov "Hero of our time" – a look at "The Other" (Chapter "Bela") (viewing and analysis of a fragment of the film "Hero of our time", directed by Alexander Kott, 2006).

Theme 4. The study of the national-cultural component of the novel by I. S. Turgenev "Fathers and Sons" (case studies based on chapter X: "Original Russian issues", "Solution", "Position", "Emotions or rationality", "But am I not Russian myself?").

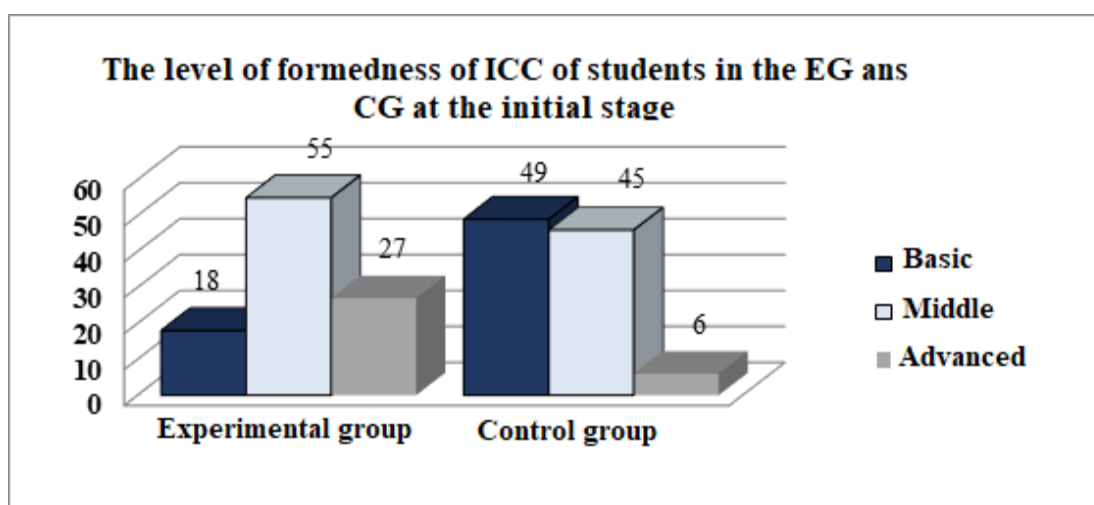
Theme 5. The specifics of the national-cultural approach to the study of Russian literature on the example of the story of Leo Tolstoy's "Prisoner of the Caucasus" (dramatisation in the work).

Topic 6. The literary text is a source of culture, an exponent of national character and mentality (cognitive training "Constellation of cultures", training of attribution "How and why?", Behavioural training "Through time and space", situational training "We enter into dialogue").

### *3.4. Final unit*

This unit was to identify the final results of the formed intercultural competence among foreign students of the experimental and control groups and confirm the effectiveness of the proposed elective course. To do this, we turned to the same techniques that were used at the initial stage. Counting the scores for the cognitive-knowledge component, a slightly different picture is obtained: at an advanced level, students of the EG now showed higher rates than students of the CG, which amounted to 58% and 20%, respectively, at middle level – 33% and 57%, at the basic level – 9% and 23%. When comparing the data of the initial and final stages, it was recorded that in the EG the number of foreign students with an advanced level increased by 40%, and the basic level decreased by 43%.

A change in the indicators of the communicative-active component was also recorded. The number of foreign students who demonstrated proficiency in the advanced level of the studied component was 30% in the EG and 0% in the CG, at the middle level 48% of respondents in the EG and 34% in the CG completed the tasks, at the basic level – 21% in the EG and 66% in KG. In the EG advanced level: + 24%, average: + 33%. The identification of the value-emotional component made it possible to note that the number of students with an advanced level of this component increased in the EG by 21% and amounted to 30%, and in the CG by 3%, which amounted to 14%. Also in the EG, the number of those who showed results corresponding to the average level increased by 15%, and this amounted to 42%, while in the CG this indicator was 34%, which is only 3% more than at the ascertaining stage. The number of those who demonstrated the basic level in the EG decreased by 37% and amounted to 27%, and in the CG by 6% and became equal to 51%. The final level of formation of intercultural competence of foreign students was determined in the same way as at the ascertaining stage. The obtained data is demonstrated using the method of diagrams (Fig. 3).



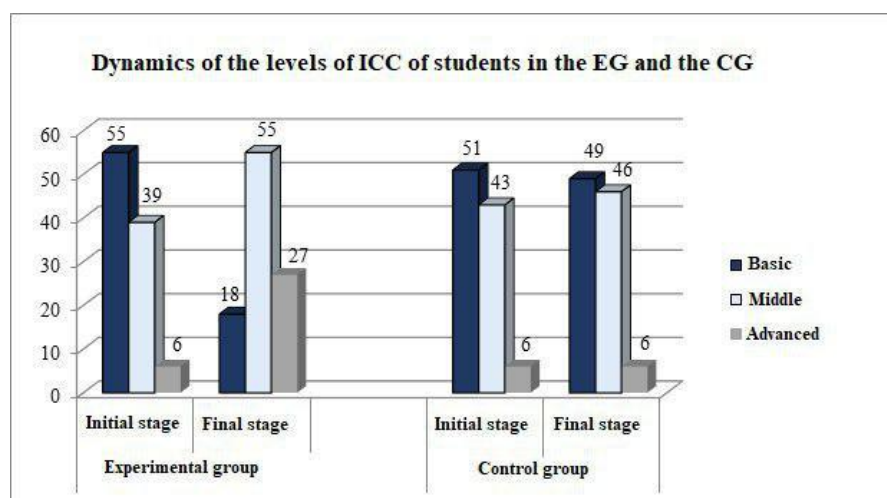
**Figure 3.** Levels of formation of intercultural competence of international students EG and CG in the final stage

In order to conduct a comparative analysis of the results of the initial and final stages, these data were collected in the one table (Table 2).

**Table 2.** Indicators of levels of ICC formation of international students EG and CG in the initial and final stage of 100%

Levels	Experimental group		Control group	
	Initial stage	Final stage	Initial stage	Final stage
Basic	55	18	51	49
Middle	39	55	43	46
Advanced	6	27	6	6

A comparative analysis allowed to note that in the EG, 27% of foreign students demonstrated compliance with the advanced level of the ICC, improving the result by 21%, while in the CG the number of subjects at the advanced level did not change (6%). On the other hand, the number of students with a basic level in the experimental group decreased and amounted to 18% (against the previous 55%), which is 31% lower than in the CG. We clearly presented the dynamics of indicators of the levels of formedness of the ICC of foreign students in the EG and CG in the diagram (Fig. 4).



**Figure 4.** Dynamics of the levels of intercultural competence of international students in the EG and the CG

As part of a comparative analysis of the results obtained at the initial and final stages, a quantitatively and qualitatively higher level of MCC was recorded for foreign students of the experimental group at the final, final stage of the study.

#### 4. Conclusion

The conducted study confirmed the authors' assumption that specially created psychological and pedagogical conditions, which are the introduction of the model for the formation of intercultural competence in educational activities, significantly improved the result, testifying to its effectiveness and efficiency. The formative stage is an important stage in the introduction of the elective course “Russian language and literature through the prism of a national character”. It was an effective predictive tool for the formation of intercultural competence of foreign students of universities of the Republic of Moldova.

A comparison of the results with the comparative method within the framework of one group – experimental or control – allowed to draw the following conclusion. If the results recorded in the CG at the final stage do not differ much from those obtained at the ascertaining one (the base level indicator decreased by 2% and increased by 3% for the average), then in the EG there was a significant change in the indicators. So, at the final stage in the ER, 27% of students showed compliance with the advanced level of the ICC against 6% at the ascertaining stage, which is 21% more, while the basic level is fixed at 18% against 55%, which is 37% less. The number of students who completed the tasks at an average level also increased: 55% versus 39%, that is, 16%. The data presented demonstrate the effectiveness of the proposed mechanisms for achieving the goal and solving the research problems and prove the productivity of the proposed psychological and pedagogical conditions.

The mechanisms and phased implementation of the model can be reproduced in wide university practice by teachers aimed at increasing the level of intercultural competence among foreign students. The research materials can be used both in the teaching of the Russian language and literature at various faculties of universities, as well as in continuing education courses, in the work of methodological seminars.

The study does not exhaust all the issues related to the formation of intercultural competence and students of universities of the Republic of Moldova. Promising areas of further scientific research in

the field of study should focus on deepening the intercultural component of vocational training of graduates, capable of ensuring the formation of personality, ready to actively interact with representatives of other cultures and able to successfully carry out professional activities in a multicultural environment.

## Acknowledgment

The authors wish to express their gratitude to the Dean of the Faculty of Philology of Creanga State Pedagogical University of the Republic of Moldova, Doctor of Philology Topor Gabriela Georgievna for support in organising and conducting the study.

## References

- Afanasyeva, N.D. (2009). *Teaching the culture of business speech of foreign law students*. Moscow: Peoples' Friendship University of Russia.
- Bakhtin, M.M. (1996). *The philosophy of the act*. Moscow: Labyrinth – MP.
- Barbenyagre, A.A. (2011). Formation of intercultural competence of students: problems and prospects of implementation. Pp. 52-60 in: *Problems of the socio-human sciences and the modernization of education*. Chisinau: Annual Conference of UPS "Ion Creangă".
- Bibler, V.S. (1991). *From science to the logic of culture: Two philosophical introductions into the 21st century*. Moscow: Politicheskaya literatura.
- Boldyrev, V.E. (2009). *Introduction to the theory of intercultural communication*. Moscow: Russian language.
- Byram, M. (2000). Assessing intercultural competence in language teaching. *Sprogforum*, 18(6), 8-13.
- Çiloğlan, F., Bardakçı, M. (2019). The relationship between intercultural sensitivity and english language achievement. *Journal of Language and Linguistic Studies*, 15(3), 1204-1214.
- Competences for Democratic Culture. Living together as equals in culturally diverse democratic societies* (2016). Strasbourg: Strasbourg Cedex. Relieved on December 12, 2020: <https://rm.coe.int/16806ccc0c>.
- Dmitriev, G.D. (1999). *Multicultural education*. Moscow: Narodnoye obrazovaniye.
- Dremov, A.F. (1984). *The role of cases in providing connectivity and text compression*. Moscow: Peoples' Friendship University.
- Elizarova, G.V. (2001). *The formation of intercultural competence of students in the process of teaching foreign language communication*. St. Petersburg: Herzen State Pedagogical University.
- Fedotova, O.S. (2015). Dialogue with the reader or introspection of the author? *Issues of cognitive linguistics*, 4(045), 138-146.
- Furmanova, V.P. (2009). *Intercultural communication in the theory and practice of teaching foreign languages at university*. Saransk: Nauka.
- Gagnon, G., Collay, M. (2006). *Constructivist learning design: Key questions for teaching to standards*. California: Corwin Press.
- Galskova, N.D., Gez, N.I. (2004). *Theory of teaching foreign languages: Linguodidactics and methodology*. Moscow: Academiya.

- Gerlovan, O.K. (2011). The formation of intercultural competence of students: problems and prospects. Pp. 52-60 in: *The conference on the totalization of the scientific and scientific-didactic work of the teacher-teaching body "Problems of the socio-human sciences and the modernization of education"*. Bucharest: Ion Creangă.
- Gukalenko, O.V. (2013). Sociocultural policy of modern Russia: regional aspect. *Social Pedagogy in Russia*, 3, 3-14.
- Hall, E. (1959). *The Silent Language*. New York: Doubleday & Company.
- Ibragimova, A.N. (2008). *The formation of intercultural competence of students in the process of interpreting a foreign literary text*. Kazan: Tatar State Humanitarian Pedagogical University.
- Ionova, I.A. (2014). *Sketches of the language picture of the world of Russian residents of Moldova*. Chisinau: Publishing house Slavic university.
- Kasatkin, P.I., Ivkina, N.V. (2018). Cultural and educational components of the "soft power" of the EU. *Comparative Politics*, 1, 26-36.
- Khaleeva, I.I. (2000). On gender approaches to the theory of teaching languages and cultures. *Bulletin of the Russian Academy of Education*, 1, 11-12.
- Kohis, R.L., Knight, J.M. (1994). *Developing intercultural awareness: a cross cultural training*. Boston: Nicholas Brealey Publishing.
- Kural, F. (2020). Long term effects of intercultural competence development training for study-abroad adjustment and global communication. *Journal of Language and Linguistic Studies*, 16(2), 948-958.
- Likhachev, B.T. (1983). *Simple truths of education*. Moscow: Yurayt-M.
- Losev, A.F. (1999). *Personality and Absolute*. Moscow: "Mysl".
- Lotman, Yu.M. (2010). *Semiosphere*. St. Petersburg: "Isskustvo – SPB".
- Mitina, L.M., Askomovets, E.S. (2001). *The emotional flexibility of a teacher: Psychological content, diagnosis, correction*. Moscow: Moscow Psychological and Social Institute; Flint Publishing House.
- Mogilyova, I.B. (1989). *A system of ways of expressing causal relationships in the scientific style of speech*. Moscow: AKD.
- Ostapenko, L.V., Subbotina, I.A., Nesterova, S.L. (2012). *Russians in Moldova. Twenty years later. Ethnosociological research*. Moscow: IEA RAS.
- Passov, E.I. (2003). *Methodical school of Passov. Concept*. Voronezh: Interlingva.
- Pluzhnik, I.L. (2003). *Formation of intercultural communicative competence of humanitarian students in the process of vocational training: thesis of PhD of Pedagogical Sciences*. Tyumen: University of Tyumen.
- Ratseeva, E.K. (2010). *The problem of preservation and development of ethnic identity of the younger generation of the Bulgarians of the Republic of Moldova at the present stage*. Chisinau: Publishing House (USM).
- Riordan-Karlsson, M. (2004). *Constructivism*. California: Teacher Created Materials, Inc.
- Sadokhin, A.P. 2006. *Intercultural communication*. Moscow: Alfa-M; INFRA-M.



- Safonova, V.V. (2004). *Communicative competence: modern approaches to multilevel description for methodological purposes*. Moscow: Publishing House NIC Euroshkola.
- Shishlova, E.E., Kuritsyn, I.A. (2017). The hidden content of professional linguistic education in the socio-cultural dimension. *Integration of Education*, 4, 709-722.
- Ter-Minasova, S.G. (2000). *Language and intercultural communication*. Moscow: Slovo.
- Tokareva, N.D. (2010). Intercultural communicative competence in the light of stylistic analysis. *Bulletin of Moscow State Linguistic University. Series: Humanities*, 596, 35-46.
- Tswik, I.I. (2014). *Formation of intercultural competence of philology students*. Chisinau: Creanga State Pedagogical University.
- Tsybalyuk, E.I. (2018). Intercultural competence as a mechanism for the implementation of effective multicultural interaction. *Slavic Readings*, 12(18), 227-238.
- Tsybalyuk, E.I. (2019). Mechanisms of intercultural interaction in the educational space of the Republic of Moldova. *Research and Development. Modern Communication Science*, 8(1), 36-39.
- Voevoda, E.V., Belogurov, A.Y., Romanenko, N.M., Silantyeva, M.V., Kostikova, L.P. (2017). Language policy in the Russian Empire: legal and constitutional aspect. *Journal of Constitutional History*, 33(1), 121-129.
- Zaikovski, T. (2003). *National-cultural component of artistic creation. Intercultural education in the Republic of Moldova*. Chisinau: PRO-DIDACTICA.
- Zakharchenko, S.S. (2006). *Methodological aspects of working with press materials in the preparation of foreign international experts*. Moscow: Peoples' Friendship University of Russia.

## Farklı ülkelerden gelen öğrenciler arasında kültürlerarası yeterliliğin oluşmasına yardımcı olan psikolojik ve pedagojik koşullar

---

### Özet

Modern eğitimin en önemli görevi, öğrencilerin diğer kültürlerin temsilcileriyle başarılı bir şekilde etkileşim kurma, kültürlerarası durumlarda ortaya çıkan taleplere, zorluklara ve fırsatlara etkin bir şekilde yanıt verme becerilerinin geliştirilmesidir. Bu makale, I. Creanga (Moldova Cumhuriyeti) adını taşıyan KSPU öğrencileri örneği ile Rus dili ve edebiyatı aracılığıyla yabancı öğrencilerin kültürlerarası iletişiminin oluşumunu ve yabancı öğrencilere öğretim sürecine genel bir bakış sunmaktadır. MGIMO ve Rusya Halkların Dostluk Üniversitesi. İlk ve son aşamalarda elde edilen sonuçların karşılaştırmalı analizinin bir parçası olarak, çalışmanın son, son aşamasında deney grubundaki yabancı öğrenciler arasında nicel ve nitel olarak daha yüksek bir IQC seviyesi kaydedildi. Kültürlerarası yeterliliğin oluşum modelinin eğitim faaliyetlerine girişini temsil eden özel olarak oluşturulmuş psikolojik ve pedagojik koşulların deney grubunun sonucunu önemli ölçüde iyileştirdiği bulunmuştur. Bu, önerilen modelin etkililiğine ve verimliliğine tanıklık eder.

*Anahtar sözcükler:* kültürlerarası yeterlilik; kültürler arası diyalog; kültür; Rus dili ve edebiyatı; yabancı öğrenciler; model; seçmeli ders; seviye.

#### **AUTHORS BIODATA**

**Elena I. Tsybalyuk** is a Lecturer at the Department of Language and Communication of the “Ion Creangă” State Pedagogical University of Chisinau.

**Nadezhda M. Romanenko** is a Full Doctor in Pedagogical Sciences, Professor at the Department of Pedagogy and Psychology of the Moscow State Institute of International Relations. Author of more than 200 scientific and methodological works on psychological and pedagogical sciences, philosophy and sociology of education, including 18 monographs, more than 170 scientific articles. Social activities, awards: Awarded the international order "For honor and dignity" of the World Artyskiy Committee (2015).

**Anastasyia V. Romanenko** is a PhD in Cultural Studies, Senior Lecturer at the Department of Russian Language of the RUDN University.

**Marina A. Volkova** is a Lecturer at the Department of Russian Language of the Moscow State Institute of International Relations. Academic area and research topics: professional language training, cultural studies, cross-cultural communication, multimedia technologies in foreign language teaching.